

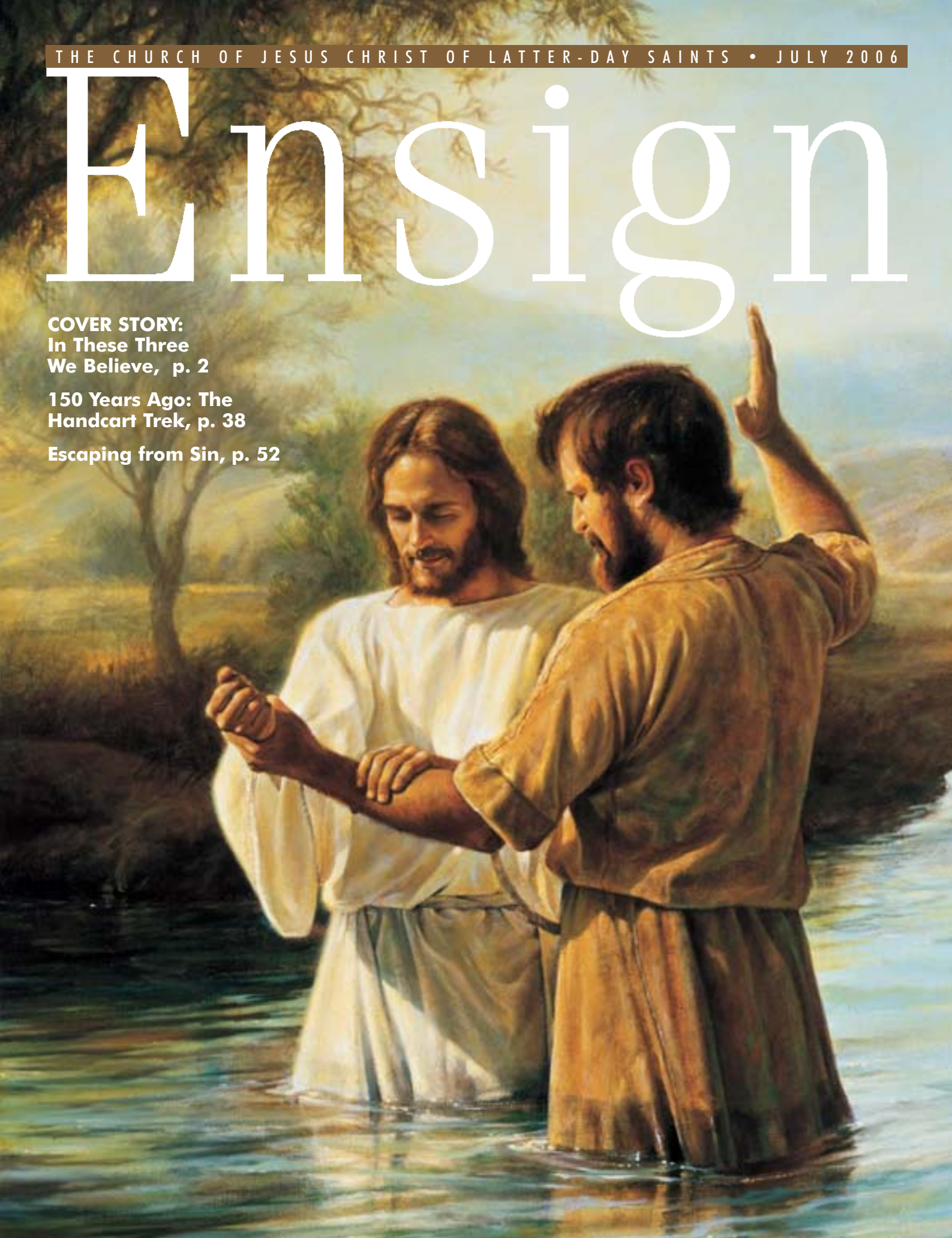
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • JULY 2006

# Ensign

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MAY NOT BE COPIED

**The Randolph Tabernacle, by G. A. Garns**

*During the early part of the twentieth century in the small Utah town of Randolph, this brick tabernacle was the center of activity for the people who lived there. Today the well-maintained tabernacle on the main street looks just as it did more than 100 years ago.*



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**"WE BELIEVE IN GOD, THE ETERNAL FATHER, . . .**

*I believe without equivocation or reservation in God the  
Eternal Father. He is the great Creator, the Ruler of the universe.*

# In These Three I Believe

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

**T**he first article of faith is surely familiar to all members of the Church. It is the pivotal position of our religion. It is significant that in setting forth the primary elements of our doctrine, the Prophet Joseph put this number one:

“We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost” (Articles of Faith 1:1).

The preeminence given that declaration is in accord with another statement the Prophet made. Said he:

“It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God” (*History of the Church*, 6:305).

These tremendously significant and overarching declarations are in harmony with the words of the Lord in His great Intercessory Prayer:

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

I recall reading a tract some years ago written by a critic, an enemy of the Church whose desire was to undermine the faith of the weak and the unknowing. The tract repeated fallacies that had been parroted for

a century and more. It purported to set forth what you and I, as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, believe.

Without wishing to argue with any of our friends of other faiths, many of whom I know and for whom I have the highest regard, I take this opportunity to set forth my position on this most important of all theological subjects.

I believe without equivocation or reservation in God the Eternal Father. He is my Father, the Father of my spirit, and the Father of the spirits of all men. He is the great Creator, the Ruler of the universe. He directed the Creation of this earth on which we live. In His image man was created. He is personal. He is real. He is individual. He has “a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s” (D&C 130:22).

## In His Image

In the account of the Creation of the earth, “God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26).

Could any language be more explicit? Does it demean God, as some would have us believe, that man was created in His express



*They are distinct beings, but They are one in purpose and effort. They are united as one in bringing to pass the grand, divine plan for the salvation and exaltation of the children of God.*



image? Rather, it should stir within the heart of every man and woman a greater appreciation for himself or herself as a son or daughter of God. Paul's words to the Corinthian Saints are as applicable to us today as they were to those to whom he wrote. Said he:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

I remember the occasion more than 70 years ago when, as a missionary, I was speaking in an open-air meeting in Hyde Park, London. As I was presenting my message, a heckler interrupted to say, "Why don't you stay with the doctrine of the Bible which says in John, 'God is a Spirit'?"

I opened my Bible to the verse he had quoted and read to him the entire verse:

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

I said, "Of course God is a spirit, and so are you in the combination of spirit and body that makes of you a living being, and so am I."

Each of us is a dual being of spiritual entity and physical entity. All know of the reality of death when the body dies, and each of us also knows that the spirit lives on as an individual entity and that at some time, under the divine plan made possible by the sacrifice of the Son of God, there will be a reunion of spirit and body.

Jesus's declaration that God is a spirit no more denies that He has a body than does the statement that I am a spirit while also having a body.

I do not equate my body with His in its refinement, in its capacity, in its beauty and radiance. His is eternal. Mine is mortal. But that only increases my reverence for Him. I worship Him "in spirit and in truth." I look to Him as my strength. I pray to Him for wisdom beyond my own. I seek to love Him with all my heart, might, mind, and strength. His wisdom is greater than the wisdom of all men. His

power is greater than the power of nature, for He is the Creator Omnipotent. His love is greater than the love of any other, for His love encompasses all of His children, and it is His work and His glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of His sons and daughters of all generations (see Moses 1:39).

### Our Almighty Father

He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

This is the Almighty of whom I stand in awe and reverence. It is He to whom I look in fear and trembling. It is

He whom I worship and unto whom I give honor and praise and glory. He is my Heavenly Father, who has invited me to come unto Him in prayer, to speak with Him, with the promised assurance that He will hear and respond.

I thank Him for the light and knowledge and understanding He has bestowed upon His children. I thank Him for His voice, which has spoken eternal truth with power and promise. I thank Him for His declaration at the baptism of His Beloved Son in the waters of Jordan when His voice was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

I thank Him for His similar declaration on the Mount of Transfiguration, when He spoke again to Jesus and His Apostles and angels also, when "after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

"And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

"And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

"Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.



**J**esus said they who had seen Him had seen the Father. Could not the same be said by many a son who resembles his parent?

... AND IN HIS SON, **JESUS CHRIST**, ...

*When Jesus was baptized by John in Jordan, His Father's voice was heard declaring His divine sonship, and the Holy Ghost was manifest in the form of a dove.*



“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (Matthew 17:1–5).

I thank Him for that voice heard again when the risen Lord was introduced to the people of the Western Hemisphere with the voice of God declaring, “Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name” (3 Nephi 11:7).

I stand in awe and reverence and gratitude for His appearance in this dispensation when, as He introduced the risen Lord to one who had sought Him in prayer, the Father declared: “*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

## ... AND IN THE HOLY GHOST”

*(Articles of Faith 1:1).*

***The Holy Ghost is the Testifier of Truth, who can teach men things they cannot teach one another.***

### **His Firstborn Son**

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the eternal, living God. I believe in Him as the Firstborn of the Father and the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. I believe in Him as an individual, separate and distinct from His Father. I believe in the declaration of John, who opened his gospel with this majestic utterance:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

“The same was in the beginning with God. . . .

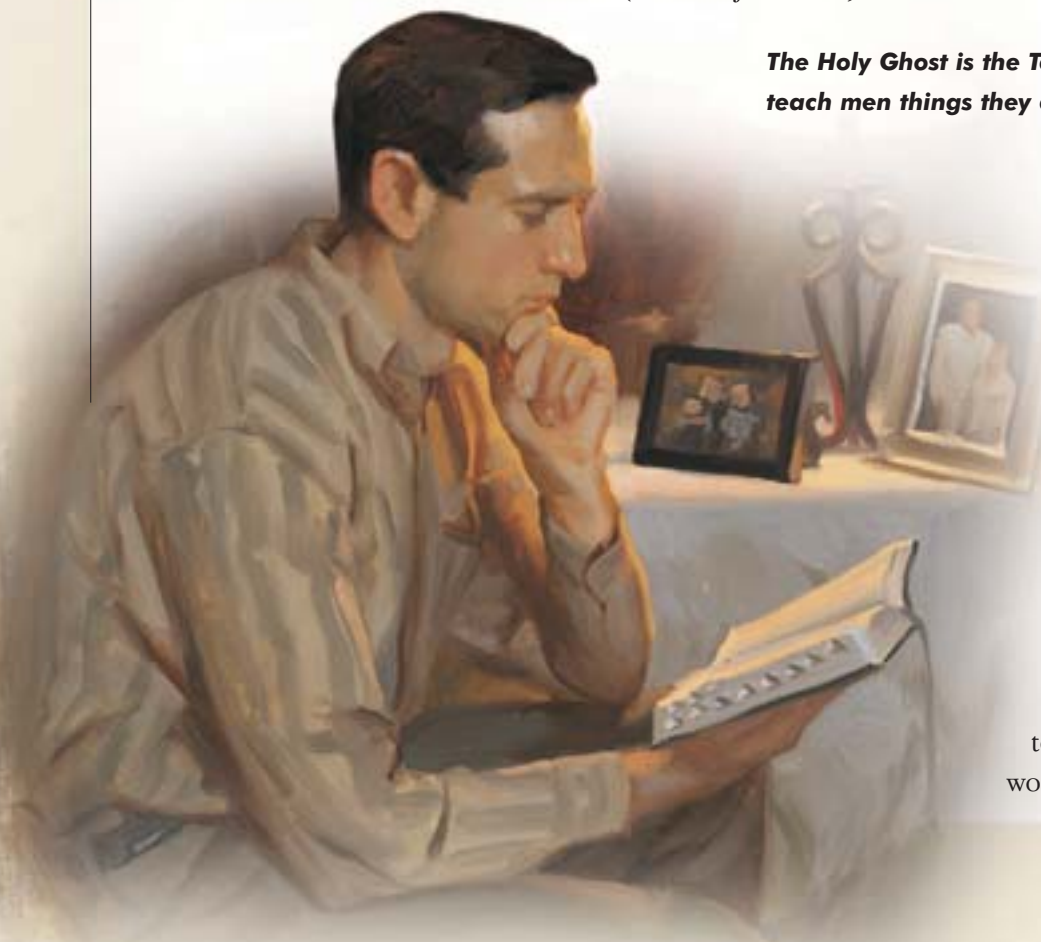
“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:1–2, 14).

I believe that He was born of Mary of the lineage of David as the promised Messiah, that He was in very deed begotten of the Father,

and that in His birth was the fulfillment of the great prophetic declaration of Isaiah:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

I believe that in His mortal life He was the one perfect man to walk the earth. I believe that in His words are to be found that light and





truth which, if observed, would save the world and bring exaltation to mankind. I believe that in His priesthood rests divine authority—the power to bless, the power to heal, the power to govern in the earthly affairs of God, the power to bind in the heavens that which is bound upon the earth.

I believe that through His atoning sacrifice, the offering of His life on Calvary's Hill, He expiated the sins of mankind, relieving us from the burden of sin if we will forsake evil and follow Him. I believe in the reality and the power of His Resurrection. I believe in the grace of God made manifest through His sacrifice and redemption, and I believe that through His Atonement, without any price on our part, each of us is offered the gift of resurrection from the dead. I believe further that through that sacrifice there is extended to every man and woman, every son and daughter of God, the opportunity for eternal life and exaltation in our Father's kingdom, as we hearken to and obey His commandments.

#### **Divine Savior and Redeemer**

None so great has ever walked the earth. None other has made a comparable sacrifice or granted a comparable blessing. He is the Savior and the Redeemer of the world. I believe in Him. I declare His divinity without equivocation or compromise. I love Him. I speak His name in reverence and wonder. I worship Him as I worship His Father, in spirit and in truth. I thank Him and kneel before His wounded feet and hands and side, amazed at the love He offers me.

God be thanked for His Beloved Son, who reached out long ago and said to each of us:

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

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

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28–30).

He lives, the firstfruits of the Resurrection. I know He lives today as really, as certainly, as individually, as He lived when, as the risen Lord, He beckoned His discouraged disciples to "come and dine. . . .

" . . . [Jesus] taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise" (John 21:12–13).

The scripture tells of others to whom He showed Himself and with whom He spoke, as the living, resurrected Son of God.

Likewise in this dispensation He has appeared, and those who saw Him declared:

"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).

This is the Christ in whom I believe and of whom I testify.

#### **The Holy Ghost**

That knowledge comes from the word of scripture, and that testimony comes by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is a gift, sacred and wonderful, borne by revelation from the third member of the Godhead. I believe in the Holy Ghost as a personage of spirit who occupies a place with the Father and the Son, these three comprising the divine Godhead.

The importance of that place is made clear from the words of the Lord, who said:

"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

"And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matthew 12:31–32).

That the Holy Ghost was recognized in ancient times as a member of the Godhead is evident from the conversation between Peter and Ananias when the latter held back a part of the price received from the sale of a piece of land.

"Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to

lie to the Holy Ghost . . . ? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:3–4).

The Holy Ghost stands as the third member of the Godhead, the Comforter promised by the Savior who would teach His followers all things and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever He had said unto them (see John 14:26).

The Holy Ghost is the Testifier of Truth, who can teach men things they cannot teach one another. In those great and challenging words of Moroni, a knowledge of the truth of the Book of Mormon is promised “by the power of the Holy Ghost.” Moroni then declares, “And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:4–5).

I believe this power, this gift, is available to us today.

### Three Distinct Beings

And so I believe in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.

I was baptized in the name of these three. I was married in the name of these three. I have no question concerning Their reality and Their individuality. That individuality was made apparent when Jesus was baptized by John in Jordan. There in the water stood the Son of God. His Father’s voice was heard declaring His divine sonship, and the Holy Ghost was manifest in the form of a dove (see Matthew 3:16–17).

I am aware that Jesus said they who had seen Him had seen the Father. Could not the same be said by many a son who resembles his parent?

When Jesus prayed to the Father, certainly He was not praying to Himself!

They are distinct beings, but They are one in purpose and effort. They are united as one in bringing to pass the grand, divine plan for the salvation and exaltation of the children of God.

In His great, moving prayer in the garden before His betrayal, Christ pleaded with His Father concerning the Apostles, whom He loved, saying:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us” (John 17:20–21).

It is that perfect unity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost that binds these three into the oneness of the divine Godhead.

Miracle of miracles and wonder of wonders, They are interested in us, and we are the substance of Their great concern. They are available to each of us. We approach the Father through the Son. He is our intercessor at the throne of God. How marvelous it is that we may so speak to the Father in the name of the Son.

I bear witness of these great, transcendent truths. I do so by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ. ■

## IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. Ask family members to repeat the first article of faith. Discuss the nature and divine role of each member of the Godhead. Relate President Hinckley’s missionary experience concerning the nature of God. Invite family members to share their own testimonies of a member of the Godhead.
2. Before your visit, prepare three pieces of paper: on each one, write a word, phrase, or scripture from the article that refers to a member of the Godhead. During the visit read the papers, and have family members identify which member of the Godhead each description refers to. Share President Hinckley’s testimony regarding each personage.
3. Read President Hinckley’s comments about the personal nature of God. Invite the family to share times when they have felt a similar closeness. Discuss ways they can deepen their testimony of members of the Godhead.



I had always fretted about “what if?” As a child, I worried, “What if I don’t get picked?” As a young adult, I agonized, “What if I don’t get asked?” As an adult, I panicked, “What if I’m not good enough?” No matter how much success I had enjoyed earlier in my life, each time I faced a new challenge, my head would ache, my stomach would twist into knots, and I couldn’t eat. I knew it had gotten out of hand when I started having anxiety attacks. I never knew when the attacks would come. As a result I didn’t want to be alone, leave home, or drive the car—not exactly reasonable expectations for a mother of four young children. What could I do? Where could I find relief?

One hot summer Sunday afternoon, these questions were weighing heavily on my mind. It was fast Sunday, and our Church meetings were over. My two sons, aged five and seven, raced to see who could get inside the house and out of the heat first. They stood on the step next to the door, jostling each other for position, each grabbing the

door handle and trying to turn the knob and push the door open. The door was locked. I caught up with them, slid my key into the lock, and tried to turn the handle, but the boys were each holding it so tightly that I could not turn the key.

The words “If you would just let go for a minute, I could turn the key and let you in” tumbled out of my mouth. Almost immediately, my sons relaxed their grip. I turned the key, and we were inside the house.

As I said those words, an image popped into my mind. I imagined the Savior standing next to me, repeating my own words back to me: “If you would just let go for a minute, I could turn the key for you. Let go. Let me help.”

I had my answer. I realized that by letting go of the fear and worry, I could open myself up to the love of the Savior. My fears may or may not materialize, but when I trust in the Lord, somehow things work out for the best.

As I let go of my worries and put my trust in the Savior, I have gained a testimony that through the Atonement, our most difficult burdens can be lifted. ■

# My Personal Parable for Peace

BY NANCY M. CHRISTENSEN



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE; INSET: JESUS CHRIST KNOCKING AT THE DOOR, BY DEL PARSON, © 1983

# On the Wings of Eagles



***The Wright brothers realized that a practical flying machine needed a pilot to control the aircraft, wings to produce lift, and an engine to keep it aloft. Similar principles apply to your own journey through life and toward the destination of eternal life.***

BY ELDER DIETER F. UCHTDORF  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**O**n December 17, 1903, a dream of mankind was fulfilled as Wilbur and Orville Wright made the first controlled, powered flight. The distance was about 120 feet, or 37 meters—about half the length of a 747 jumbo jet—and the duration was about 12 seconds. That’s shorter than the time it takes me to climb the stairs leading up to the 747 cockpit. By today’s standards, it was a very short flight, but at that time it was an accomplishment that few believed would ever be possible.

Wilbur and Orville had parents who encouraged education, religion, and family values. Both brothers had their share of serious illnesses. They went through difficult times of trouble, perplexity, and even despair, wondering if they would ever succeed. They tried different vocations as printers, bicycle repairmen, bicycle manufacturers, and, eventually, aircraft inventors. Throughout their lives, whenever they

picked a project to work on, they were focused and worked as a team.

The Wright brothers committed themselves to do what no one else had ever done before. They took time to do their homework. They were humble and smart enough to appreciate and learn about the work of others who went before. And they tackled the problem line upon line, precept upon precept. They realized that there were three main requirements for a practical flying machine: first, the pilot had to be able to

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control the aircraft; second, the wings had to produce lift; third, it had to be powered by an engine to stay aloft.<sup>1</sup>

They had their goals defined and worked diligently on them one day at a time. Leonardo da Vinci said, “He turns not back who is bound to a star.”<sup>2</sup>

Similar principles and requirements apply to your own journey through life and toward the destination of eternal life. Divine principles have to be learned and lived as you prepare to rise up on the wings of eagles.

#### **First: You Have to Learn to Control Yourself**

It isn’t until you come to a spiritual understanding of who you are that you can begin to take control of yourself. As you learn to control yourself, you will get control of your life. If you want to move the world, you first have to move yourself.



***Divine principles have to be learned and lived as you prepare to rise up on the wings of eagles.***

Be responsive to the counsel of the prophets, seers, and revelators, who will help you to reach true self-mastery. Be responsive to the promptings of the Spirit. The Spirit will influence your conscience and help you to refine yourself by working on the little tasks of self-control—which leads to self-control of your whole self, of mind, body, and spirit. Remember, *anger* is only one letter short of *danger*.

Your choices are the mirror of your self-control. They will lead you to your eternal destination if they are made with divine direction and control. Stay morally clean. Keep

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) often quoted an unknown author: “The greatest battle of life is fought out within the silent chambers of the soul. A victory on the inside of a man’s heart is worth a hundred conquests on the battlefields of life. To be master of yourself is the best guarantee that you will be master of the situation. Know thyself. The crown of character is self-control.”<sup>3</sup>

a clean mind and heart. Your thoughts will determine your actions. Control your thoughts. Don't submit yourself to temptation. Aristotle said, "For where it is in our power to act it is also in our power not to act."<sup>4</sup>

Control wisely and select carefully what you will invite via a mouse click or remote control into your home or office. Select reading material, movies, TV shows, and any other form of entertainment that bring good, uplifting thoughts rather than unwholesome desires.

## **Second: Your Attitude Will Determine Your Lift and Altitude**

The Wright brothers knew that in addition to keeping control of the aircraft, they needed to produce enough lift to keep their flying machine aloft. Dictionaries describe *lift* something like the following: to carry or direct from a lower to a higher position; the power or force available for raising to a new level or altitude; a force acting in an upward direction, opposing the pull of gravity.

The Psalmist sets the goals even higher: "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul" (Psalm 25:1) and "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help" (Psalm 121:1). He invites you to fly with the eagles, not to scratch with the chickens.

Lifting your eyes toward the God of heaven is a process of cultivating your own very personal spirituality. It is a desire to live in harmony with the Father; the Son, our Savior; and the Holy Ghost. It is also your ability to be truly "submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon [you], even as a child doth submit to his father" (Mosiah 3:19).

**Sincere prayer.** With the right attitude—which, incidentally, is also needed to produce sufficient lift for an airplane—you will be able to effectively communicate with your Heavenly Father and not to just say your prayers. You will be able to say prayers that will go beyond the ceiling of the room, prayers not filled with trite repetitions or

spoken without thinking but filled with your deep yearning to be one with your Father in Heaven.

Prayer, if given in faith, is acceptable to God at all times. If you ever feel you cannot pray, that is the time when you definitely need to pray. Nephi taught in plainness, "If ye would hearken unto the Spirit [of God] which teacheth a man to pray ye would know that ye must pray; for the evil spirit . . . teacheth him that he must not pray" (2 Nephi 32:8).

President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) taught, "The sincere prayer of the righteous heart opens to any individual the door to divine wisdom and strength in that for which he righteously seeks."<sup>5</sup>


Obedience assures us an answer to our prayers. We read in the New Testament, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22).

The Prophet Joseph Smith learned in a revelation given to him in Kirtland in 1831, "He that asketh in the Spirit asketh according to the will of God; wherefore it is done even as he asketh" (D&C 46:30).

In order to lift, enhance, and cultivate your relationship with God as His spiritual children, you have the unique opportunity to converse with the supreme source of wisdom and compassion in the universe.

Daily, simple but sincere and mighty prayers will help you lift your lives to a higher spiritual altitude. In your prayers you praise God, give thanks to Him, confess weaknesses, petition needs, and express deep devotion to your Heavenly Father. As you do this in the name of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, you perform a spiritual effort that leads to increased inspiration, revelation, and righteousness—not self-righteousness—and brings the brightness of heaven into your lives.

This brings back memories from my professional life as an airline captain: departing from a dark and rainy airport, climbing through thick and threatening winter clouds,



*In aerodynamics, gravity and drag work in opposition to lift. This same important principle has been an integral part of the plan of salvation from the beginning.*



and then, suddenly, breaking through the cloud tops and steeply gaining altitude into the bright sunshine and into the endless blue sky, feeling free, safe, and home at last. But this beautiful feeling reflects only the smallest part of what you can experience through your daily prayers.

**Opposition and agency.** A word of caution: in aerodynamics, gravity and drag work in *opposition* to lift. This same important principle has been an integral part of the plan of salvation from the beginning. As Lehi explained, “For it must needs be, that there is an *opposition* in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11; emphasis added). And as the angel taught King Benjamin, “For the natural man is an enemy to God . . . *unless* he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit” (Mosiah 3:19; emphasis added).

This leads us to God’s great gift to His children: agency.

Lehi taught this most important doctrine to his children. He said: “The Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself. . . . And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power

of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:16, 27).

You have agency, and you are free to choose. But there is actually no *free* agency. Agency has its price. You have to pay the consequences of your choices.

Human agency was purchased with the price of Christ’s suffering. The power of Christ’s Atonement overcomes the effect of sin on the condition of wholehearted repentance. Through and by the Savior’s universal and infinite Atonement, all have been redeemed from the Fall and have become free forever to act for themselves (see 2 Nephi 2:26).

Agency is a spiritual matter. Without awareness of alternatives, you could not choose. Agency is so important in your lives that you not only *can* choose obedience or rebellion, but you *must*. During this life you cannot remain on neutral ground; you cannot abstain from either receiving or rejecting the light from God.

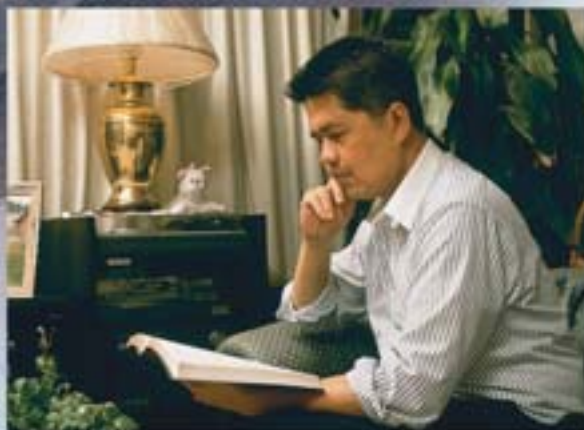
By learning to use the gift of agency to make right decisions, you will increase your spiritual

*As an airline captain I remember breaking through the cloud tops into the bright sunshine and endless blue sky, feeling free, safe, and home at last. But this beautiful feeling reflects only the smallest part of what you can experience through your daily prayers.*





*As airplanes need engine power to fly, you have an all-encompassing source of power available to lift you and help you reach the purpose of your creation. This is the power of God.*



lift and altitude. You will also quickly recognize one other prime source of spiritual truth: the written word of God.

**Feasting on the word.** Lifting your eyes toward heaven requires an attitude directed upward. With this positive attitude toward life comes the desire to *feast* “upon the word of Christ” (2 Nephi 31:20), not to just occasionally nibble on the scriptures or the words of the prophets.

*Feasting* includes searching, pondering, asking, praying, and living the word of God. Read the holy scriptures as if they were written for you—for they are. Nephi said, “For behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:3).

One powerful scripture in the New Testament, James 1:5, initiated a wonderful process that led to the Restoration of all things. May I ask you to take time to feast upon the word of God? It is available 24

hours a day, 7 days a week but should not be treated like a fast-food service. Jesus asked listeners to go home and ponder what He had taught them (see 3 Nephi 17:3). This pondering, feasting, and meditating will help you “know to what source [you] may look for a remission of [your] sins” (2 Nephi 25:26).

Praying and feasting upon the word of

God are two elements of a heavenward attitude that will also enhance your work ethic and your willingness to serve and lift others. It will help you to carry Church responsibilities with the willingness to magnify your callings without trying to magnify yourself. With this divine attitude you will be more concerned about *how* you serve rather than *where* you serve. King Benjamin taught, “I tell you these things that ye may learn

wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17). And we do this by “lift[ing] up the hands which hang down” (Hebrews 12:12).

### **Third: You Need to Find and Trust the True Source of Divine Power**

The Wright brothers needed engine power to make the airplane fly. Without it there would have been no lift, no forward motion to enable flight—no airplane.

You have an all-encompassing true source of power available to help you reach the purpose of your creation. This is the power of God, exercising a subtle and loving influence in the lives of His children, lifting you and keeping you aloft. It is manifested as the Light of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The Latin source of the word *comforter*—*com fortis*—means “together strong.” As the Holy Ghost visits your own spirit, you become stronger than you are by yourself. When you receive the Holy Ghost, you receive strength, power, peace, and comfort.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “There is a difference between the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, but he could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man.”<sup>6</sup>

Elder Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stated that the Holy Ghost “inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation and social feeling. It develops and invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens, invigorates and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is . . . marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being.”<sup>7</sup>

President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency, gave us encouragement: “You can make every decision in your life correctly if you can learn to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This you can do if you will discipline yourself to yield your own feelings to the promptings of the Spirit. Study your problems and prayerfully make a decision. Then take that decision and say to him, in a simple, honest supplication, ‘Father, I want to make the right decision. I want to do the right thing. This is what I think I should

do; let me know if it is the right course.’ Doing this, you can get the burning in your bosom, if your decision is right. . . . When you learn to walk by the Spirit, you never need to make a mistake.”<sup>8</sup>

The Prophet Joseph Smith talked about the promptings of the Spirit as “sudden strokes of ideas.”<sup>9</sup>

The Holy Ghost will make you independent. If you will learn how to have the Holy Ghost as a constant companion, all other needful things will fall in place. Through your personal righteousness the Spirit of God will guide you to learn to control yourself, to enhance your attitude, to increase your spiritual altitude, and to find and trust the true source of divine power.

### The Wind beneath Your Wings

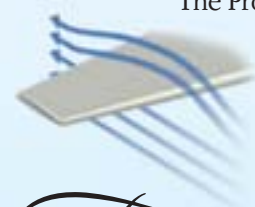
To stay one more time within the metaphor of flying an aircraft, many things are required to make an airplane fly and fly safely, but the most important thing, as I used to call it, is the “wind beneath your wings.” Without it, there is no lift, no climb, no flight into the wild blue yonder or to faraway, beautiful destinations.

The Holy Ghost will be the wind beneath your wings, placing in your heart the firm conviction of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and His place in the eternal plan of God your Eternal Father. Through the Holy Ghost you will know your place in this plan and your divine eternal destination. You will be converted to the Lord, His gospel, and His Church, and you will never fall away. ■

*From a Brigham Young University devotional address given on November 11, 2003.*

### NOTES

1. See Tom D. Crouch, *The Bishop's Boys: A Life of Wilbur and Orville Wright* (1989), 166.
2. *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, ed. Irma A. Richter (1980), 261.
3. *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 235.
4. *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross, book 3, chapter 5 (see Internet, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.3.iii.html>).
5. *Stand Ye in Holy Places* (1974), 318.
6. *History of the Church*, 4:555.
7. *Key to the Science of Theology*, 9th ed. (1965), 101.
8. In Conference Report, Oct. 1961, 60–61.
9. *History of the Church*, 3:381.



*The Holy Ghost will be the wind beneath your wings, placing in your heart the firm conviction of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.*



# AHOLE IN HER SOUL

## NAME WITHHELD

Our beautiful and bubbly daughter had just turned 16 and was finishing her first year of high school. She was blessed with great talent in dance and music, playing both the piano and the violin. She was thoughtful and kind and served as a peer tutor to students with disabilities. She was the president of her Laurel class, a member of a community youth council, and an officer in the color guard of the high school marching band. She had felt the thrill of her first prom and her first date. She had friends and family who loved her dearly, and she was bursting with enthusiasm for life.

Then she met a young man from a different high school, a Church member who seemed to think she was really special. He introduced her to his family and even took her to meet his grandparents. He was tall, smart, and charming.

On the last day of her sophomore year, our daughter went out with her new beau on a group date to celebrate his 18th birthday. She had taken extra care to look just right, and she did look lovely. Her little five-foot frame looked so tiny next to his six-foot stature as they walked down our front walk to his car. I thought, “She picked a boy who looks like her father.”

She arrived home before 11:00 p.m. but went straight to her room. I heard a bang as she slammed the door. I knocked and asked if she would like to talk, but she said

she just wanted to go right to sleep because she was leaving for band camp early the next morning.

When she returned from camp the next week, she was different somehow. She was angry at everyone and everything. As the weeks passed, things progressively got worse. We really worried the day after she marched in the

Independence Day parade. She ignored her friends, including her best friend, and complained

and criticized everything they did. They responded in the only way they could—they left her alone. Time passed, and she grew to be totally alone. Gone were the rooms filled with giggling girls and the incessant phone calls. The violin lay idle. The piano collected dust.

Three months into her junior year, the answers finally came. Her sociology class was having a discussion about dating, the increasing incidence of date rape, and the

use of date-rape drugs. Her secret exploded. It had been her intent to put the episode behind her, to forget it and never let anyone know that “she was not a virgin—that she felt dirty—that she no longer felt worthy of Heavenly Father’s love.” Yet there she was, blurting it out for all to hear. Her self-control evaporated in the intensity of the moment as she revealed the horror of her experience. She told of how her trust had been violated, of the terror she had felt while paralyzed by the drug, and of being

*After  
the assault, our  
16-year-old daughter  
thought she could never  
trust anyone again. What  
could we do to help her  
find peace and  
healing?*



completely unable to help herself. She wept as she spoke of how foolish she felt for not even knowing where she was or the last names of the others she had been with, and how stupid she felt for trusting the young man she had gone out with that last night of her sophomore year.

I received a call from the vice-principal of her school to come and pick her up. A report was filed with the police. I took her for an interview and exam, but too much time had passed. There was no physical evidence of the paralyzing drug or the damage of the attack, only a young woman now emotionally paralyzed by memories of her experience. A police officer told her another medication she had been taking at the time had made her aware of all that transpired. Normally the victim's memory is like a dream, or there is no memory of the incident at all. The officer said many young women now are victims without even knowing a crime has been committed. Their only mistake is to accept a drug-laced drink from the perpetrator. The officer told her she should be thankful to still be alive, because the drug or a combination of drugs could have killed her. But my beautiful daughter wished it *had* killed her. She remembered everything vividly, and the memory was eating away at her very soul.

It was important for her to talk to someone she respected and who had the proper authority, someone who could help correct her thinking and remove any guilt from her troubled heart. My husband and I immediately had our daughter speak with our bishop. He was a loving and gentle man who assured her she was still pure and worthy and that the sin was the perpetrator's, not her own. We allowed our priesthood leaders to handle Church discipline issues with the perpetrator. We also found professional counseling. In truth, our daughter went to five different counselors in the period that followed.

Still, she was not healed. It was going to take even more to fill the enormous hole in her soul. Signs of depression plagued her. Her behavior was erratic and self-destructive. We wept for her, we prayed for her, we worried for her, and our hearts were broken by

# DATING SAFETY

her. There are many possible reactions to sexual assault, and our daughter seemed to exhibit the worst of them: depression, high anxiety, truancy, chronic running away, severe nightmares, and substance abuse.

It was not enough to be loving and compassionate with our daughter; my husband and I had to be moral anchors for a child who was being lost to the mists of darkness. From the beginning there was never room for hatred toward the perpetrator of this horrific act. We placed our faith in a just and caring Heavenly Father. All our energies had to be focused on our daughter, as her

As the accompanying story illustrates, sexual assault can happen to anyone. But if you are single and dating, the following tips can help keep you safe on your dates. If you are a parent, you may want to share these tips with your children who are of dating age:

- Accept drinks—punch, water, and so on—only from those you trust. If possible, watch as it is being poured. Date-rape drugs are not added only to drinks containing alcohol. Sip your drink slowly. Some drugs are tasteless; others are not. If the drink tastes or smells odd, do not finish it.
- If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, do not hesitate to end the date. Your safety is paramount; do not worry about hurting your date's feelings. Do not allow your date to take you home; arrange for someone else to give you a ride.
- If you are a minor, never arrange a meeting with someone you came to know on the Internet. If you are a single adult, be especially cautious. Always meet in a public place, such as a restaurant. Go with a friend if possible. Let friends and family know where you are going and when you will return.
- If you are dating someone who seems excessively jealous or possessive, calls you names, or hits you, know that these unacceptable behaviors can escalate and that it is best to end the relationship.
- If you have been assaulted, *immediately* seek help from the police or a hospital. Call your parents, and seek spiritual help from priesthood leaders and professional help from counselors.

course was set toward self-destruction.

Her pain was so intense that it encompassed all the dynamics of a once-happy family. My husband and I maintained our love and commitment to each other, joining together in this struggle rather than pulling apart. We continued to do all the things that make a safe and happy family, such as family prayer and scripture study. We were faithful to our covenants, and we prayed. We prayed as we had never prayed before and with tears that can come only from those in the greatest need.

Our daughter did not make it through her senior year before we withdrew her from school. She was totally dysfunctional. Time passed, as did our tears and our trials while

we strove with all our might to save our child. Our lives were in such a shambles that one counselor recommended we “give our daughter back to God,” just accept the situation as it was and move on. But the words of President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, from a stake conference echoed ever so loudly: “Never give up! Never give up!” We knew Heavenly Father loved her and that He loved us.


Faith is something we must grasp onto when things seem the worst. Heavenly Father does love us, and He does hear our prayers. His plan sometimes takes time, but the help and answers will come. It is our job to be patient, prayerful, and unbending in what is true and right.

Our daughter realized she could not go back to the person she once was, and she was attempting to reinvent herself each day. She found it easier to turn to the world

**Love and compassion helped us reclaim our daughter.**







***Our daughter met a wonderful young man who was kind and gentle and loved her for who she was. They were sealed for time and all eternity in the temple.***

where she felt understood than to turn to the good people around her whom she felt understood little of her pain. It was crucial that her father and I let go of former hopes and expectations so that we could accept the new person she needed to evolve into. We knew her reinvention needed the guidance of loving parents.

Trust is a casualty of sexual assault, but trust is the first step toward love. We had to help our daughter learn how to trust us all over again, even when she was untrustworthy; then she could feel our love even when she was unlovable. Trust is nurtured by consistency, and we prayed for the strength we needed to be consistent in all that matters most. We praised her positive behaviors; set firm, gospel-centered standards for ourselves and our home; and loved her. We created opportunities to be together, such as rides to appointments or work, tickets to the movies or a ball game, and gatherings with extended family members. Then, as trust grew, we provided for her a soft place to fall, a place to turn to for help and refuge from the storm that was raging inside her.

Help also came through people who entered our lives at precise moments when they were needed. They too were consistent and persistent in their loving service to our daughter.

We are blessed with a large and loving extended family. They were completely unaware of our daughter's assault and knew only that she was now different. Still, even without being aware of a cause, they accepted her without condemnation. They offered smiles and hugs, cookies and cards, and

the warmest of wishes. They were consistent in their love and behavior toward her. She learned she could trust in their love.

I am especially thankful for a sensitive Young Women president who loved our daughter in spite of our daughter's efforts to push her away. This leader would stop by regularly with a thoughtful note, a hug, or small tokens of friendship, usually when we were desperate for assistance. This kind woman never gave up, even though her efforts seemed in vain and even after our daughter left the Young Women program. Like our family members, this leader was consistent and persistent. After a long time, our daughter began to realize she could trust in this woman's love too.

We also feel immense gratitude for kind and loving bishops who taught her the power of the Atonement. They helped her to once again—after such a long time—feel worthy of her many blessings from an ever-loving Heavenly Father.

Finally, one last person was sent to us: an enthusiastic returned missionary. Only a few weeks before they met, our daughter had made the choice to return to full activity in the Church. This young man was kind and gentle and did not judge her for her past; he welcomed her, and he prayed with her and for her. They were sealed for time and all eternity in the temple.

Through the love and service of others, our daughter was prepared and ready to trust again. The consistent love we offered brought her to the point where she was capable of forgiving, and then of recognizing the Savior's love for her. She at last felt the peace she had craved. The hole in her soul had been filled—with love. ■

# Finding Ancestors,

BY REBECCA M. TAYLOR  
Church Magazines

*A simple process is helping members of a Cincinnati ward do temple work more effectively and grow closer as a result.*



COLUMBUS OHIO TEMPLE

For many years the Cincinnati Fifth Ward was perhaps typical of many other wards in the Church. While temple work was an important part of many members' lives, only a handful were seriously dedicated to researching their family history and finding their own ancestors. When they did find many names, keeping up with the necessary temple work often became overwhelming. Ward leaders wondered: How can we help ward members understand the urgency of finding names and performing temple ordinances for their own ancestors? And how do we help expedite the process for the members who are already involved?

To address these concerns, leaders in the Cincinnati Fifth Ward—later renamed the Eastgate Ward—came up with a simple process that enables ward members to help each other in their family history and temple work. Here is how the process works:

After members find their ancestors' names and clear them for temple work, they get an ordinance card for each cleared name and then give the cards to the ward coordinator. The coordinator records the names in a spreadsheet and tracks the date each temple ordinance is performed.

Before ward members attend the temple, they contact the coordinator to get an ordinance card; afterward they return the card to the coordinator.

Because of this process, as well as the increased emphasis of temple work in the ward, more ward members are participating in family history and temple work efforts. Members can now be confident that when they clear the name of a deceased ancestor, the temple work for that individual will likely be done within the year. Temple work has become more personal. And because ward members are helping each other and having spiritual experiences together, unity among ward members has increased.

## The Basics

A key figure in this work is the coordinator, who must be detail oriented and have strong organizational skills. He or she must be able to track what temple ordinances have been performed and who has each ordinance card at any given time. Once the baptism, initiatory, and endowment ordinances have been completed, the coordinator returns the card to the family member and then lets that person take responsibility for the sealing.

The coordinator also places a status report in the ward bulletin approximately once a month so that members can see how many ordinances have been performed that year and how many ordinances still need to be performed for available names.

"It helps us with planning our ward temple trips," says Bruce Robinson, who served as bishop until June 2005. "If we're getting backed up in a certain area, we can shift our resources around so we can catch up in that area, such as if we need more initiatory ordinances than endowments. It helps us keep a balance."

## Work Is Completed Faster

When the idea of a common repository for names was first implemented, some ward members were



# Uniting a Ward



*Left: Members of the John de Jong family display some temple ordinance cards for their ancestors. Above: Robbie and Larry Clark have benefited from their ward's coordinated family history efforts. Below: John terHorst shows his family a document from his family history.*

reluctant to hand over their ordinance cards to the coordinator. "We had to convince them, 'You're not giving up anything. You're actually going to gain,' " says Bishop Robinson.

Robbie Clark admits she felt some hesitation at the idea of relinquishing the names she had located. But then she saw the care used to keep track of the information, and she found that the coordinated efforts in her ward made her own efforts much more productive. "Previously I was





## COORDINATING TEMPLE WORK

- Ward members clear their ancestors' names and give the ordinance cards to the coordinator.
- Before attending the temple, ward members contact the coordinator to obtain a name on an ordinance card.
- The coordinator tracks when baptism, confirmation, initiatory, and endowment ordinances are performed. Families are responsible for performing sealings.
- Members of the bishopric keep an "emergency fund" of names in case the coordinator is unavailable.
- The ward hosts a family history class during the week.

finding information but not doing anything with it," she says. Now she uses TempleReady regularly to prepare her names for temple ordinances. "The program was an inspiration and catalyst for those collecting information but not getting it where it needed to go," she says.

"If you have just a few names, you can take care of them yourself," says Jim Ison, who served as the first coordinator of the process. "But if you have 20, 50, or 100 names or more, you think, 'This could take me a really long time.' " Trying to independently enlist ward members to help perform ordinances for ancestors can be a challenge. But now that the names go into one ward temple file, the work gets done much more quickly and efficiently.

At the end of the program's first year, ward members had participated in more than 1,900 temple ordinances.

"It's almost a habit now instead of a novelty, but the level of excitement that we had when the program first started is still there," says current bishop Joe Bradley.

### Ward Unity

John terHorst says he feels a sense of indebtedness to members of the ward as a result of their coordinated efforts in temple work. Baptized at age 14, he had a long line of ancestors to locate. His wife, Janice, found more than 400 of his family names, and many members of the ward have since participated in ordinances on behalf of these ancestors. "Right now I can pretty much guarantee that everybody who's gone to the temple from our ward has helped someone in my family history," he says.

Like other members of the ward, Brother terHorst has noticed the impact of temple work on the unity of the ward. He says it is common for members to tell each other, "I did an endowment session for your ancestor last week." Sometimes, in the right setting, they will share an experience that was particularly meaningful.

"People might not have shared the experience otherwise, but because they know you, they're open. I don't

know what can bring you closer than having that openness," he says.

John de Jong shares a similar sentiment, noting that temple work now feels more personal and meaningful. Before he and his wife, Ann, became involved in family history, and before the ward members concentrated their efforts in temple work, "we would go to the temple and take a name there and just go on through,"

he says. "Now we get to go through for our own family members and for the ancestors of ward members. It makes our ward feel more like a family.

"Very often we tell people to go to the temple because people are waiting to have their work done. It's kind of intangible. But if members of the ward know that the de Jongs have a whole bunch of names and all those people are waiting to have their work done, it becomes a stronger reason to go. There's a connection now."

"It's more enjoyable to go to the temple when you have a connection," says Robbie Clark. "It's really made us feel like a ward family. Even the kids get involved."

Youth 12 and up are able to participate by doing baptisms for the dead for their own ancestors or for the ancestors of fellow ward members. Eighteen-year-old Ashley de Jong says, "It feels good to be able to do baptisms for my own ancestors. It's more meaningful. I'm looking forward to when I can meet them on the other side."

### Saviors on Mount Zion

Jim Waldron, who currently serves as the coordinator, sums up the benefits of the ward's focused effort: "From an individual point of view, it's a godsend because we're able to get things done that we couldn't get done on our own. From a ward point of view, it binds us together and gives us a greater purpose. It reinforces the fact that there is a purpose in going to the temple beyond the personal, spiritual benefits that we derive."

Adds Brother Ison, "Now the idea of being saviors on Mount Zion has become much more real and tangible." ■

# More Than a *Name*

BY LAURA BUNKER

As I sat in the temple, I studied the name on the family file card that my mother had given me. It was the name of one of her ancestors, Catharina Hansdotter, born in 1781 in Malmö, Sweden.

I glanced around the room, and a lovely young woman caught my eye. She seemed to be glowing with joy. She gazed around the beautiful room with wide, sparkling eyes, eager to take it all in. Apparently, this was her first time in the temple of the Lord, and she was savoring every minute of it.

I smiled to myself. Her sweet happiness reminded me of my first time in the temple several years earlier. What joy I had felt entering that holy place!

I then looked at the card in my hand and thought of Catharina Hansdotter. Suddenly, I was impressed that she too was eagerly anticipating what would happen here. How long she had waited for this day! How happy I was to help her partake of the blessings of the temple, and I wanted to represent her well.

At the end of the session, the lovely young woman I had noticed earlier was called to the front of the room. Her name sounded familiar to me. I glanced down at my card again and caught my breath. The name of this young woman, Catherine Hanson, was the modern English equivalent of the name on my family file card, Catharina Hansdotter.

This sweet coincidence deepened the impression that, like the young woman who shared her name, Catharina Hansdotter was not just a name on a card. She was a real person who was rejoicing in the temple of the Lord. ■



# Yelled At, Barked At, and RAINED On

*I had heard my friends'  
glowing stories about their missions.  
So why was I so miserable?*

BY KATHARINA BETZ BIRCH

**H**ow could you not tell me how horrible it is?" I wrote to Elder Newman, one of my instructors at the Missionary Training Center. When I arrived in the mission field 20 years ago, it was hard, and I was hating it. I would stick it out because I wasn't a quitter, but I would never tell anyone it was the best 18 months of my life.

Elder Newman wrote back: "I'm sorry you feel that way, Sister Betz. Actually, Elder Bradford and I tried to tell you. All of you. We always do, but no one ever wants to believe it. Don't worry. It will get better. And by the time you get home, you'll be glad you went."

I decided to make the best of it. After all, I was sure Heavenly Father wanted me to come, and I couldn't deny the Spirit I had felt when I had approached Him with my decision to serve a mission. Many of my friends had served missions or were serving, and they seemed to have insights into the gospel that I felt I was missing. Every one of my missionary friends told glowing stories of people whose lives were touched by the gospel and of miracles they witnessed on a daily basis. They all said that serving a mission was the greatest thing they had ever done, and their experiences had helped me choose to serve.

Yet there I was in northern Germany with jet lag, a senior companion who was almost as green as I was, and cool weather in June. We were soaked to the skin at least twice a day and generally looked like we had been dragged through large puddles. Riding bikes didn't make matters any better. We lived at the top of one of the few high hills in northern Germany, and our investigators, it seemed, all lived at the top of another. Most discouraging, however, was my awareness that I had not yet learned to recognize the subtle influence of the Spirit. I worried that I was doomed to failure as a missionary. And I hadn't even been in Germany two months yet.

Incredibly, however, I came to find out that Elder Newman was right. It did get better. None of the hard stuff went away, but I learned to see and savor the good times.

There was, for example, the return trip from my second zone conference. We had transferred trains and were busy talking to a woman about the new temple in Freiberg when I noticed that the train had stopped in a city we shouldn't have been in. We realized we had gotten on the wrong train and quickly jumped off. Unfortunately, the next train headed in the right direction would not pass through for another two hours, and our connection after







that would be even later. Waiting in that train station, we had the chance to do some reading. “The Inconvenient Messiah,” an article by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, then president of Brigham Young University, appeared in the *Ensign* we had just received, and his thoughts seemed directed straight to me:

“And so I ask you to be patient in things of the Spirit. Perhaps your life has been different from mine, but I doubt it. . . . My mission was not easy. . . .

“ . . . All but a prophetic few must go about God’s work in very quiet, very unspectacular ways. And as you labor to know him, and to know that he knows you; as you invest your time—and inconvenience—in quiet, unassuming service, you will indeed find that ‘his angels [have] charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up’ (Matthew 4:6). It may not come quickly. It probably won’t come quickly, but there is purpose in the time it takes. Cherish your spiritual burdens because God will converse with you through them and will use you to do his work if you will carry them well” (*Tambuli*, Mar. 1989, 23; *Ensign*, Feb. 1984, 70).

My experience in the mission field helped me understand those words, and the Spirit bore strong, penetrating, comforting witness to me of those truths in that lonely train station.

It was getting late one evening when Sister Gubler and I were tracting in a large apartment building. We were a little surprised when an elderly woman invited us into her apartment, but we both sensed that this woman was hurting inside. While we sat in her darkened room, she told us the story of her husband’s death and her stepchildren’s rejection, and we knew that she needed desperately to feel her Heavenly Father’s love for her. Asking for her Bible, I read to her these beautiful words: “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:29–30). The Spirit entered that room. As tears streamed down three faces, my companion and I bore testimony to her that her Father in Heaven knew of her sorrow and loved her. At

least one conversion took place in those brief, precious moments—mine.

Gradually I realized that my perceptions were changing. We still got yelled at, barked at, rained on, stood up, and ignored; my shoulder bag grew heavier; my clothes wore out more every day; and the responsibility of reaching those thousands of people sometimes seemed overwhelming. But the barbs stung less and less, the aches and pains got duller and duller, and life got brighter and brighter as my testimony grew stronger and stronger. I felt changes take place within me, and I saw them take place in those to whom we taught the gospel.

There was Uwe, the young, idealistic environmentalist, who heard about the plan of salvation and knew the message was true. He bicycled 5 miles (8 km) to church on Sunday morning in answer to our invitation, even though his long, leather-clad legs wouldn’t fit into the chapel’s pews. When he prayed on his knees for the first time, we felt the peace that entered his heart, and we watched his countenance change.

A doctor and his wife wanted to fight everything we taught them, but somehow they knew they couldn’t. Even though they didn’t accept the restored gospel of Jesus Christ at that time, they were happy to let their children visit the branch in Glückstadt for Sunday meetings and branch activities.

One day while my new companion, Sister Neumann, and I were teaching a sweet young woman, her boyfriend, Tom, came to see her. She had warned us that he did not want her to continue meeting with us. Tom saw our bicycles in front of the house and knew we were there that morning, so he decided to wait outside until we left. As he waited his curiosity grew stronger and stronger, and he thought of more and more questions to ask us. Eventually his interest overcame his reservations, and he came inside to put us to the test. After briefly explaining the basic principles of the gospel and outlining the Apostasy and the Restoration, we made an appointment to begin teaching him



the next evening. He was baptized 10 weeks later. I was so full of joy I would have re-enlisted for 10 years if I could have.

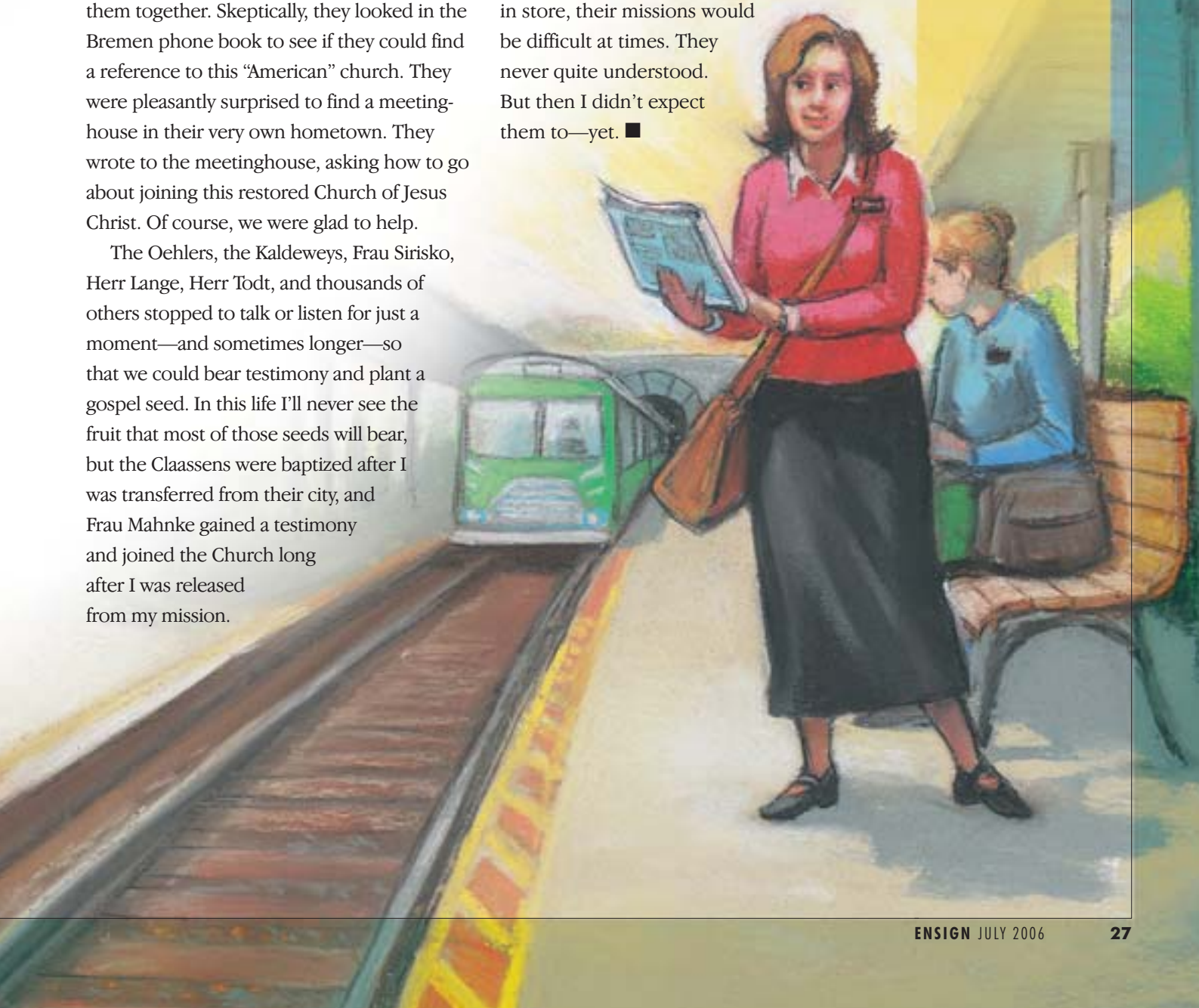
Astrid and Jennifer, sisters, found the Church before the missionaries could find them. Jennifer was interested when she heard about the Church in a religion class at school and did some research. In the local library she found German translations of the Book of Mormon and William E. Berrett's *The Restored Church*. She and Astrid read them together. Skeptically, they looked in the Bremen phone book to see if they could find a reference to this "American" church. They were pleasantly surprised to find a meeting-house in their very own hometown. They wrote to the meetinghouse, asking how to go about joining this restored Church of Jesus Christ. Of course, we were glad to help.

The Oehlers, the Kaldeweys, Frau Sirisko, Herr Lange, Herr Todt, and thousands of others stopped to talk or listen for just a moment—and sometimes longer—so that we could bear testimony and plant a gospel seed. In this life I'll never see the fruit that most of those seeds will bear, but the Claassens were baptized after I was transferred from their city, and Frau Mahnke gained a testimony and joined the Church long after I was released from my mission.

Elder Newman was right. By the time I left Germany, my heart had expanded to include an entirely new world full of people, ideas, traditions, and customs—not to mention spiritual impressions—that will remain inscribed on my heart forever. I learned to love, to give, and to suffer for people I had once thought of as strangers.

After returning home, while working with missionaries at the MTC, I tried to help them see that although great blessings were in store, their missions would be difficult at times. They never quite understood. But then I didn't expect them to—yet. ■

***"Cherish your spiritual burdens because God will converse with you through them." As I read these words in a lonely train station, the Spirit bore witness to me of their truth.***





An illustration of a man in a light-colored shirt and trousers walking away from the viewer down a long, straight path in a desert. The path is flanked by sand dunes and cacti. In the background, a large, bright sun hangs low in the sky, casting a long, golden glow over the scene. The overall mood is one of solitude and contemplation.

# GETTING PAST THE HURT

BY ROBERT F. WILLIAMS

*How does one cope when a dating relationship ends?*

**J**ared (all names have been changed) came to my office in a depressed state. He had been referred to my clinical psychology practice by his bishop because he had been unable to function in his college classes and had been struggling with doubts about whether his life was worth living. The truth was, Jared was brokenhearted when his fiancée, Christy, ended their relationship because she was interested in another young man.

"Without her, nothing seems worthwhile," Jared told me. "She was my happiness. The pain feels like it will go on forever. I think about her every day and remember every moment we had together."

When Christy broke their engagement, Jared thought

it meant he was a failure and that no woman would want him with all his deficiencies.

Like many who are abandoned in a relationship, he assumed all of the responsibility and blame without considering Christy's weaknesses too.

Another client, Carla, experienced similar feelings. After a long series of hurtful events, she finally had been able to end a painful and sometimes abusive relationship.

"At first I was relieved, but now I feel depressed," she said. "I cry, but it doesn't help. I want to go back to Roy, but everyone says I shouldn't. No one seems to understand what I'm going through."

Carla knew Roy had habits that were incompatible with her values, and sometimes he had frightened her with his stormy moods. But she had been confident that he would respond to her love and the strength





of her commitment to him. Besides, Roy was so loving and apologetic when he upset her that she believed she needed only to wait patiently for him to change. Instead, as their relationship became more serious, Roy became increasingly critical, angry, and abusive. When Carla at last ended the relationship, she was surprised at the intensity of her sadness.

Why does it hurt so much when a serious relationship is lost? Why is it so hard to get over, even when we know it is really for the best?

#### **In the Premortal Realm**

To better understand, think for a moment about your experience in the premortal realm. In that world of spirits, it was not possible for you to be sealed to an eternal companion. Eternal marriage requires the union of two souls—and the soul is made up of both a spiritual *and* a physical body (see D&C 88:15). And so our Heavenly Father, to help fulfill His purpose “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39), ensured that the earth would be a place where His spirit children, endowed with mortal bodies, could be sealed to a companion in the new and everlasting covenant and continue their eternal progression toward godhood.

Thus, in mortality, each of our Heavenly Father’s sons carries a divinely inspired longing for a bond of attachment to one of His daughters, and likewise, each of His daughters carries within her a yearning for the same fulfillment with one of His sons.

#### **The Pain of Mourning**

Yet the potential for this great joy also brings with it the potential for pain when the hope of this fulfillment is disappointed. The experience of having a loving relationship with another person is exciting and wonderful, but the loss of that relationship can be devastating.

This loss can be particularly painful when one has relied excessively upon the other person for a sense of identity and worth. Carla said of her experience: “With Roy I felt like I was really somebody, but without him I don’t know what to do or even who I am. When he was good to me I wanted to devote my life just to being there for him. But even when he was mean, I still felt that I was special to him, and that made me feel like I mattered. Now that we’ve broken up, I don’t seem to have any life of my own at all.”

Carla had been absorbed by this unhealthy relationship and had virtually given up her own identity. Without the relationship, she felt worthless and lost. Her resolve

wavered, especially when Roy urged her to come back and promised that things would be different. It was hard for her to remember how hurtful the relationship had been, and her friends sometimes had to remind her of the unhappiness and fear that led her to break it off.

### Surviving the Loss

How does one survive the loss of a serious relationship? Three factors can help us overcome any painful loss or misfortune:<sup>1</sup>

The first is *a personal commitment to finding meaningful purpose in life*. When you are actively engaged in a sincere search for an understanding of the meaning and purpose of life, you are also in the process of developing the strength to cope with stress and disappointment. As members of the Lord's Church, we are blessed to have the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, which explains the Lord's plan of happiness and gives direction to our lives, meaning to our experience, and purpose in our struggles. As we commit ourselves to faith in the plans and purposes of God, we learn to endure the pain of life's disappointments, and we are buoyed up by the eternal perspective of the covenants He has made with us.

The second factor is *a belief in one's ability to influence one's surroundings and the outcome of events*. In a gospel context, this means that we develop emotional strength when we add works to our faith, believing that through our labors we can make a positive difference in our own behalf and in behalf of others. The gospel teaches that our efforts, when coupled with faith in God, can help us overcome trials and afflictions and can bring about much good. "For the power is in them," says the Lord, "wherein they are

agents unto themselves" (D&C 58:28). Thus, as we devote ourselves to the service of God and our fellow beings, we are endowed with "power from on high" (D&C 20:8), we realize that we can accomplish many things of great worth, and we find comfort against the sorrows of mortality. We also develop confidence in our ability to make ourselves happy, and we learn that we do not have to wait for some-

one else to do so.

The third factor is *a belief that one can learn and grow from both positive and negative life experiences*.

This essential principle is plainly evident in God's teachings to His children. For example, in a profound statement to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord lists the calamities that had befallen or could befall the Prophet and then emphasizes that even these hardships can benefit him: "Know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good. The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?" (D&C 122:7–8).

Here the Lord teaches that our mortal suffering, in some degree like the suffering of the Savior himself,

can have significant purpose, meaning, and value that can enhance our growth and our development toward godhood.

### Steps toward Recovery

One can take positive steps toward recovering from the loss of a serious relationship. The first is to recognize that such a loss can be similar to the bereavement we experience at the death of a loved one. Minimizing the loss—that is, telling yourself, "It's not that big a deal; I should just get over it"—will not help.

It is also important to realize that the loss of a relationship involves multiple additional losses, such as loss of



**The Lord taught the Prophet Joseph Smith that hardships can benefit us.**



contact with other valued people and loss of enjoyable activities shared with the other person. Even more painful is the loss of “what might have been”—the loss of the life we expected to have and the plans we hoped would become reality.

Healing from such a loss comes in stages as we work through painful feelings. It would be a comfort, perhaps, to believe that “every day I’ll feel a little better,” but the truth is that grief often comes in great rolling waves of emotion. Just when we thought we were getting over it, a seemingly insignificant reminder of the lost love may trigger painful feelings with unexpected intensity. Over time, the frequency and intensity of these spikes of emotion will diminish, but sharp pangs of grief may still be felt even months afterward. Try to be patient with your own grieving process, and acknowledge that the day will come when you will feel better.

In the meantime, consider the following tips:

- If someone says something like, “I don’t want to be tied down,” “I’m not ready for a relationship,” or “I can’t make that commitment,” *believe it*. Remember that your love alone is not enough to make a good relationship. You can choose to be loving, but you cannot choose to be loved.
- Realize that you are not really alone and that isolating yourself won’t help. Instead, look to the supportive relationships in your life for comfort and reassurance.



***The sorrow we feel when a relationship ends can be similar to the bereavement we experience at the death of a loved one.***

- Seek spiritual guidance and counsel from your bishop. His inspired counsel can help alleviate doubt and distress.
- Ask your father, your bishop, or another worthy priesthood holder for a priesthood blessing. A blessing can reassure you of the Lord’s love and concern for you.
- Remember that when your feelings are most poignant and tender, you are also likely to be humble and susceptible to the Spirit. This is the time to appeal to the Lord in prayer. “Cast thy burden upon the Lord,” wrote the Psalmist, “and he shall sustain thee” (Psalm 55:22).



- If you are endowed, visit the temple seeking to understand the Lord's perspective on you and your life. Honor the Lord's house as a place of contemplation, serenity, and inspiration.

- Remember that the Lord has known you from the beginning and has a plan for your

***We can overcome  
feelings of grief  
and loss and learn  
to be happy again.***

happiness. Seek to better understand that plan and to allow yourself to accomplish His purposes for you.

- Keep a regular schedule during the day, and make plans for evenings, weekends, and holidays. When you are hurting or depressed,



unstructured time is usually unproductive.

- Stay involved in activities, and don't be afraid to start something new and interesting. Take a class, join a new group, begin an exercise program, or take up an outdoor activity.

- Give yourself some time as an unattached person. Avoid rushing into a new relationship to protect yourself from the pain of the old one.

- Let go of your souvenirs of the past relationship. Don't build a shrine to the memory of what has been lost. And stay away from romantic places you used to visit.

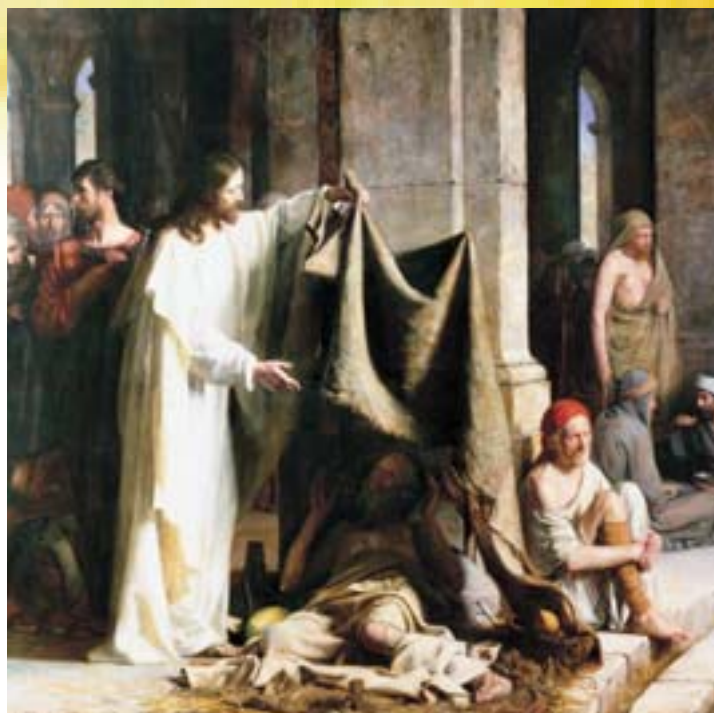
- Keep a "feelings journal." Writing about your experiences obliges you to organize and make sense of your thoughts and feelings instead of repeatedly reexperiencing the same confusion and distress. Writing in this journal can also be a solace at times when you are alone in your mourning.

- Share your feelings with a person you trust. Talking to someone helps you avoid acting in ways that can be self-destructive, such as taking excessive or dangerous risks or making unwise decisions.

- If you have followed these suggestions but are still not making progress, you may want to consider talking with an experienced professional counselor. Your bishop can help refer you to a counselor with high standards and values consistent with Church teachings.

### Experiencing Recovery

For Jared, recovery from heartbreak began when he took the risk of sharing his grief with those who had offered their support. It was especially difficult for him to share his feelings with his mother, but he was surprised when she opened up to him and shared the feelings of loneliness and isolation she



***Just as the Savior healed the sick during His mortal ministry, He can heal our hearts through the power of His Atonement.***

had experienced as a single parent. In addition, Jared found a "feelings journal" to be particularly useful because it helped him work through his complex emotions and make note of his progress. Eventually he felt ready to risk involving himself in another relationship, and he found that he had more confidence in his relationship skills.

Carla had a more difficult time. Despite her sad experience with Roy,

she quickly became involved in a similar relationship with another man in the hope of soothing her distress over the breakup. When this relationship also failed, she was again overwhelmed with painful feelings. Carla's recovery began when she allowed herself to fully experience these emotions rather than running away from them. She discovered that this experience required her to trust in the Lord's ability to assist her in bearing the burden of pain she had believed was beyond her capacity to endure. As she did so, she developed a greater testimony of the Atonement and a greater faith in the Savior's willingness to comfort those in distress.

### Our Bond with Jesus Christ

Carla also learned that much of our deep need for attachment can be fulfilled when we enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost. If we live according to our covenants, we are blessed with a feeling of closeness to the Savior and peace with the life He has given us. With His help we are able to overcome feelings of grief, loss, weakness, and failure, and we can again live in blessed harmony with ourselves and those around us. ■

### NOTE

1. See Suzanne C. Kobasa, Salvatore R. Maddi, and Stephen Kahn, "Hardiness and Health: A Prospective Study," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Jan. 1982, 168–77.



# Songs of the

*Members share how hymns have brought peace and courage to their hearts during difficult times.*

## **A Foundation of Faith in the Wilderness**

The years 1998 and 1999 were a period of somber events in the Congo. I fled my village because of war and spent more than seven months traveling in the wilderness with a group from my village. We had no way to return home.

Every evening our group prayed and sang together, and each person took a turn suggesting a hymn. When it was my turn, I suggested “How Firm a Foundation” (*Hymns*, no. 85). Even though no one else knew this hymn, I felt that it answered our concerns exactly.

I sang “How Firm a Foundation” many times in those seven months. It comforted me in my moments of isolation and suffering when life was so difficult with sickness and famine in the wilderness. I sang it alone, but the words and music penetrated the ears and hearts of the others: “In ev’ry condition—in sickness, in health, / In poverty’s vale or abounding in wealth, / At home or abroad, on the land or the sea— / As thy days may demand, . . . so thy succor shall be.” Because of these words, others told me they wanted to learn more about the Church.

One of the men in our group was the leader of a church in our country. After we returned to our village, this brother told me he wanted to find out more about the gospel. I responded to him, following the example set by Alma in Mosiah 18 (see vv. 8–10). In the end he joined the Church.

The hymn “How Firm a Foundation” touched my soul



and brought me great joy and comfort while I was in the wilderness, and it brings me joy today knowing that it helped a good brother to join the Church.

*Tbierry Alexis Toko, Republic of Congo*

## **Hymns Soothe My Soul**

Sacred hymns brought me peace even before I joined the Church. I was converted to the gospel long before I was actually baptized. My parents required

me to wait until I was 18 years old and a legal adult. I appreciated their concern for me, but this was a difficult situation. I dreamed of having a Latter-day Saint family that studied the scriptures, held family home evening, and shared testimonies with each other. I wished my mother would ask me about my Young Women Personal Progress instead of ridiculing me for not drinking tea. I wished my father would understand that my desire to join God’s true Church was sincere, not fanatical. As I withstood the criticism, I realized that the tribulations were a test of my faith. Still, my heart was heavy.

Frustrated and exhausted, I attended stake conference just 43 days before I would turn 18. As I sat in the conference hall filled with friendly faces, I felt the Spirit instantly. Right then, I found my refuge. Between inspiring talks, the full-time missionaries sang “Love One Another” (*Hymns*, no. 308), first in English then in Chinese. I didn’t understand the English lyrics, and I hardly knew any of the missionaries, but I was deeply moved. The hymn seemed to describe The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where members truly love and care about one another. When I was at church, I felt right at home; people loved and supported me.

Now I am a Church member and still face similar trials.

# Righteous

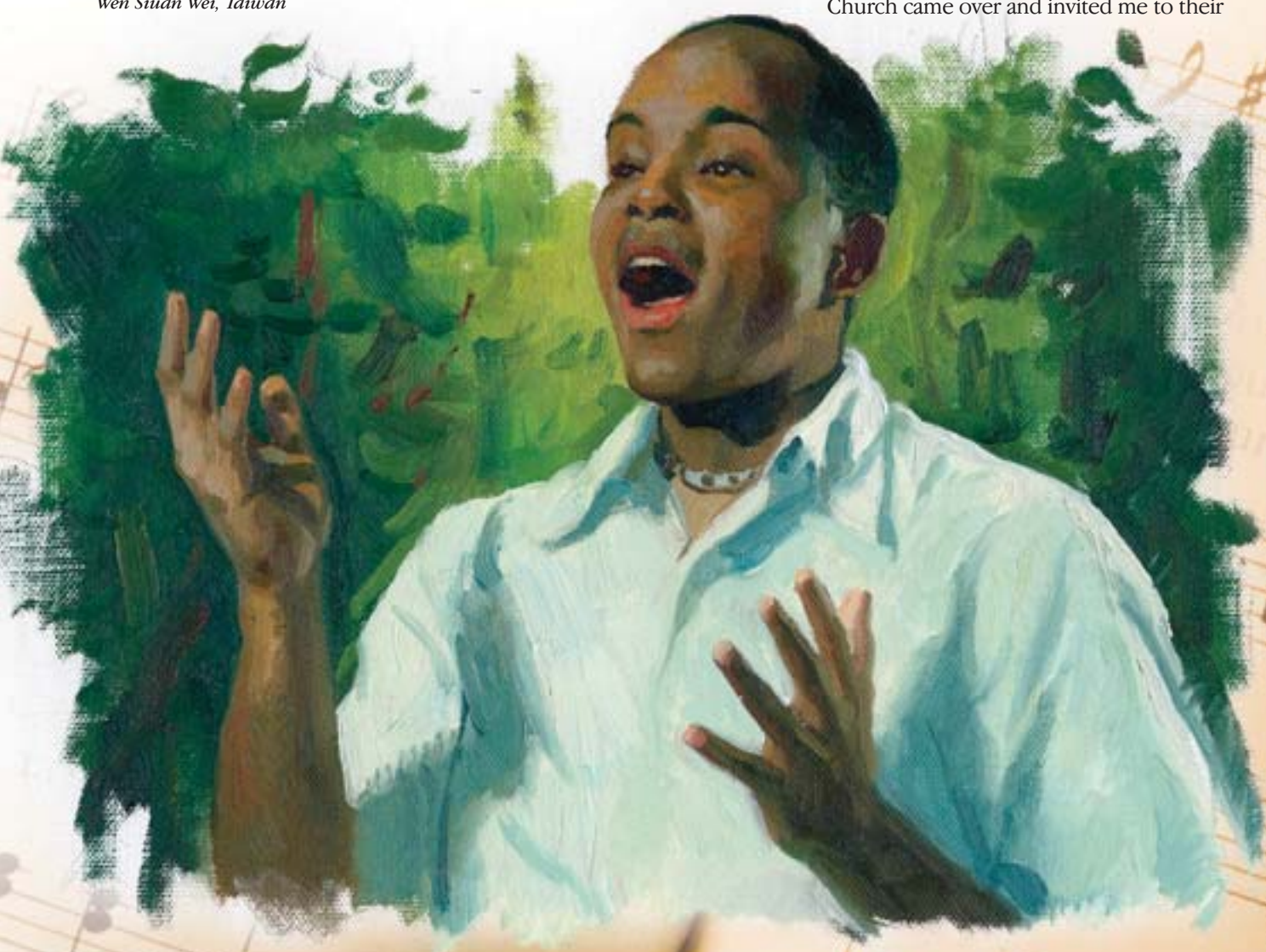
However, when I feel down and lonely I sing hymns, and my heart is comforted. Hymns quench my thirsty heart and feed my hungry soul. They bring peace at times of weariness and give me courage to move forward. They make me realize that God knows who I am and that He loves me.

*Wen Siuan Wei, Taiwan*

## **The Hymns Brought Me to Baptism**

On October 28, 2000, I moved into a home behind a Latter-day Saint meetinghouse. While putting my things away that night, I noticed activity in the building. Not accustomed to so much noise in the evening, I was upset at first. Then a woman from the

Church came over and invited me to their





activity that night. Since I was a member of another faith, I declined and said that I did not want to mix up my beliefs. During the activity I heard the Church members singing hymns, and I found the music very beautiful.

On Sunday I got up early and went to my church, but when I returned home, I saw that the meetinghouse was full of people, and I again heard the hymns. The music was so pretty, and I could feel something touch me deep in my heart. People were in the church again in the afternoon. This time I turned off the television and paid attention to their music.

As they sang I stood at the window. I felt something special, a great peace within my heart. I wanted to go out to the garden to feel closer to them. My emotions were so great that I started to cry.

My daughter and I walked outside. A gentleman came out of the church, looked at me, and invited us to attend a baptism. At first I refused, but then I felt I should go in. I called to my daughter, but she would not go. Even so, I did not resist. My daughter finally came too, and we attended the baptism. I was moved and felt the Spirit touch me. On December 10, 2000, my daughter and I were baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The hymns changed my life. I was a profoundly sad person, and now I am happy. I am grateful for the hymns that praise and express love to the Lord. They helped bring me to baptism.

*Carmelinda Pereira da Silva, Brazil*

### **A Child of God**

I was a missionary in Seoul, Korea, and had just been transferred to a new area. The bustling city of millions of people was still overwhelming, and my Korean was far from fluent, but I knew I was where the Lord wanted me to be.

One day my companion and I had the blessing of meeting a member who hadn't attended church for years. Her father had recently passed away, and she was in great

need of spiritual and emotional comfort. We visited her at home, but I was not able to understand much of the conversation.

One night at about 3:00 a.m. our telephone rang. When I answered the phone, I couldn't understand what the woman was saying at first. She was upset, but I had no idea how to help or what to say.

I began to pray silently. As I prayed I recognized the woman's voice and realized it was the less-active sister we had recently met. Though I couldn't completely understand her, I felt she was lonely and needed to know she was loved. But how could I tell her? I couldn't find the words in English, much less in Korean.

Suddenly I remembered that I had memorized the words to the hymn "I Am a Child of God" (*Hymns*, no. 301) in Korean. After the sister stopped speaking, I slowly asked if we could sing the hymn together. She said yes. As we sang I felt a wonderful feeling of peace and comfort. It was as if Heavenly Father were holding both of us, reminding us that He loved us and would always be there when we needed Him.

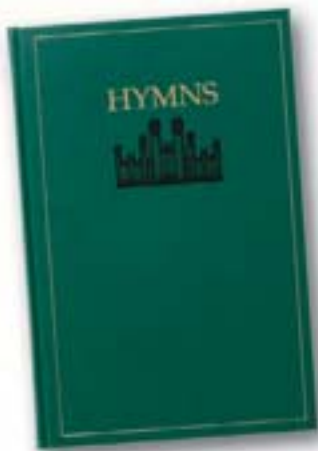
After we finished singing, the sister told me that she would be all right, and we said good night. I walked back into the bedroom, amazed at the Spirit that still lingered in my heart. I was so grateful to know that when a child of God calls for help on a dark night, Father in Heaven will always be there to answer.

*Diantba Smith, Utah, USA*

### **A Spirit of Peace during Difficult Times**

My family joined the Church in 1977, when I was 11 years old. At that time a violent civil war was beginning in our native land of El Salvador. The political situation was serious, and there were constant armed confrontations between the army and the rebels, forcing the government to order a curfew of 6:00 p.m. for all citizens. There was no freedom of assembly or freedom of speech, and we felt threatened by both the army and the rebels.

These events caused many people to look for ways





to emigrate to wherever they could. My family was no exception. My father accepted an offer of employment in Venezuela, hoping he could get us out of danger. For a time my mother was left as the head of our household.

The war made it a difficult time for the Church. The same flight that took my father to Venezuela took the last 15 missionaries out of El Salvador. This meant the end of any chance to receive the messengers of the gospel of Jesus Christ for a long time.

At the end of 1979 we and other members of the Church, especially the youth, began doing missionary work of our own. We organized small choirs and sang in the streets to give people hope. By doing this we found many people wanting to learn about the gospel.

Meanwhile we learned to live in danger. Whenever the confrontations or shelling occurred, we threw ourselves on the floor and hoped it would all be over soon. Mama

would cover us with our mattresses for protection. What brought peace to us in these difficult moments were the hymns. Lying on the floor, we would hold our hymnbooks, and Mama would encourage us to sing “Come, Come, Ye Saints” (*Hymns*, no. 30), “How Firm a Foundation” (no. 85), “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer” (no. 26), “High on the Mountain Top” (no. 5), “O My Father” (no. 292), “I Stand All Amazed” (no. 193), and many other hymns that comforted us in our adversity. We often cried from the stress, but singing the hymns gave us the courage to face such a terrible situation.

Some time later Papa succeeded in bringing us to Venezuela, where we began a new life. We thanked our Heavenly Father for keeping us together and alive. Through this experience, I learned that the hymns invite a spirit of peace during difficult times. ■

*Ana Gloria Hernández de Abzuela, Venezuela*







# SOME MUST PUSH AND SOME MUST PULL

*June 9, 2006, marked the 150th anniversary of the first handcart company to leave Iowa City, Iowa, for the Salt Lake Valley. Imagine what it was like to travel with one of the 10 handcart companies from 1856 through 1860 as you read the journal entries of those who did.*

**S**arah Goode Marshall (inset) had no formal education as a youth in Abenhall, England. However, she was a devoted reader of the Bible. “There is more in the Bible than the ministers understand,” she often remarked. After she learned of the gospel, she walked 20 miles with her baby in her arms to hear the missionaries. But her husband, Tom, was strongly opposed to her new beliefs and her desire to join the Saints.



In the summer of 1854 her husband died, leaving her penniless with six small children. She was baptized and worked for two years as a “lady’s maid” during the day and made kid gloves at night to earn enough money to emigrate.

The night before she left England with her children, all under the age of 12, her extended family and friends gathered to say good-bye. Some of the presiding elders of the British Mission were also invited.





## HANDCART COMPANIES

No.	Year	Captain	Persons	Carts	Wagons	Deaths
1	1856	Edmund L. Ellsworth	280	52	3	16
2	1856	Daniel D. McArthur	220	48	2	10
3	1856	Edward Bunker	290	64	3	4
4	1856	James G. Willie	500	120	5	69
5	1856	Edward Martin	665	146	7	150–170
6	1857	Israel Evans	149	31	1	2
7	1857	Christian Christiansen	330	68	3	15
8	1859	George Rowley	235	60	8	7
9	1860	Daniel Robinson	233	43	6	1
10	1860	Oscar O. Stoddard	126	21	6	0

Original research by Melvin Bashore, Senior Librarian, Church History Library.

During the gathering Sarah's family begged her not to leave, telling her that she and her children would die. One of the elders heard the discouraging remarks. He rose to his feet and, by the power of God, promised her that she would complete the journey successfully and not lose one of her children on the way. (The elder's promise was fulfilled.)<sup>1</sup>

On Saturday, April 19, 1856, Sarah and her young family boarded the ship *Samuel Curling* and sailed from Liverpool, England. After five weeks they arrived in Boston,

Massachusetts, where they went by train to Iowa City, Iowa. Here they became part of the Ellsworth company, the first handcart company to cross the plains to the Salt Lake Valley.

Sarah Goode Marshall's story is similar to those of hundreds of emigrants

from England, Wales, and other parts of Europe, who made up the majority of the 10 handcart companies that crossed the plains from 1856 through 1860. Eight of the 10 companies traveled with little mishap, but the Willie and Martin





companies were caught in early snowstorms in 1856 that led to the deaths of more than 200 Saints.

What follows is a sampling of events involving the handcart companies as they traveled to the Salt Lake Valley.

#### On the Trail in Iowa

**1856:** Mr. Charles Good, a store owner in Des Moines, Iowa, was compassionate toward children. A life sketch says that “he could not see them in want or suffering.”

On July 31, 1856, the Willie handcart company passed through downtown Des Moines, likely within a block or two of Mr. Good’s store. Apparently Mr. Good’s decision to donate 15 pairs of children’s boots from his store shelves to the handcart company came from his seeing the pioneer children as they passed through town that morning.

Of the 500 members of the Willie handcart company, at least 84 were children between the ages of 3 and 12. No doubt some were barefoot. Charles knew they had a long



COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF CHURCH HISTORY AND ART

**Above:** Twelve-year-old Ellen Perks and two other girls pulled some little children in a handcart, thinking it would help the children’s mothers. Soon the girls got tired, so they rested and got separated from the company. When they caught up, Ellen remembers they “received a lecture never to be forgotten.”

**Left:** Many handcart pioneers traveled first by ship to America, then went by train to Iowa City, Iowa.

walk ahead of them and that many of those small feet would need protection sooner or later. So he went to where they were camped and offered the boots to children who needed them.<sup>2</sup>

**1856:** Priscilla M. Evans, a woman from Wales, traveled with the Bunker handcart company. Her words reflect the optimism felt by the handcart pioneers, even amid their many hardships: “People made fun of us as we walked, pulling our carts, but the weather was fine and the roads were excellent and although I was sick and we were very tired at night, still we thought it was a glorious way to go to Zion.”<sup>3</sup>





### On the Trail in Nebraska

**1860:** Six-year-old Mary Ann Stucki from Switzerland traveled with the Stoddard company. She remembers the mosquitoes that gave them a “hearty welcome” the first night out from Florence, Nebraska. Weeks later it was the rain that affected them. She wrote: “A cover on the handcart shielded the . . . younger children [from the rain]. . . . At night, when the handcarts were drawn up in a circle and the fires were lighted, the camp looked quite happy. Singing, music, and speeches by the leaders cheered everyone.”<sup>4</sup>

**1856:** Ellen Perks was nearly 12 years old when her father sent her ahead to the Salt Lake Valley alone with the Bunker handcart company. One day she and two other girls “took a handcart and filled it with little children, too small to walk.” When they became tired of pulling through the sand, they moved off the trail to rest with the handcart full of children and missed the rest of the company. “We traveled until dusk, then seeing the campfires down near the river, found they had had supper and that a few men were ready to start out to hunt for us. We were very tired and received a lecture never to be forgotten.”<sup>5</sup>



PASSING THROUGH IOWA, ARTIST UNKNOWN

### TENTS AND WAGONS

- The handcart companies were organized with about five persons per handcart. Each person was limited to 17 pounds of clothing and bedding.
- The handcart pioneers slept in round tents, each supported by a center pole. The 20 occupants per tent slept with their feet to the center, like spokes on a wheel.

- The occupants of each tent were under a president, or tent captain; five tents were supervised by the captain of a hundred.
- The tent captain “was expected to give all his time and attention to his company,” to oversee the rationing of provisions (one pint of flour for each person every 24 hours), and to help equalize the labor.
- A wagon to haul provisions, drawn by three

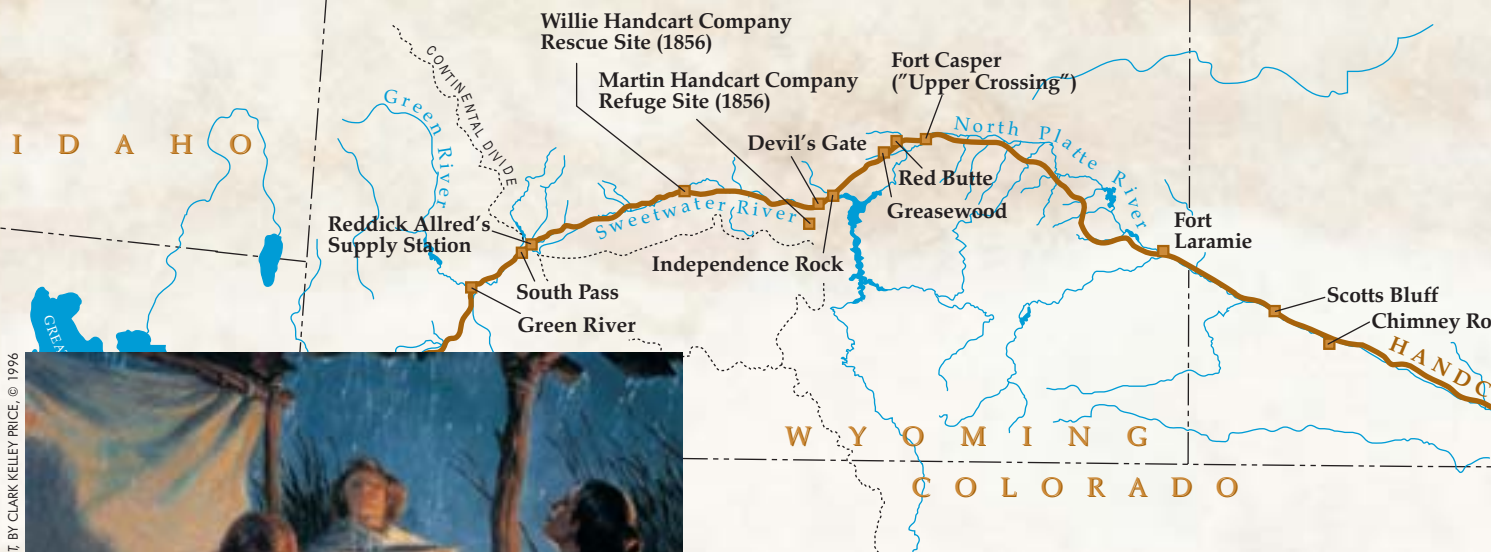
yoke of oxen, was assigned to each hundred pioneers.

Source: LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* (1960), 157, 58–59.



STRUGGLE WITH DEATH IN MARTIN'S COVE, BY OLINDA REYNOLDS © 1997

**Above:** Handcart pioneers wave at others as they pass through a small town. **Left:** The handcart pioneers slept in round tents, as shown here in a painting of the Martin handcart company.



*The cycle of life sometimes took on an unusual aspect as births (above), marriages, and deaths took place along the journey. Right: Helena Roseberry and her husband traveled with twins.*

**1856:** One evening at about 11:00 p.m., Sarah Goode Marshall of the Ellsworth company was preparing her rations for the next day. She was “in a very lonely state,” listening “to the strange cries of prowling beasts and birds.” She was startled from her thoughts by a young man from their company who asked her for something to eat. She shared her limited rations with him, but “he was found dead in his bed the next morning.” Sarah told her granddaughter that she thanked the Lord many times that she had shared her food with this young man. “Should I not have done so,” Sarah said, “my conscience would have condemned me the rest of my days.”<sup>6</sup>

**1857:** The cycle of life continued unbroken on the trek west. Anna Marie Sorenson, from Scandinavia, was with the Christiansen company in 1857. At Wood River, Nebraska, she “retired from the camp, and under some willows gave birth to a baby girl. In the morning she appeared with the baby in her apron. . . . The baby survived, as well as the mother.”<sup>7</sup>

James and Honor Welch Reeder traveled with the Evans company in 1857. After James died, Honor “plodded on with



her [five-year-old] son and cart. Six weeks after arrival in the Valley she gave birth to a baby girl who lived to maturity.”<sup>8</sup>

**1860:** If food became scarce, the pioneers suffered. John Stucki from Switzerland was nine years old when he traveled with his family in the Stoddard company. At one point, the company was placed on half rations. When a buffalo was shot, the meat was divided. John’s father put their small share in the back of the cart. John later wrote: “I was so very hungry all the time, and the meat smelled so





## GREAT THINGS EXPECTED



*"We stand today as the recipients of [the pioneers'] great effort. I hope we are thankful. I hope we carry in our hearts*

*a deep sense of gratitude for all that they have done for us. . . . As great things were expected of them, so are they of us. We note what they did with what they had. We have so much more, with an overwhelming challenge to go on and build the kingdom of God. There is so much to do."*

**President Gordon B. Hinckley, "True to the Faith," *Ensign*, May 1997, 66–67.**

**Depending on the location and time of year, buffalo meat was a good source of food for the handcart pioneers. Nine-year-old John Stucki remembers when food was scarce and his father put their ration of buffalo meat in the back of the handcart. He was so hungry he could not resist cutting off a small piece several times a day.**

good . . . and having a little pocketknife, I could not resist, but had to cut off a piece or two each half day." When his father brought out what was left of the meat on Sunday, "instead of giving me the severe scolding . . . he did not say a word but started to wipe the tears from his eyes."<sup>9</sup>

### On the Trail in Wyoming

**1857:** A little known fact is that handcart companies sometimes received help from others traveling west who were not Latter-day Saints.

In August 1857, as the Christiansen company passed by Fort Laramie, Wyoming, they met a detachment of the army going west to impose federal control on the Saints. An ox belonging to the soldiers became "disabled when a heavy wagon ran over and crushed its foot. The military captain came over to the hungry [immigrants] and said:

'You may have the ox, I guess you need it.' The fresh meat was gratefully devoured."<sup>10</sup>

**1856:** On Wednesday, November 5, 1856, James Bleak of the Martin handcart company wrote: "No travelling. Weather very severe. . . . Our ration of flour was reduced to 4 oz and 2 oz for the children making 1 lb a day for the 6 of us. Through the blessing of our Father we felt as contented as when we had 1 lb per head."<sup>11</sup>

**1859:** Helena Roseberry, her husband, and twins traveled with the Rowley company. "I had to walk and carry one of my babies and help to pull the cart for many weeks until my feet began to swell up so I had to ride some [in the wagon]. . . . I cannot tell all I suffered on that journey, but the Lord knows it. One day they tipped the wagon over and injured my hip so they had to carry me to the tent every night and there I lay on the ground with a few things under my head and a baby on each arm." At Green River "an old woman that rode in the wagon . . . saw I was nearly dead and she took my babies from me and [cared for] them. . . . This enabled me to live."<sup>12</sup>

**1856:** As Elder Parley P. Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles traveled to his mission to the eastern states in September 1856, he met a handcart company coming



west at Green River. "They had travelled [for some 1,200 miles] twenty miles a day and sometimes more. Their faces were much sunburnt and their lips parched; but cheerfulness reigned in every heart, and joy seemed to beam on every countenance. The company gathered around us and I tried to address them, . . . but my utterance was choked, and I [tried three times] before I could overcome my emotions."<sup>13</sup>

**1859:** A well-provided party of wagons going west to Colorado, which was a part of the big "Pike's Peak or Bust" gold rush, passed a caravan of handcarts and killed a big buffalo. They took one-fourth of it, covered the remaining three-fourths with the hide, and put up a notice that read, "This is for the handcarts." This was the only fresh meat the Rowley company had.<sup>14</sup>



DEVIL'S GATE, WYOMING, BY FREDERICK HAWKINS PIERCY

**Above:** When the ninth handcart company arrived at the Sweetwater River, the pioneers found the water filled with fish. They ate all they wanted to eat. **Left:** Devil's Gate, a dramatic landmark on the trail, played an important role as a gathering place during the rescue of the Martin handcart company in 1856.





PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

## HUBS, AXLES, SPOKES, AND RIMS

In 1851 President Brigham Young suggested traveling by handcart as a less expensive and faster way to cross the plains than oxen-drawn wagons.

A carpenter by trade, President Young prepared instructions on how to build what came to be known as the 1856 Economy Model handcart. The following are some of his instructions given in letters written in September 1855: "I will give you my plan for building the carts. . . . You will need not a particle of Iron. . . . Prior to the time of starting[,] some mechanics accustomed to working in wood with a turning lathe, making wheels, etc., should be picked up to go to the outfitting point and gather good timber for the purpose, and commence turning hubs, spokes, etc."

President Young recommended that hubs be made from "Iron Wood" or "Hard Hack"; axles, spokes, and rims from hickory. Rims were to be split "something like spinning wheel rims only thicker, and fasten them through and through

with green hide and cover them also with the same when it can be done . . . in order to be light."

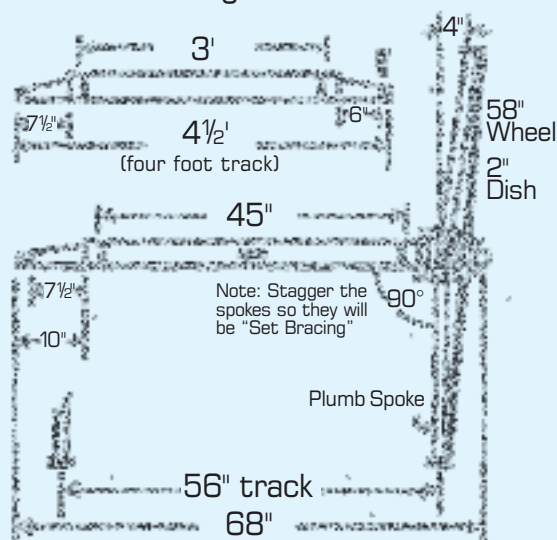
- A handcart cost about four or five dollars to build.
- The handcart bed was four feet long, three feet wide, and eight inches deep. A strip of bed ticking was sewed across the bars of the bed of the cart. Some handcarts had a canvas cover similar to the covers used on wagons.
- The wheels on either side of the handcart were nearly five feet in diameter. The hubs were lined with sole leather. The axles were four and a half feet from point to point, making them the same width as a covered wagon.

• Running along each side of the bed were seven-foot pull shafts ending with a three-foot crossbar connecting them at the front. The crossbar was used to push or pull the 60-pound cart.

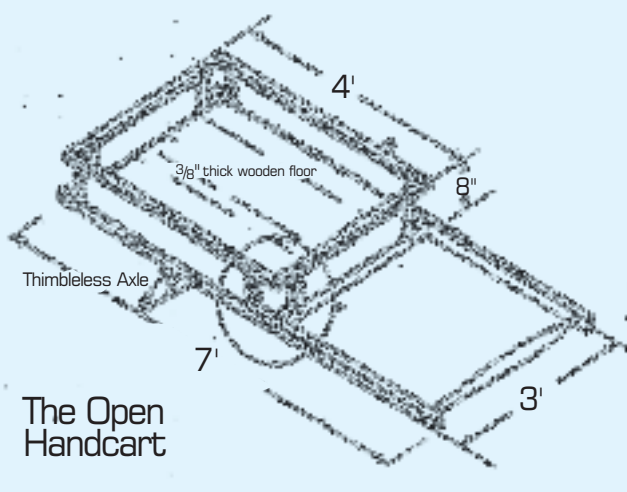
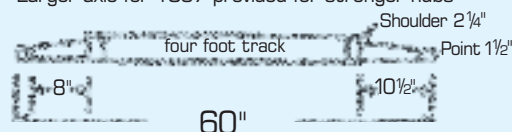
- When the sand on the trail, especially in Nebraska, ground away at the unprotected wooden spindles of the axles, the pioneers used tin plates, kettles, buckets, or a piece of iron to

**1860:** Daniel Robinson, captain of the ninth handcart company, wrote of a time when "arriving at the Sweetwater River we found the bottom of the river

## Smallest and largest handcart axles



Larger axle for 1857 provided for stronger hubs



prevent the wheel from wearing away the wooden spindle.

- Due to the lack of proper lubricants to grease the axles of the handcarts, some pioneers used bacon or soap to help keep their cart wheels turning.

- The great majority of handcarts were loaded with about 250

pounds of provisions. However, on rare occasions, handcarts were loaded with 400 or 500 pounds of flour, bedding, extra clothing, cooking utensils, and a tent.

Source: Excerpted from Pratt Wagon Works, "Pioneer Handcarts, 1856-1860" (1989), typescript, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1-4.

covered with fish. Everyone had all they could eat, which was a treat after having to eat salty bacon from the time we started until now."<sup>15</sup>



GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, 1853, BY FREDERICK HAWKINS PERCY

ILLUSTRATION BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE

### Little Mountain, Utah

**1856:** After three months and 17 days of pulling her handcart, Sarah Goode Marshall was camped with her six children and the Ellsworth and McArthur handcart companies. All were ready to enter the Salt Lake Valley the next day. Sarah asked Captain Ellsworth if she and her children could start out ahead of the company. Permission was granted, and early on the morning of September 26, 1856, Sarah and her six children left.

Meanwhile, the news had spread in the Salt Lake Valley that the first two handcart companies were arriving on the 26th. Preparations were made to meet them and celebrate their arrival.

As Sarah and her children headed toward the valley, they encountered the men on horseback. Some of

the men (with Sarah's permission) scooped up her children on horseback and galloped back to the valley. Sarah was now free to pull the handcart the rest of the way.<sup>16</sup>

President Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball and many citizens, with a military detachment of the Lancers (a cavalry unit carrying lances) and brass bands, went out to meet the companies and escort them into the city. They met the two handcart companies at the foot of Little Mountain.

Elder Wilford Woodruff wrote of the joyous occasion: "After the meeting and salutations were over, amid feelings which no one can describe, the escort was formed, a party of Lancers leading the advance, followed by the bands, the Presidency, the Marshal, and citizens; then came the companies of handcarts, another party of





**Though Salt Lake City was isolated (left), it grew rapidly as Latter-day Saints arrived by wagon and handcart. Above: City residents, a brass band, and the Lancers meet the Ellsworth and McArthur handcart companies as they enter the valley.**

Lancers bringing up the rear. . . . I must say my feelings were inexpressible to behold a company of men, women, and children, many of them aged and infirm, enter the city of the Great Salt Lake, drawing 100 handcarts, (led by Brother Ellsworth, who assisted in drawing the first handcart) with which they had travelled . . . and to see them dance with joy as they travelled through the streets. . . . This sight filled our hearts with joy and thanksgiving to God.<sup>17</sup> ■

*Compiled by Linda Dekker, Church Magazines.*

#### NOTES

1. From an unpublished biography of Sarah Goode Marshall, written by an unnamed granddaughter, in possession of another descendant, Marlin D. Sharp, Lindon, Utah.
2. William G. Hartley, "Good Charles Good" (unpublished article, June 2000), 5.
3. In LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* (1960), 193.
4. In Susan Arrington Madsen, *I Walked to Zion* (1994), 50–51.
5. In Rosemary Gudmundson Palmer, *Children's Voices from the Trail* (2002), 191.
6. Unpublished biography of Sarah Goode Marshall.
7. Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts*, 161.
8. Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts*, 156.
9. In Madsen, *I Walked to Zion*, 54.
10. Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts*, 161.
11. Journal of James Godson Bleak, Nov. 30, 1856, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; see also William W. Slaughter and Michael Landon, *Trail of Hope* (1997), 128.
12. Edith Y. Booth, Elsie Fern Bushman, and Cory W. Bangerter, "Summary of Biographical Sketches of Helena Jonsson Ericksson Roseberry" (unpublished paper in possession of Cory W. Bangerter, Salt Lake City, Utah), 3–4.
13. Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt*, ed. Parley P. Pratt Jr. (1938), 435.
14. See Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts*, 171.
15. In Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts*, 183–84.
16. From unpublished biography of Sarah Goode Marshall.
17. In Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts*, 76–77.

# Cambodia

## a Land of Developing Peace



*In 1994 Cambodia opened the door to proselytizing missionaries, who now enjoy the enthusiastic support of more than 6,000 members.*

**BY MARISSA A. WIDDISON**  
Church Magazines

Since the Cambodian government officially recognized the Church in 1994, stories of faith, courage, and conversion have become a part of Cambodia's pioneer legacy. Lives are changed daily as Saints and missionaries continue to work side by side in this tropical Asian land.

In 1994 Elder Donald and Sister Charlene Dobson were transferred from their labors in India to serve as Cambodia's first missionaries. On March 27 of that year the first Church meeting in Cambodia was held at a hotel, with a total of six members and nine investigators in attendance.

On May 9, 1994, Sister Pahl Mao became the first member baptized in Cambodia. Two years later, in May 1996, President

Gordon B. Hinckley visited and dedicated Cambodia for the preaching of the gospel while he stood on a hill overlooking the Mekong River. The work had officially begun!

### **Reaching Out: Humanitarian Aid**

In 1993 Larry R. White was serving as president of the Thailand Bangkok Mission when he heard a favorable report about religious progress in Cambodia. He, along with Elder John K. Carmack of the Seventy and Brother Vichit Ith, a member living in Bangkok, traveled to Cambodia to ask government representatives about the possibility of beginning missionary work and humanitarian aid projects. The request to begin humanitarian aid projects was granted.

Since that time many humanitarian missionaries have served here. Recently, Elder Robert and Sister Virginia Scholes served as country directors for Latter-day Saint Charities, a humanitarian organization sponsored by the Church that often teams up with local government or civic



# CAMBODIA

Phnom Penh

organizations to bring relief to the needy people in countries throughout the world. They understand that the power of charitable service can break barriers, bridge political rifts, and bring credibility to the name of the Church.

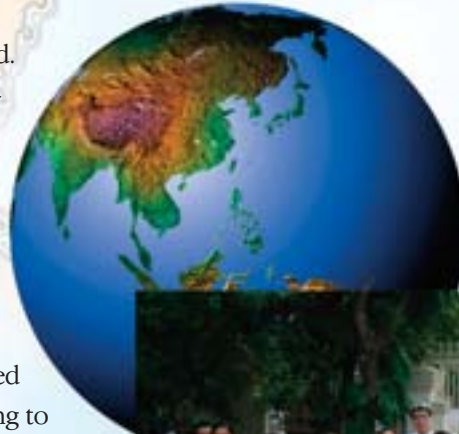
When Elder and Sister Scholes heard that more than 500 innocent Cambodian citizens are maimed, injured, or killed every year by undetected land mines, they decided to do something to help the victims. They teamed up with the Wheelchair Foundation and the Cambodian Red Cross to participate in a project they dubbed “Triple Combination,” which presented many victims of land mines—as well as others with physical limitations—with new wheelchairs.

## Family History: A Shared Value

In a culture of traditional ancestor worship, it is no wonder that the people of Cambodia would be intrigued by the genealogical work of the Church. Senior missionaries Elder Michael and Sister Donna Frame organized and taught family history seminars in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. Over the past few years hundreds of men and women have attended these seminars, sponsored by Latter-day Saint Charities and taught by humanitarian aid missionaries.

“There are many surviving Cambodians who went through the Pol Pot era, when so many records were destroyed,” says Sister Frame. “We want to help families write down their histories so their children and grandchildren can read them. We want to show how easy it is to record a pedigree.”

Interested people have come from all over Phnom Penh to attend the family history classes and have been rewarded with information on recording family histories, interviewing



**Opposite page: Commuters cross a bridge over the Mekong River; Latter-day Saints use a puppet show to teach the importance of being healthy; a pedicab on the streets of Phnom Penh; a Latter-day Saint chapel in Phnom Penh. Above: Families and missionaries gather for a baptism; boats on the Mekong River.**

parents and grandparents, and collecting important and interesting information about their ancestors. After witnessing years of political turmoil, many are understandably interested in preserving current family information for future generations.

#### **Proselytizing in Cambodia**

Thanks to the efforts of humanitarian missionaries and the proselytizing elders and sisters,



**Below, left to right: Sisters Sodaly Sean and Rachel Pace; Brother Eng Bun Huoch; Sister Sam Nang; sister missionaries and others help clean up after a fire in Phnom Penh.**



thousands of Cambodians have accepted the gospel.

On a preparation day in the Cambodia Phnom Penh Mission, Elder Trent Nielson of Mesa, Arizona, watched as his fellow missionaries began a game of soccer. The field was adjacent to a school, and the activity of the missionaries attracted some of the local teenagers who approached Elder Nielson and asked why so many Americans were playing soccer in Cambodia. He explained that they were all missionary teachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The young men wanted to know how much these teachers were paid. When they learned that the missionaries paid their own way, they were dumbfounded. Why would anybody do such a thing?

Soon the curiosity of the teens led to probing spiritual questions, and they became engrossed in the missionary's message. Before long Elder Nielson was teaching 10 young men on the grass of a soccer field about the Restoration of the gospel.

The member of the group who was the most antagonistic in the beginning became the most interested in the end. He and others asked for copies of the Book of Mormon. Elder Nielson realized that he did not have enough to give one to each of the inquisitive young men, so he hurriedly searched through the bags of the missionaries on the field for additional copies. Before the group left, Elder Nielson told them how they could get more information about the Church.

#### **Sisters and Native Members**

The arrival of the first sister missionaries was celebrated in Phnom Penh as a sign of the tremendous expansion of work in that area. Sisters Meagan Jones, Kirsten Downing, and Rachel Pace arrived in the capital city on August 21, 2003. On their first day, these sisters went proselytizing in Central Market, the busiest open market in the city. They were a bit nervous, but their companions—the first Cambodian sister missionaries, Sisters Sokhom Suon,



Molis Chan Soun, and Sodalys Sean—were comfortable on the familiar turf.

Geographic familiarity is just one example of how native missionaries are a tremendous asset to the mission. Native missionaries also seem to cherish the opportunity to serve in their homeland, and they bring a contagious spirit of enthusiasm with them wherever they go.

“I want to tell all the members of the Church that I loved my mission very much,” says Cambodian member Eng Bun Huoch, who was baptized on October 25, 1998. He served a mission in Phnom Penh two years later. “Serving a mission is not easy, but it is worth it. I can’t describe how important and profitable it was to my life. My two-year mission instilled in me leadership skills and teaching skills and showed me how to be a better friend, son, and member.”

After returning home on July 17, 2002, Elder Huoch was able to find a job that improved his quality of life. His testimony had been strengthened, and he felt better prepared to deal with the challenges of life.

“I thank the Lord that He brought the gospel to Cambodia before I was too old to serve a mission,” he says. “I would be very sad if I missed the opportunity to do this marvelous work.”

Thanks to missionaries—sisters and elders, native and foreign—the work is rolling forth every day.

### **Blessed by Priesthood Power**

The power of the priesthood is a sustaining influence in the lives of new Cambodian members as they mature in the gospel. Many people, such as Sam Nang, have experienced medical miracles that continue to strengthen their faith.

Early one morning as Sam rode to work on the back of



### **WORK WITH FAITH**

*“The Church has grown across the world until our membership outside of North America exceeds that in North America. We have become a great international family scattered through 160 nations. . . .*

*“Our hope concerning the future is great and our faith is strong. . . .*

*“I now repeat what I said 10 years ago, let us ‘stand a little taller, . . . lift our eyes and stretch our minds to a greater comprehension and understanding of the grand millennial mission of this The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.’”*

*President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Opening Remarks,” Liahona and Ensign, May 2005, 4–6.*

**President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Opening Remarks,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2005, 4–6.**

a motorbike, a large truck ran into her, throwing her violently onto the pavement. No one wanted to move her until she could be identified, and being only semiconscious, she was unable to answer the bystanders’ questions. She lay in the street unattended for almost two hours.

At the hospital a doctor examined her injuries and said the bones in her right leg were “smashed to fragments.” His immediate plan was to amputate the leg just above the knee or, at best, try to pin the bones back together. Sam’s family was distraught, and they called branch president Un Son and senior missionary couple Elder LaVon and Sister Marianne Day. These leaders told the doctor to do nothing until they arrived.

After arriving at the hospital, President Son and Elder Day gave her a blessing. Despite earlier

protests the doctor agreed to delay the surgery briefly, while he reviewed the recent X-rays and saw something that he couldn’t quite believe: the leg showed no fracture or sign of trauma! The only real damage was a torn muscle and large laceration, which he stitched closed. The doctor seemed to have no explanation for the abrupt change in Sam’s condition.

With some additional surgery and skin grafting, Sam will have the complete use of her leg again.

### **Cambodia: Toward a Peaceful Life**

Cambodia is a small country, but a great spirit is found within its people. As missionaries and Cambodian Saints strive to nurture peace in this once war-torn area, they pave the way for future generations to prosper in the gospel. ■

# Breaking the Chains of Sin



*Sacrificing the object of desire or passion is the key to becoming free from captivity.*

BY ELDER H. ROSS WORKMAN  
Of the Seventy

**T**he evil practice of slavery has existed in various civilizations throughout the history of the world. We are astonished that men, women, and children could be a commodity bought, sold, and subjected to prolonged misery to further the interests of others. We recoil at descriptions of “man’s inhumanity to man” in these accounts, and we are horrified at reports of slavery existing in some parts of the world even today.

How is it, then, that many willingly relinquish their freedom and submit themselves and their loved ones to captivity by that master whose only purpose is to make them “miserable like unto himself”? (2 Nephi 2:27).

## **Spiritual Captivity**

Many think of captivity only in terms of imprisonment by other people. Physical captivity is abhorrent, but the effects may not endure eternally. The greater bondage is to the father of lies—a form of captivity that is far more devastating and potentially longer lasting. Remarkably, this spiritual captivity results from personal choice as one yields to uncontrolled desires and passions. One can be in captivity to sin or to the pursuit of worldly honors such as fame, wealth, political power, or social standing. One can also be in captivity

through obsessive preoccupation with activities such as sports, music, or entertainment.

A particularly powerful source of captivity is tradition. Traditions exist in every culture. In some countries, tribal traditions run deep. Some of these traditions are wonderful, preserving culture and defining social order. Other traditions are contrary to the gospel and priesthood government and, when followed blindly, result in captivity.

Even individual and family traditions can lead to spiritual captivity. Traditions that are contrary to gospel principles offend the Spirit and, if followed, obscure one’s ability to be guided by the Spirit to recognize righteous choices that would expand freedom. For example, consider family traditions regarding the Sabbath. How does your family feel when a major sports event conflicts with Church responsibilities? Yielding to unrighteous influences diminishes your freedom and amplifies the danger of captivity.

## **One Small Step at a Time**

Freedom to choose all that is “expedient” is a gift given by God to His children. Thus, we can choose liberty (freedom) and eternal life through Christ, or we can choose captivity and death according to the power of the devil (see 2 Nephi 2:27). It is often said that we are free to choose whatever course we desire, but we






are not free to avoid the consequences of that choice.

Spiritual captivity rarely results from a single choice or event. More often, freedom is surrendered one small step at a time until the way to regain that freedom is obscured.

A young man once pleaded with me for help. He had become addicted to pornography, which he accessed via his home computer. It burdened him with such guilt that he could not feel good about attending church or participating in priesthood assignments. It adversely affected his social life. He was powerfully drawn to spend hour upon hour alone in front of the computer viewing that which he acknowledged brought only frustration and



**S**piritual  
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until the way to  
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is obscured.



**T**he Lord requires sacrifice to test the faithful. He asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. He asked the rich young ruler to “sell that thou hast, and give to the poor.”

despair. It was as if he were chained by a master whose only purpose was to make him miserable.

He did not decide at once to become a slave to the computer screen. Rather, he decided at some earlier time that viewing destructive images “just this once” would not hurt and would satisfy a “curiosity.” Once became twice, and twice became several times, until a powerful addiction had lessened his power of choice. Only after he was enchained by his addiction did he recognize that he had willingly submitted to captivity.

If we are succumbing to spiritual captivity, we may not recognize the growing loss of freedom in our lives. Yet the more spiritual captivity we experience, choose, or permit, the less freedom of choice we feel in matters of spiritual importance.

Some seek to explain spiritual captivity as something out of their control. Is it really out of their control? Typically, freedom to make righteous choices is measured by a willingness to sacrifice that which is the object of desire or passion. Hence, sacrifice is a guiding principle and is the key to setting oneself free from captivity.

#### **An Example of Sacrifice:**

##### **Couple Missionaries**

Couples who are physically and financially able are urged to sacrifice to serve full-time missions. Clearly, poor health, inadequate financial resources, and other circumstances influence the ability to serve. However, careful attention to the reasons for not serving may reveal a risk of being imprisoned by worldly desires. Concern about the house, car, or boat; preoccupation with investments; plans for travel; a desire to enjoy a summer

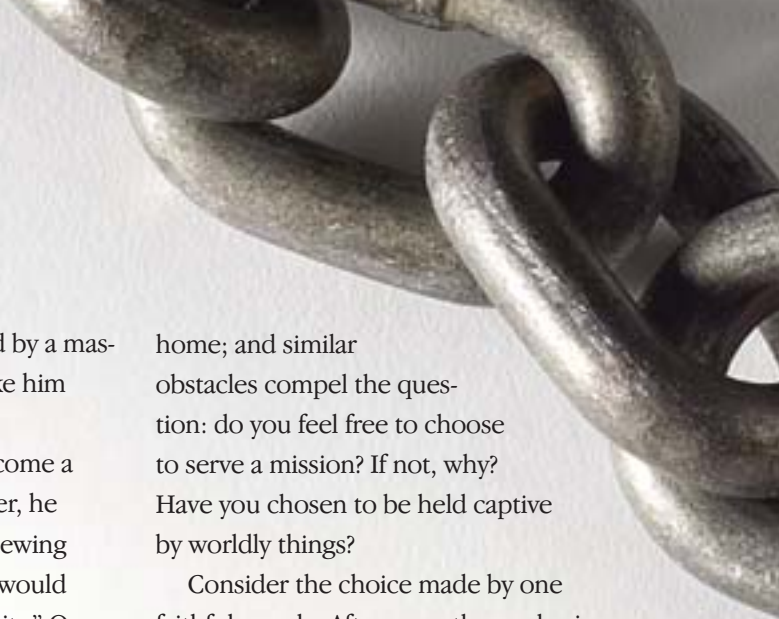
home; and similar obstacles compel the question: do you feel free to choose to serve a mission? If not, why? Have you chosen to be held captive by worldly things?

Consider the choice made by one faithful couple. After recently purchasing a farm for their retirement, they felt prompted to accept a mission call. They were called to serve in a village far from other Church units. They built their own housing, dug their own water well, attended to all their personal needs, and proselytized by bicycle. While the living conditions were extremely difficult, they enjoyed wonderful success in teaching, training members, and bringing converts to the gospel.

In the course of their mission this couple received a letter from a family member reporting that thieves had broken into their farm and stolen all their farm implements and machinery. They were urged to return home and seek to reclaim their much-needed property. The mission president gave them the option to do so. This couple considered their choice and decided to stay. They were not held captive by their worldly goods. They were free to choose the Lord’s service, and they so chose.

##### **The Lesson of Balaam**

I am intrigued by the story of the Old Testament prophet Balaam, which teaches us much about captivity and freedom. Balaam was an Israelite prophet residing near the borders of Moab at the time Moses was leading the children of Israel through the wilderness. Balak, the Moabite king, fearing the incursion of the children of Israel







journeying through Sinai, appealed to Balaam for help in cursing them. Balaam sought the will of the Lord in the matter. In response the Lord said to Balaam, “Thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed” (Numbers 22:12).

When Balaam made the Lord’s response known, the king’s ministers tempted Balaam with ever greater promises of gifts: great riches and worldly honors. While Balaam at first refused to oppose the will of God, the Moabite king tempted him with wealth, position, and political influence. Step by step Balaam compromised his divine calling as his desire to gain the king’s honor grew. At last he was so consumed with the desire for those gifts promised by the king that he conspired to bring a curse upon the children of Israel (see Numbers 31:16). He made choices that put him in bondage to his desire for the wealth and power promised by the king. In so doing he lost his life to the sword of Israel—and he lost the spiritual freedom he once had (see Numbers 31:8).

### **The Pattern of Christ**

Some people feel they are in captivity because of their poverty. Poverty can indeed be disabling, limiting some of the choices one can make. However, poverty is not a source of captivity in the eternal sense.

The mortal Jesus had few possessions, and He relied on others for His food and keeping. Yet He was not in captivity. His willingness to sacrifice all that Heavenly Father required and to keep all the Father’s commandments



brought Him ultimate freedom.

The Lord requires sacrifice to test the faithful. He asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. He asked the rich young ruler to “sell that thou hast, and give to the poor” (Matthew 19:21). The Prophet Joseph Smith and the pioneer Saints sacrificed much to establish the

Church “in the top of the mountains” (Isaiah 2:2). The Lord asks us to sacrifice too.

Father Lehi, in his last recorded discourse to his sons, pleaded with them to “shake off the awful chains by which ye are bound, which are the chains which bind the children of men, that they are carried away captive down to the eternal gulf of misery and woe” (2 Nephi 1:13). His words evoke the Savior’s message: “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (John 8:34).

How, then, does one “shake off the awful chains” of spiritual captivity? As we purify our hearts through repentance and turn to the Savior with a firm determination to obey His commandments, He will enlarge our strength through the power of His grace. Each righteous choice we make can then lead to future righteous choices. The struggle to escape spiritual captivity and regain our freedom is not always an easy process; indeed, it may lead us through the refiner’s fire. But because of the Atonement and the great gift of repentance, “though [our] sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isaiah 1:18).

The Savior promised, “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31–32). Let us implement in our lives those principles that we know to be true. Rather than submitting to captivity, let us make righteous choices and “continue in [the Savior’s] word.” Then we shall be truly free. ■

# Putting Off the *Natural Man*



*A continuing series examining doctrines unique to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.*

**F**or centuries philosophers and theologians have debated the question of human nature. Over the years three general philosophies have taken center stage: that people are basically good, that they are fundamentally evil, and that they are neutral (a blank slate to be written upon). We can be thankful that the restored gospel of Jesus Christ reveals the true nature of man and gives purpose, meaning, and direction to life's challenge of putting off "the natural man" (Mosiah 3:19).

## **A Dual Nature**

Because of the Fall of Adam and Eve "all mankind became a lost and fallen people" (Alma 12:22). King

Benjamin taught that fallen man or "the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord" (Mosiah 3:19).

President David O. McKay (1873–1970) taught that because of the Fall we have a dual nature: "One, related to the earthly or animal life; the other, akin to the Divine. Whether a man remains satisfied within what we designate the animal world, satisfied with what the animal world will give him, yielding without effort to the whims of his appetites and passions and slipping farther and farther into the realm of indulgence, or whether, through self-mastery, he rises toward intellectual, moral, and spiritual enjoyments depends upon the kind of choice he makes every day, nay, every hour of his life."<sup>1</sup>



Our spirits come from the presence of God, and “every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning” (D&C 93:38). Our physical bodies are also gifts from God. One reason we wanted to come to this earth was to become more like our Heavenly Father, who has a physical body. Consequently, one of our challenges in mortality is to learn how to manage, care for, and use our bodies properly. If we can govern the natural tendencies of the flesh, we will rise toward the kind of spiritual life President McKay described. But if we let “the natural man” govern, we will find ourselves at enmity with God and His purposes (see Mosiah 3:19).

### The Battle

Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “all the assaults that the enemy of our souls will make to capture us will be through the flesh, because it is made up of the unredeemed earth, and he has power over the elements of the earth. The approach he makes to us will be through the lusts, the appetites, the ambitions of the flesh. All the help that comes to us from the Lord to aid us in this struggle will come to us through the spirit that dwells within this mortal body. So these two mighty forces are operating upon us through these two channels.

“... If you would have a strong spirit which has dominance over the body, you must see to it that your spirit receives spiritual food and spiritual exercise. . . .

“The man or woman who is taking neither spiritual food nor spiritual exercise will presently become a spiritual weakling, and the flesh will be master. Whoever therefore is obtaining both spiritual food and exercise will be in control over this body and will keep it subject unto the will of God.”<sup>2</sup>

Elder Ballard identified several forms of spiritual food and exercise: praying, partaking of the sacrament, and



**I**t takes spiritual food and spiritual exercise to control the body and keep it subject to the will of God.

serving one another. The scriptures and the prophets remind us of others, such as attending Sabbath meetings, serving in the temple, and studying the scriptures.

### Changing Our Nature

Spiritual food and exercise can strengthen us in our quest to govern the body, but this endeavor becomes much easier if the body can be sanctified from its corrupt, or “natural,” state (see Moroni 10:32–33). This sanctification comes through the grace of Christ and the ministering of the Holy Spirit. Elder Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) of the Quorum of the Twelve

Apostles taught that “the gift of the Holy Spirit . . . quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands and purifies all the natural passions and affections; and adapts them, by the gift of wisdom, to their lawful use.”<sup>3</sup> Passions are not inherently evil. Passions in righteous people can be a vehicle to create great goodness.

The message of the gospel, then, is that we don’t have to surrender to our weaknesses and the yearnings of the flesh. The good news of the gospel is that through the Atonement of our Savior and the appropriate use of agency we can experience a fundamental change in our nature. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) taught that the world attempts to “shape human behavior, but Christ can change human nature.”<sup>4</sup> Indeed, as Peter declared, by the Lord’s power we can “be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (see 2 Peter 1:3–4). Through the Atonement of Christ we can put off the natural man and become saints, “submissive, meek, humble, patient, [and] full of love” (Mosiah 3:19). ■

### NOTES

1. *Gospel Ideals* (1953), 347–48.
2. “The Struggle for the Soul,” *Tambuli*, Sept. 1984, 37; *New Era*, Mar. 1984, 36.
3. *Key to the Science of Theology*, 9th ed. (1965), 101.
4. “Born of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 6.

# FAMILIES ARE

BY GARTH HANSON AND STEVE HANSON

Some fathers and mothers feel their parental charge ends when their children are “grown up.” Nudging sons and daughters out the door when they turn 18 may seem to be the “easy” solution, but when parents establish a self-imposed time limit to their parental duties, they often unwittingly push these responsibilities onto the shoulders of other people. Bishops’ offices, for instance, are frequently visited by adult children in need of parental guidance.

Although we may not realize it when our children are young, they may need some degree of parental direction until the day we die. The extent and the timing of our involvement in our adult children’s lives may vary with each child or each situation, but if we come unto Christ and rely on the promptings of the Holy Spirit, we can have divine assistance in making these often difficult decisions.

Within this context, the following four principles may be helpful to parents who are struggling in their relationships with their adult children. Although each family situation may be different, these principles may help parents determine how involved to be in their adult children’s lives, how to deal with issues of agency and accountability, and how to maintain their own spiritual and emotional well-being in the face of stressful circumstances.

*Four principles can help parents find appropriate ways to be involved in the lives of their adult children.*

## **Principle One: Parents never outlive their responsibility to their children.**

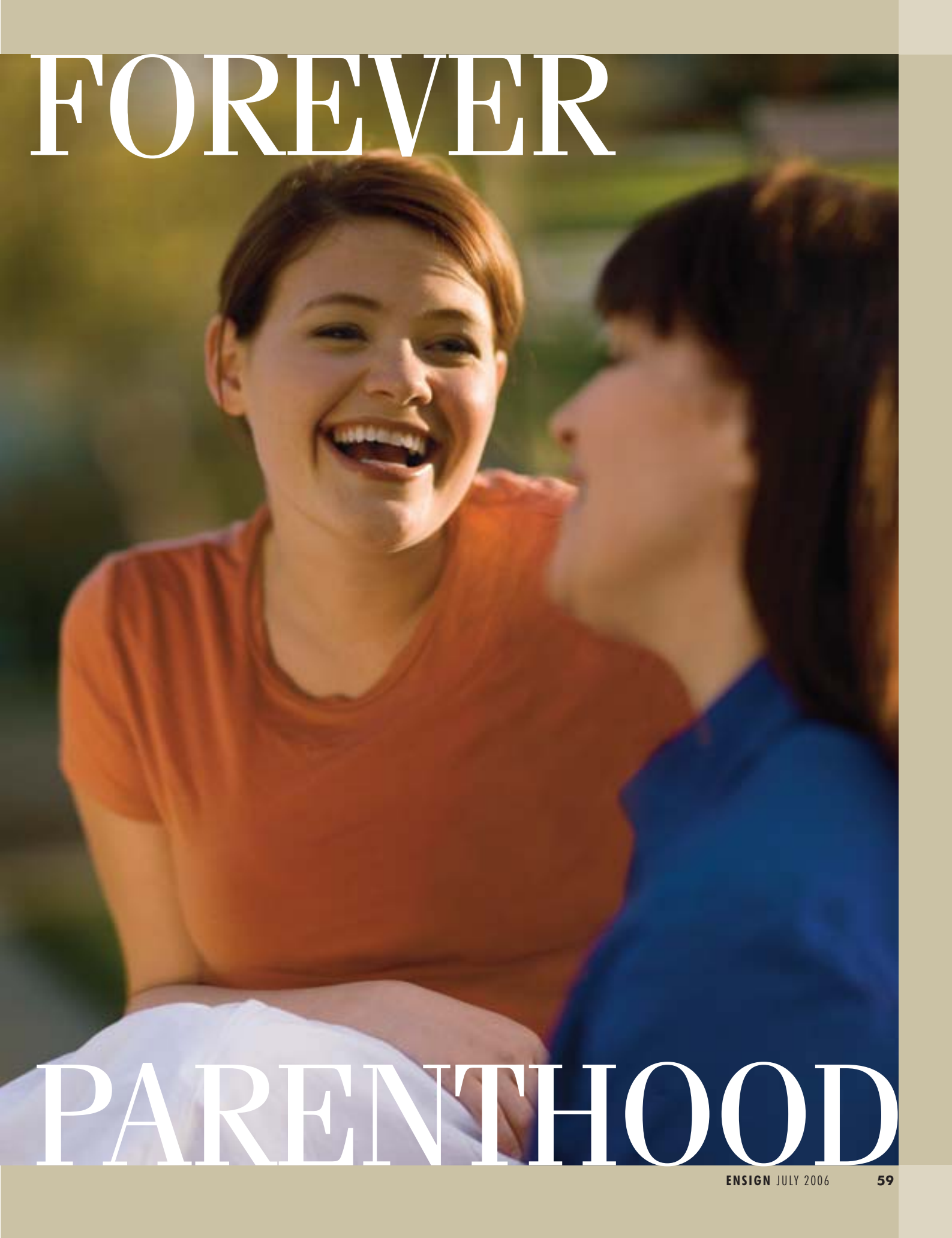
Our leaders have been forthright about this. One statement representative of many will suffice here. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said: “Fathers [and certainly mothers too], yours is an eternal calling from which you are never released. . . . [A] father’s calling is eternal, and its importance transcends time. It is a calling for both time and eternity.”<sup>1</sup>

While parental responsibility never ceases, it does change. After the birth of a child, parents provide for the baby’s every need. As the child grows, the amount of parental involvement decreases. Over time, the degree of involvement becomes harder for parents to determine. By the time children have reached adulthood, the complexity of determining the timing, extent, and direction of parental involvement in children’s lives sometimes causes parents to give up. As a result, they either assume a very passive role or stop those relationships altogether. When this happens, everybody loses. Parents feel alienated from their children’s lives and activities, and the children lose opportunities to draw on the wisdom their parents have accumulated through years of experience.

Parents generally spend more years with their offspring as adults than as young children or adolescents. They will be involved

# AND SO IS





# FOREVER

# PARENTHOOD

**R**ecognizing the right to make choices independent of each other's decisions and actions is critical in maintaining a viable relationship between parents and adult children.

not only with their adult children but also with those who come into the family as their children marry and have children of their own. This expanded circle includes sons- and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, and perhaps even step-grandchildren. Each of these relationships creates additional challenges.

A number of years ago, Raymond Hanson (Garth's father and Steve's grandfather) stood before family members who were gathered at a reunion. He was in his 90s at the time and had outlived three wives. His posterity then numbered over 200, most of whom were present.

While physically feeble, Raymond spoke clearly and with power. He expressed his love for all of his family, including the "in-laws" and the "steps." He bore a strong testimony of the gospel and invited those who were having spiritual challenges to change their lives so that the family could be together eternally. It was an emotionally charged moment for all who were there, as we watched the patriarch of our family magnify his role as a parent right up to the end of his life. We believe this is the way it ought to be.

**Principle Two: Parents and adult children have the ability and the right to make choices independent of each other's decisions and actions.**

Several years ago Bob\* was talking to his stake president following an interview the leader had recently had with Bob's 21-year-old son, who had just returned from a mission. The stake president was glowing

in his compliments about the son and concluded by saying to Bob, "You must be a marvelous father to have raised a son like that."

Bob's first impulse was to accept the compliment as well deserved. After all, he and his wife, Janice,\* had always spent lots of time with their children, had tried to do everything the Lord expected of them, and had encouraged their son to go on a mission. But then the face of his daughter Enid\* flashed into his mind. She was ending her second marriage; had challenges with dishonesty, promiscuity, and drugs; and had never been

able to hold a job for longer than a few weeks. She had been raised in the same home and had been treated, as far as Bob knew, the same as his other children.

Bob didn't take the compliment. Instead, his response surprised his stake president: "If you give me credit for

what my son is doing, you have to give me the blame for what my daughter has done. I don't think I deserve either."

To what extent, if any, are parents responsible for their children's behavior? That's not an easy question to answer. Why are we the way we are? How much do our genes influence our behavior? What role does the home environment play?

As Latter-day Saints, our gospel perspective requires that we add two additional considerations when we seek to determine ultimate responsibility for actions and choices: the eternal nature of Heavenly Father's children and their God-given moral agency. To understand these truths is to





know that our personalities and dispositions may be affected by our family environment but not ultimately determined by it. Parents who have more than one child know intuitively that each child is unique and came into the world that way. The restored gospel explains why. It teaches that children come from a premortal existence with individual traits, personalities, and other characteristics.

Recognizing the right to make choices independent of each other's decisions and actions is critical in maintaining a viable relationship between parents and adult children. Please consider the following:

- Children's actions do not necessarily make a statement about how they were raised.
- Parents can influence but cannot ultimately control what their children do.
- Neither children nor parents can ultimately take from the other the right to choose.

**3 Principle Three: Sometimes positive change cannot occur until parents allow their children to experience the consequences of bad decisions.**

Lance,\* a young adult living at home, was doing just about everything wrong. He lied, stole, cheated, and used drugs and alcohol. He was unchaste and seemed completely indifferent to how his actions affected his parents and other family members. His mother and father had tried everything they could think of to help him. For several years they had been patient and forgiving. They convinced him to see a professional counselor, but after a session or two he refused to go back. He never did agree to see his bishop. Finally, Lance was arrested.

The phone rang at Lance's home, and his mother

answered. "Hi, Mom, this is Lance. I'm in jail, and they won't let me out until you come and get me. Please hurry!"

Lance's mother was shocked, even panicked, but didn't say anything. Lance pleaded again, "Mom, please hurry! This is not a nice place!"

She didn't say anything for a long time, then quietly asked, "Lance, are you guilty of the charges?"

"Well, Mom, I really wasn't as involved as the police say I was."

"Lance, are you guilty?"

"Well, Mom, I guess I am."

Then, with all the courage she could muster, she replied, "I'm sorry that you are. I guess you will have to work through this by yourself. Call me when you get it all worked out." She hung up the phone and fell apart.

Two very long days passed. Finally, Lance called, and his parents went to the police station to pick him up. A few more days passed, and the phone rang again. Lance's mother answered, and this time it

was an attorney.

"Hello. I am Mark Johnson.\* I helped Lance with his legal problems while he was in custody. I just wanted to speak with you to see how you wanted to work out my compensation for helping Lance get out of jail."

At first Lance's mother was troubled. Finances were tight, and she was surprised at the call. She paused a minute, then said, "Mr. Johnson, I appreciate what you did to help Lance, but you are talking to the wrong person. I did not hire you. You did not help me. You helped Lance. If you want compensation for your efforts, I think you ought to talk to Lance."

Some time later, Lance came to his parents asking for



**H**ow can children know that the gospel brings happiness, if their parents are not happy as they try to live it?

a “donation” to pay his legal bill, but the donation did not come. Lance had to go back to the attorney and work out a pay-back plan. After many months of payments, Lance paid Mr. Johnson in full. Lance eventually returned to activity in the Church and is doing very well as a student at a major university. He is paying for much of his education himself, and his relationship with his parents couldn’t be better. He will tell you today that the actions of his very brave and very frightened mother helped him turn his life around.

Obviously, not all stories have such a happy ending. However, many stories do, if parents wait long enough and if they are trying to do the right thing.

Parents are accountable to teach their children to take responsibility for their actions. This is almost always a very hard thing to do and often may involve what seems to be a temporary abandonment. In a very real sense, parents can interfere with their children’s progress if they try to protect them from the consequences of their actions.

Our prototype here is Heavenly Father and His response to Adam and Eve after they had partaken of the forbidden fruit. He cast them out of the Garden of Eden, and to help them learn, He cursed the ground *for their sake* (see Genesis 3:17). While He promises that His grace will be sufficient for us, grace will not replace our experiencing consequences that are necessary to teach us something we need to know.

#### **Principle Four: Choosing to be happy brings peace and increases parents’ ability to deal effectively with their adult children.**

The Lord’s plan for us has been designated a “plan of happiness” (see Alma 42:8, 16). If we are not generally happy and are not suffering from a clinical illness, perhaps the solution is to let the Lord’s plan work more fully in our lives. Even those suffering from clinical depression can still be blessed by obedience to the plan. Happiness can come through drawing near to the Lord and needn’t be dependent on our external circumstances.

Tom and Dayna\* had been fretting for many months over the behavior of their oldest daughter, Julie,\* who was in her late teens. While they still allowed her to live in their home, she was nearly impossible to live with. She was verbally abusive to them and to her younger



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

siblings. She obeyed house rules just enough to keep from being asked to leave, and Tom and Dayna suspected she was involved in immoral behavior and drug use.

Their worries about Julie consumed them. Usually they were depressed, and they seldom laughed. Their involvement with their other children became perfunctory at best. It was as though a dark cloud had settled upon their home.

Finally, they saw what was happening and talked about it. They could see that they were not allowing the light of the gospel to lift them or their children. They discussed how their personal examples should demonstrate the results of living gospel principles



so their children could see firsthand that happiness comes from following Jesus Christ. They vowed they would change and pleaded in their personal prayers for the strength to be happy.

They did change. It did not happen overnight, and there were still periods of despondency, but by working to be happy, they began to see many things they should be happy about. Gradually the tension in the home subsided. While Julie did not noticeably change her behavior, the other children and Tom and Dayna became more comfortable around each other, and the joking and laughter that had been absent for so long began to return.

Julie ultimately moved out, got married, and lived a life quite different from the other family members' lives. Her lifestyle was not gospel centered, but she loved to come home because of the love and happiness that existed there. After a number of years, she began to go to church again, and her husband asked to take the missionary lessons. He said he wanted to have in his home what he felt in Tom and Dayna's home.

How are children to know that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings happiness if their parents are not happy as they try to live it? How can they know that peace comes from righteousness, regardless of one's external circumstances, if parents are not at peace in the midst of their own stresses?

It is easy to say we should all be happy, but how do we do it? Can we just say, "From now on I am going to be happy"? Not quite—but almost. Happiness is a frame of mind, a perspective, a desire. To want to be happy is mandatory before one can ever be happy or at peace. Here are some ideas to help you increase your happiness:

- Dictate your own happiness. Don't let a problem child dictate it for you. Try not to let circumstances overwhelm you emotionally, financially, spiritually, or physically. Pray for the influence of the Holy Ghost.
- Realize that time is on your side. Most challenges with adult children are not resolved quickly, but time often works in favor of ultimate resolution.
- Take a break from your challenges. Don't cancel your weekly spouse dates. If you have put off a vacation until

things get better, go now so things *can* get better.

- Lose yourself in service to others. Often, acts of service relieve the burdens of those who are serving.
- Take time to "be still." It is usually in spiritual solitude that we are able to hear the quiet whisperings of the Holy Ghost (see Psalm 45:10).

Happiness is a decision. If we truly want it, we will do what is necessary to obtain it.

### The Proper Focus

As Latter-day Saints, we should realize the importance of our lifelong responsibility and find appropriate ways to be involved in the lives of our adult children. When we focus our lives on Jesus Christ and seek to offer our "whole souls" to Him (see Omni 1:26), our ability to love our children with His pure love is enhanced. This, in turn, increases our sensitivity to the promptings of the Holy Ghost as we make decisions. If we are prayerful and try to do our best, the Lord will help us, and we can feel good about our efforts, regardless of the choices our children may make. ■

*\*Names have been changed.*

### NOTE

1. "To the Fathers in Israel," *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 48.



## 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. Ask parents and children to reverse roles. Role-play several instances in which the "parents" must counsel their "children" about family rules (such as curfews, Sabbath observance, dress standards). Discuss how it felt to switch roles and how roles will change throughout a person's life.
2. Tell each of the children's day-you-were-born stories. Discuss how you felt as their parent. Do they think they will ever stop being your child? Using the first section of the article and the first principle, testify that families are forever and that you will always be their parent.



# FOLLOWING

BY CHERYL C. LANT  
Primary General President

**M**any years ago, my husband, John, and I spent a week with our young children at a camp for families. We had a wonderful time enjoying the beauty of the mountains, the companionship of the other families, and the enrichment of the programs and classes offered at the camp.

One afternoon John and I left the two youngest children—Trish, age three, and Mindy, age two—at the camp nursery so that we could participate in some of the adult classes. As the afternoon progressed, we called the nursery several times to make sure the children were OK. After one such call, I had a strong impression that we needed to return to the children, even though we had been told all was well.

The nursery facility was some distance away—down a steep incline and up the other

side of the canyon—but John and I hurried there. When we arrived, we saw that Mindy was indeed playing happily, but Trish was nowhere to be found. We had no idea how long she had been gone. Fear and dread began to grip our hearts.

The nursery cabin was in an isolated, rugged part of the forest. A deep canyon with a swift stream of water lay directly behind the nursery. Our family was staying in a cabin about a quarter mile from the area. The road leading from our cabin to the nursery was winding and lined with pine forest. Several roads branched off it. We had walked that road only once.

Our first inclination was to dash about, calling Trish's name. But we soon realized we desperately needed the guidance of the Spirit, so we slipped behind one of the cabins and knelt in prayer, begging Heavenly Father to help us. Immediately upon finishing our



*When we discovered our daughter was missing, our first inclination was to dash about, calling Trish's name. But we soon realized we desperately needed the guidance of the Spirit.*





# THE HOLY GHOST

prayer, and without saying a word to each other, John and I both began to run back toward our cabin. As we approached, we could see that the normally locked cabin door was ajar. As we entered, we found Trish, on her bed fast asleep. How grateful we were to see her! We knew the Spirit had directed us to her. And we knew the Spirit had led Trish along the unfamiliar, threatening path to find her way home. That Spirit is the Holy Ghost.


I have often related this experience to our lives in mortality. Just as the mountain was full of dangers for our little girl, the world holds influences that would pull us away from heaven. The dark forest is like the evils of the world, threatening to block out the sunlight of truth. The many paths along the road are like the choices that are presented to us each day, many of which look good and are appealing to our senses but do not lead back to our heavenly home. In life, as in the mountains, there are temptations that can confuse and distract us. The fear John and I felt for our child's safety could have immobilized us, making us unable to respond to the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. Likewise, fear and self-doubt are used by

Satan to stop our progression and cloud our perspective, making us less effective and slower to respond to the direction of the Spirit.

Faith is the opposite of fear. So as we seek the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, we must do so with faith. This faith enables us to act upon the promptings we receive. As we act upon the promptings, we are blessed and our faith is strengthened.

The Lord has given us, as members of His Church, the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost does not usually communicate to us in spectacular ways, as we learn in an Old Testament story about the prophet Elijah. In 1 Kings 19, Elijah journeyed to Horeb, “the mount of God.” There he witnessed a great wind so strong that it “brake in pieces the rocks . . . but the Lord was not in the wind.” The wind was followed by an earthquake, “but the Lord was not in the earthquake.” Finally, the earthquake was followed by a fire, “but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice” (vv. 8, 11–12).

So it is with us. The Holy Ghost most often communicates with us in quiet ways, usually through feelings or



***The Lord spoke to the prophet Elijah, not through a great wind, an earthquake, or a fire, but through “a still small voice.” And so the Holy Ghost communicates with us.***

impressions. As President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has said, its comforting influence “can abide with us twenty-four hours a day: when we work, when we play, when we rest. Its strengthening influence can be with us year in and year out. That sustaining influence can be with us in joy and sorrow, when we rejoice as well as when we grieve.”<sup>1</sup>

The Holy Ghost can be a personal and constant companion to each of us. It can be a revelator, a comforter, and a guide. It can help us make correct choices and recognize the truth. It can enlighten and invigorate our minds. It can bring us peace and joy. It can protect and inspire. But it can bless us only if we live worthy of

its companionship. This is up to us. We must pray and

ask Heavenly Father to send the Holy Ghost. Then we must do all in our power to qualify ourselves to be worthy of it. When we keep the commandments, our worthiness increases, and we can enjoy the blessings of the Holy Ghost.

Our Heavenly Father has shown us the way back home. He has given us the Holy Ghost to help us return to Him. He knows and loves each one of us. As we follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost, we will be able to return to Him. I pray we may all live worthy to claim this rich blessing. ■

#### **NOTE**

1. “The Gift of the Holy Ghost: A Sure Compass,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1996, 5.



### **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. Ask family members to close their eyes and imagine the following scenario. Read the story, stopping right at the point when the parents found out their daughter was missing. Ask the family what they would do. Finish the story. Testify of how the Spirit can guide us in all aspects of our lives.

2. Have family members repeat the first and fourth Articles of Faith. Discuss the nature of the Holy Ghost and what having this gift means. Discuss how we can identify the Holy Ghost's promptings and influence, and invite family members to tell about times when they have felt the Holy Ghost. Using the second half of the article, look for ways the Holy Ghost communicates and how we can be worthy of receiving the Spirit's guidance.

3. Ask family members to describe the qualities of a best friend. Discuss how the Holy Ghost can be a personal and constant friend and how we can be more sensitive to the Spirit's communication.



# Strengthening 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.*

## Blessings of Belonging to Relief

**Society:** Relief Society encourages provident living, wise home management, and participation in temple and family history work to help each sister honor her heritage.

**Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president:** “My belonging to Relief Society has renewed, strengthened, and committed me to be a better wife and mother and daughter of God. My heart has been enlarged with gospel understanding and with love of the Savior and what He’s done for me. So to you, dear sisters, I say: Come to Relief Society! It will fill your homes with love and charity; it will nurture and strengthen you and your families” (“How Has Relief Society Blessed Your Life?” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 35).

## How Does Wise Home Management Strengthen Our Families?

**D&C 93:43, 50:** “Set in order your own house. . . . See that [you] are more diligent and concerned at home.”

**Proverbs 31:10, 13, 25, 27:** “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. . . .

“She . . . worketh willingly with her hands. . . .

“Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. . . .

“She looketh well to the ways of her household.”

### President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“I urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt to the extent possible. Pay off debt as quickly as you can, and free yourselves from bondage.

“. . . If you have paid your debts, if you have a reserve, even though it be small, then should storms howl about your head, you will have shelter . . . and peace in your hearts” (“To the Boys and to the Men,” *Liabona*, Jan. 1999, 66; *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 54).

## How Do Temple Worship and Family History Work Strengthen Our Families?

### President Ezra Taft Benson

**(1899–1994):** “The temple is an ever present reminder that God intends the family to be eternal. . . . Go to the temple . . . that you may be entitled to the highest blessings of the priesthood. . . .

“. . . When you attend the temple and perform the ordinances that pertain to the house of the Lord, certain blessings will come to you:

“You will receive the Spirit of Elijah, which will turn your heart to

your spouse, to your children, and to your forebears.

“You will love your family with a deeper love than you have loved before” (“What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple,” *Tambuli*, Apr.–May 1985, 2, 6; *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, 6, 10).

### President Howard W. Hunter

**(1907–95):** “Attend the temple as frequently as personal circumstances allow. Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it. Teach them about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Have them plan from their earliest years to go there.

“. . . Gather in the history of your family and prepare the names for the sacred ordinances performed only in the temple. This family research is essential to the work of the temples, and blessings surely will come to those who do that work” (“Exceeding Great and Precious Promises,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 8). ■



# Check the Boys

By Mary Rich Goodwin

Our home in Manti, Utah, was small, and our family was very close. Our sons, Stewart and Chandler, played together constantly and shared a bedroom. The room was small, and the boys didn't seem to mind sharing a twin bed, one sleeping at each end. Their toes would barely reach to the middle, and often the sounds of giggling would escape as they tickled each other's feet.

They soon outgrew the bed, though, so we shopped around and decided to get bunk beds. Their excitement was overwhelming as my husband, Rex, set up the new beds. He attached a board across the top bunk to keep Stewart, age four, from rolling off the bed. Chandler was younger and smaller and had the bottom bunk. After family prayer they climbed happily into their new beds, and we heard giggling and whispering through their closed door. Eventually they went to sleep, and the house was quiet.

Housework, dishes, and laundry filled the rest of my evening, and I clutched Rex's hand tightly as we had our evening prayer. Finally we climbed into bed, exhausted from the day's work. It must have been only seconds before I was in a deep sleep.

I woke up around 2:00 a.m., opened my eyes, looked at the clock, and was ready to doze back to sleep when I heard a very quiet voice say, "Check the boys." I looked at Rex to see if he was awake, but he was sleeping soundly. I closed my eyes a second time, but again I heard,

**A**fter family prayer the boys climbed into their new beds, and we heard giggling and whispering through their closed door.





"Check the boys." My body was so tired I wasn't sure if I was awake, and once more I closed my eyes to go to sleep when I heard the voice a third time: "Check the boys." My mind began to fill with stories I had heard about the still, small voice. I couldn't imagine why I should check the boys, but finally I climbed out of bed and headed toward their room.

I walked down the dark hall and through the kitchen. All was quiet. I walked through the family room and finally reached the boys' door. I heard a faint whimpering in the bedroom. As I quietly opened the door, I looked at the new bunk beds, and to my horror, Chandler was hanging from the top bed. His skinny body had slipped through the space between the mattress and the board, but his head had caught. His small body hung limp. His only cry was a muffled whimper as his face was buried in the mattress. Stewart slept soundly on the bottom bunk, unaware of his brother's distress. They must have switched beds after we tucked them in for the night.

I quickly slipped Chandler back through the small space and held him tightly in my arms. His frightened, tear-filled eyes met mine. I realized how close he had come to death. I rocked him back to sleep and placed him in the bottom bed beside his brother. The image of Chandler hanging from the top bed haunted me. I knew he couldn't have survived for more than a few minutes.

As I watched my two sons sleep, I felt the protective Spirit of the Lord within my heart and realized I had been given a miracle that night. After returning to my bedroom, I knelt and thanked my Heavenly Father for the repeated prompting I had received and for the safety of our family. ■

## True to My Decision

By Yazmin Ojeda

I was 11 years old when I learned about the Church. From the moment I first entered the meetinghouse, I felt a beautiful spirit. I continued to attend for several months, during which time I turned 12 and started the Personal Progress program in Young Women. Two months later, on August 14, 1994, I was baptized.

It was surprising to the ward members to see a girl of 12 baptized by herself, without her parents. How did this happen? I asked my father if I could be baptized. He replied, "You're an intelligent young woman, and you will know what decision to make." I had already made the decision in my heart that I would never again be without the beautiful feeling I had when I heard the true gospel.

During middle school and high school I experienced wonderful and difficult years at the same time, because during adolescence a young person wants support from her parents. It wasn't easy to be the only member of the Church at home when my parents did things that were at odds with the Church's teachings. But I remembered what Nephi said, "If ye shall . . . endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life" (2 Nephi 31:20).

Years later my younger siblings were baptized, but my parents were not. The missionaries talked to them, but they did not want to be baptized. Their decision saddened me, but I knew I had set a good example.



**When President Hinckley visited our island and encouraged us to go to the temple, I made a firm decision that I would be married for eternity.**

When I was 16 I traveled to the temple in Orlando, Florida, and it was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life. I went by myself and was able to be baptized for my ancestors. Two years later, when I received my Young Womanhood Recognition, my joy could not be contained. I felt that our Heavenly Father was pleased with me.

When President Gordon B. Hinckley visited our beautiful island of Puerto Rico and spoke to the members, I had the privilege of singing in the choir. He urged us to go to the temple on the neighboring island of the Dominican Republic. I did, and in that temple I made a firm decision that I would be married for eternity to a returned missionary.

I reached this goal when I found a worthy priesthood holder who is a returned missionary. We were sealed in the Dominican Republic temple for time and eternity. We now have a baby boy, and I am serving in the stake Young Women presidency. My parents are still not members, but I am pleased with the example I have given them. I try to build on the good in my parents while forgetting their imperfections.

I know I belong to the true Church and that Jesus Christ is my Savior. My dream, which I pray for, is to be sealed someday to my parents and siblings. I love this gospel that has given me so much joy and hope in my life. ■

## *The Blessing*

By Joel R. Bryan

**E**van Payne owned and operated a gasoline and auto repair station in Thousand Oaks, California. He was quick with a smile and even quicker to remember people's names. He knew his customers, their children, and their cars. Evan worked long hours, six days a week, and was genuinely interested in helping people. He gave jobs to teenagers who had family problems or who were preparing for or returning from missions. He would stay late or arrive early to accommodate a customer. Nearly everyone in town knew Evan Payne and liked him.

Evan was also busy at home and at church. He and his wife, Becky, had five children, ages 7 to 13. He had served twice as a counselor in the bishopric, as bishop, and now as a counselor in our stake presidency.

Evan was young, athletic, happy, and outgoing. He had dark hair and a handsome face. He loved to ski and play Church softball and basketball. So it didn't seem possible when I heard that Evan had leukemia.

In the months following his diagnosis there were family, ward, and stake fasts. Evan went through chemotherapy and radiation. When Evan's illness did not go into remission, his brothers were tested to determine if they could be bone marrow donors. None

matched. He and Becky got their affairs in order and prepared for the worst, but in spite of the pain Evan remained upbeat and positive. He continued to work nearly every day, although he was clearly suffering.

One day my office phone rang. "Joel," Evan said, "what are you doing tonight? I want you to come with me to give a blessing to someone in your ward. Can you do it?"

"Sure," I said. "Who are we going to bless?"

"Sally Carlisle (names have been changed). She is an elderly lady from San Diego. She is in town visiting her daughter, Joan Wilson, who isn't active. I should be taking the Wilsons' home teacher, but I don't know who it is, and she needs a blessing right away. Can you pick me up?"

I had a sudden sinking feeling, and a wave of guilt flooded over me. For many months I had been assigned to home teach the Wilson family, but I had not even called them. Numerous times I had intended to call or stop by, but each time I rationalized my way out. I had not done my duty. I told Evan I would pick him up at 7:00.

As we drove Evan explained that the Wilsons had been customers at his service station for many years. Joan had been raised in the Church but had drifted into inactivity as a young adult. She had married Mike Wilson, who was not a member of the Church, and they had raised their four boys in Mike's religion. Evan explained that we would be giving a blessing to



Joan's mother, who had the flu. Joan had called Evan at the station and asked him to come. He was the only member of the Church she knew.

When we arrived at the Wilson home, Joan greeted us at the door but excused herself while we visited with her mother. Sally explained how much she wanted her daughter to come back to the Church and how she prayed for Mike and Joan to be able to receive the


blessings of the gospel. After we visited for a few minutes, I anointed Sally and Evan blessed her. It was a simple blessing of comfort and good health.

As I drove Evan home, I felt grateful to have witnessed that priesthood blessing. I was also grateful for the introduction to the Wilson family and for spending those moments with Evan Payne, who passed away just a few months later.

In the following years I visited the Wilson home regularly. They welcomed me and remembered me as Evan's friend. At first we just talked about Evan and what a great power for good he had been in our community. I remained the Wilsons' home teacher for 15 years, and I tried to be like Evan and help whenever I could. Mike and Joan became my good friends and blessed my life in return.

Although Joan did not return to activity and Mike did not join the Church, I will always treasure their love and friendship. I was serving as bishop when Joan passed away. At the time of her death, Mike donated a large sum to the ward missionary fund. That money supported a missionary from our ward who joined the Church as a teenager and had no family resources to allow him to serve. Mike's contribution indirectly touched the lives of the many converts that young elder taught.

Although I am certain Evan Payne did not intend to teach me any lessons that night many years ago, I learned that it is no burden to be about the Lord's business. I try to be, as Evan was, truly interested in and concerned for our Heavenly Father's children. And as a home teacher I try to be as faithful as Evan was and as the Savior would want me to be. ■



**I** anointed Sister Carlisle, and Evan blessed her. As I drove him home, I felt grateful for spending those moments with Evan Payne.

## Productive Summer Fun

**W**ant to help your children enjoy a productive summer? Spend time learning together. Following are a variety of ideas to add to your own.

- **Organize “learning stations.”**

Have an older child spend some time each day helping a younger child. The “tutoring” child could teach or review the alphabet, numbers, phonics, multiplication facts, or geographical names.

- **Feature “alphabet” days.** For younger children, spend a couple of days teaching each letter. For instance, on “A” days, eat foods beginning with A, learn about “A” animals and countries, and go on a field trip to “A” destinations. With 26 possibilities, this idea provides a host of summer fun.

- **Read together.** Visit your public library and discover age-appropriate books to read aloud with your children. Participate in summer youth programs offered there.

- **Schedule quiet time.** Help children become more independent by establishing a quiet hour each afternoon. The child spends the time alone in a nearby room, choosing his or her own activities, such as reading, writing, scrapbooking, doing puzzles or workbooks, or completing projects such as crocheting or organizing a drawer.



- **Encourage correspondence.**

Help your children write letters to family and friends. The handwriting practice is good, the process of addressing and stamping an envelope develops a new skill, and the rewards are great as return mail arrives.

*Marilynne Linford, Utah*

## Memorizing Isn't Just for Youth

**A**s people grow older, some feel concerned about keeping their minds invigorated. There are many activities that can contribute to expanding the mind.

I have found that memorizing the scriptures helps stimulate my mind. First, I begin with a single line and repeat it over and over until I feel ready to add another line or phrase. For reference, I write the full scripture on an index card and carry it in my purse or pocket. Over time I have acquired many scripture cards, which I have bound into a small booklet to help me easily review them.

As I have committed the scriptures to memory, their meanings have become clearer to me. I often discover connections between them that I hadn't realized before, thus enhancing my appreciation for Heavenly Father's blessings in my life.

*Patricia Thelin, Utah*



## Finding Comfort at the Loss of a Spouse

After 32 years of marriage, my husband, Clyn, passed away following a short illness. Even with faith in the eternal marriage covenant and gospel plan, the ensuing years have been painful and lonely. However, I have found comfort and strength through some things we did before we knew of my husband's illness and some that I have done following his death.

### Before a Spouse's Death:

#### **Discuss together the "what-ifs."**

"If I were to die, I would want you to . . ." "I would want you to remember and know . . ." Talking about such things openly before emergencies arise provides great comfort later.

**Build fond memories.** Live in a loving, warm relationship, spending happy time together. Don't postpone experiences but enjoy them throughout your marriage. Preserve journal entries and photos of these special occasions.

#### **Record your thoughts and feelings.**

My husband's love expressed in letters to me, his testimony written in talks, and his goals and desires for our family recorded in other documents bring me great



### A Wagon in Our Living Room

"Get your wagon ready!" I imagine pioneer leaders called out. Years ago my father helped our family recreate our own version of a pioneer experience—right in the living room. First my dad laid boards on the floor about the size of a covered wagon. (You could also spread blankets or use other items for a similar effect.) He

then loaded containers of water, food, blankets, family history records, and other necessities. With our wagon almost ready, he instructed that we each had five minutes to choose three items to place on our confined space. When we were ready, Dad asked us to tell why we had made our selections. I remember choosing my journal and gifts from family and friends—all items that had great sentimental value to me.

To enhance this activity, perhaps your family has a pioneer heritage story you could tell. Or you might select one from Church magazine articles, available at lds.org. As you reflect upon the pioneers' sacrifices, you can focus on what's most important in your own life. Our "wagon" experience taught me that most worldly possessions can be left behind at a moment's notice, but we need our family and the gospel for our eternal journey.

Rachel Harper  
Holloway, Utah



comfort and assurance. Musical recordings of his performances, which are deep expressions of his soul, are priceless.

**Learn to be self-reliant.** Along with strengthening marital unity, make sure that both of you have participated in each other's usual responsibilities at home and know names and phone numbers of people to contact for help.

### After a Spouse's Death:

**Plan a daily schedule.** Keeping busy can be an important way of dealing with loss. Before retiring at night, I organize my schedule for the

following day, a practice that helps me arise each morning with a sense of purpose and renewed courage.

**Participate in public settings.** It can be helpful after a spouse's death to return to group settings as soon as you can. The support and love of others are essential as one attempts to build a new life.

**Increase your faith.** Savoring the words of prophets and attending the temple frequently, accompanied with earnest prayer, have strengthened my faith and courage and have made my loved one seem closer in spirit.

Marilyn Barrus, Utah

## Church Supports Call for Constitutional Amendment

In April Church leaders added their voices to those of the leaders of many other religions in support of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to protect and preserve the institution of marriage between a man and a woman.

"We take the unprecedented stand of uniting to call for a constitutional amendment to establish a uniform national definition of marriage as the exclusive union of one man and one woman," states a letter signed by American religious leaders, including Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "We are convinced that this is the only measure that will adequately protect marriage from those who would circumvent the legislative process and force a redefinition of it on the whole of our society" ("A Letter from America's Religious Leaders in Defense of Marriage," <http://www.religiouscoalitionformarriage.org>).

The doctrine of the Church affirms marriage between a man and a woman, and it opposes same-gender unions and any other sexual relations outside of marriage.

"The union of husband and wife assures perpetuation of the race and provides a divinely ordained setting for the

nurturing and teaching of children," stated a news release based on a letter dated February 1, 1994, from the First Presidency to priesthood leaders. "This sacred family setting, with father and mother and children firmly committed to each other and to righteous living, offers the best hope for avoiding many of the ills that afflict society."

"The Family: A Proclamation to the World" states, "We call upon responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

Because national campaigns on moral, social, or political issues often become divisive, the Church urges those who participate in public debate to be respectful of others.

"We can and do work with those of other religions in various undertakings in the everlasting fight against social evils which threaten the treasured values which are so important to all of us," President Hinckley said in April 1998 general conference. "These people are not of our faith, but they are our friends, neighbors, and co-workers in a variety of causes. We are pleased to lend our strength to their efforts. But in all of this there is no doctrinal compromise. There need not be and must not be on our part. But there is a degree of fellowship as we labor together" ("We Bear Witness of Him," *Ensign*, May 1998, 4–5).

The Church has previously issued two statements in support of a constitutional amendment on marriage—on July 7, 2004, and on October 19, 2004.

The October 2004 First Presidency statement reads: "We of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reach out with understanding and respect for individuals who are attracted to those of the same gender. We realize there may be great loneliness in their lives but there must also be recognition of what is right before the Lord.

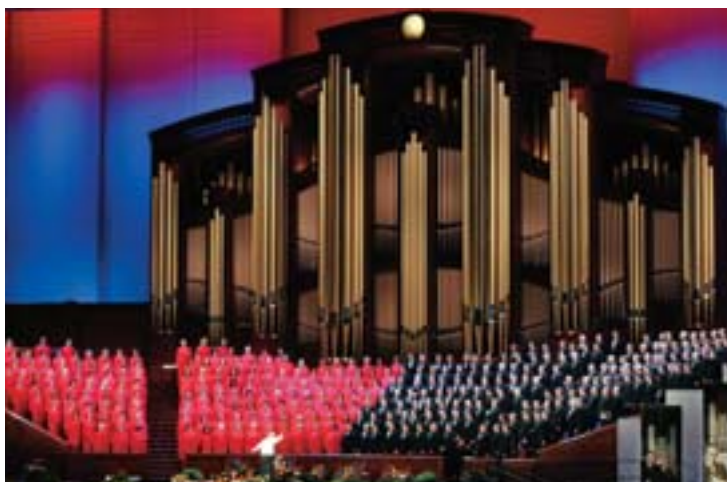
"As a doctrinal principle, based on sacred scripture, we affirm that marriage between a man and a woman is essential to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children. The powers of procreation are to be exercised only between a man and a woman lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

"Any other sexual relations, including those between persons of the same gender, undermine the divinely created institution of the family. The Church accordingly favors measures that define marriage as the union of a man and a woman and that do not confer legal status on any other sexual relationship." ■



**Church leaders have proclaimed the family as the "fundamental unit of society."**





**The Mormon Tabernacle Choir performs during the 4,000th broadcast of *Music and the Spoken Word*.**

## Tabernacle Choir Honored for 4,000th Broadcast

By Brittany Karford, Church Magazines

**B**oth President Gordon B. Hinckley and U.S. president George W. Bush had something to say at the 4,000th broadcast of *Music and the Spoken Word*, the world's longest-running continuous network radio broadcast.

The 4,000th program is but one more record for the weekly Sunday broadcast. It is a notable achievement for broadcasting, both in the United States and around the world.

"We are thrilled with its continued prosperity," said Scott Barrick, general manager of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, which performs at every broadcast. "People still love the music—it's a vibrant force for good in the world today."

The 4,000th broadcast featured "A Legacy of Music through 4,000 Broadcasts"—a special retrospective

broadcast tracing historical and meaningful moments in the program's 77-year history—and included a recorded message from President Bush.

Brother Barrick said the president was grateful to be involved. During its nearly 160-year history, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir

has performed for ten U.S. presidents and at five presidential inaugurations. The choir's most recent appearance at the White House was in November 2003 to be awarded the National Medal of Arts, the nation's highest honor for artistic excellence.

Recognition during the program also came from Utah governor Jon Huntsman Jr., who proclaimed the April 30th milestone as Mormon Tabernacle Choir Day in Utah.

Yet even with all the choir has accomplished, Brother Barrick said there is much more to look forward to. "President Hinckley said the choir is only at the foothills of what it could accomplish," he said, recalling the prophet's words from the 2004 celebration of *Music and the Spoken Word's* 75th year. "The 4,000th is just another marker on the slope President Hinckley has asked us to climb."



**President Gordon B. Hinckley honors the choir for reaching the 4,000th broadcast milestone.**

Those in attendance at the Conference Center were privileged to see and hear from President Hinckley, who spoke briefly in a live program following the retrospective broadcast. U.S. senator Orrin Hatch, Governor Huntsman, and others who are involved with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir also gave brief statements.

Led by music director Craig Jessop, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir performed with the Orchestra at Temple Square following the broadcast. Since its initial broadcast on July 15, 1929, *Music and the Spoken Word* has featured the Mormon Tabernacle Choir weekly, joined in recent years by the orchestra. Over the years the program has featured a variety of religious, patriotic, folk, show-tune, and other music, accompanied by inspirational spoken messages. ■

## Pioneer Day Concert Set for Broadcast

By Abbey Olsen, Church Magazines

**T**housands will gather in the Conference Center on July 21, 2006, for a Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra on Temple Square concert to celebrate the 159th anniversary of the first Latter-day Saint pioneer company to enter the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847, and the 150th anniversary of the first handcart companies to enter the valley.

“The choir and orchestra are honored to be invited by the First Presidency to help commemorate the great latter-day pioneers who laid the foundation for so much of what we cherish as members of the Church,” Mormon Tabernacle Choir music director Craig Jessop told the Church Magazines. “Our commemoration concert will be a celebration of the pioneer spirit not only of those who went before us but also of those who are pioneering in the Church today.”

One such pioneering family, the Brett Family Singers, has been invited to perform with the choir and orchestra at the concert. This Latter-day Saint family performs a daily morning variety show broadcast on PBS television from Branson, Missouri.

Three years have passed since the last Pioneer Day commemoration concert. In 2005 the choir and orchestra focused on celebrating President Gordon B. Hinckley’s 95th birthday, and in 2004, the 75th anniversary of *Music and the Spoken Word*.

Past Pioneer Day concerts have included music from the Nauvoo Illinois Temple dedication and hymns associated with pioneer heritage. The Pioneer Day concert this year is listed as an official event in Salt Lake City’s pioneer celebration, the Days of ’47.

The Pioneer Day commemorative concert will be broadcast over the Church satellite system at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, July 21,

to meetinghouses worldwide, with subsequent rebroadcasts. Live audio, and later archived audio and video, versions will be available at [www.lds.org/broadcast](http://www.lds.org/broadcast).

The Internet audio live and archived versions of the concert will be available in 17 languages (English, Cambodian, Cantonese, French, Haitian, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Marshallese, Navajo, Polish, Portuguese, Samoan, Spanish, Tongan, and Vietnamese).

The archived video version will be available in English, American Sign Language, and Spanish.

The concert will also be rebroadcast Sunday, July 23, over the Church satellite system to meetinghouses in the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean in 15 languages (English, Cambodian, Cantonese, French, Haitian, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Navajo, Portuguese, Samoan, Spanish, Tongan, and Vietnamese). ■

## Visitors’ Center Reopens in Independence

**J**ust about everything is different than it used to be inside the Independence Visitors’ Center in Independence, Missouri, which recently reopened after more than a year of renovations.

Closed for 13 months, the visitors’ center opened its two new theaters, 23 exhibits, and unique interactive children’s area to the public in March. The new features give more than a historical context of Independence.

“It’s really almost completely different,” says Sister Stacy Jorgensen, who served as a full-time missionary in the center prior to its closure. Before, she says, missionaries did most of the tour, which emphasized the background of Independence. And that was for a good reason—the center stands 70 miles south of Adam-ondi-Ahman and across the street from the site consecrated for a temple by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Needless to say, the center still retains a historical presence, with features such as a log cabin exhibit of frontier life and a replica of the William W. Phelps printing press used to print the *Evening and Morning Star*, the Church’s first newspaper. But it also incorporates the rich historical background of Independence with its marvelous future through a focus

on Christ and His role in the eternal plan of happiness for Heavenly Father’s children.

Many who visit the center comment about a replica of the *Christus* statue standing at the entrance. It replaces the 28-foot (8.5-m) mural that once stood in the entryway.

“You see Christ is the centerpiece of our religion—it is just so clear,” says Jose Mendoza, a member of the Independence Third Ward. He received a tour of the center in Spanish along with his father-in-law. “My father-in-law does not easily express his feelings,” Brother Mendoza said. “But after the tour, he said to me: ‘I have no doubt that God exists.’ It was incredible—to see him almost in tears over what he saw and felt. Whether you are a Church member or not, you can be touched by the message delivered there.”

The center’s three missionary couples, 16 sister missionaries, and additional volunteers are eager to share the gospel through the center, where interactive media



**The recently reopened visitors’ center includes this re-creation of the William W. Phelps print shop.**



exhibits answer questions about the gospel and the Lord's plan for families. Visitors can also see some 30 different Church films on request, including the new production, *Joseph Smith The Prophet of the Restoration*.

"Before, we were *telling* people about the plan of salvation," says Paul Tonga, who worked as a host in the old center. "Today we *show*

them." After visiting the center with his wife, Brother Tonga could not wait to return with his 7 children and 18 grandchildren. "The message is there for families and individuals—whoever decides to follow Christ," he said.

The Independence Visitors' Center is open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. seven days a week, free of charge. ■

## Taiwan Jubilee: Saints Celebrate 50 years

**M**elvin C. Fish was one of the first four missionaries to set foot in Taiwan. He was also the first Relief Society president—just one of the many privileges that come with opening a new mission in a new land. Now, 50 years later, there are nine stake Relief Society presidents. Those 50 years are also marked by the creation of three missions, construction of a temple, and membership approaching 50,000.

From those first 4 elders in 1956 to almost 400 elders in 2006, missionaries and members are celebrating half a century of the gospel in Taiwan.

"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you," Elder Ho Yu-Chen, an Area Seventy, reads from Leviticus 25:10 as he talks about events to commemorate 50 years of the Church in Taiwan.

Members and missionaries

are invited to pedal from Taitung or Hangchuen, depending on the route, all the way to Taipei in the Taiwan Legacy Bike Relay.

"Two missionaries riding bikes have been the symbol of our Church in Taiwan," Elder Ho explains. Missionaries are even pictured on bicycles in children's textbooks in Taiwan.

As such, the Taiwan Jubilee logo features two missionaries on bikes, and the relay requires missionary-standard clothing, including helmets with reflective stickers. With team leaders carrying flags and a support car trailing, they expect to receive some local media coverage. The journey, from July 31 to August 7, requires a six- or seven-hour ride of about 50 miles (80 km) per day, finishing at the Taipei Taiwan Temple.

Officially, the summer events kicked off in May with historic firesides taking place in three key locations: Kaohsiung, Taichung, and Taipei, culminating in a

dedication commemoration at the Grand Hotel in Taipei on June 3. This is believed to be the site where Elder Mark E. Petersen, an Apostle, dedicated Taiwan to the preaching of the gospel on June 1, 1959.

Several cultural performances are planned in July and August, featuring drama, dancing, and a 50-member orchestra, in addition to member-missionary reunions,

leader appreciation dinners, and the much-anticipated islandwide youth conference.

"We focus on that because that's the future of our Church," Elder Ho says of the youth conference. Coordinating with three Especially for Youth trainers from Brigham Young University, organizers plan on more than 1,000 youth attending. ■

### A Time Line of the Church in Taiwan

- 1956** Four missionaries arrive in Taiwan to preach the gospel.
- 1959** Elder Mark E. Petersen (1900–1984) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicates Taiwan for missionary work.
- 1965** First Chinese edition of the Book of Mormon is published.
- 1971** Taiwan Mission is organized.
- 1975** President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) presides over a Taiwan regional conference.
- 1975** First Chinese edition of the Doctrine and Covenants is published.
- 1976** Taipei stake, Taiwan's first stake, is organized by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley.
- 1976** First Chinese edition of the Pearl of Great Price is published.
- 1980** President Spencer W. Kimball returns to preside over another Taiwan regional conference.
- 1984** Taipei Taiwan Temple is dedicated.
- 1996** President Gordon B. Hinckley presides over a special conference.
- 1999** Church magazine the *Voice of Saints* becomes the *Liabona*.
- 2000** Taipei Employment Resource Service Center (ERSC) is created.
- 2001** Church's Chinese name is changed from 耶穌基督末世聖徒教會 to 耶穌基督後期聖徒教會.
- 2005** President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicates the new Church Administration Building—Taipei.

# Seminary and Church Magazines Music Now Available Online at LDS.org

The Olive Tree,” “Walk His Way,” and “I’ll Trust in the Lord” are a few of several seminary video song titles visitors to the Church music section of LDS.org can now download as sheet music in English and as MP3s.

The Music and Cultural Arts Division of the Priesthood Department has updated the “Other Music” section of the Web site to include the digital music files and printable music from the Church Educational System video series, which includes the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Old Testament, and New

Testament sound tracks.

Besides making available the new seminary sheet music, the site now links to music from the Church magazines, which is indexed alphabetically, by topic, and by author/composer.

The update gives youth, choirs, children, and families another, more accessible, resource for music.

“The hope is to provide some uplifting, modern music that seminary students are familiar with and can listen to and enjoy,” says Ron Schwendiman, manager of Internet coordination in the Church’s Curriculum

Department, who worked on the project.

The goal is to strengthen testimonies, families, and overall knowledge of the gospel, he says.

Diane R. Bastian, product manager of the Church music Web site, says that in addition to the Priesthood Department’s emphasis on providing more material for the youth, the department is also focused on making the music site accessible in different languages. She says feedback received from the Web site indicates, “We love your English site, but we want something in our language.”

The Priesthood Department is working to make Church music available in Spanish, Portuguese, and French and also plans to make selected music from the *Children’s Songbook* and *Hymns* available in American Sign Language.

The Church music site launched in May 2004, and the update and other music resources can be accessed at [www.lds.org/cm](http://www.lds.org/cm). ■

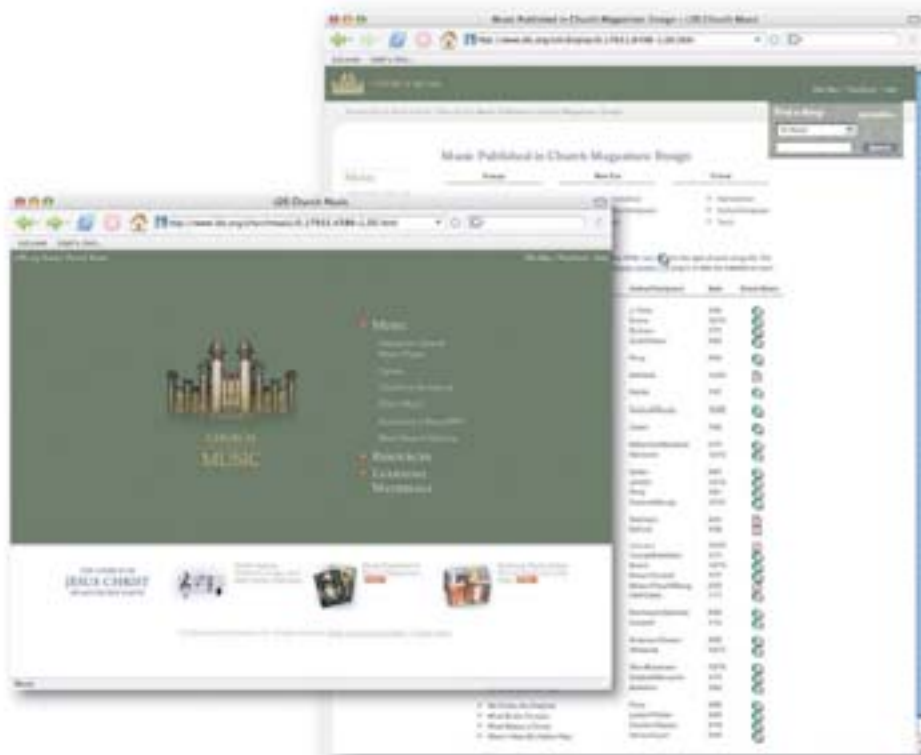
## EFY Marks 30 Years, Looks Ahead

This year 50,000 youth from all over the world will take part in the 30th year of the Especially for Youth summer program. This summer 100 sessions are taking place, the most ever and in more places than ever before.

The program has become a phenomenon over the last 30 years, as youth return for an atmosphere that program director Greg Tanner says changes their hearts.

“They come back because the Spirit is here,” he says. “It comes down to the strength of the youth.”

In the weeklong gathering, teens ages 14 to 18 kneel in prayer together, get to know each other, and bear their testimonies to peers they have never met before. Between dances and variety shows, sharing meals and living quarters, and in-depth doctrinal study and firesides, the youth, who were strangers at the beginning of the week,



Sheet music printed in the *Ensign*, *New Era*, and *Friend* is now available online, as are the MP3 files for music from seminary videos.



find it difficult to part.

Brother Tanner's recent questions to youth in Mexico sum it up: "How many of you have two friends your age who are members?" Almost all the hands go up.

"How many of you have five?" A few hands go down.

"Ten?" Few hands are left.

"Well, at EFY you have 600!"

Or more. Attendance at the largest-ever session held at Brigham Young University in July 2004 boasted 1,400 participants—far more than the first EFY in 1976. That year 172 participants and 15 counselors gathered in Helaman Halls dormitories at BYU. The following year 863 attended, an increase of 500 percent.

The Provo location is not necessarily the best, adds assistant EFY director Pete Kadish. Many of the regional sessions may be more financially feasible. At the six EFY sessions in Virginia this summer, more than 2,000 participants are expected to attend.

Dan Heaton, a director of the Virginia conference, has attended EFY as a participant, a counselor, and now a liaison for the regional programs as he studies law in Washington, D.C. "I've felt the impact, and I want to give something back to the youth," Brother Heaton says.

EFY recruits worthy, enthusiastic, young single adults as counselors for the youth, a choice Brother Tanner says makes a powerful connection. "The youth look up to them," he says. "They see these young adults—

they've made it and they are happy and energetic—they absolutely love that," Brother Tanner says.

The response is overwhelming, as EFY has expanded to 34 of the 50 states, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Ireland. A "Best of EFY" program takes the sessions' best speakers on tours to stakes by request, and participants have come from more than 15 countries, including Australia, China, and Uganda, to name a few.

"Our goal is to reach as many youth as we possibly can," says Brother Tanner, looking to the future. "Wherever they may be." ■

## Call for Articles

Are you a Church member with a physical disability? Or are you a caretaker, teacher, or leader of someone with such a disability? We invite you to submit personal accounts of how you or others have adapted Church programs or materials to fit the needs of those with physical disabilities.

Please send your submission (500 words or less) by August 21, 2006, to [ensign@ldschurch.org](mailto:ensign@ldschurch.org) or to *Ensign* Editorial, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-3220, USA. Clearly mark your submission "Adapting," 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.

## Comment

### Remaining in the Field

I recently read in the April issue of the *Ensign* the article titled "I Needed to Know," about the sister missionary who lost her father while serving our Heavenly Father. This article spoke directly to me, showing me what kind of trial it can be for a very limited number of missionaries. I lost my father seven months ago in a motorcycle accident and am still serving my own mission. When my mission president showed up on our doorstep at 6:30 a.m., I knew something wasn't right. He quickly informed me of the terrible news, and I was in shock. As I called home, I too was surprised to hear my bishop's voice on the other end. It wasn't easy for me to deal with my father's death, and I wanted to go home for funeral services. But my supplication in prayer to my Heavenly Father revealed that the answer would be found in my patriarchal blessing. As I read it over the phone to my sister, a certain phrase made sense to me that I hadn't ever understood before. It was clear to me from then on, and now I know that remaining in the field was the best thing for me to do. Our Heavenly

Father watches over us, especially in the more dire circumstances.

Elder Brant Cox,  
Switzerland Zurich Mission

### His Child

It's 2:30 a.m., and I am awake because I had a nightmare. Being a single mother, I cannot rely on a husband to comfort me after scary dreams, but I have come to rely on the Lord. After saying a prayer, I decided to read the *Ensign* to calm my spirit. Wouldn't you know it—the second article I read was "Our Child, His Child," about a faithful father comforting his daughter after a scary dream. A coincidence? Perhaps, but I am grateful to my Heavenly Father, who knows exactly how to bring me peace after my scary dreams, and I'm grateful to the *Ensign* for being there when I need it—even at 2:00 a.m. Thank you. Jenny McMullin, Arizona

### Ensign and Improvement Era

Thank you for the wonderful *Ensign* magazine. I love every issue, and even though we watch the sessions of general conference, I try to read every issue from cover to cover.

During World War II, I subscribed to 10 years of the *Improvement Era*, as I never wanted to be without it. Recently I ran across the July 1947 issue of the *Era*, and I sat down, looked through it, and cried as I thought about the wonderful influence it has been in my life in building my testimony. Thank you, thank you.

Sarah C. Fernsten, California



# MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

J U L Y 2 0 0 6

wings.' Without it, there is no lift, no climb. . . . The Holy Ghost will be the wind beneath your wings." To read more from Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles about our journey toward eternal life, see page 10.

## A STILL, SMALL VOICE

When Cheryl Lant, Primary general president, and her husband discovered their daughter was missing, they realized they needed guidance from the Holy Ghost. To read how the Spirit guided Brother and Sister Lant and their young daughter, see page 64.

## For Singles

### BROKEN UP OVER BREAKING UP?

Are you experiencing feelings of loss and depression because of a broken relationship? Does it seem like you'll never quite get over the hurt? There are ways to deal with

these feelings. For help in learning to cope, see page 28.

## Yelled At, Barked At, and Rained On

"How could you not tell me how horrible it is?" Sister Betz wrote from the mission field to her MTC instructor. "Don't worry," Elder Newman wrote back. "It will get better." To read about how Sister Betz grew to love her mission, see page 24.

## Handcarts across the Plains

It has been 150 years since the first handcart pioneers "walked and walked and walked" to the valley of the Great Salt Lake. This month's arts package honors those stalwart Saints who crossed half a continent to gather with fellow Saints in the tops of the mountains. See page 38.

## The Power of Hymns

Has a hymn ever changed your life? Five members tell of

their experiences with hymns that brought them peace, courage, faith, and comfort. See page 34.

## Slaves to Sin?

Many people fall into spiritual bondage because of damaging or addictive choices they make. "How, then, does one 'shake off



## Breaking the Chains of Sin, p. 52

the awful chains' of spiritual captivity?" asks Elder H. Ross Workman of the Seventy. Read his answer on page 52.

## Home, Visiting Teaching

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 67.

## For Parents

### ETERNAL PARENTHOOD

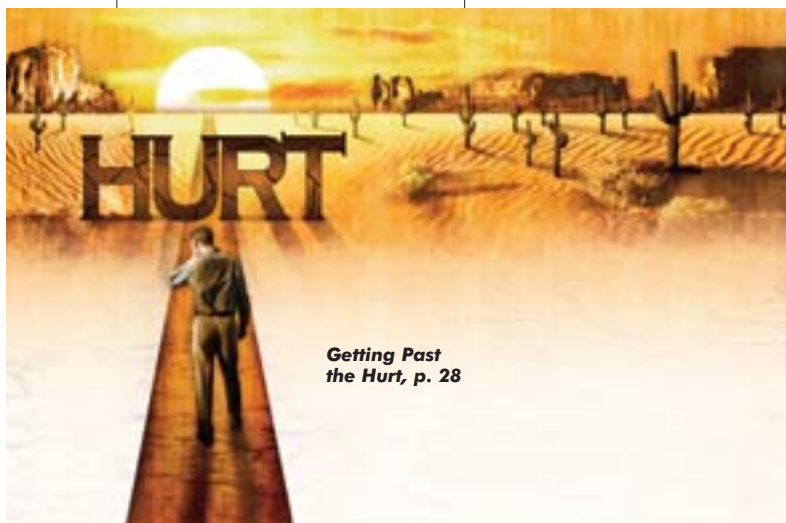
Some parents think their responsibility ends when the children leave home. But fathers and mothers should be appropriately involved in their adult children's lives. What is "appropriate" when helping adult children face problems? See page 58 for some counsel on the topic.

### WHOM IS YOUR CHILD DATING?

Happy anticipation before the date turned into years of anguish and suffering. But the power of the gospel and the love of others helped her overcome the pain of the assault. Please see "A Hole in Her Soul," page 16.

### Learning as We Listen ON THE WINGS OF EAGLES

"Many things are required to make an airplane fly and fly safely, but the most important thing . . . is the 'wind beneath your



Getting Past the Hurt, p. 28

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MAY NOT BE COPIED

**Into the Storm, by Byron Pixton**

*On this 150th anniversary of the handcart pioneers, we remember the 10 handcart companies that made their way from Iowa City, Iowa, and Florence, Nebraska, to the Salt Lake Valley between 1856 and 1860. While most of these companies traveled the more than 1,000 miles (1,600 km) with little trouble, two companies became stranded in early snowstorms in Wyoming, where many died.*



“I believe in God the  
Eternal Father, and in His  
Son, Jesus Christ, and in  
the Holy Ghost. . . . I have  
no question concerning  
Their reality and Their

individuality. That individuality was made apparent  
when Jesus was baptized by John in Jordan.  
There in the water stood the Son of God. His  
Father’s voice was heard declaring His divine  
sonship, and the Holy Ghost was manifest in  
the form of a dove.” See President Gordon B.  
Hinckley, “In These Three I Believe,” p. 2.