

Ensign



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COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM

He Restoreth My Soul,
by Walter Rane

“This is a depiction of King David writing psalms,” says the artist. “David was one of the most influential kings of Israel, yet his personal life was filled with tragedy. . . . Yet out of those tragedies came many psalms of David as he implored the Lord for healing and for forgiveness.”

The title of this painting comes from Psalm 23:1–3, wherein David says:

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

“He restoreth my soul.”

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Back: Photo illustrations by Hyun Gyu Lee, Lauren Ademar Fochetto, and Ruth Sipus.



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COMING IN OCTOBER

• In lieu of your regular magazine, a new edition of the *Temples* booklet will be distributed next month.

Ensign

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If you're looking to get more from your Church magazine experience, check out additional features at ensign.lds.org.

DO MORE WITH MUSIC

If you're interested in learning more about the Mormon Tabernacle Choir after reading the article on page 54, visit mormontabernaclechoir.org.

In addition, the "History of Hymns" podcast, available on Mormon Channel, investigates the inception and evolution of the hymns of the Church. Visit radio.lds.org.

CELEBRATE RELIEF SOCIETY

Have you been to the Relief Society page of LDS.org lately? If not, visit reliefsociety.lds.org. There are several new features to explore. For instance, you can access the visiting teaching message, get to know the general presidency and board, learn about the history of Relief Society, revisit past general Relief Society meeting messages, and watch video presentations about the organization's enduring legacy. You can also find information about some of the fundamentals of Relief Society, such as its purpose and how to participate.

And don't forget: the general Relief Society meeting will be held at the end of this month on Saturday, September 25. Please check LDS.org or contact your ward or branch leadership for broadcast times and locations.



DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

With general conference just around the corner, the *Ensign* invites you to share your ideas and experiences relating to any of the following: How you prepare for general conference; experiences you have with receiving direction for your life; how you make conference meaningful for your whole family, particularly for children or teens; what you decide to do differently in your life based on counsel you hear and feel; how you share your experience with family or associations.

Please label your submission "General Conference" and submit it by October 22.

We also welcome submissions on other topics showing the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. On each submission, please include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and the name of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

Please submit articles through ensign.lds.org, or send them to Ensign Editorial, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT, 84150-0024, USA. We regret that we cannot acknowledge receipt or return manuscripts. Authors whose work is selected for publication will be notified.

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By President
Henry B. Eyring
First Counselor in the
First Presidency



THE BOOK OF MORMON

as a Personal Guide

All of us feel, in our best moments, a desire to return home to live with God. He gave us the gift of His Beloved Son as our Savior to provide the path and to teach us how to follow it. He gave us prophets to point the way. The Prophet Joseph Smith was inspired to translate the record of prophets that is the Book of Mormon. It is our sure guide on the way home to God.

Joseph Smith said of that precious book, “I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”¹

The precepts of the Book of Mormon are the commandments of God we find in it. Some are direct commands from the Savior through His prophets as to what we are to do and what we are to become. The Book of Mormon gives us the Savior’s example to increase our faith and determination to obey His command to follow Him. The book is filled with the doctrine of Christ to guide us. Here is an example from 2 Nephi:

“[Jesus] said unto the children of men: Follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow

Jesus save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?

“And the Father said: Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my Beloved Son” (2 Nephi 31:10–11).

The book makes plain that we must receive the Holy Ghost as a baptism of fire to help us stay on the strait and narrow path. We are taught that we must pray always in the name of Christ, not fainting, and that if we do, we have this promise: “Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life” (2 Nephi 31:20).

The Book of Mormon makes plain in the marvelous sermon of King Benjamin what it means to have a love of God and of all men. When our natures are changed by the power of the Atonement and through our faithful obedience to the commandments, we will be filled with the love of God (see Mosiah 4:1–12).

The Book of Mormon also gives us confidence that we can become so purified in this life that we have no more



Each time I read even a few lines in the Book of Mormon, I feel my testimony strengthened that the book is true, that Jesus is the Christ.

desire to do evil (see Mosiah 5:2). This hope gives us courage and comfort as Satan tries to tempt and discourage us on our way.

Each time I read even a few lines in the Book of Mormon, I feel my testimony strengthened that the book is true, that Jesus is the Christ, that we can follow Him home, and that we can take those we love home with us. It has been for me the book of books. It is the word of God.

I pray that we and all those we love will drink deeply and daily from it. I testify in the name of Jesus Christ that it is a true guide. ■

NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 64.

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

When we use the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets as the source of all our teaching, we invite the Spirit to bear witness. This brings to our teaching ‘the power of God unto the convincing of men’ (D&C 11:21)” (*Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 51). Consider reading highlights from President Eyring’s message, including Joseph Smith’s statement about the Book of Mormon. Invite family members to share how living the teachings found in the Book of Mormon helps them draw nearer to God.

“When learners discuss principles from the scriptures, they develop skills they need for their personal scripture study” (*Teaching, No Greater Call*, 54). Consider reading the scriptures referred to in this message and looking for and discussing the principles they teach.

YOUTH

My Own Book of Mormon

By Hillary Holbrook

In August 2005, when President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) issued a challenge to Church members to read the Book of Mormon before the end of the year, I promised myself I would read the entire book. I was familiar with stories in the Book of Mormon but had never read it all the way through. Now I meant to keep my promise.

I had been taught to apply the scriptures to my life and make them my very own. So as I read, I wrote in the margins of the page what I thought the main idea of the passage was. I also underlined repeated words and phrases to show emphasis.

I placed my name next to names in the scriptures to help me remember that the word of God spoken to others can also be the word spoken to me. For example, in 2 Nephi 2:28 I wrote my name: “And now, [Hillary], I would that ye should look to the great Mediator, and hearken unto his great commandments.” The more I made the Book of Mormon my own, the more excited I became about reading it every day.

As I read daily, my prayers became heartfelt and personal. I was also able to focus on my classes and follow promptings of the Spirit to befriend others. On the last night of the year, I finished the Book of Mormon.

I then understood the importance of reading the whole Book of Mormon, along with other scriptures, and want to do so many more times in my life.



CHILDREN

A Guide to Help Us Get Home

How would you feel if you were lost and didn't know the way to get home to your family? Would you be happy if you could follow someone who could show you the way? President Eyring says

the Book of Mormon is like a guide that helps us get back home to Heavenly Father.

Look at the pictures of some things the Book of Mormon tells us we need to do to get back home. Read 2 Nephi 31:10, 11, 20. Below each picture, write the correct verse from the Book of Mormon. You will need to use one of the verses twice.



Repent and be baptized.



Have bright hope.



Love God and all people.



Follow Jesus.



Faith • Family • Relief

Our Responsibility to Nurture the Rising Generation

Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

Without nurturing, our rising generation could be in danger of becoming like the one described in Mosiah 26. Many youth didn't believe the traditions of their fathers and became a separate people as to their faith, remaining so ever after. Our rising generation could likewise be led away if they don't understand their part in Heavenly Father's plan.

So what is it that will keep the rising generation safe? In the Church, we teach saving principles, and those principles are family principles, the principles that will help the rising generation to form a family, teach that family, and prepare that family for ordinances and covenants—and then the next generation will teach the next and so on.

As parents, leaders, and Church members, we are preparing this generation for the blessings of Abraham, for the temple. We have the responsibility to be very clear on key points of doctrine found in the proclamation on the family. Motherhood and fatherhood are eternal roles and responsibilities. Each of us carries the responsibility for either the male or the female half of the plan.

We can teach this doctrine in any setting. We must speak respectfully of marriage and family. And from our example, the rising generation can gain great hope and understanding—not just from the words we speak but from the way we feel and emanate the spirit of family.

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

From the Scriptures

Proverbs 22: 6; Ephesians 6:4; Enos 1:1;
Alma 53:20–21; 56:47; 57:27

What Can I Do?

1. How can I help my sisters use "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" to nurture the rising generation? You might consider sharing a copy of the proclamation and helping your sisters identify and mark those passages that would best teach key doctrines.
2. How can I nurture the rising generation? You might consider reaching out to members of your ward, branch, family, or community who could benefit from your attention and love.

From Our History

Addressing the sisters at the general Relief Society meeting on September 23, 1995, President Gordon B. Hinckley said: "The world we are in is a world of turmoil, of shifting values. Shrill voices call out for one thing or another in betrayal of time-tested standards of behavior."¹ President Hinckley then went on to introduce to the sisters, the Church, and ultimately people everywhere "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."

In subsequent years this prophetic document has been translated into many languages and distributed to world leaders. It asks citizens and government leaders "to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society."²

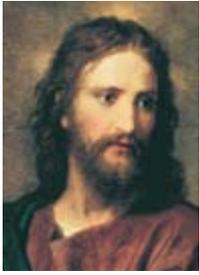
The proclamation has become the foundation for Latter-day Saint beliefs about the family, a statement to which we can hold fast and know that by living its precepts, we are strengthening our families and homes.

NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Stand Strong against the Wiles of the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 99.
2. See "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Liahona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.





Bringing Christ into Our Home

By Cynthia Green

Several years ago, after hearing a young woman in our ward recite “The Living Christ,”¹ I decided I would memorize it too. I took a small copy of the document with me as I ran in the early mornings. Because I was alone and distractions were minimal, this was an ideal opportunity for me to think. After several months of this, I was in great physical shape—and I had met my memorization goal.

As good as “finishing” felt, the long-term benefits were even better. I found myself thinking more often about Jesus Christ, His life, and His mission and wanting to be more like Him. I treated my husband and our children with more patience and love. I found greater peace and happiness in all that I did. And I felt greater joy in caring for and loving those around me. Then, like Lehi, who partook of the fruit of the tree of life, I wanted my family to experience what I had (see 1 Nephi 8:12).

I began seeking for ways that I could teach “The Living Christ” to our children. I recognized that they were young (our oldest was 11) and that this precious document was rather lengthy. But I had a desire, and after I

prayed and thought about it often, the Spirit showed me how I could teach my family.

I had long collected pictures cut out of old Church magazines. I went to the box where I kept them and started pulling out pictures that seemed to match the different phrases in “The Living Christ.” For instance, for “He was the Great Jehovah of the Old Testament,” I found a picture of Christ, as Jehovah, talking with Moses. For the next phrase, “Under the direction of His Father,” I found a picture of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ standing together. Within a short time, I had gathered many pictures and paired them with their associated text from “The Living Christ.”

December seemed the perfect time for our family to start focusing on “The Living Christ.” Our children were excited and really got into our endeavor. We posted the pictures we were working on in our kitchen. I noticed that during the day, the kids would say the phrases as they passed by the pictures. When everyone had memorized the set of pictures on the wall, we put them away and started working on a new set.

With each picture, we discussed

the gospel and life of Jesus Christ. Our family home evening lessons were filled with stories and lessons about the Savior. My husband taught some of the concepts in “The Living Christ,” bringing new insights.

Family prayers became more meaningful because the children gave more thought to Him in whose name they were praying. The Spirit filled our home. We felt like Nephi when he wrote, “We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ” (2 Nephi 25:26). Our home became a place of greater peace.

The blessings poured in, in ways I had never imagined. For instance, although I had tried simplifying some of the words for our youngest child, Joseph, who was four, he persisted in learning the complete document word for word. This became particularly poignant one week at church. The cover of the sacrament meeting program featured a picture of the Savior in Gethsemane that we had used in our memorization. Joseph pointed to the picture and said, “Look, Mommy. ‘He gave His life to atone for the sins of all mankind.’”

Another week we had a rough time at church; the children were more

restless than they should have been, especially during the sacrament. The next night we talked about the sacrament in family home evening. We discussed its purpose and how we should behave as the sacrament is being passed. I asked the children what they thought about during the sacrament. Our 10-year-old, Sharanne, commented that she thought about the life of Jesus Christ and the words from “The Living Christ.” Nothing more needed to be said.

Another time, Joseph was having difficulty going to bed. He wasn’t cooperating and was irritable. I asked him to tell me some of “The Living Christ.” As he began, I could feel the Spirit come into the room. He calmed down and changed back into his normal, happy self. Some time later, on another night when he was restless, I tried it again. This time his reply was very different: “No! I don’t want to be happy!” Our young son had learned what remembering Jesus Christ could do. Indeed, the Savior had become more real to all of us.

Our family finished memorizing “The Living Christ” the following Easter. It was the greatest four-month experience we have

ever had. Even though the project is over, I know the effects of what we learned can remain with each family member for the rest of our lives.

I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are real. I am grateful to have a better understanding of Their

works and to feel more deeply of Their love. I thank God for the matchless gift of His divine Son and for the beautiful experience of learning of Him and trying to become more like Him. ■

NOTE

1. “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Apr. 2000, 2–3.



I know the effects of what our family learned about the Savior can remain with each of us for the rest of our lives.

THE GOSPEL

SHALL BE PREACHED TO ALL THE WORLD

Jesus Christ invites all people to come unto Him. We can help people come unto Him by sharing His gospel with them. Here are a few ways to do so:



When Jesus Christ lived on the earth, He taught others a way to live that would lead them to happiness in this life and the next. His message was one of peace, love, and obedience to God’s commandments. “He went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God” (Luke 8:1). He also taught that ordinances, such as baptism, are necessary for us to return to our Heavenly Father (see John 3:5).

He told His disciples that the “gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world” (Matthew 24:14). Therefore, He sent them “forth to preach” (Mark 3:14). This is the same task He has given us today—share His gospel with others. In 1831 He revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, “This gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (D&C 133:37).

We can look to our Savior as an example of how to share the gospel. He taught the gospel clearly (see

Matthew 5–7). He took advantage of simple unplanned moments to share the gospel (see John 4:4–42). And He showed genuine love and concern for others (see 3 Nephi 17). We can do the same. ■

Iwould ask that your faith and prayers continue to be offered in behalf of those areas where our influence is limited and where we are not allowed to share the gospel freely at this time. Miracles can occur as we do so.”

President Thomas S. Monson,
 “Welcome to Conference,”
Liahona and Ensign,
 Nov. 2009, 6.



1. Show the joy we feel as we live the gospel of Jesus Christ.



2. Be friendly to all people.



3. Invite friends to Church meetings, activities, and service projects.



4. Share copies of the Book of Mormon or the Liahona with those not of our faith.



5. Use the Internet to share the gospel. For instance, we can share our testimonies in a blog or refer people to Church Web sites such as *Mormon.org*.



6. Prepare as young men, young women, and seniors to serve missions.



7. Invite friends and neighbors to be taught by the missionaries.

You are called to cry repentance unto this people.

“And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!” (D&C 18:14–15).

For more information, see Gospel Principles (2009), 189–95; True to the Faith (2004), 104–6.



GROWING GREEN BEANS & FAMILIES

*I thought a garden would help me be self-reliant.
Little did I know that it would also teach me about
cultivating relationships.*

By Forrest J. Nielson

Some 20 years ago as a young husband and father, I found myself thinking about the counsel President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) had given us to be self-reliant by growing our own gardens. Despite the fact that my family had no yard, I felt strongly prompted to follow his counsel.

At first I borrowed some land from my neighbors to plant a garden, but the land had long been unused, and I didn't have the proper machinery to make it fertile again. Then I remembered an older gentleman, Vern Draney, who had befriended my parents while I was serving a full-time mission. My mother had mentioned that he was a great gardener. I wondered if Brother Draney had a garden now and, if he did, whether he would mind some help. I decided to visit and find out.

Brother Draney's house had a large untilled field beside it. When I knocked on the door

and explained my desire to help him create a garden, I was pleased to hear him accept my offer. But he did so with a condition. He told me I would have to commit to care for the garden according to *its* needs, not my own. This would be absolutely crucial. "I'll be there," I promised, "whenever it needs me." And the next thing I knew, we were off to buy the first seeds! At that time I had no way of knowing exactly how much I was about to learn from this special garden or how it would change me and my family.

Brother Draney and I spent a lot of time together cultivating our seeds. I loved each day. Seeing the plants begin to grow and prosper was magical, even mesmerizing! Because the last time I had eaten fresh green beans was at my grandmother's home when I was a child, I looked forward to those beans more than any of the other vegetables, and caring for them



became my personal responsibility. I was filled with excitement and hope as the beans began to sprout and then as they curled into vines. I knew I would soon be able to provide fresh green beans for my family.

Before much time had passed, thoughts began to creep into my mind that it was too hot to spend so much time in the garden. After all, the plants were healthy and growing well, so I figured it would be OK to leave them alone for a while. Slowly I began spending less time in the garden.

Then one day I noticed some beautiful trumpet-shaped flowers blooming from what I thought were the vines of the green beans. How wonderful it is, I mused, that Heavenly Father gives us pretty flowers to go with these vegetable plants.

It wasn't until days later, when I saw some of the green bean plants turning brown, that I discovered that the pretty flowers were actually field bindweed, sometimes called wild morning glory. It's a beautiful yet dangerous weed. The vines grew camouflaged to look like those of the green beans, and they had wrapped themselves so tightly around the bean plants that they were now literally choking the life out of the beans. My heart sank when I realized what I had let happen. How could I exterminate so many powerful weeds without damaging the green beans? Guilt and regret swelled within me.

Finally I found the courage to confess my neglectfulness to Brother Draney. He immediately reminded me of the promise I had made to him. I should have taken care of the weeds when they first came up, he told me. Paying close attention to the green beans and providing them with daily care—regardless of how well they thrived—would have let me see the

dangers of bindweed in time to pull it out and keep my green beans safe. I understood that if I had spent more time with the beans, I could have protected them.

The bindweed had done so much damage already that I couldn't save the green bean plants. They eventually withered away and died.

As I thought about our lost green beans, I began to reflect on my family and my divine role as a father. Each person in my family, I realized, was like a special green bean plant, and together we made up a whole garden. We would all need the attentive care of others to grow strong. I knew that just like the bindweed's damage could have been prevented by my consistent care, spending time with my children and helping them grow spiritually could allow me to recognize the temptations they would be dealing with so I could help them through these challenges. We could be a safer, happier family if I put forth the effort to actually notice and “pull up weeds” in our home before they choked the life out of my family's happiness.

Now, years later, as I cultivate the garden in my own backyard, I often remember Brother Draney and the lesson I learned in his garden. This lesson changed me, though I hadn't realized then that it would. I have become a better father by being more aware of what's going on in our children's lives. I pay careful attention to their needs, ask for their input, and prayerfully help guide them as they make important decisions.

My family and I may not have been able to enjoy those green beans that year, but we have been able to enjoy the love, compassion, and wonderful spirit of selflessness and caring that have grown in our home ever since. ■



Our children are being challenged by the world's teachings about relationships. Counteracting those wrong messages starts with parents in the home.

Dating and VIRTUE

Ten things parents can do to help their children prepare for dating.

From an interview with David L. Beck, Young Men General President, and Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women General President

As worldly morals continue to degenerate, they challenge and even threaten traditional beliefs of dating and marriage. These threats are aimed forcefully at the rising generation. Particularly when it comes to relationships with the opposite sex, members of the Church need to hold to the iron rod. This has never been more true with the principles of dating than it is now, say the leaders of the Church's youth organizations.

"There's a big challenge today, just being in the world," explains Brother David L. Beck, Young Men general president. "Do we need to teach? Do we ever! We've got to counteract all the wrong messages that are coming, not only through the media, but also through associates and friends. Parents have a solemn responsibility to teach. It starts in the home."

Here, Brother Beck and Sister Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president, share 10 ideas to help parents teach their children appropriate methods of dating and help safeguard young people from the pitfalls of the world.



1. Understand the doctrine of dating and celestial marriage.

"The first thing parents need to do is understand the doctrine," says Sister Dalton. "The doctrine is the plan of salvation and includes celestial marriage, family, and parenthood. 'The Family: A Proclamation to the World' states that 'marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God.' That's why we're here on the earth—to form eternal families."

"I agree," says Brother Beck. "The family proclamation also declares that 'the family is central to the Creator's plan . . . [and] is ordained of God.' Marriage between a man and a woman is *essential* to His eternal plan and our eternal possibilities. The proclamation also has the doctrine for dating; it describes the boundaries on our physical relationships in that 'the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between . . . husband and wife.'"¹ (For a better understanding of what is meant by "sexual purity" and "immoral behavior," please see the sidebar on page 18, "*For the Strength of Youth: Sexual Purity.*")

Sister Dalton adds that young people also need

to understand the role of agency and their own identity. “In the premortal council in heaven, all of us fought to have agency. But when you step over the line into immorality, you’re compromising the agency of another person. You’re actually tampering with a power that God has entrusted us with to create other lives. If Satan can get youth to break the law of chastity, he can frustrate the purposes that we fought for valiantly in the premortal realm.

“If we could see each other for who we really are—children of our Father in Heaven—we would treat each other with the reverence, respect, and dignity that our spiritual heritage demands,” says Sister Dalton. “When we understand our divine identity, it will define all of our relationships with each other.”

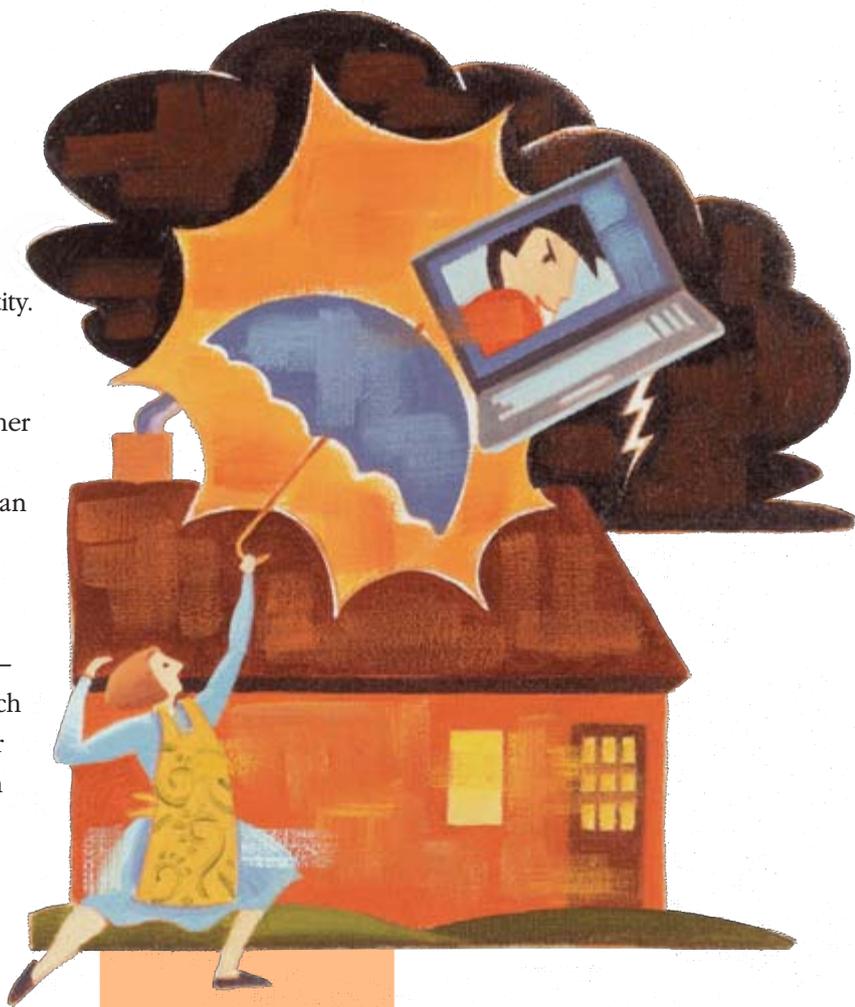
2. Don’t be influenced by the ways of the world.

The world, especially the media, would have us violate or ignore Heavenly Father’s teachings on dating and marriage. We don’t have to do that, says Brother Beck. “When we cross a line and engage in immoral behavior, we offend the Spirit, and when we lose that influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives, all those wonderful things that the Spirit provides to us are lost. Immoral behavior destroys faith. Nothing I’ve seen seems so destructive to faith as immoral behavior.”

That’s one of the main reasons parents have to be so careful about what messages their children receive. “We’re just immersed in incorrect worldly messages through the media. It’s an overflowing scourge. You can’t spend an hour on television without getting false messages that create distorted views of reality which are against God’s purposes for us here on the earth. That’s why pornography—and all the immorality it portrays—is so destructive to relationships. It dehumanizes. Be very careful with the media you let into your home.”

3. Teach that virtue is not outdated.

With all those messages, parents have to remind their children that prophetic counsel hasn’t changed. “The



Be careful with the media you let into your home. The media immerses us in incorrect worldly messages that can destroy faith.

prophets and seers have been telling us this for years,” says Sister Dalton, “and we have the words of current prophets, seers, and revelators as well. That is why we added the value of virtue to the Young Women theme and values. The word ‘virtue’ means chastity. The core of a virtuous life is chastity and sexual purity.

“Parents, teach your children that the body is a temple. Make sure they understand that we must be pure in heart to have the guidance of the Holy Ghost. That means we need to live so that we are worthy to enter the temple—now!

“When young men and young women start dating, teach them to ask themselves, ‘Will this person in this relationship lead me to the temple?’ If they can’t honestly answer yes, then they ought to think about what they are doing and make some changes.”

4. Teach the appropriate seasons of dating.

In the Young Men and Young Women programs, youth receive guidance in addition to what they may receive in the home on interacting with the opposite sex, explains Brother Beck. To help youth interact properly and successfully, “the Church sponsors group activities. We hold mutual and combined activities for youth beginning at age 12. These teach youth the fundamental lessons about respect. At age 14, youth start having youth conferences, dances, and other activities. *For the Strength of Youth* clearly points out that dating can occur at age 16 under conditions such as group and double dates that are positive and help maintain self-respect.”

Dating in these circumstances doesn't mean youth can't or won't have fun, according to Sister Dalton. “I've watched a lot of stake and multistake dance festivals, as well as mutual and service activities. Both the girls and the boys are excited to attend. And while they are having a good time, they learn appropriate social interaction and how to be respectful of one another, how to be careful about the way they dress. Even the Beehives and deacons learn how to honor one another in these wholesome settings. I believe that is why our prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, says that he is an advocate of these activities.”

FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH: DATING

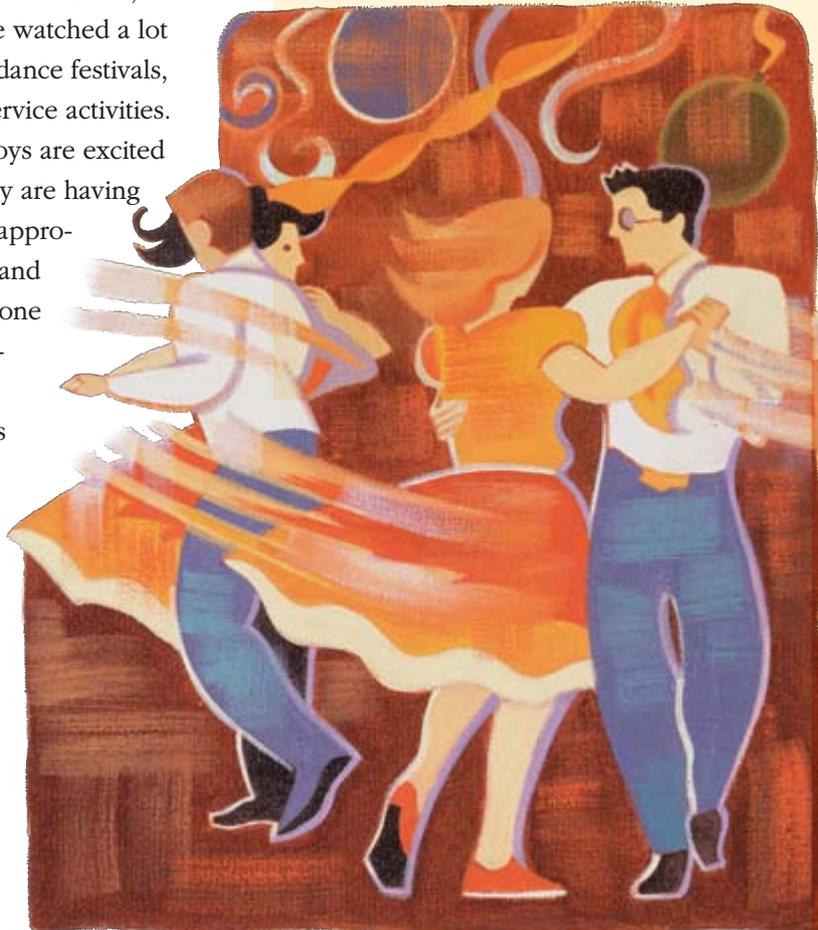
In cultures where dating or courtship is acceptable, dating can help you develop lasting friendships and eventually find an eternal companion. Date only those who have high standards and in whose company you can maintain your standards. A young man and a young woman on a date are responsible to help each other maintain their standards and to protect each other's honor and virtue. You must honor the sanctity of the priesthood and of womanhood.

“Do not date until you are at least 16 years old. Dating before then can lead to immorality, limit the number of other young people you meet, and deprive you of experiences that will help you choose an eternal partner.

“Not all teenagers need to date or even want to. Many young people do not date during their teen years because they are not yet interested, do not have opportunities, or simply want to delay forming serious relationships. However, good friendships can and should be developed at every age.

“When you begin dating, go in groups or on double dates. Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person. Make sure your parents meet those you date. You may want to invite your dates to activities with your family. Plan dating activities that are positive and inexpensive and that will help you get to know each other. Do things that will help you and your companions maintain your self-respect and remain close to the Spirit of the Lord.”

For the Strength of Youth, pages 24–25.



Participation in wholesome group activities helps youth learn to honor each other while having fun.

FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH: SEXUAL PURITY

“When you obey God’s commandment to be sexually pure, you prepare yourself to make and keep sacred covenants in the temple. You prepare yourself to build a strong marriage and to bring children into the world as part of a loving family. You protect yourself from the emotional damage that always comes from sharing physical intimacies with someone outside of marriage.

“Do not have any sexual relations before marriage, and be completely faithful to your spouse after marriage. Satan may tempt you to rationalize that sexual intimacy before marriage is acceptable when two people are in love. That is not true. In God’s sight, sexual sins are extremely serious because they defile the power God has given us to create life. The prophet Alma taught that sexual sins are more serious than any other sins except murder or denying the Holy Ghost (see Alma 39:5).

“Before marriage, do not do anything to arouse the powerful emotions that must be expressed only in marriage. Do not participate in passionate kissing, lie on top of another person, or touch the private, sacred parts of another person’s body, with or without clothing. Do not allow anyone to do that with you. Do not arouse those emotions in your own body.

“In cultures where dating or courting is acceptable, always treat your date with respect, never as an object to be used for your lustful desires. Stay in areas of safety where you can easily control your physical feelings. Do not participate in talk or activities that arouse sexual feelings.”

For the Strength of Youth,
pages 26–27.

A true friend makes it easier to live the gospel, brings out righteous qualities in you that make you better, and helps you be a guardian of virtue.



5. Encourage good friendships.

Proper dating and developing wholesome friendships are really about being a disciple of Jesus Christ, says Sister Dalton. “When I talk to young women about dating, I like to ask them to define what a friend is. I married my best friend. We became friends first. And he’s still my best friend.

“I love Elder Robert D. Hales’s definition of a friend,” Sister Dalton continues. “True friends make it easier to live the gospel.”² It is pretty simple. A person who brings out righteous qualities in you makes you better.”

Brother Beck says, “Teach young men about their priesthood responsibilities in the context of dating and how they should treat young women. Doctrine and Covenants 20 explains that a teacher should watch over the Church always and be with and strengthen the members. To the young men, I would say, ‘Think about that in the context of a relationship with a young woman you are watching over. You have this priesthood responsibility to watch over her when you are in her presence, to strengthen her. When you are with her, how are you strengthening and inviting her to come unto Christ?’”

Sister Dalton adds, “I call that being a guardian of virtue. I believe that these young men with priesthood power *must* be guardians of virtue. They must be virtuous themselves so that they can access that priesthood power and exercise it in purity and in holiness, and they also need to protect others’ virtue. And the young women also have to be guardians of their own virtue and guardians of the boys’.”

6. Set a positive example of dating and relationships.

“One of the most important things parents can do,” says Brother Beck, “is set the example by the respect they show each other and the joy they have in their relationship—seeing that it really is a wonderful thing. I don’t know that we could overstate what a motivator that is. Parents should try to model what a marriage can and should be.”

“I agree,” says Sister Dalton. “Those things make a big difference when we start dating and looking for qualities we want in an eternal relationship. I think parents can teach and model respect in their homes.”

7. Use Church resources.

Brother Beck explains that in addition to the Church programs already mentioned, there are a number of excellent resources to help parents teach their children. “Parents can use *For the Strength of Youth* to teach what the prophets have written to us about dating. Don’t just read or memorize it. Take these standards and appreciate them as words from the Lord’s anointed, and really listen to make sure our children understand them. *For the Strength of Youth* will provide a great protection for them.”

Sister Dalton concurs. “I think every parent would be wise to use *For the Strength of Youth* as a family home evening resource, especially with teenagers.”

“There’s also the *Family Guidebook*,” adds Brother Beck. “It teaches the organization and purpose of a family. We also need to point out that families bring happiness to Heavenly Father’s children by teaching them correct principles in a loving atmosphere. Those principles are best taught by example in the home.”

“There’s another powerful resource—the Book of Mormon,” says Sister Dalton. “Dating practices and



Learn to listen with the Spirit so that you can understand your children and develop a relationship in which they will want to talk and open up to you.

principles are contained right there. For example, Alma 39, with Alma’s advice to his son Corianton, is a very good place to start. Also in Doctrine and Covenants 88:40, the scripture says that light cleaveth to light and virtue loveth virtue. I think that’s a relationship scripture. We need to remember that good attracts good.”

8. Teach and influence by listening and spending time together.

Every point of teaching works better when we listen, says Brother Beck. “We need to emphasize the ability to listen with the Spirit so parents can really understand and have the kind of relationship in which a child will want to talk and open up.

“As a priesthood leader, I spend the vast majority of my time just listening. Sometimes you don’t need to say anything. It’s the same for parents. Parents need to teach, but they also need to listen and invite their children to express their feelings about what is going on.

“This can happen in family home evening, family council, at mealtimes, and in interviews,” Brother Beck continues. “During those times, listen and also express how you view these standards. Share your commitment, understanding, and appreciation for them.

“In addition, we need to spend time with our children and do things with them that they like to do—not just the things we want to do. This builds confidence and trust.”

FOR MORE ON THIS TOPIC:

- Gordon B. Hinckley, "Great Shall Be the Peace of Thy Children," *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 50–53.
- Gordon B. Hinckley, "Your Greatest Challenge, Mother," *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 97–100.
- Gordon B. Hinckley, "A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth," *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 2–11.

All three of these addresses are available from Distribution Services on a single DVD entitled, "President Hinckley Speaks to Parents and Youth," item number 54591000 (DVD) or 53591000 (VHS).

- *For the Strength of Youth*, item number 36550000
- *The Family Guidebook*, item number 31180000

9. Prepare in advance to deal with difficult situations.

"Parents can also teach what I call 'refusal skills,'" says Sister Dalton. "Discuss with your children what situations might occur on dates and how they would react. Ask: 'So what if you get in this situation? What will you do?' Then let them actually act it out. Chances are good that they will do what they actually planned to do.

"The other thing is to help youth make 'preplanned decisions and commitments.' There are certain things you can decide right now, and you don't ever have to decide them again. Then, in the heat of the moment, you don't have to make that decision again. It's made! When I was a teenager, if someone offered me liquor or a cigarette, I'd respond, 'Are you kidding? I made that decision when I was 12. I'm not doing



Encourage youth to do hard things, and sometimes to take the path that stretches them. Let them know you believe in them. Let them discover who they are and come to know God.

that.' I made those decisions once. I never had to remake them.

"But make sure you teach them to believe in the power and principles of repentance. They are young. They will make mistakes. But they need to believe they can repent and get back on track."

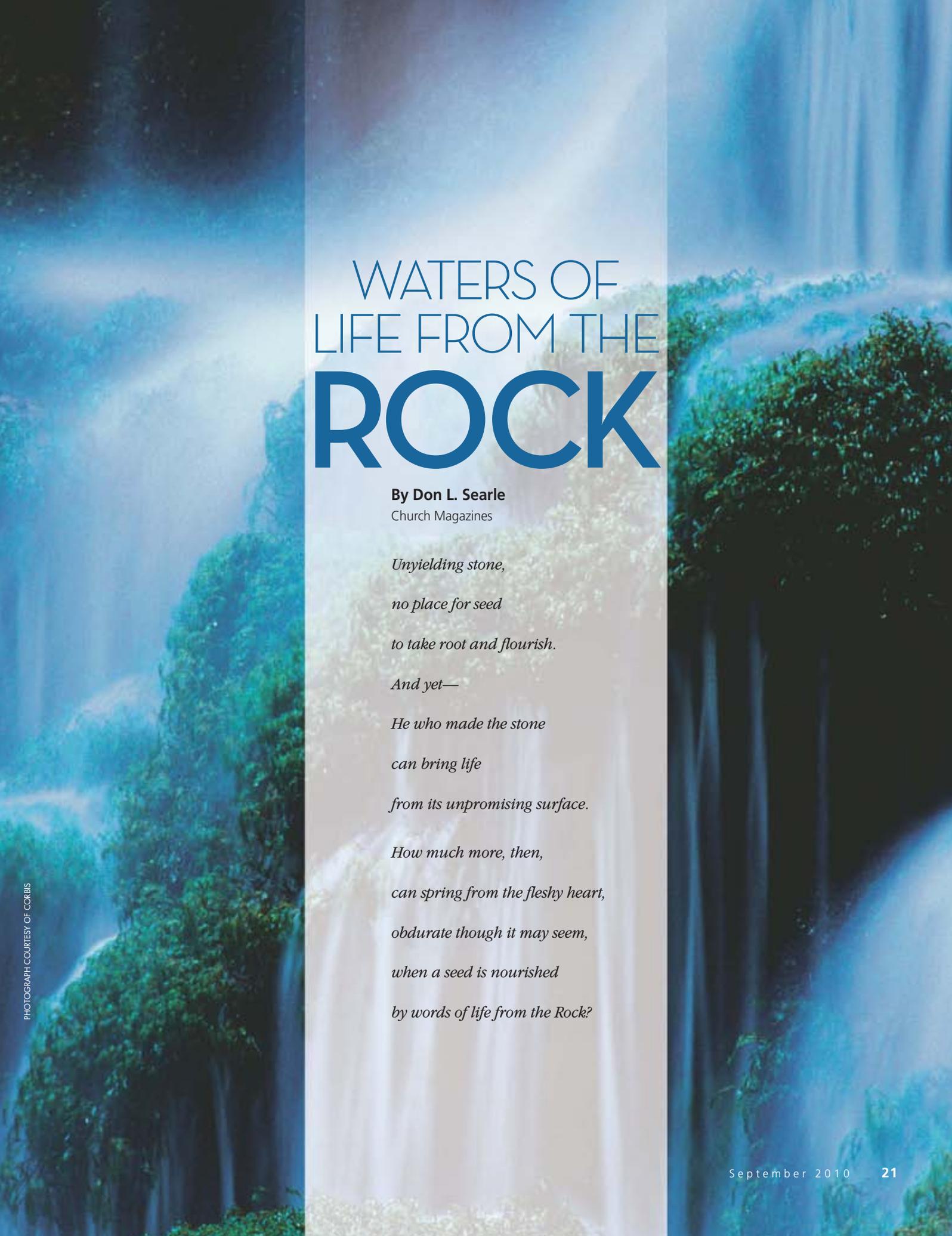
10. Let them know their parents and leaders trust them.

"Our youth need to know we believe in them," says Brother Beck. "We need to encourage them to do hard things and sometimes to take the path that stretches them. When each of us as individuals confronts our fears, we discover who we are. We discover God in our lives and we develop confidence. Go forward in faith, knowing that the Lord will support you. His grace is sufficient to help us through challenging situations."

Sister Dalton adds: "This generation of youth is the most noble and incredible ever. They're uniquely positioned in the world right now to make a difference. And they are full of hope. They want to be validated for who they really are. They come with such nobility inside. We need to provide opportunities that foster authentic relationships and help them develop the feeling and knowledge of their own divine identity. Parents, you can do that. Teach them to focus on the temple and on being worthy to make and keep covenants. Teach them with love and respect, and they will develop those same patterns." ■

NOTES

1. The Family: A Proclamation to the World, *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. Robert D. Hales, "The Aaronic Priesthood: Preparing for the Decade of Decision," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 49.



WATERS OF LIFE FROM THE ROCK

By Don L. Searle
Church Magazines

*Unyielding stone,
no place for seed
to take root and flourish.*

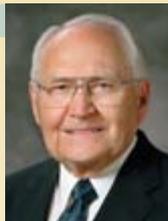
And yet—

*He who made the stone
can bring life
from its unpromising surface.*

*How much more, then,
can spring from the fleshy heart,
obdurate though it may seem,
when a seed is nourished
by words of life from the Rock?*

By Elder L. Tom Perry

Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles



TO RETURNED MISSIONARIES

What we need is a royal army of returned missionaries reenlisted into service.

I have learned from many conversations with returned missionaries that the adjustment associated with leaving the mission field and returning to the world you left behind is sometimes difficult. May I offer just a few suggestions?

Frequent, Consistent, and Mighty Prayer

One of the strongest recollections I have of being a missionary is how close I drew to the Lord through the practice of regular prayer. In my day the mission home was located on State Street in Salt Lake City. It was a large house that had been converted to a missionary training center. It had large dormitory rooms with perhaps as many as 10 beds in a room. We checked in on Sunday night.

The week before I entered the mission field was an exciting time. There were a lot of parties and farewells. I am afraid that I was not properly rested

and prepared for the training I was to receive at the mission home. As the evening of our first day in the mission home came to a close, I was weary. While waiting for the other missionaries to prepare themselves for bed, I stretched out on my bed and promptly fell asleep. My sleep, however, was interrupted by a feeling that I was surrounded. As the fog of sleep lifted, I heard the words of a prayer being said. I opened my eyes, and much to my surprise I found all the elders in my dormitory room kneeling around my bed, concluding the day with a prayer. I quickly closed my eyes and acted as if I was asleep. I was too embarrassed to get out of bed and join them. Even though my first experience with prayer as a missionary was an embarrassing one, it was the beginning of two wonderful years of frequently calling upon the Lord for guidance.

Throughout my mission, I prayed with my companion each morning as

we began a new day. The process was repeated each night before we retired. We offered a prayer before we studied, a prayer as we left our apartment to go out tracting, and of course special prayers when special guidance was needed to direct our missionary work. The frequency of our appeals to our Father in Heaven gave us strength and courage to press forward in the work to which we had been called. Answers would come, sometimes in astonishingly direct and positive ways. The guidance of the Holy Spirit seemed to be magnified the more times we appealed to Heavenly Father for direction on a given day.

As I look back on my life following my mission, I realize that there were periods when I was able to maintain the same closeness to the Lord that I experienced in the mission field. There were also periods when the world seemed to creep in and I was less consistent and faithful with my prayers.

Wouldn't this be a good time for a little self-evaluation to determine if we still have the same relationship with our Father in Heaven that we enjoyed in the mission field? If the world has diverted us from the practice of prayer, we then have lost a great spiritual power. Maybe it is time that we rekindle our missionary spirit through more frequent, consistent, and mighty prayer.



Attending institute would help keep the doctrines of the kingdom clear in our minds and offset the persistent intrusion of worldly concerns.

Individual and Companion Scripture Study

The next fond memory I have of being a missionary is that of daily engaging in scripture study. The discipline of following a scripture-study plan of learning the gospel was a wonderful, rewarding experience. The knowledge of the teachings of the scriptures would unfold in a glorious way through individual study. As a missionary I recall marveling at how completely the Lord had prepared a plan for His children here on earth, how in all dispensations of time He has inspired the minds of His prophets to record His dealings with them. His words are always positive and direct, revealing the blessings that come through following His law and His way.

We would also take an hour or more each day to study as companions together. Having two sets of eyes examine the doctrine of the kingdom seemed to multiply our understanding. We would read together, then share our insights.

Our minds were sharpened as we followed the daily practice of individual and companion study. The practice brought us closer together as companions and increased our understanding of the doctrines of the kingdom.

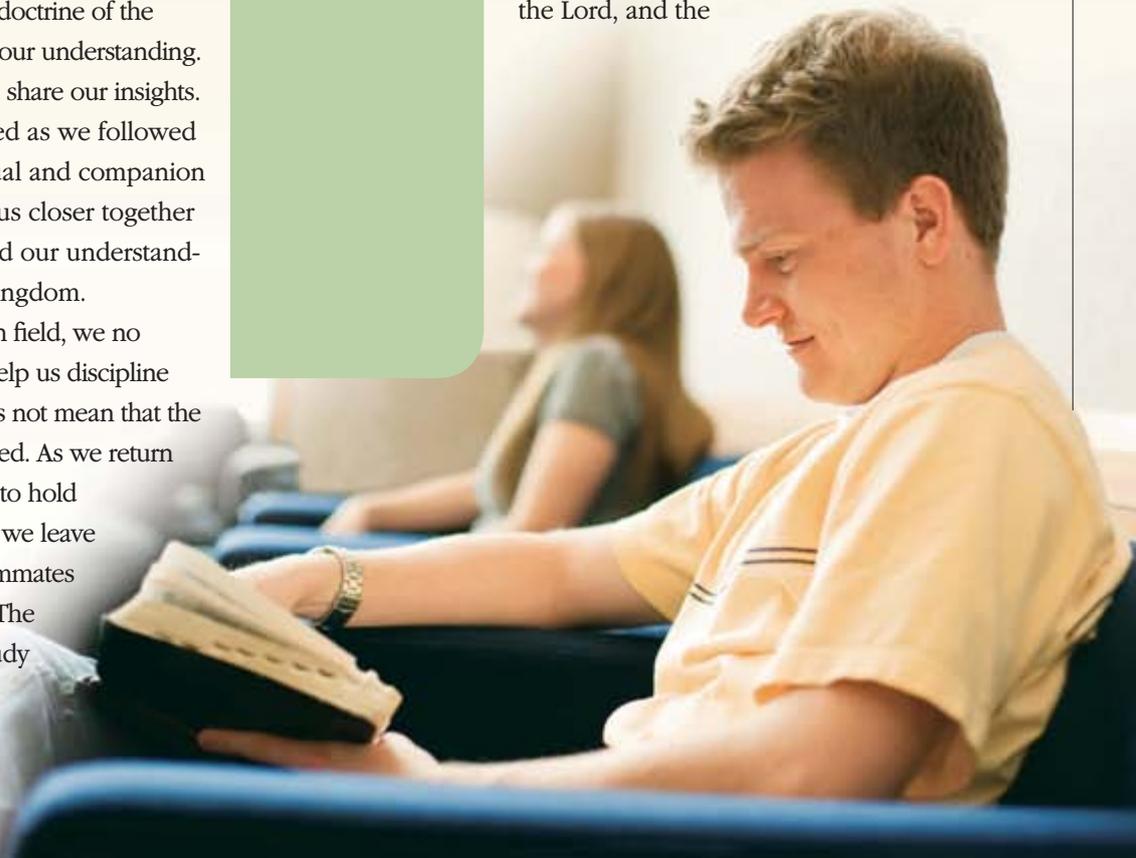
When we leave the mission field, we no longer have companions to help us discipline our study habits, but that does not mean that the practice should be discontinued. As we return home, how great it would be to hold daily family scripture study. If we leave home, couldn't we invite roommates and friends to study with us? The practice of holding regular study classes and attending institute

would help keep the doctrines of the kingdom clear in our minds and offset the persistent intrusion of worldly concerns. Of course, when we marry, we have eternal companions with whom we can study and share gospel teachings.

The scriptures are always there to deepen our understanding of the purpose of life and what we need to do to make life more fulfilling and rewarding. Please keep alive the practice of regular individual and companion scripture study.

The Joy of Teaching the Gospel

Do you remember the joy that comes from teaching the gospel to someone who has been deprived of these teachings throughout his or her life, the excitement that comes when you teach the law of the Lord, and the



blessings that are received from following Him? Could you ever forget the joy of your first baptism in the mission field?

In my day the chapels were not equipped with baptismal fonts. My first baptism was in the Scioto River in the state of Ohio, USA. It was on a cool fall day, and the water seemed even colder than the air. I remember the shock of wading into the cold river while encouraging my investigator to follow me. The coldness of the air and the water, however, soon vanished as I administered the ordinance of baptism. Seeing the radiant face of the individual who came up out of the waters of baptism is an image I will never forget.

Opportunities to teach the gospel and



While returned missionaries would not wear the badge of a full-time missionary, they could possess the same resolve and determination to bring the light of the gospel to a world struggling to find its way.

baptize are not exclusive to those who wear the badge of a full-time missionary. I wonder why we allow the fire of missionary service to diminish when we return to the activities of our life in the world.

There has never been a time in the history of mankind when we have been better equipped to teach the gospel to our Father in Heaven's children here on earth. And they seem to need it more today than they ever have. We see a deterioration of faith. We see an increased love for worldliness and a depletion of moral values, both of which will cause increased heartache and despair. What we need is a royal army of returned missionaries reenlisted into service. While they would not wear the badge of a full-time missionary, they could possess the same resolve and determination to bring the light of the gospel to a world struggling to find its way.

I call on you returned missionaries to rededicate yourselves, to become reinfused with the desire and spirit of missionary service. I call on you to look the part, to be the part, and to act the part of a servant of our Father in Heaven. I pray for your renewed determination to proclaim the gospel that you may become more actively engaged in this great work the Lord has called all of us to do. I want to promise you there are great blessings in store for you if you continue to press forward with the zeal you once possessed as a full-time missionary.

Go forward with new determination, and through your example, let shine the light of the gospel in this troubled world. This is the Lord's work in which we are engaged. God lives. Jesus is the Christ. We belong to His Church. This is my witness to you. ■

From an October 2001 general conference address. For the full text, please visit www.conference.lds.org.



That We Might Have JOY

By Andrea Jones

It did not take long for me to realize that my mission was going to be very different than I had expected. I was faced with some unexpected challenges. I tried to stay positive, but my attempts often failed, leaving me feeling discouraged. Thankfully, I received encouragement at zone conferences, which always concluded with a testimony meeting.

I remember one particular zone conference when each missionary took the stand, expressing the joy of serving a mission. As the meeting progressed, I began to feel uncomfortable. I had been a missionary for a full year but had never felt the joy others were describing. I left that conference heavy-hearted and confused, questioning why I was even serving a mission. What was wrong with me? Why couldn't I feel that same joy? Later that night I expressed my concerns to Heavenly Father and asked Him how I could feel such joy.

Several weeks later, while attending stake conference, I received my answer during a talk by my mission president. Although he spoke to the hundreds in the audience, I felt that he spoke directly to me. He talked about the joy of Christ's Redemption that each of us

Everything that made my mission difficult seemed to keep me from feeling joy. But did it have to?

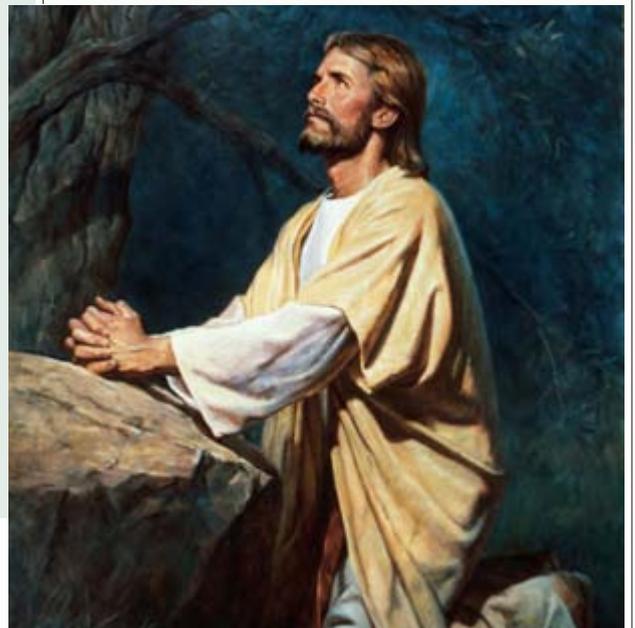
We can feel joy from understanding the significance of the Savior's Atonement.

can feel every day. He testified that even during difficult and uncertain times, we can feel joy from understanding the significance of the Savior's Atonement.

I knew those words were for me. Heavenly Father had answered my prayer. Perhaps my mission was not going as I had thought it would, but the Savior loved me and had atoned for my sins. The joy I thought I had never experienced was all around me. I just hadn't opened my heart to feel it.

My challenges continued, but this experience taught me that I could feel joy by choosing to open my heart to the Savior's redeeming power and by sharing my testimony of that power with others.

Since my mission I have come to understand that situations and surroundings have no lasting impact on our ability to feel joy. Instead, true joy comes from obeying and believing in Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, who made life here—and hereafter—"that [we] might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25). ■





By Elder
Kent D. Watson
Of the Seventy

Our Senior Missionaries

*They are “as a dew from the Lord,
as the showers upon the grass.”*

As a member of the Asia Area Presidency, I have the special privilege to serve in an area of the world I learned to love as a young missionary over 45 years ago. Things have changed since then. What was then the Southern Far East Mission now comprises over 25 missions. A few members in a few branches have grown to 750,000 members. Chapels dot the landscape, and temple worship is available to our Asian members.

As the Church has grown in Asia, I have come to love and appreciate a group of people who seek no reward, no honor, and no other worldly emoluments. They seek only to glorify our Father in Heaven. They are our senior missionaries: wonderful, seasoned brothers and sisters who are quietly and diligently helping “to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness” (D&C 1:30).

Their experience, faith, testimony, and love enable them to perform

wonderful miracles in establishing and strengthening the Church in our part of the Lord’s vineyard—from Ulaanbaatar to New Delhi. They are those whom Micah described: “The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass” (Micah 5:7).

In many cases they were surprised at the locations to which they were called. Some of them, perhaps like the prophet Jonah, may have chosen Tarshish over Nineveh, as it were. But they did not “flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord” or reside “in the belly of the fish three days and three nights” (Jonah 1:3, 17). Rather, knowing their calls came from the Lord, “they straightway left their nets, and followed him” (Matthew 4:20).

Some of their numerous and diverse assignments include working in temples, teaching seminary and institute, serving in mission offices, administering the Perpetual Education Fund, serving in branches (teaching, training, activating, and sharing), mentoring



Senior missionaries serve in numerous and diverse assignments.



AN INDISPENSABLE INGREDIENT

“As welfare missionaries in South America, we had the privilege of working with members of the Church as well as those not of our faith. We worked with a variety of organizations that, together with the Church, implemented a number of humanitarian projects.

“We spent much of our time working with orphanages, hospitals, prisons, medical clinics, and foundations that help the disadvantaged, disabled, poor, and needy.

“Although we didn’t teach the gospel in lessons as do the young missionaries, we had many spiritual experiences as we saw changes take place in the lives of the needy as they received help and felt their faith increase as they recognized the real source of that help.

“Missionary couples add an indispensable ingredient to the missionary effort with their vast past experience. The Church needs more missionary couples than ever before, and the couples who could serve need the blessings that are waiting for them.”

Charles E. and Julia Cartmill, Idaho, USA



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEVE BUNDERSON, HYUN GYU LEE, WELDEN C. ANDERSEN, CODY BELL, FARELL BARLOW, AND DAVID STOKER



WE NEED SENIOR COUPLES

Included in such a long list of dedicated servants of the Lord is an increasing number of senior couples who make an indispensable contribution to the work. How we love and need couples in virtually every mission of this Church!

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Abide in Me,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2004, 30.

and helping people upgrade job skills and enhance employment, working in their professional specialties (law, finance, engineering, education, health care), coordinating humanitarian services, and providing relief during floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters. Some of them even get to participate in finding, teaching, and baptizing new members!

Elder Phil and Sister Brenda Frandsen are one such couple. They served in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. In addition to his other responsibilities, Elder Frandsen served as a counselor to the mission president. The following brief interview with the Frandsens illustrates the thoughts and feelings of many couples and may provide insight to those considering missionary service.

What were your thoughts as you contemplated serving a mission?

Sister Frandsen: “We had always talked about serving a mission after

our children were grown. When the time came, it was hard to agree on where we would go and what we would do. After much discussion, Elder Frandsen suggested that we leave the choice up to the Lord. When we received our mission call, it could not have been more exciting. We consider it a very special blessing!”

What were your feelings about returning to your original mission field?

Elder Frandsen: “Returning after a 44-year absence has been a most rewarding experience. In an area where there was once a tiny branch in a rented building, there now stands a beautiful stake center. An eight-year-old boy I knew then is a devoted stake president now. Progress in this part of the world has been truly marvelous. Every day there is a new spiritual experience as Sister Frandsen and I labor to help individuals gain or strengthen their testimonies.”

Do you feel that you are effectively utilized?

Elder Frandsen: “We have been able to use our talents and experiences, and we have discovered talents that we didn’t know we had. I have been able to relearn much of my Chinese. Sister Frandsen can answer the phone in Chinese and is able to read names in order to forward the mail. We feel that learning new skills at our age is good for old brains!”

But what about your family?

Sister Frandsen: “I worried about being away from children and grandchildren. However, there are amazing technological advances in communication available to senior missionaries. In some respects, I hear from and see more of our family than we ever did when we were home. We will have at least four grandchildren born while we are here, which we count as one of the greatest blessings of all. Although I will miss holding the newborn babies, we will get to see pictures and videos as soon as each event happens. Rather than taking us away from family, in many ways our mission has brought us closer together.”

Elder Frandsen: “Actually, we feel that we have enlarged our family by going on a mission. We are ‘grandparents’ to the missionaries. Each day we are excited for young missionaries to share their missions with us. We love them—and they love us back! Don’t you enjoy hearing returned missionaries report their experiences of sharing the gospel? We get to hear those experiences every day while they are fresh and largely unedited. Watching the missionaries mature and grow into effective gospel teachers and leaders is priceless!”

Sister Frandsen: “While we have been gone, we have still been doing missionary work back in Arizona. Two of our best friends have invited the missionaries into their homes. Additionally, our daughter and her husband decided to share the gospel with someone. As a



result, one of their friends was recently baptized. The more we try to serve, the more blessings we receive. It is impossible to get ahead of the Lord.”

Is serving a mission fulfilling to you personally?

Elder Frandsen: “Missionary work is never boring! There are new challenges and new adventures every day. In addition to our office duties, we teach an English class on Saturday morning and a Gospel Doctrine class on Sunday morning. Twice a week we teach college-preparation English classes for returned missionaries. We are also involved in finding and teaching investigators. Every opportunity for service opens up new doors for teaching the gospel.”

Any advice for couples contemplating a mission?

Sister Frandsen: “Perhaps one of my biggest fears was health concerns; instead, we have experienced health blessings. Our missionary schedule is healthful. We get up early, retire early, exercise daily, and eat nutritious foods. The Lord blesses missionaries with strength to perform their labors. You need not be afraid!”

Elder Frandsen: “We sometimes smile when those back home think that we are making a sacrifice. The sacrifice is miniscule compared to the blessings, joy, and satisfaction that God gives us each day.”

The Frandsens’ experiences are typical of comments we hear from other senior missionaries serving throughout Asia. Recently, one senior couple became emotional when advised that they could finish their mission one month early so they could be home at Christmastime. We assumed that their tears were tears of joy for the opportunity of being reunited with their children and grandchildren at Christmas. Little did we understand that their tears were tears of sadness. Knowing that they might never have another opportunity to serve in this capacity again, they desired to spend one last Christmas in the mission field!

I honor our senior missionaries. They truly are given power in places where needed to lay the foundation of this Church and bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness. ■

To learn more about mission opportunities for seniors, visit www.lds.org/csm/index.html.

Above, from left: Elder and Sister Frandsen with missionaries in their district; Elder Frandsen prepares to go tracting with the younger elders; Sister Frandsen serves in the Primary; the Mexico City Mexico Temple, where Brother and Sister Ortiz served (see below); Elder and Sister Lopes were called to help collect and write the history of the Church in Brazil.

BLESSINGS OF SERVING

My wife and I were called to serve in the Mexico City Temple. We greatly enjoyed the holy character of the work. We talked often about the wonderful experiences we were having and wept because we could feel the Spirit. It was the happiest and most wonderful time of our lives. Our faith and testimonies increased because we were serving the Lord with love and faith in His great work.”

Pedro Córdoba Ortiz, Aguascalientes, Mexico

GIVING CHILDREN A CHANCE TO SERVE

By Jenny Baker



Anyone serving in the Primary can tell you that children often have difficulty coming to Primary ready to sit quietly and learn. No matter how skilled a leader is or how much teachers love their class, children sometimes act out.

Latter-day Saints have been told that all new members of the Church need a responsibility.¹ Having a responsibility helps them feel a part of the Church and gives them a chance to learn and grow. Children can enjoy these same blessings when they are given a chance to serve.

Callings are not given to children, but Primary leaders can prayerfully search for service opportunities for even the smallest child. Here are a few ideas:

- Have an older child help a younger child during sharing time.
- Invite a child who has arrived early to stand at the door and greet others as they come to Primary.
- Assign an older child to be in charge of making sure the microphone is turned on.
- Ask a few older children to get chalk, eraser, crayons, or other items from the library.
- Ask a child who plays the piano to play a prelude or postlude hymn.

- Assign two friends to sit by a visitor or new member and help the person feel welcome.
- Invite a child to help lead the music.
- Assign several children to help set up or take down chairs.
- Ask a child and the child's family to visit a new child in your ward or branch.
- Ask a child to hold a picture.
- Ask someone to create a simple chalk drawing to go with your lesson.
- Ask selected class members to invent actions to a new song they are learning.
- Help an 11-year-old plan a Primary activity day. This will help the child complete a Faith in God requirement.

However large or small their responsibility, remember to thank children for their service.

I have enjoyed working with children as they have learned to serve. It is rewarding to watch them grow and use skills in the Young Men and Young Women programs that they began to develop in Primary. ■

NOTE

1. See Gordon B. Hinckley, "Converts and Young Men," *Ensign*, May 1997, 47.



WHAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT

Elder Kenneth Johnson of the Seventy tells of a time when he was painting the exterior

of his home and his five-year-old son asked to help: "[After I provided] him with an old shirt of mine that covered him completely, almost touching the floor and with sleeves rolled back several times, we went to work on the door that secured the main entrance to our home. He was applying paint to the bottom panel as I worked on the top section. I noticed that because of his age and physical stature, he wasn't able to spread the paint evenly and that beads of paint were resulting. Each time he bent down to recharge his brush, I would hastily smooth out the paint on the bottom panel, returning to my assigned area so that he would not realize what I was doing. After a while I decided that more important than a first-class paint job was the opportunity to work with my son. On reflection I realized how well he was doing. Thereafter, every time I approached the door and saw the distinctive style of decoration, I was reminded of what is really important in our lives."

From "We All Have a Father in Whom We Can Trust," *Ensign*, May 1994, 30.

TEN Scripture Study TOOLS

Do you want to get more out of your scripture study?

Trying some of these 10 tools can help. The more you earnestly seek to understand and apply the words of the scriptures, the more you will learn.

- 1. Questions:** Ask questions like “What did this prophet want me to know?” or “How can I apply this to my life?” Increased understanding comes as you explore the answers to these questions.
Example: Mosiah 4:14–15.
- 2. Word definitions:** Ancient prophets used words that may be foreign to us. Use the Bible Dictionary, a regular dictionary, and footnotes to understand words and recognize synonyms.
Example: Define the word *flaxen* in 2 Nephi 26:22.
- 3. Name substitution:** Insert your name for a name or pronoun in the scriptures.
Example: D&C 25:1.
- 4. Scripture chain:** Group or link together scriptures on the same topic and use cross-references to clarify meaning and unlock understanding.
Example: Chain for the law of consecration—D&C 42:30–34; 51:3; 83:1–6.
- 5. Cause and effect:** Look for *if/then* and *because/therefore* relationships.
Example: Jeremiah 7:5–7.
- 6. Words of emphasis or explanation:** Words and phrases like *behold*, *wherefore*, *because*, *nevertheless*, and *thus we see* are invitations to stop and look for lessons learned or meanings given.
Examples: Helaman 6:35–36; 3 Nephi 18:30–32.
- 7. Scripture lists:** Prophets often gave lists in their warnings and challenges without identifying them in ways we are used to. When you find lists, number each element.
Example: 2 Timothy 3:16–17.
- 8. Clarification:** Define the *who*, *what*, *when*, and *where* of scriptural events or passages.
Example: Luke 10:25–29.
- 9. Visualization:** Look for descriptive details and create a mental picture as you read. Ask questions about the event and imagine being present when it took place. Try to see it from different points of view.
Example: Acts 3:1–11.
- 10. Scriptural symbolism:** Words such as *like*, *as*, or *likened unto* identify symbols. Look beyond the symbol by exploring its nature and pondering its characteristics or attributes. The Bible Dictionary, Topical Guide, and footnotes can also help you find the interpretation.
Example: Compare Daniel 2:31–35 with Daniel 2:36–45. ■

By Julie B. Beck
Relief Society General President



USING Relief Society Meetings TO TEACH AND INSPIRE

Inspired Relief Society presidencies and priesthood leaders use Relief Society meetings to fulfill the purposes and work of Relief Society.

THE PURPOSE OF RELIEF SOCIETY

The purpose of Relief Society as established by the Lord is to prepare women for the blessings of eternal life by helping them:

1. Increase faith and personal righteousness.
2. Strengthen families and homes.
3. Seek out and help those in need.

As each sister in the Church does her part to ensure that the purposes of Relief Society are fulfilled, angels will be our associates and we will be participants in amazing miracles.



Sisters from around the world are finding that Relief Society meetings can help teach Latter-day Saint women and engage them in the Lord's work of salvation.

In the Philippines, Relief Society leaders wanted to support the Area Presidency in their desire to have members prepare to attend the Cebu Philippines Temple after it was dedicated. They discussed ideas with their bishop. As a result, they held additional Relief Society meetings on temple preparation, modesty in dress, and the blessings of paying tithing.

In Mexico City, where flooding often occurs during torrential rainstorms, Relief Society leaders organized projects to help the sisters and their families be prepared to leave their homes quickly. In another ward with 20 widows, leaders organized a Relief Society meeting to help support and strengthen those sisters.

In California, USA, one Relief Society president used ongoing parenthood

classes to strengthen and teach young mothers. They have now started these classes in Spanish.

In Moscow, Russia, sisters in one Relief Society wanted to focus on strengthening their families and homes by learning basic homemaking skills. They began classes on cooking, sewing, and making their homes lovelier.

Experiences such as these came as a result of Relief Society leaders implementing the new policy for Relief Society meetings, announced during the general Relief Society meeting on September 26, 2009.¹

Working Together

Relief Society is the largest women's organization in the world. The fact that it works under priesthood direction makes it completely unique. It allows our worldwide Relief Society to work in all cultures.

Every bishop or branch president has the responsibility for his specific unit. Each Relief Society president is called to





HOW TO ANNOUNCE RELIEF SOCIETY MEETINGS

Individual Relief Society meetings that are not held on Sunday can be called whatever they are: Relief Society service, classes, projects, conferences, or workshops. Following are a few examples of how to announce these meetings:

- “Please come to our Relief Society class on how to prepare for the temple.”
- “This Thursday we will have a Relief Society meeting for all sisters on using *Preach My Gospel* in family home evening.”
- “The Relief Society will be holding a workshop on gardening.”
- “A Relief Society service project will be held on Saturday morning.”

assist one bishop or branch president. Each priesthood leader and Relief Society presidency member has been set apart and blessed to receive inspiration for his or her particular responsibilities—and not for any other ward or branch or group of Relief Society sisters. As a result, all Relief Societies—whether in Chile, Hong Kong, Ghana, or elsewhere—can each plan what their sisters specifically need.

Following are examples of how two Relief Society presidents worked in partnership with their bishops:

A Relief Society presidency in Pleasant Grove, Utah, met with their bishop to discuss ward goals before planning Relief Society classes. Based on those goals, Relief Society leaders planned a meeting where a sister in the ward shared how she uses *Preach My Gospel* for family home evening. They also arranged several gardening workshops, including how to store food from one’s garden. Of the presidency’s meetings with the bishop, the Relief Society president says, “We feel our bishop’s love, knowing he is praying to the Lord in our behalf.”

A Relief Society president in Lehi, Utah, using information from reliefsociety.lds.org, proposed six months of meetings to the bishop. She says, “I encouraged my counselor to train our Relief Society meeting coordinator to focus on the purposes of Relief Society as they planned our monthly classes. When they met with the Relief Society committee members, they asked them to pray about how we could use the purposes of Relief Society to help meet the needs in our ward.

The committee came back with many ideas. Then with the bishop’s input and approval, we finalized our plans.”

Praying for Inspiration

Relief Society presidents who get on their knees and ask Heavenly Father to tell them what they need to learn will have revelation pouring down to them in beauty and detail. One Relief Society president says, “The Lord knows the hearts and minds of each of our sisters. He knows their struggles and heartaches, their joys and their sorrows. And only He truly knows what will best help them. Thus, our solution is to ask in faith for direction.”

The purpose of Relief Society will take on a new strength for Relief Society leaders, the sisters, and their families. Relief Society meetings will be a place where sisters can be taught and inspired in ways that meet their needs and, in turn, the needs of the ward or branch. ■

NOTE

1. See Julie B. Beck, “Relief Society: A Sacred Work,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 110–14.

For more information about Relief Society meetings, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.



SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN RELIEF SOCIETY MEETINGS

- Align the name of Relief Society meetings with Relief Society purposes and work.
- Encourage counseling between the Relief Society president and the bishop or branch president.
- Focus sisters on increasing their faith and personal righteousness.
- Emphasize strengthening families and homes.
- Give sisters opportunities to organize efforts to seek out and help those in need.

SUMMARY OF POLICIES FOR RELIEF SOCIETY MEETINGS

- The Relief Society president oversees all Relief Society meetings; she may ask the first or second counselor to assist her with Relief Society meetings.
- A sister in the ward or branch may be called as the Relief Society meeting coordinator. A Relief Society meeting committee may be called to assist her.

- Additional Relief Society meetings are generally held monthly, but the Relief Society presidency may recommend that they be held more or less often. Efforts should be made to hold the meetings at least quarterly, and they are usually held at a time other than on Sunday or on Monday evening. At least one member of the Relief Society presidency should attend all Relief Society meetings.
- In planning meetings, leaders should give priority to topics that fulfill Relief Society purposes, such as marriage and family, homemaking, provident living and self-reliance, compassionate service, temple and family history, sharing the gospel, and other subjects requested by the bishop or branch president.
- Meetings can focus on one topic or be divided into more than one class or activity. Generally, teachers should be members of the ward or stake.
- These meetings can be valuable supplements to Sunday instruction, especially for sisters who serve in Primary or Young Women or who are unable to attend Sunday meetings.
- Relief Society leaders should follow Church policies about finances and activities.

STAKE RELIEF SOCIETY MEETINGS

As approved by the stake president, one or two stake Relief Society meetings may be planned and carried out by the stake Relief Society presidency each year for all Relief Society sisters in the stake. One of these stake Relief Society meetings may be held in conjunction with the annual broadcast of the general Relief Society meeting, which is on September 25 this year.

COUNSELING WITH THE BISHOP OR BRANCH PRESIDENT

Using Relief Society meetings appropriately will increase the ability of the Relief Society to work in powerful ways with the priesthood leaders in every ward or branch.

- The Relief Society president should counsel regularly with her bishop or branch president regarding how these meetings can strengthen individuals and families.
- The Relief Society presidency makes recommendations about Relief Society meetings to the bishop or branch president for his approval, taking into consideration time commitments of sisters, family circumstances, travel distance and cost, safety, financial cost to the ward or branch, and other local circumstances.



HOPE

in the Ordinances of the Gospel

My wife assured me on the phone that she was feeling better and that everything would be all right. Three days later everything changed.

By Elias Magabo

I was born and raised in the Philippines, where I met and married my wife, Monina. It was there that our son, Mark, was born. In the mid-1990s, our family moved to Saipan, which is a small island in the Pacific. There, we were active members of another church. Occasionally, I'd see pairs of young men walking around the island, dressed neatly in white shirts and ties. I knew they were Latter-day Saint missionaries, but I had no plans to join another church. When I saw them coming my way, I would literally turn and run in the opposite direction.

My attitude toward the missionaries changed when two friends, Mel and Soledad Espinosa, were baptized into the Church. They encouraged our family to meet with the missionaries, and mostly out of curiosity, we agreed to do so. Our first meeting was in August 2007, and as the missionaries shared their message, I felt something powerful. My heart beat faster, and I felt a tingling sensation throughout my entire body. I later learned that my entire family felt inspired and uplifted. Our feelings intensified in the ensuing months as we learned more about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

About the time we began meeting with the missionaries, Monina's energy began to decrease, and strange bumps started appearing all over her body. Her arthritis flared up as it never had before. We sought medical help, but none of the tests gave us any answers. As the months passed, her health deteriorated to the point that she needed additional

medical attention. In December, Monina flew to the Philippines to meet with doctors there. I stayed in Saipan so I could continue to work and care for our teenage son.

Before she left, Monina told me that she wanted to be baptized when she returned to Saipan. She also asked me to continue meeting with the missionaries even though she would be missing some of the lessons. I promised her that Mark and I would do so.

During her time in the Philippines, we talked regularly so that I could hear about her doctor visits and she could hear what we were learning about the gospel. My wife reported that she was feeling less and less pain every day, and I was glad that the medical attention was working. In early January 2008, I purchased a plane ticket so I could go visit her, but she felt certain that she would be back in Saipan soon and that there was no need to waste money on the trip. She told me she loved and missed our son and me but assured me everything would be all right.

Three days later she died suddenly. The cause: undetected leukemia. Mark and I were stunned—and heartbroken. We immediately traveled to the Philippines for the funeral and then returned to Saipan. This was the most difficult time of our lives.

The sorrow I felt was profound, so much so

that I found it hard to get out of bed each morning. One particularly difficult day, Mark reminded me of something the missionaries had taught our family. He said, “Dad, don’t cry too much. Mom is in a place of God. She is in the spirit world.” How grateful I felt that a just God had provided a way for Monina to continue to learn about the gospel, that everyone who has ever lived will have a chance to either accept or reject the gospel of Jesus Christ—either in this life or the next.

As I continued to learn the teachings of Jesus Christ, I realized that Heavenly Father had provided much more than that: He also made it possible for her to receive essential ordinances like baptism. Before my wife left for the Philippines, she and I had started talking about being baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Even though she wasn’t able to be baptized in this life, Heavenly Father had not left us without hope.

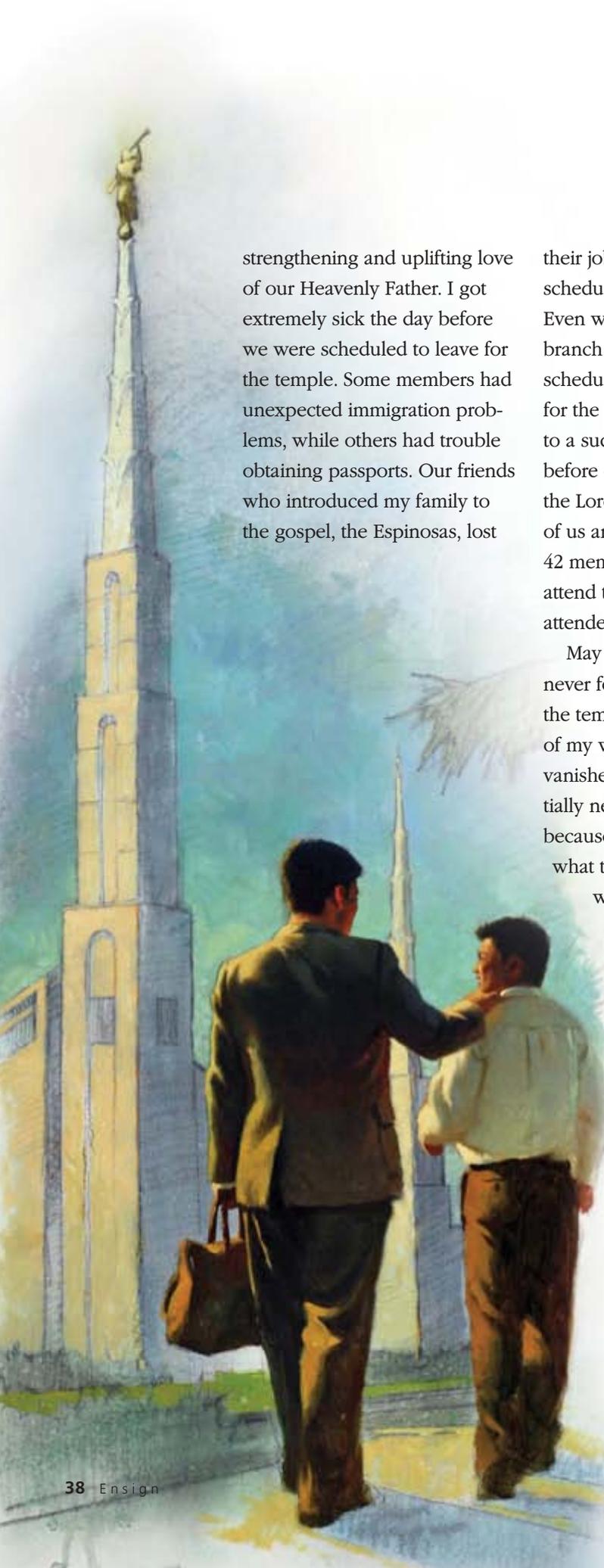
Mark and I faced several trials in the following months.

After returning to the Philippines for my wife’s funeral, I lost my job. I sold our car to pay Monina’s hospital bills. Plus, Mark and I had to adjust to life without Monina. Despite the adversity, Mark and I found hope in our new-found faith, and we were baptized in April 2008. In the months that followed, I was able to find another job and pay the hospital bills. Mark and I made a goal to attend our branch trip to the Manila Philippines Temple so we could be sealed together as a family.

After saving all our extra income and preparing ourselves spiritually, Mark and I traveled with our branch to the temple in May 2009. As we prepared for the trip, we saw firsthand the destructive hand of the adversary as well as the

The missionary lessons helped our family feel uplifted and inspired. Little did we know how much we would need that comfort in the coming months.





strengthening and uplifting love of our Heavenly Father. I got extremely sick the day before we were scheduled to leave for the temple. Some members had unexpected immigration problems, while others had trouble obtaining passports. Our friends who introduced my family to the gospel, the Espinosas, lost

their jobs the week we were scheduled to attend the temple. Even worse, a member of our branch presidency who was scheduled to attend the temple for the first time lost his father to a sudden illness three days before our trip. But in the end the Lord strengthened each of us and made it possible for 42 members of the branch to attend the temple. Sixteen of us attended for the first time.

May 13, 2009, is a day I will never forget. When I arrived at the temple, the weight and pain of my wife's death immediately vanished. Although I was initially nervous about the temple because I didn't know exactly what to do or where to go, I was struck by the calm, peaceful presence I felt once I stepped inside.

It was very different from the busy streets just outside the temple doors.

As the day progressed, my temple experience became only more meaningful and more powerful. In the morning our branch participated in baptisms for the dead. As I watched, I found myself thinking of my wife, who a year and a half earlier

At the temple with my son, we regained what I thought we had lost forever.

had expressed her desire to be baptized. I then witnessed the fulfillment of that desire as a friend was baptized for and in behalf of Monina.

The most significant portion of my trip, however, came later that afternoon when I walked into the sealing room. My wife and I were married years ago, but we were not married in the temple by Heavenly Father's priesthood authority. When my wife died, I thought I had lost her forever. But as I met with the missionaries, I learned that in the temple, families can be sealed together for eternity.

As I walked into the sealing room at the Manila Temple, I was overcome with emotion. Ever since my baptism, I had known the blessings of the gospel were real, but in that instant I truly witnessed their worth. As Mark and I knelt at the altar to be sealed as a family, I felt my wife's presence. I could hear her voice, and it was as if I were holding her hand. I felt Monina's presence with every feeling in my heart. I knew then that we were an eternal family. ■

Bridges of Friendship



By Wendy L. Marshall

Joining the Church is a leap of faith. Often in moving closer to the

Lord, converts are stepping away from family, friends, work, and social situations they've been a part of for a long time. Old lives and old habits are voluntarily left behind in order to obey the Savior's admonition to "come, follow me" (Luke 18:22).

In fulfilling our role as member missionaries and as friends, we can provide a bridge for new members and investigators as they make their leaps of faith. When I made my own leap of faith 25 years ago, ward members offered friendship in three very important ways.

First, I was immediately struck by the number of people who attended my baptism. It meant a lot to them that I had decided to join the Church, and they came to congratulate me and wish me well.

Second, ward members promised me that the Shepherd knew my voice. All I had to do was listen for His. They answered questions and encouraged me to study, pray, and be patient and my prayers would be answered.

Third, they warned me that as imperfect human beings, they might make mistakes or unintentionally do something to offend me. "Don't ever let our mistakes chase you away from the gospel of Jesus Christ, because it is true," they told me.

Unfortunately, just as converts are drawn to the Church because of friends, they can be diverted away from the gospel by "friends" who follow something other than the Lord's agenda. Elder Malcolm S. Jeppsen, formerly of the Quorum of the Seventy, said in his April 1990 general

conference address: "A true friend is someone who makes it easier to live the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . Don't ever be led into displeasing your Father in Heaven by your friends who might ask that as a condition of being your friend, you must choose between their way and the Lord's way."¹

When my nephew returned from his mission in Japan, he spoke of the wonderful lesson of friendship he'd learned—that all the little things he and his companions had done for the Japanese people as their friends had brought about great things. By daily showing love to the people, there was a new warmth and acceptance toward the Church. At his homecoming, he said, "I can continue my mission here by being a friend."

Being a friend is perhaps one of our most important missions. *Friendship* is simply another word for *fellowship*, which is another word for *love*. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that friendship is among the fundamental principles of our faith. It is designed "to revolutionize and civilize the world."²

Jesus Himself said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Such a sacrifice has not been asked of many, but in my life, I have seen friends offer nearly everything else. In doing so, these friends show their love by helping new members across the bridges as they come unto Christ. ■

NOTES

1. Malcolm S. Jeppsen, "Who Is a True Friend?" *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May (1990), 45; see also Robert D. Hales, "The Aaronic Priesthood: Preparing for the Decade of Decision," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 49.
2. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 318.

MORE THAN A MISSIONARY GUIDE

By Melissa Merrill

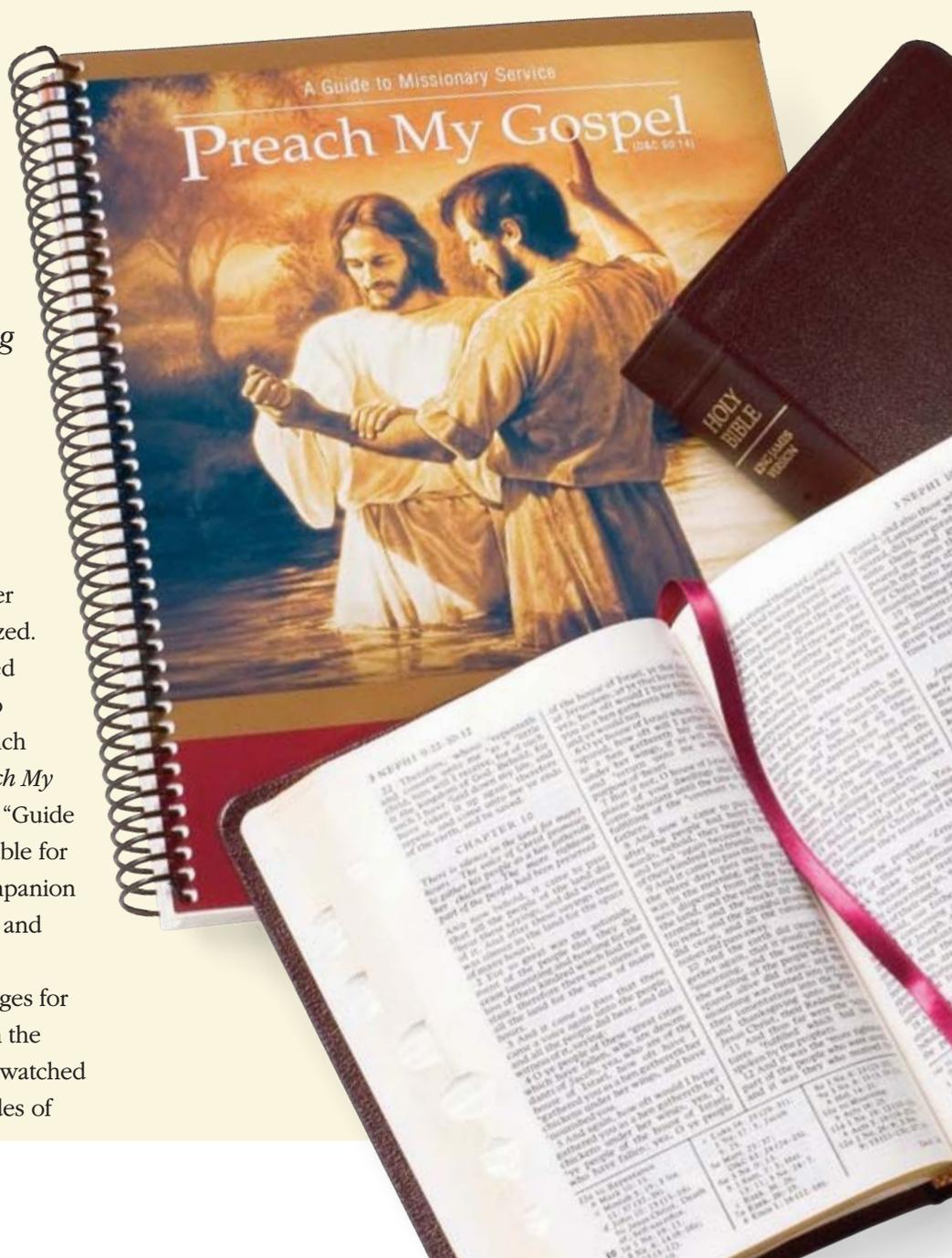
Church Magazines

In personal study. In the home. In Sunday lessons. And, of course, in missionary work. These are the ways members of the Hingham Massachusetts Stake are using Preach My Gospel.

As a missionary in France, Chris Ivie served in a small branch where no investigators had attended church in at least a year. Moreover, members couldn't remember the last time someone had been baptized.

Elder Ivie and his companion prayed about what to do and felt prompted to make sure that each family in the branch had—and was using—a copy of *Preach My Gospel*. At that point in early 2006, the “Guide to Missionary Service” had been available for just over a year. Elder Ivie and his companion acted on their prompting and ordered and distributed copies of the book.

That was the beginning of big changes for the branch. Although Elder Ivie was in the branch for only two more months, he watched *Preach My Gospel* transform the attitudes of



Church members—youth and adults alike—about missionary work.

“It was working!” remembers Chris. “Members were thinking about missionary work and trying to share the gospel and having great experiences. There was more missionary activity than the branch had seen in years.”

Members began reporting regularly to the missionaries about gospel conversations they were having with family members, friends, or colleagues. When those friends agreed to come to branch activities, other members welcomed

them warmly. For Elder Ivie and his companion, that meant they were knocking on doors less and teaching the gospel more. One of the investigators they began teaching was later baptized.

“Sometimes we have this misperception in the Church that missionary work is only for missionaries to do,” says Chris. “But when the members of this branch were prepared through studying *Preach My Gospel*, they came to realize that they had a role in finding people to be taught. *Preach My Gospel* helped give them the missionary spirit.”

Chris has now been home in Medway, Massachusetts, for nearly three years, but he still uses *Preach My Gospel* in his daily study as a gateway to the scriptures. “It helped me be a better missionary. It has helped me be a better gospel teacher. And it is helping me be a better, more Christlike person,” he says.

Chris is not the only member of the Hingham Massachusetts Stake to discover the power of *Preach My Gospel* outside the parameters of full-time missionary service. Although the resource is certainly intended for

“When the members of this branch were prepared through studying *Preach My Gospel*, they came to realize that they had a role in finding people to be taught. *Preach My Gospel* helped give them the missionary spirit.”

Chris Ivie



“When you do set and work toward goals, you stretch yourself and become a better person. I have *Preach My Gospel* to thank for learning that.”

James Setterberg



full-time missionaries, *member* missionaries in the Hingham stake are finding that it can bless and enrich their lives as well.

From Mission to Home

James Setterberg was also part of the first generation of missionaries to use *Preach My Gospel*. When he arrived in the Texas Houston East Mission in 2005, his fellow missionaries had been using the resource for several months. But because of the example of a local priesthood leader, Elder Setterberg realized that the tool’s usefulness wasn’t limited to the missionaries.

“In one area, we missionaries lived in the home of a stake president and his family. Every morning, they got up



“The doctrines contained in Preach My Gospel have given me a greater understanding of the power of the basics and an appreciation for the strength we can gain from studying things like the Restoration, faith, the Atonement, or repentance. There is great power in those things.”

Jake Peterson



for scripture study, which included going through the various chapters of *Preach My Gospel*. That’s when I realized that

this book really is for everyone,” he says.

It was a lesson he brought home with him. “Before my mission, I had never really set specific goals for my life; I guess I didn’t want to overshoot

things,” he admits. “But because of the emphasis on goal setting from my mission president and chapter 8 of *Preach My Gospel*, that began to change.”

Weekly planning and goal-setting sessions for two years formed a habit that James has retained since his return home. He has, for example, set and worked toward educational and spiritual goals. He says, “I’ve come to realize that without setting goals, you can’t really tell where you are in life, progression-wise. But when you do set and work toward goals, you stretch yourself and become a better person. I have *Preach My Gospel* to thank for learning that.”

In Teaching at Church and in the Family

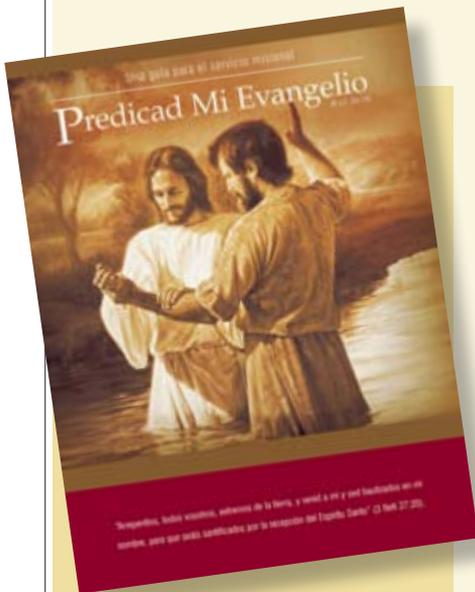
Even members who didn’t use *Preach My Gospel* as missionaries are discovering its power. Jake Peterson is a member of the stake’s young single adult branch. Although he served his mission before *Preach My Gospel* became available, Jake says the resource has been

invaluable to him in his calling as branch mission leader because it explains the reasons we share the gospel: “Sometimes we as members might think, ‘What’s the big deal about missionary work? My neighbors are living good lives and doing good things. Why should I create a possibly awkward situation by talking to them about the Church?’ *Preach My Gospel* goes over that. It explains why we share the gospel and talk to our friends: because the gospel of Jesus Christ ‘will bless their families, meet their spiritual needs, and help them fulfill their deepest desires.’”¹

It also helps keep all members founded in basic gospel doctrines, he says. “There’s a quote I like from Hyrum Smith about teaching the first principles of the gospel, then teaching them again and again.”² That statement and the doctrines contained in *Preach My Gospel* have given me a greater understanding of the power of the basics and an appreciation for the strength we can gain from studying things like the Restoration, faith, the Atonement, or repentance. There is great power in those things.”

Another member of the stake, Rick Doane, was serving as the ward mission leader when *Preach My Gospel* first became available. Rick immediately sensed that this new tool could help him in his calling.

“I love the fact that the book includes a chapter on how to work with stake and ward leaders.



ORDER A COPY

P*reach My Gospel* is available in many languages through Distribution Services. You can also download a PDF copy or listen to an audio file at preachmygospel.lds.org.

Missionaries come and go, but ward leaders will be there in the long run. They're the sustainability factor. I love that the book emphasizes the importance of that," says Rick.

Rick and his wife, Moshi, have also seen the potential for the book as a resource for teaching their young sons. "There is a 15-minute lesson in each chapter that can be perfect for family home evening," Rick explains. "It is principle focused, so it helps keep you to the basics, which can help you build a strong foundation for yourself and your children. The book even lists scriptures and activities you can use. It's a great resource to draw from, whether you're teaching in the home or elsewhere."

In Preparing for the Future

Mark Wadsworth, age 19, is now serving in the Spain Bilbao Mission and regularly uses *Preach My Gospel*. But even before his mission, he studied from it. "Every time I have gone through it, there has always been something new to get out of it," he says.

Studying *Preach My Gospel* before his mission helped him identify missionary opportunities. The missionaries in his area helped him and his family develop a family mission plan. "That got me thinking about missionary work in a more proactive way," he says. As a result, he had more conversations with friends about the Church's doctrines, its history, and Church-related activities.

"I might have had a similar amount of opportunities to talk about the Church before we made our plan, but I came to react differently to them," says Elder Wadsworth. "It was just a matter of thinking a little bit differently about things I was already doing."

Andrew Mello, age 18, still has several months before he submits his mission papers, but that doesn't mean he's not actively preparing now. Studying *Preach My Gospel*, he says, has been one of the best ways he's been able to do so.

Some preparation has come through personal study. Other times it comes from training in his priests quorum. On the first Sunday of each month, a member of the quorum is assigned to teach a lesson from *Preach My Gospel* to his peers and adviser. Sometimes they teach the full 45-minute lesson, but other times, just for practice, they'll teach the 15- or 5-minute versions of several different lessons instead.

And while Andrew acknowledges that this preparation is equipping him for full-time missionary service, he can also see advantages in his life right now.

"I find myself thinking about things from *Preach My Gospel* all the time," says Andrew. "I am the only Mormon in



"It helps keep you to the basics, which can help you build a strong foundation for yourself and your children. The book even lists scriptures and activities you can use. It's a great resource to draw from, whether you're teaching in the home or elsewhere."

Rick Doane



"Every time I have gone through it, there has always been something new to get out of it."

Elder Mark Wadsworth

“There are some questions or conversations that could go a lot of different ways, but when I can steer them in a productive direction because of things I’ve studied, that feels awesome.”

Andrew Mello



my high school, so people often ask me questions about what I believe. I’ve been able to use lessons and skills

from *Preach My Gospel* to tell friends or acquaintances about the gospel.

“There are some questions or conversations that could go a lot of different ways,” he continues, “but when I can steer them in a productive direction because of things I’ve studied, that feels awesome.”

Like Andrew Mello, Andrew Hovey, age 19, received a copy of *Preach My Gospel* during his high school years, but it wasn’t until he was a university freshman that he came to appreciate it. Through the influence of a returned-

missionary roommate and a mission-preparation class, Andrew began to prepare for his mission more actively than he ever had before. His prayers became more

intimate and meaningful, his scripture study became more directed, and his plans for his mission became more real,

he says. Moreover, he started using *Preach My Gospel* to direct his efforts.

Since then, Andrew has developed a system for marking and color coding his

scriptures to coincide with principles he has studied in *Preach My Gospel* as well as for recording thoughts and impressions he receives during his study. But he’s quick to acknowledge that the point is not to have a prescriptive way of marking or color coding or note taking. Rather, “you can personalize your study method in a way that fits you best,” he says. “That’s what’s great about the gospel. We’re all different, but the gospel fits all of us.

“It’s the same with *Preach My Gospel*. It teaches basic doctrines in broad ways so that you can use it as a guide. We can use it the way we need to for our own learning or to reach someone else.”

Patrick Smith, another young man in the Hingham stake, reports that once a month in his branch’s Aaronic Priesthood meetings, the young men report on any missionary experience they have had and then set up times to work with the full-time missionaries.

“Not long ago I went with the missionaries to teach a family who had already been taught the Joseph Smith story,” Patrick says. “The elders asked me to teach about Christ coming to the earth and establishing His Church. *Preach My Gospel* clearly illustrated everything and listed scriptures to back everything up. It was all outlined there.

“I knew about these things and had a testimony of them, but *Preach My Gospel* and going on exchanges

“I knew about these things and had a testimony of them, but Preach My Gospel . . . has helped me teach these principles better.”

Patrick Smith



“What we’ve been charged with doing, I realized, is helping our Father accomplish His work.”

Tom Smith



with the missionaries has helped me teach these principles better,” Patrick says. “The doctrines outlined in the book have reinforced what I’ve learned at home and in Primary for as long as I can remember. And the things taught in *Preach My Gospel* invite the Spirit, which is the most important thing we can have when we’re talking about the Church.”

In Helping Accomplish Heavenly Father’s Work and Glory

Patrick’s older brother, Tom, returned from the California Ventura Mission in August 2009. He feels that *Preach My Gospel* is one of the best tools for missionary work. Although Tom appreciated what the book helped him do as a missionary, he notes that nearly all of the prophetic statements on missionary work appearing on pages 12–13 of *Preach My Gospel* talk about the role of *members* in sharing the gospel. He says that’s indicative of how much missionary work should be done by

members and not just by full-time missionaries.

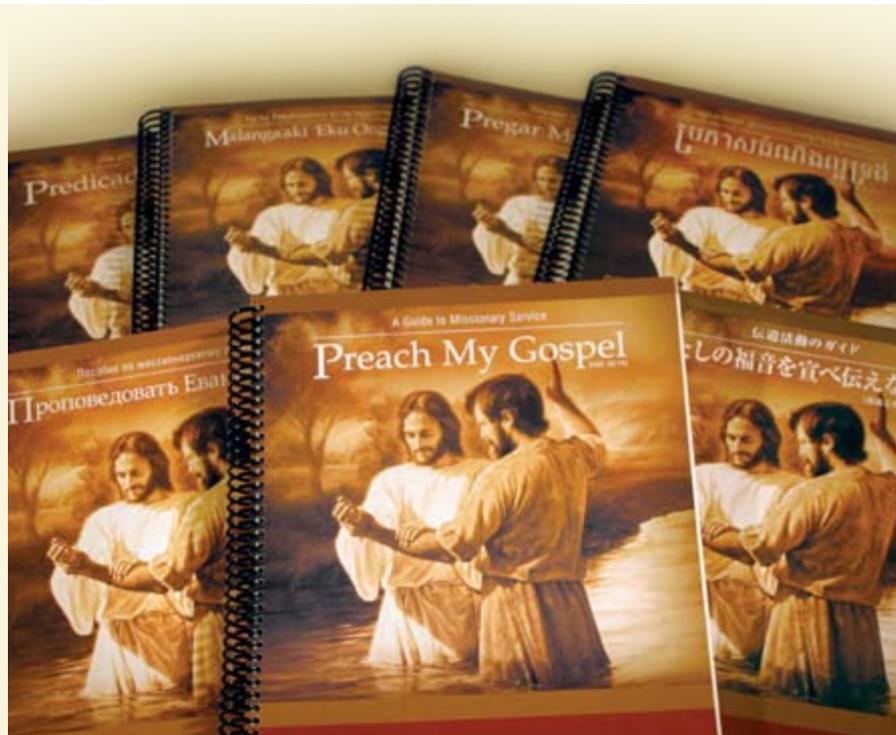
“As I was closing in on the end of my mission,” he recalls, “I was studying about the responsibilities of missionaries and why we—missionaries and members—are given this work to do. I read Moses 1:39 and thought about missionary work from Heavenly Father’s point of view. All He wants is for His children to return to Him. What we’ve been charged with doing, I realized, is helping

our Father accomplish His work.

“Now as a member missionary, I know that with regular scripture study (including study of *Preach My Gospel*), prayer, and seeking the Spirit, we can succeed in any endeavor. And if we let the gospel be at the center of our lives and work to better our understanding of it, it will become easier to share and testify.” ■

NOTES

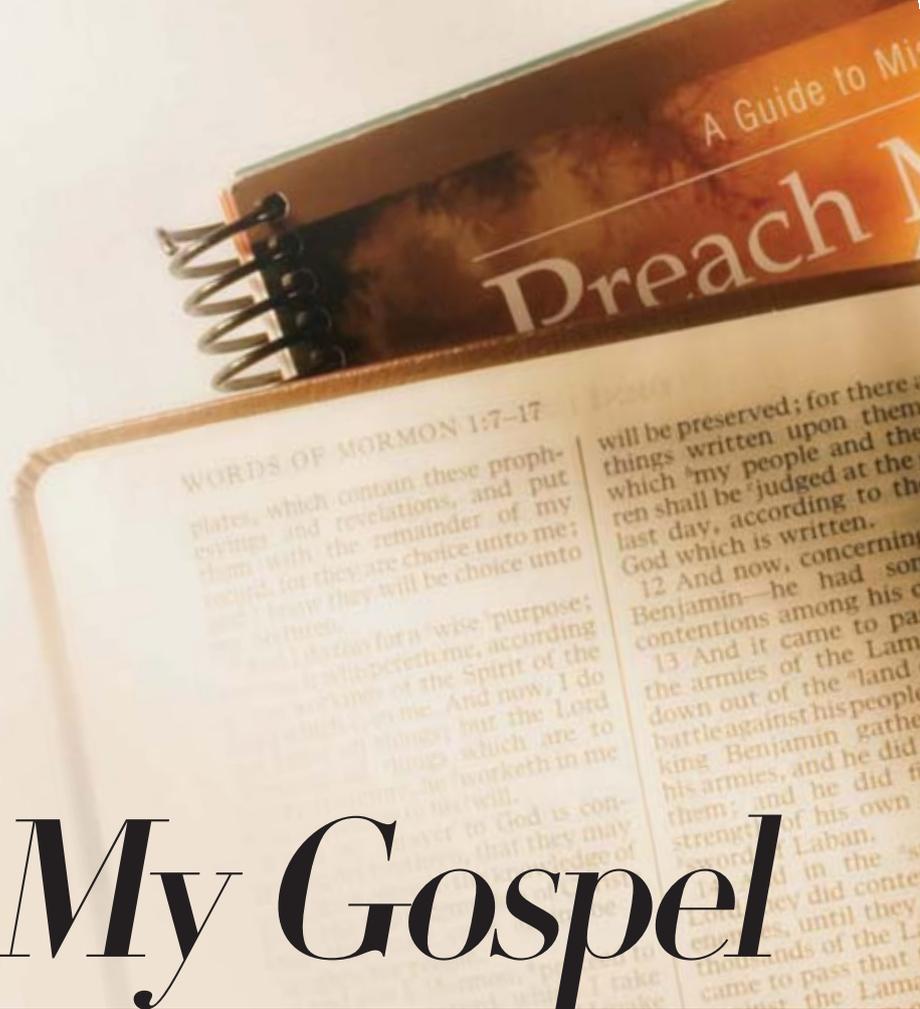
1. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 1.
2. See *Preach My Gospel*, 6.



MORE ON PREACH MY GOSPEL

The following addresses and articles are available at LDS.org.

- Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Bring Souls unto Me,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 109.
- Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, “Go Ye Therefore,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 10.
- Elder Erich W. Kopischke of the Seventy, “*Preach My Gospel*—the Unifying Tool between Members and Missionaries,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 33.
- Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Creating a Gospel-Sharing Home,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2006, 84.
- Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Power of *Preach My Gospel*,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2005, 29.



USING *Preach My Gospel*

TO TEACH NEW MEMBERS

By **Melissa Merrill**

Church Magazines

Jeanne Condon has been a religious person for as long as she can remember. As a child she experienced severe illness, but during that time she received a heavenly message of strength and hope that she was not going to die but would live to do the Lord's work.

At 27, following her military service, Jeanne joined a Christian faith, of which she was a devout member for more than 20 years. She even served as a missionary for that faith, teaching regularly from the Old and New Testaments.

When Jeanne went online in mid-2007 to order a new copy of the Bible, she came across information about the Church. "She wondered, 'What do the Mormons believe?'" Jeanne used a search engine to find out. When she read the Articles of Faith, she felt drawn to learn more. She requested a copy of the Book of Mormon, found the location of the nearest meetinghouse, and attended church the following Sunday, before the missionaries had even had a chance to visit her at home.

From there, Jeanne says,

For Jeanne Condon (above), *Preach My Gospel* has been the perfect tool to bridge her strong foundation in the Bible and the teachings of her newfound faith.

she "just fell in love with the Church." She was baptized on September 7, 2007.

Within a few months Jake and Hillary Stone were assigned to review the new-member lessons with Jeanne using *Preach My Gospel*.

Jake had served a mission in the New York New York North Mission where he had worked with many members of Jeanne's former faith, so he "really looked forward" to teaching and getting to know Jeanne. "Jeanne had a solid foundation in the scriptures," Jake says. "At that point

she was already teaching the Gospel Principles class.” But she wasn’t as familiar yet with Church history or the Book of Mormon. “*Preach My Gospel* was great because it offered self-contained lessons—like the lesson on the Apostasy, for instance—that let us build on the biblical teachings she already knew and link them together with the things she was still learning.”

Hillary notes that Jeanne’s scriptural foundation made her an eager student. “We’ll start with the beginning scripture in

a chapter of *Preach My Gospel*,” Hillary says, “and Jeanne will read all of the verses thoroughly and take notes along the way. And with the way that *Preach My Gospel* backs everything up with scripture, it’s been a great way to teach the lessons.

“I didn’t serve a mission,” Hillary continues, “and I grew up in the Church, so before we met Jeanne, I didn’t really know what a new member needed to learn. It’s been interesting—and good—for me to have the outline that *Preach My Gospel* provides. There are things I’ve always known and perhaps have taken for granted, so to have them spelled out has helped me a lot.”

Jeanne says she also appreciates having a book that organizes gospel teachings by subject. “I just think it’s a wonderful study guide,” she says.

“*Preach My Gospel* is, of course, the latest standard in missionary teaching tools,” Jake notes, “but it’s not just missionaries or new members who need to learn and teach the basics of the gospel. *All of us* can benefit from focusing on the basic teachings. Studying *Preach My Gospel* is great because it reaffirms the things you know (or that you have forgotten that you know) and does a lot to rekindle your testimony. It’s really a study guide for lifelong membership.”



ARE YOU USING *PREACH MY GOSPEL*? TELL US HOW.

How have you and your family implemented *Preach My Gospel* in your personal and family scripture study? How has it made a difference? See “Do You Have a Story to Tell?” on page 2 for submission instructions. Please label your submission “Preach My Gospel” and submit it by October 15.

In addition to the articles on *Preach My Gospel* this month, the *Ensign* has published other articles on how families can use this gospel resource. See, for example, “Using *Preach My Gospel* in Scripture Study,” December 2009, 18.

“It’s not just missionaries or new members who need to learn and teach the basics of the gospel,” Jake Stone says (shown above with his wife, Hillary, and their son). “All of us can benefit from focusing on the basic teachings.”

Hillary also appreciates the book’s focus on foundational principles. “Because of *Preach My Gospel*, when I go to prepare a lesson or a talk, I am more willing to talk about the basic principles than I was before. I used to think, ‘I don’t need to talk about that; I should find something new.’ But I’ve realized with *Preach My Gospel* that the basics are so important.”

Jeanne says that the more she learns from *Preach My Gospel*, the more gratitude she feels for having found the gospel. “So many blessings have come into my life because of the Church,” she says. “That first Sunday, I felt that I was in the right place. And I still feel that I’m in the right place.” ■

FINDING THE LORD IN Tonga

By Joshua J. Perkey
Church Magazines

Tongan members share how sacrificing for the work of the Lord leads to an outpouring of blessings.





On a cool, misty morning in northeastern Tongatapu, the main island in Tonga, Filimone Tufui Pasi dresses for a day “in the bush”—the Tongan expression referring to working on his farming plot. To get there he will pass through the swampy land surrounding his cinder-block home and then walk beneath the tall coconut trees and among the broad-leaf taro plants.

On this day, however, President Pasi, a counselor in the stake presidency, never makes it to the bush. Members of the Church have come seeking his assistance. A humble man of few words, President Pasi nods quietly, walks back inside his home, and explains the situation to his wife, Ana Malina. She and their daughter will spend this day making tapa cloth to raise money for school and sending the Pasis’ children on missions.

Within a few minutes President Pasi returns to the group, now dressed in a white shirt and tie, prepared to help. The decision will cost him a full day of his livelihood. But the smile of satisfaction on his face, knowing he is doing the Lord’s work, makes up the difference. “I’ve tried to live my life

this way,” he says. “I think that’s why the Lord has blessed me so much.”

Such acts of dedication and faithfulness are common among the Tongan Latter-day Saints, who testify that blessings come through faithfully living the gospel.

Faith to Serve

Liola Christine Nau Hingano grew up in the Church, and she often saw the missionaries serving in her community. “I wanted to serve a mission myself,” she says. However, serving would not be easy.

Shortly after Liola submitted her mission papers, she became very sick. The doctors discovered she had a tumor and had to perform surgery to remove it. While she was in the hospital, Liola received her mission call—to serve in Tonga. She had two months to recover before starting her mission, but it was a difficult time for Liola because her parents thought a mission would be too hard on her and didn’t want her to go.

“But I believed that because the Lord had called me, I would be OK, so I decided to go,” she

Above: In addition to teaching institute classes, Liola Hingano (inset) teaches a youth Sunday School class. Far left: Filimone Pasi with his wife, Ana Malina; inset: Filimone’s family shows the tapa cloth his wife and daughters make from the bark of the paper mulberry tree.



says. “When I entered the missionary training center, the mission president gave me a blessing and said that as I served the Lord, I would be as healthy as any missionary.

“My first mission area was very hard. We walked for miles each day just to get to the area where we were working. We carried our scriptures with us, and the sun was hot. But I knew I would be fine because I had received a priesthood blessing that said so. And I was. I never had trouble because of my previous illness.

“I am very grateful I had the courage to go on a mission and not turn back. It has made such a difference in who I am today—and in my testimony. I have faith in our Savior and Heavenly Father.”

Opening the Windows of Heaven

Just as Liola served faithfully because of her testimony, others have gained that testimony through obedience. Such was the case for ‘Anau Vuna Hala. ‘Anau was baptized as a young boy but became less active almost immediately. Although his sister was an active member of the Church, ‘Anau had no desire to return to church, and for many years he did not.

As a grown man he married Kinakuia (Kina) Hala, a Latter-day Saint. One day he discovered something that troubled him: his wife had begun paying tithing.

“I was disappointed,” ‘Anau says. “I did not

Above: ‘Anau Vuna Hala with his wife, Kina, and their baby. Below: Kumifonua Taumoepeuu (center), with his wife and children, testifies that all of their blessings come from the Lord.

make a lot of money as a schoolteacher. I didn’t want her to pay tithing anymore. We argued about it for several years.”

Kina tried everything to convince her husband that paying tithing was a good idea. “She had the home teachers teach us about the principle of tithing,” ‘Anau says. “I received many lessons about tithing, but I still said no.

“Then one day my wife challenged me to observe the law with her and see what would happen. It was a tough decision for me, but I wanted us to find peace, so I said OK.”

Not long after, ‘Anau began noticing little changes taking place in their lives. “When we paid our tithing first and then our bills, we had very little left over,” he explains. “But then we received blessings. Sometimes we’d receive help unexpectedly from family members overseas



or help from elsewhere. We always had enough.”

The blessings weren’t just financial. ‘Anau says, “I became active in the Church. We were happier at home. We decided to adopt a baby, even though we knew the food and other needs would be costly. But we knew that if we were faithful and paid tithing, doing what the Lord required, somehow things would work out. I was even able to get a better job working for the Church school, Liahona High School. And we were sealed in the temple.

“We feel our greatest blessings are the peace and joy we feel in knowing that we can cope with our financial difficulties if we pay our tithing. From the moment I accepted that principle, the Lord has blessed my family. I know it to be true.”

The Impact of Our Faith

Kumifonua (Fonua) Taumoepenu found that the strength of conviction may come even after periods of loss and inactivity. Shortly after his baptism in 1995, Fonua served in many positions in the Church. He also worked for a soft drink company and was very successful, rising quickly through the ranks. But he was frequently away from home and found himself slowly moving away from his spiritual convictions. After a time he even began engaging in activities he knew he shouldn’t.

One day Fonua ran into a group of men who, though unprovoked, beat him so badly he had to be taken to the hospital. While there Fonua began to reflect on his life and the poor decisions he had made. “I realized something was wrong with the way I was living,” he says. “My example caused my children to make poor decisions too. They were doing things they shouldn’t do.”

Fonua decided it was time to change. He worked hard to repent, became worthy to



THE POWER OF FASTING AND THE BOOK OF MORMON

After Telesia Falatau was baptized, she still struggled with aspects of her new religion.

“Sometimes I would attend church with my in-laws because my husband was not active,” she says. “I was impressed with the teachings I saw, especially the Relief Society meetings.”

She enjoyed the good instruction and socializing with the sisters.

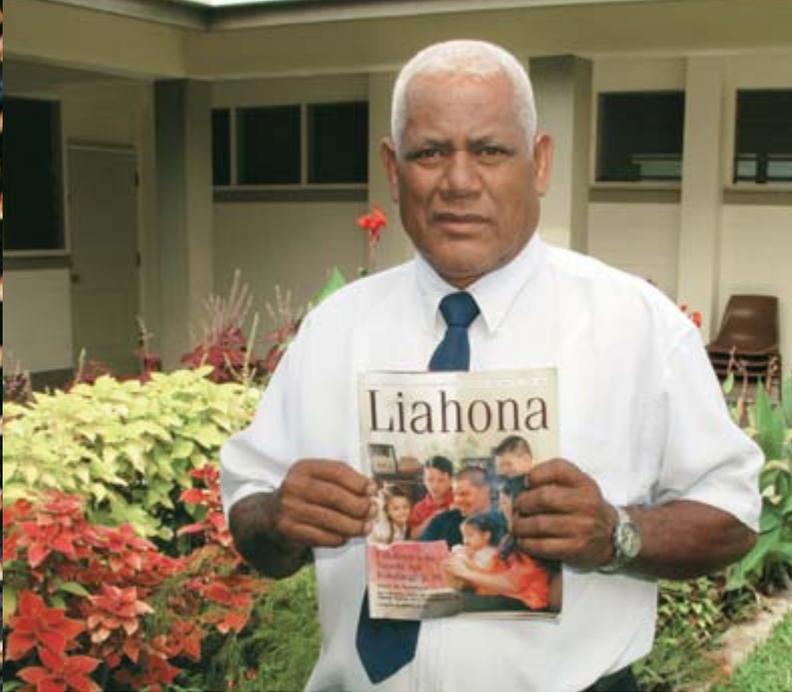
“But we were having problems at home,” she says. “When we started having children, my husband and I decided we had to do something” to bring peace into the home.

They agreed to do two things in addition to becoming active in the Church: they would fast every Friday and read the Book of Mormon daily. “I was determined,” Telesia adds. “I never missed. My husband did well also.”

Their feelings at home improved, and they continued fasting and reading the Book of Mormon. As Telesia describes, they grew stronger in their faith, their children grew in the gospel, and their home became a place of peace. Today, years later, Telesia and her husband are temple workers.

“I owe my life to those faithful Relief Society sisters,” Telesia says. “But it was also our commitment to studying the Book of Mormon and fasting that changed our lives.”





Above: As Vaea Ta'ufo'ou describes his life, he notes that the sacrifices he has made have brought forth the blessings of heaven. After exercising the power of prayer and fasting, he and his fiancée were able to travel to New Zealand to marry in the temple, a feat far beyond their personal resources.

enter the temple, and began attending regularly. One evening in the temple, he reflected on his life. “I knew I was worthy to be there,” he says, “but I felt uncomfortable. I looked back on my life and evaluated what I had done. I had not been a good servant of the Lord. And I needed answers too. I wanted a new job that would make it easier to stay clean.”

Fonua had just been offered a well-paying job in New Zealand. His family had encouraged him to take it because such jobs were hard to come by. “But I worried about leaving my family in Tonga and about how I would stay clean living so far away,” he says.

While in the temple, Fonua offered his heart in prayer to Heavenly Father. “I made a commitment to myself and to God that I would do what He wants for me. It was different from any commitment I had ever made before. And I received an answer there in the temple about how I could permanently change my life.”

Instead of taking the job in New Zealand, Fonua decided to stay in Tonga and look for better work. During this time, he was called as a temple worker. As he served faithfully, he says, “the Lord blessed me for righteous choices.” Fonua soon gained a major contract cleaning buildings. “It was a tremendous blessing. I could stay in Tonga with my family, take care of them, and serve in the temple.

“All that I have, all my blessings, come from being a servant of the Lord. I will never forget that moment in the temple. Even my children have been blessed. Before, they had caused a lot of trouble for Church members. But they’ve changed. They participate in church. There’s a great happiness in our home now—all because of the Lord.”

Sacrifice Brings Forth Blessings

For Vaea Tangitau Ta'ufo'ou, being a faithful member of the Church has involved significant physical sacrifices. When he joined the Church at age 19, he lived on Foa, one of the outer islands in the Ha'apai group. One of his first callings was as a leader working with the youth. Like other leaders he often had to attend meetings in Pangai, a town on the next island. To get there he had to walk seven miles (11 km) to the end of the island. Then he would have to wait for low tide so he could walk to the next island through the shallow water—assuming the current wasn't too strong at the time—and then continue on until he arrived. The trip would take most of the day, and sometimes he would have to wait overnight to return home.

“It was a challenge to make our meetings,” Vaea says. “But it did not discourage us. It strengthened our testimonies.”

Early in his life Vaea hated the Church because of untrue stories spread about it by others in the village. Then his family was befriended by members of the Church. Their good example softened the hearts of Vaea's family, and his sister was baptized. A year later he joined the Church and was soon serving diligently.

Some years later their district had grown significantly and had the potential to become a stake. Following meetings at Pangai, Vaea and others had to return home. But the district president

wanted them to be back for meetings the next morning and asked them to be on time. To make the round trip successfully, Vaea had to run most of the way.

“I was so exhausted I almost felt like dying because the district president had also asked us to fast so we could organize the stake. But I made it. I learned the importance of making it to our meetings and being on time despite the challenges. I believe my calling as bishop shortly after this was because I was willing to make the sacrifice to serve and be obedient. I also believe our fasting made a difference. Not long after, President Howard W. Hunter [1907–95] came and organized the stake.”

Perhaps the largest challenge for Vaea, however, was getting to the temple to be sealed. He and his girlfriend had decided to get married, and they both wanted to get married in the temple. But the closest temple at the time was in New Zealand, and the cost of getting there was tremendous.

“For a whole year we fasted together every Tuesday to find a way to make it to the temple. She was still living on an island in the north; I was in Ha‘apai. It was difficult. But then two businessmen heard our story, and they felt inspired to help. They actually paid for our trip. They said that if we truly wanted to be married in the temple, they would provide the way. I did not have any property or even a job so I could pay them back, but they did not want anything. It was a tremendous blessing.”

Blessings of Living the Gospel

Just as the taro plants and coconut trees nourish those who tend them, these Tongan Saints have learned that the Lord blesses those who serve Him. And just as the waves lap continuously upon the Tongan shores, the Lord is a constant factor in these members' lives. Whether it be through repentance or tithing or simple, daily commitments, they have discovered peace, comfort, and happiness as they have dedicated themselves to the service of the Lord. And they testify that such blessings are available to all who make the same commitment (see Mosiah 2:24, 41; D&C 130:20–21). ■

BLESSINGS OF REPENTANCE

Sione Finau learned the hard way the power of living “after the manner of happiness” (2 Nephi 5:27).

Born in Tonga and raised in Hawaii, he stopped going to church when

he was old enough to make his own decisions. Part of his problem, he says, was so-called friends who encouraged him into forbidden paths. Soon Sione had gotten into so much trouble he had to return to Tonga.

“That’s when my life changed,” he says. “I moved in with an auntie who was strong and active in the Church. I started attending church with her and making friends with the local young single adults.

“They showed me a different kind of happiness—a clean happiness through the gospel. So I started attending institute and other activities as well. I began to build my testimony.”

Sione finds great joy in life now. Why? “The principle of repentance is something we can truly enjoy in this life,” he explains. “I’m so happy for all the blessings I’ve received. I know the work we are doing is our Father’s work. Whatever He wants me to do, whatever calling I receive, I want to do to the best of my ability because I know it’s true. I made that promise years ago, and I’m never going to go back. I’ve seen both sides, and I know which is better.”

Sione Finau with his wife, Oa.



THE FIRST MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR RECORDINGS

*The choir's
first audio
recordings paved
the way for future
success as
a goodwill
ambassador for
the Church.*



*Main Image:
The Mormon
Tabernacle Choir
performing in
the Tabernacle,
circa 1914. Left:
The record label
from the 1910
recording ses-
sion featuring
the song “Let
the Mountains
Shout for Joy.”*

By Richard E. Turley Jr.

Assistant Church Historian and Recorder

For a century and a half, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir has been a goodwill ambassador for the Church.

Formed in the mid-nineteenth century, the choir rose from obscurity to fame partly because of its many sound recordings—the earliest of which were made a century ago this month. According to the *Deseret Evening News*, an “epoch in musical history” began when the Columbia Phonograph Company captured the majestic sound of the Tabernacle Choir and organ in September 1910.¹

A New Era of Sound Recording

Standing at the crossroads of the American West in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, the historic Tabernacle drew many overland travelers, some of whom commented on the quality of the fledgling choir and the great organ they heard there.² Still, the choir received little formal acclaim until its trip to the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893 earned it a second-place finish in a choral competition.

Even after that achievement, the choir remained largely unknown because few people around the world heard

it perform. But the growing popularity of recorded music would soon enlarge the choir’s audience.

Thomas Edison invented the phonograph in 1877, the year President Brigham Young died. Three major recording giants eventually came to dominate the record industry: Columbia, Victor, and Edison. Each sought to add the world’s best musicians to its growing list of recorded artists.

Yet the early days of sound recording presented many challenges. The microphone had been invented but was not refined enough for recording music.

Instead, artists had to stand in front of a large, flared horn that focused sound into an acoustic recording device. This technology worked well for solo artists and small ensembles but made it hard to record large performing groups.

Columbia was intent on recording such groups and sought to invent a machine for that purpose. By the fall of





Left: The Tabernacle Choir performing at the Chicago World's Fair, 1893. Left inset: Evan Stephens, Tabernacle choir conductor. Right: The Tabernacle Choir at the World's Fair in 1934.



1909 technology had made sufficient progress that the company agreed to record the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and organ. With further development, the company was able to transform a 500-pound recording machine into one that was one-fifth that size—a machine small enough to be transported from New York to Salt Lake City.³ The final product did not arrive until August 29, 1910.

At the time, the choir had a loose membership of 600 people, some of whom took part only on special occasions. Tabernacle Choir conductor Evan Stephens encouraged a good turnout for the recording session, hoping a claim to fame might entice more singers.⁴ Three hundred choir members responded.

Organ Sessions

Recording the organ would be difficult, but Alexander Hausmann, the recording engineer, was undaunted. His greatest challenge was determining where to place the recording machine in the Tabernacle so it would record both loud and soft passages clearly. On Tuesday, August 30, Hausmann tested the machine in a number of positions until he found the location that would work best.

With the device in readiness, Hausmann recorded

Tabernacle organist J. J. McClellan playing several bars of music, which Hausmann then played back to him using a “reproducer.” Satisfied, McClellan performed the closing section of Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* overture. It was one of the earliest recordings ever made of a large pipe organ. After the *Deseret Evening News* declared the experiments “a complete success,”⁵ Hausmann and McClellan returned the following night to make 10 “excellent” recordings.⁶

Recording the Choir

Although capturing the organ’s sounds had been an exacting task, recording a choral group the size of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir presented a new set of challenges and entailed relocating the recording machine.

Hausmann, with the aid of his assistant, spent two hours on Thursday, September 1, trying to find the best location for the machine’s two long recording horns. “Finally,” the *Deseret Evening News* reported, “he suspended them from a rope stretched across from gallery to gallery, the flaring bells of the two horns covering [the required area]—the one the sopranos and altos, the other the tenors and basses, the small ends connecting directly with the machine where the choir leader stands at the east of the organ console.”⁷ This meant the machine was positioned

in front of the organ console, “with the two large horns spread out toward the body of singers.”⁸

The actual recording began at 8:00 p.m. At Hausmann’s request, the women took off their hats, and the 300 singers clustered together as closely as they could while facing the horns. Because of the distance of the recording equipment from the organ pipes, McClellan had to play the accompaniment double forte. Meanwhile, soloists Lizzie Thomas Edward and Horace Ensign were arranged “with their faces in one of the horn bells.”

“Of course,” a newspaper critic observed, “fine shading work was out of the question; massive effects were the principal thing.”

As with the earlier efforts to record the organ’s sounds, the first order of business was to capture a few measures of music and play them back. The choir sang a few bars of the initial number to be recorded—“We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet”—and then paused as critics listened at the opening of the “reproducing horn.” When the first recorded sounds of the choir reached the ears of those around the horn, they “expressed their delight, as the work was just what had been hoped for.”

The newspaper reported that the choir members “sang with a vim, a wholesouled vigor, an earnestness, a wonderful unison and attack that carried Professor Stephens and those who were there to listen, almost off their feet.” After the choir recorded its numbers, Hausmann expressed to them his cautious optimism. Record-making, he said, was intricate and included work yet to be done in the factory. Their efforts appeared to be successful, but he would have to see how the recordings turned out in New York.

The *Deseret Evening News* exulted in the story. “What may, without stretch of the imagination, be considered the most interesting event in local musical history, occurred Thursday evening, in the tabernacle,” the newspaper trumpeted. “It was the successful recording for phonographic reproduction, of 12 numbers sung by the tabernacle choir of 300 singers within two hours, by expert Hausmann of the Columbia Phonograph company of New York City.”

For readers unfamiliar with the technology race, the



THE CHOIR’S RECORDING MILESTONES

- 1910:** First acoustic recordings made.
- 1925:** First electrical recordings made.
- 1949–50:** First two albums released. An “album” was originally a collection of individual records (one or two songs to a side) that were packaged together in a binder. New technology later made it possible to reproduce all of the songs from an album on one long-play record, which continued to be called an “album.” The choir’s two albums were released in both formats.
- 1959:** Recording of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” which was included on the album *The Lord’s Prayer*, won a Grammy Award.
- 1963:** The 1959 albums *The Lord’s Prayer* and *Messiah* reached gold record status in the United States (U.S.).
- 1979:** The 1963 album *The Joy of Christmas* reached gold record status in the U.S.
- 1981:** The First digital recording, *The Power and the Glory*, released.
- 1985:** The 1965 album *The Mormon Tabernacle Choir Sings Christmas Carols* and the 1970 album *Joy to the World* reached gold record status in the U.S.
- 1987:** *Christmas Sampler*, a musical special starring opera singer Shirley Verrett, received a regional Emmy Award.
- 1991:** The 1989 Hallmark album *Carols of Christmas*, which features the choir as well as other artists, reached platinum record status in the U.S.
- 1993:** The 1992 Hallmark album *Celebrate Christmas!*, which features the choir as well as other artists, reached platinum record status in the U.S.
- 2003:** The choir founded its own recording label, which has issued nearly 30 titles to date.
- 2007:** *Spirit of the Season* released. This Christmas album, which features Norwegian singer Sissel, reached no. 1 on the Billboard Classical Charts and was nominated for two Grammy Awards.

Right: As part of its growth to international recognition, the Tabernacle Choir appeared on the Ed Sullivan show in 1958. Far right: The 1959 recording of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” and the Grammy Award won for this recording.



THE CHOIR'S MOST POPULAR SONG

“You’ve got a Pop hit!”¹ The announcement, from Columbia Records’ sales department to its venerable Masterworks classical department, was startling. This was, after all, a reference to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir’s rendition of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” recorded with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Included in the 1959 album *The Lord’s Prayer*, the Civil War-era song was released as a single and was soon played by radio disc jockeys across the United States. For 11 weeks it remained on Billboard’s Top 40 charts, where it eventually reached no. 13.²

“How often . . . does a Masterworks recording land on Top Forty charts of records most-played on popular, even rock and roll, radio station programs????” was the incredulous question posed in a Columbia Records news release.³

In October 1959 the choir performed the song at the end of the closing session general conference. President David O. McKay said the title was not consistent with the message of the conference and introduced it as “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord.” Before the singing commenced, hundreds of people who had gathered outside were allowed to file into the Tabernacle to hear the song.⁴

Later that month, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) informed the choir that it would receive a Grammy Award for “Best Performance by a Chorus.”⁵ In November the choir performed the song at the first ever televised Grammy broadcast, in a program

that featured recording artists such as Ella Fitzgerald, Bobby Darin, and Nat King Cole.⁶

NARAS chairman James B. Conkling sent a letter to President David O. McKay after the performance. “From the moment the Choir’s portion of the program began, I have never witnessed such complete quiet and attention from this group,” he wrote. “When the Choir finished there was a silent moment and then an absolute thunder of applause—many of the Academy members rising as if in tribute. And many of us noticed tears on the cheeks of some of the coldest and hardest professionals in the business.”⁷

Renditions of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir have since been included on more than 30 different albums. To this day, it is considered one of the choir’s signature numbers.⁸

NOTES

1. Columbia Records, press release, Sept. 15, 1959, copy at Church History Library.
2. Joel Whitburn, *The Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits* (2000), 442.
3. Columbia Records, press release, Sept. 15, 1959.
4. “LDS Conference Highlights: Visitors Fill Temple Grounds at Closing,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 12, 1959, 13.
5. The National Trustees of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences to Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Oct. 27, 1959, Church History Library.
6. Conrad B. Harrison, “S.L. Choir Returns with Record Award,” *Deseret News*, Nov. 30, 1959, A1; Thomas O’Neil, *The Grammys: The Ultimate, Unofficial Guide to Music’s Highest Honor* (1993), 32–35.
7. James B. Conkling to David O. McKay, letter, quoted in David O. McKay, diary, Dec. 1959, Church History Library.
8. mormontabernaclechoir.org (accessed Nov. 12, 2009).

paper explained the significance of Thursday night's recording session: "The achievement is the more remarkable from the fact that for the last four years or more, the three great phonograph companies have been endeavoring to secure acceptable records of large bodies of singers. Fortunes have been expended in all kinds of experiments with mechanisms and horns, principally the latter, but to no purpose."⁹

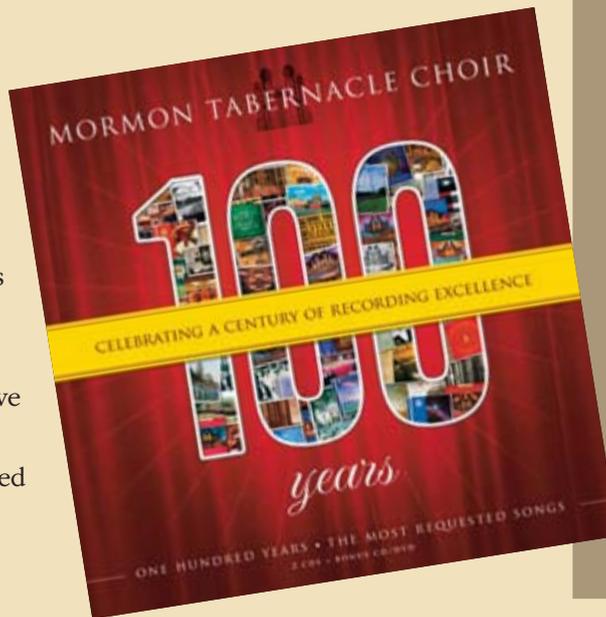
Organ and Violin Recordings

The final recording session in the Tabernacle took place on Friday, September 2. As on the other days, placement of the recording device was a major issue. On this day, the machine was positioned inside the organ case—the wooden structure housing the pipes. Violinist Willard E. Weihe had no choice but to climb inside the case too, so he could play his instrument near the horn flare. Doing so, commented the *Deseret Evening News*, "made performance in unison between violinist and organist difficult and embarrassing."

Despite the challenges, Hausmann reported that he was "entirely satisfied" with his work.¹⁰ In a final tally, the *Salt Lake Herald-Republican* reported that he recorded 12 selections by the choir, 10 by McClellan, 2 by McClellan and Weihe, and 1 by former Tabernacle organist Joseph J. Daynes Sr. Six of the recordings would be discarded due to poor quality, while several others apparently were never issued as records. The rest would be duplicated and distributed for public sale.¹¹

Impact of the Recordings

Though it is not known exactly how many finished discs were sold or how broadly they were distributed, the public response was positive, and listeners reported that the recordings touched hearts. For example, J. A. Vernon, a missionary serving in Larned, Kansas, USA, wrote in a letter dated December 20, 1910: "We recently received some phonograph records containing songs and solos by the Tabernacle choir and organ. On hearing them played, the people become inquisitive, which gives us many opportunities to explain the principles of the gospel."¹²



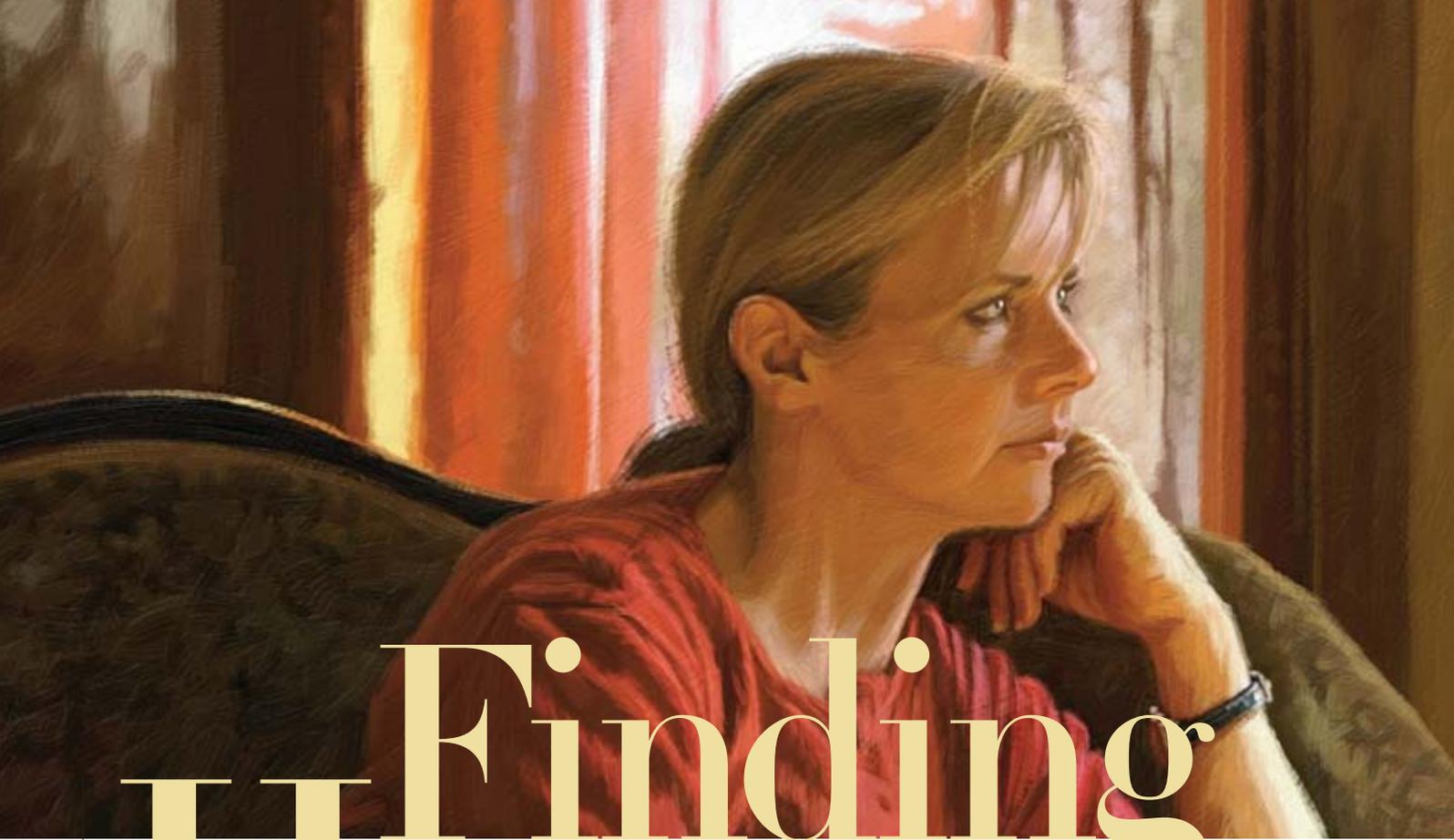
Left: In June 2010 the Tabernacle Choir released an album celebrating 100 years of recording excellence.

The 1910 recording session significantly expanded the choir's listening audience. Together with a series of concert tours, the sessions helped lay the foundation for a widely distributed set of recordings in 1925, as well as for a nationwide choir broadcast that began in 1929. To this day, millions worldwide listen to the broadcast, known as *Music and the Spoken Word*.

Since those first rudimentary recording sessions in 1910, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir has been showcased in more than 175 albums, including 5 that reached gold record status and 2 that achieved platinum recognition. One of the choir's recordings received a Grammy Award in 1959, and another album garnered two Grammy nominations in 2007. More important than awards and honors, however, is the impact of the choir's music upon its listeners. Now through greatly improved technology, the recorded music of the choir continues to move and inspire, just as it did in 1910. ■

NOTES

1. "Big Choir Sings into Phonograph," *Deseret Evening News*, Sept. 2, 1910, 5.
2. See Ronald W. Walker, "The Salt Lake Tabernacle in the Nineteenth Century: A Glimpse of Early Mormonism," *Journal of Mormon History* 31 (Fall 2005): 229–32.
3. "Music and Musicians," *Deseret Evening News*, Dec. 25, 1909, 15.
4. "Records to be Made of the Tabernacle Choir and Organ," *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 20, 1910, 17.
5. "Cannot Admit Public: Recording of Tabernacle Choir and Organ Numbers Require Still House," *Deseret News*, Aug. 31, 1910, 2; "Music and Musicians," *Deseret Evening News*, Sept. 3, 1910, 15.
6. "Music and Musicians," 15.
7. "Big Choir Sings into Phonograph," 5.
8. "Music and Musicians," 15.
9. "Big Choir Sings into Phonograph," 5.
10. "Music and Musicians," 15.
11. "Last Records Secured," *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, Sept. 3, 1910, 14; "Choir and Organ Records Splendid," *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 11, 1910, 1; spelling standardized.
12. "Messages from the Missions," *Improvement Era*, Feb. 1911, 353–54.



Finding Hope after DIVORCE

Name Withheld

Could I let go of my fears and turn my life over to the Lord?

It was nearly impossible for me to comprehend what was happening when my temple marriage of 27 years crumbled. I was devastated and disillusioned. When the dust finally settled, I was left alone, responsible financially for our youngest three children—a son on a mission and two daughters still at home.

It happened so quickly that I often felt like shouting, “How could this have happened to us?” But it *had* happened, and I had no choice but to move on. I struggled with sorrow and bitterness. But most of all, with a paralyzing fear that gripped me, I didn’t know what to do next. I had devoted the past 26 years to raising our six children. The thought of reentering the workforce was overwhelming.

Grieving and Learning

My bishop recommended counseling through LDS Family Services. I was ready to try anything that might lessen my pain and help me move through the grieving process. The counseling sessions were a remarkable learning and soul-stretching experience. I soaked up any information that would help me.

I learned many things during this excruciating time. The scriptures, prayer, my journal, and the temple became my primary links to daily strength. What changed my life, however, was learning to turn my fears over to the Lord. I learned that faith and fear cannot coexist in our minds. Fear inhibits faith and crowds our minds with worry so we cannot hear the Spirit. Fear needs to give way to faith

in order for us to access the Lord's guidance and comfort. This was a huge realization for me. Worry consumes the present, crowding out all positive, inspired thought. Could I let go of the worry and turn my life over to the Lord? I knew I couldn't do it alone, but I also knew the Lord would help.

Courage to Move Forward

I remember praying with all of my heart for the Lord to take away my fear and replace it with faith. I poured out my soul, telling Heavenly Father I didn't know which way to turn but that I knew He did. The pain and anger and fear were too great for me to bear alone. I asked Him to help me work through it to the point of understanding and forgiveness.

I thought of the scripture in Matthew 11:29–30: "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." I clung to the hope that this was possible. I wept and offered a heartfelt plea to Heavenly Father to help me through this difficult time in my life, and I promised to live as close to the Spirit as I could so I would be worthy of His guidance and wisdom. My prayer ended with a promise to help lift others as He lifted me.

That prayer was a turning point for me. I felt that my burden *did* become lighter, and I began to feel a deep sense of peace and well-being. I felt as if the sun had burst through the clouds after a long, dark storm. Comfort in the knowledge that the Lord knew me eased my intense pain and feelings of betrayal and anguish. The Lord knew of my dashed hopes, my fears, and my trials. He heard my prayers and answered them. This gave me the courage to make decisions, to square my shoulders, and to move forward.

Focusing on the Savior

Nevertheless, there have been times since then when I have lost my focus and the fear or bitterness would creep back in. Sorrow was never very far away. I learned that I needed to feel those emotions in order to move through

the grieving process. When the burden settled back on my shoulders, I would often think of Peter trying to walk on the water toward the Savior. As long as Peter focused on the Savior, he was able to move forward, but when he looked at the wind and the stormy waters, he began to sink. (See Matthew 14:22–33.) I needed to focus on the Savior and not look at the crashing waves all around me. It was a constant effort, requiring me to pray always and exert all my faith, but it paid off. I began to make difficult

The Lord promised: "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." I clung to the hope that this was possible.

decisions, liquidating property, obtaining employment, settling taxes, and caring for the children. As I focused one day at a time on the Lord's will in my life, I received spiritual guidance.

Now I look back with amazement and gratitude at the Lord's guidance and comfort so graciously bestowed on me. The anger and bitterness are gone. I feel daily peace and joy and know deep within me of the Lord's love and concern. I learned firsthand what the term "refiner's fire" means. The process of heating gold so that the impurities run off, leaving only that which is of lasting worth, parallels what has been happening in my life. I do not like the heat, but learning to let go of the impurities has been worth the results—more deeply ingrained faith, understanding, and gratitude.

I have come to know that as we trust in the Lord with all our hearts, lean not on our own understanding, and in all our ways acknowledge Him, He *will* direct our paths (see Proverbs 3:5–6). ■

The Church's Humanitarian Efforts:

Discipleship in

By Heather L. Stock, Welfare Services
and Larry Hiller, Church Magazines



The Gospels are filled with accounts of the Savior healing the sick, the blind, and the lame. The Savior's desire to bless and heal is reflected in His own words to the Nephites when He appeared to them

following His Resurrection:

“Have ye any that are sick among you? Bring them hither. Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them, for I have compassion upon you; my bowels are filled with mercy” (3 Nephi 17:7).

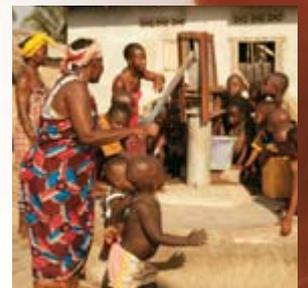
Also abundant are the Lord's invitations in the scriptures to come follow Him, to do His works, to become like Him. (See John 13:34–35 or 3 Nephi 27:27.) Doing so requires that we, too, have compassion, that we seek to bless and to heal, to lift burdens, and to ease pain and suffering. This is the driving principle behind the Church's humanitarian efforts around the world—efforts that are funded

largely by the freewill offerings of Church members.

In recent years, millions of people in more than 100 countries have been blessed by Church humanitarian initiatives that bring clean water to remote villages, provide mobility to those who cannot walk, help prevent or treat blindness, save the lives of struggling newborns, immunize against disease, and help improve crop yields and nutrition.

Clean Water

Walking seven miles to bring water home was once a daily task for 13-year-old Saidi Kigongobero, the eldest child of a large family in Bulyampande, Uganda. When collecting the water, he could wait two or three hours for his turn at the nearest well during the day, or he could leave at 10:00 p.m. and return home at 1:00 a.m. Either way, Saidi was often too tired to attend school or complete his assignments. “I felt like I was wasting my life doing nothing except hauling water,” he says. “I was not in school most of the time, and we still never had enough water to drink.”



LEFT: PHOTO BY MARK PHIBRICK



Action

The Church's efforts to relieve suffering go far beyond responding to natural disasters.

Today, Saidi and his family have a clean, new well only half a mile from their home. Now, Saidi's younger siblings can help carry water home, Saidi does much better in school, and the whole family enjoys better health.

Water for drinking, cooking, hygiene, and irrigation is scarce in many remote parts of the world. Often it is gathered a few gallons at a time from rivers, ponds, or shallow wells contaminated with parasites and diseases. Time spent obtaining water keeps many adults from more productive activities.

The Church's clean water projects not only provide safe water systems but also construct sanitation facilities and teach basic hygiene

practices. Depending on local conditions, the clean water may come from a new borehole well sunk into an aquifer, from a hand-dug well that is then lined and covered, or from spring water that is captured and piped to a community.

Local contractors complete the projects using labor donated by those who will receive the water. Local water committees manage the systems, which are designed to be sustainable for generations. Matt Heaps, manager of the clean water initiative, says, "In reality, our projects are more about people than water systems. We try to strengthen people in the community. Everything is done with an eye toward helping individuals and communities become self-sustaining."

Since 2002, 235 projects in 54 countries have brought clean water to 5,271,607 people.





The Gift of Movement

The group of relief agency workers had come to rural Ukraine to deliver several wheelchairs that had been furnished by Latter-day Saint Charities. Now it was growing late, and one intended recipient had not arrived at the designated location. Reluctantly, the workers were about to leave when they saw a distant figure in the dimming light. It was an elderly woman, trudging down the road, dragging an apple crate attached to a rope. In the crate was a 14-year-old girl with cerebral palsy. Unable to walk, with no car or bus available and no money for a taxi, this was the only way the girl could come for the device that would free her from a lifetime of immobility.

For those unable to move about freely on their own, receiving a wheelchair, a walker, or a prosthetic limb is like being given wings. Getting an education, going to work, attending church, socializing, serving others—all suddenly become possible. For the 14-year-old Ukrainian girl, the wheelchair was a passport to the world outside her apartment.

Unfortunately, in many parts of the world, even the most basic mobility devices are unavailable or unaffordable. By providing such equipment, Latter-day Saint Charities removes a physical barrier that keeps some people from reaching their potential. Partnering with local organizations and buying from regional manufacturers where possible, the wheelchair initiative can ensure that recipients have the equipment that best meets their needs. It also helps to ensure that follow-up therapy is available to people and that parts and knowledgeable people are available for equipment maintenance. In the past nine years more than 300,000 people have been given greater mobility by this program.



Vision Treatment

The hospital hallways echo from the music of a Buddhist festival across the street. Today is also a celebration of sorts for Dr. Roger Harrie and his wife, Beverly. They have presented their medical colleagues in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, with a special camera and are teaching them how to use it to diagnose and prescribe treatments for certain vision problems, such as diabetic retinopathy, a leading cause of blindness in adults with diabetes.



PHOTO BY MARK PHILBRICK

Some of the blindness in the world today can be treated, corrected, or halted with medical procedures. The Church's vision treatment initiative works to improve vision care and prevent eye problems by providing equipment and training through short-term specialists like the Harries. These specialists donate local medical professionals the equipment, supplies, and training they need to care for their people long after the specialists have left the country. In Mongolia, for example, local medical personnel trained through the vision treatment initiative are now performing free diabetic retinopathy screenings.



Neonatal Resuscitation

A baby's first cry is music to the mother. But too often, in too many places, instead of a cry and the glad voice of a nurse or midwife, there is only silence. It's all the more tragic because the nurse or midwife does not have an inexpensive bulb syringe or the knowledge to perform rescue breathing techniques. By having these two tools doctors, nurses, and midwives can often save struggling newborns who would otherwise die.

The Church's neonatal resuscitation training (NRT) initiative uses short-term specialists to train local doctors, nurses, and midwives in NRT techniques. For example, Dr. George Bennett and his wife, Marcia, along with doctors from the Turkish Ministry of Health, met with medical representatives from Tajikistan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan. They explained how the NRT program can save the lives of infants. In fact, the program requires that each person taught will provide the training to birth attendants in their area.

This train-the-trainer method allows life-saving knowledge and supplies to quickly cross language and cultural boundaries. Medical communities are improved, birth attendants no longer watch helplessly when a newborn struggles to draw breath, and families are blessed. Liz Howell, an international health coordinator with LDS Charities, says, "It truly is a life-changing and a life-saving program."



PHOTOS ABOVE AND BELOW BY JASON SWENSEN WITH DESERET NEWS



THE RESULTS OF REACHING OUT

Initiative	No. of Projects	No. of Countries	Beneficiaries
Clean Water (since 2002)	235	54	5,271,607
Wheelchairs (since 2001)	626	106	302,236
Vision Care (since 2003)	72	41	214,545 (trained or treated)
Neonatal Resuscitation Training (since 2003)	145	70	112,999 (trained or treated)
Food (since 2007)	20	11	343,668

RESCUING, FEEDING, CLOTHING, EDUCATING

- In addition to the welfare assistance provided to Church members through fast offerings, between 1985 and the end of 2008, the Church responded to 1,566 emergencies and disasters in 141 nations.

- During that same period, 375,312,423 pounds of goods were distributed. These include clothing, medical supplies, food, educational supplies, and a variety of "kits," such as hygiene kits and kits to provide basic supplies for schoolchildren.
- Total value of cash and in-kind assistance: \$1.1 billion.
- Latter-day Saint Charities often partners with other reputable, well-established agencies, including those of other faiths. This avoids duplicate local staffs and distribution channels, takes advantage of local expertise and experience, and allows more of every donated dollar to go directly to its intended purpose. Outcomes of the humanitarian initiatives are carefully monitored.



Health and Strength

Diseases that no longer threaten children in developed nations still rage among the poor in many countries. Measles is one of the leading causes of death among young children, according to the World Health Organization.¹

Hunger and malnutrition are also prevalent, stunting the physical and mental development of children and greatly increasing their susceptibility to diseases like measles. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, “Undernourishment and deficiencies in essential vitamins and minerals cost more than 5 million children their lives every year.”²

In 2003, the Church joined the international Measles Initiative and Partnership. In addition to making financial contributions, the Church has played a significant role in organizing, promoting, and conducting local vaccination campaigns using Church volunteers. Since 2003, approximately 56,000 Church members have provided more than 600,000 hours of service in 32 nations. Since 2001, the Measles Initiative and Partnership has vaccinated 600 million children and youth. Measles deaths worldwide have decreased from 750,000 in 2000 to 197,000 in 2007.³

The Church’s humanitarian efforts have always included helping to feed the hungry. But now chronic hunger and malnutrition are also being addressed by a food initiative that teaches communities in both rural and urban areas how to grow nutritious vegetables and to raise small animals for protein. Many of the techniques being taught are based on years of research by the Benson Institute, which became part of Latter-day Saint Charities in 2007.

Projects begin with short-term specialists teaching at schools and community centers in an area where malnutrition is a problem. Children, their families, and teachers all learn clean food preparation, the health benefits of eating a varied diet, and effective, sustainable gardening techniques suited to local conditions. The Church and partner organizations provide materials. Initiative manager Wade Sperry says that when people’s physical health improves, they are able to improve their emotional and spiritual health as well.



Following Jesus Christ

Seeing suffering and need in the world, followers of Christ instinctively desire to help. These initiatives of the Church’s humanitarian efforts provide an organized and effective way for Church members to act on their desire to follow the Savior’s admonition:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do” (3 Nephi 27: 21).

President Thomas S. Monson said, “I am deeply grateful that as a church we continue to extend humanitarian aid where there is great need. We have done much in this regard and have blessed the lives of thousands upon thousands of our Father’s children who are not of our faith as well as those who are. We intend to continue to help wherever such is needed.”⁴ ■

NOTES

1. World Health Organization, Fact Sheet no. 286, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs286/en>.
2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Undernourishment around the World 2004,” http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5650e/y5650e03.htm#P26_3460.
3. See “Members Assist with Measles Initiative,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2010, 77.
4. Thomas S. Monson “Until We Meet Again,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 114.



Discussing the Family Proclamation

When I was a teenager, my family held a discussion about the unique principles taught in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”¹ We used a whiteboard to draw a T-chart, with one side labeled “What the Family Proclamation Teaches” and the other side labeled

“What the World Teaches.” Our family contrasted key principles of the family proclamation with messages we had heard in school, in the media, and elsewhere. (See chart below.) Reviewing the family proclamation point by point helped us appreciate and understand its various

principles more clearly. Contrasting them with other world views helped us recognize messages that are false or confusing or otherwise counter to Heavenly Father’s plan. As a result, we

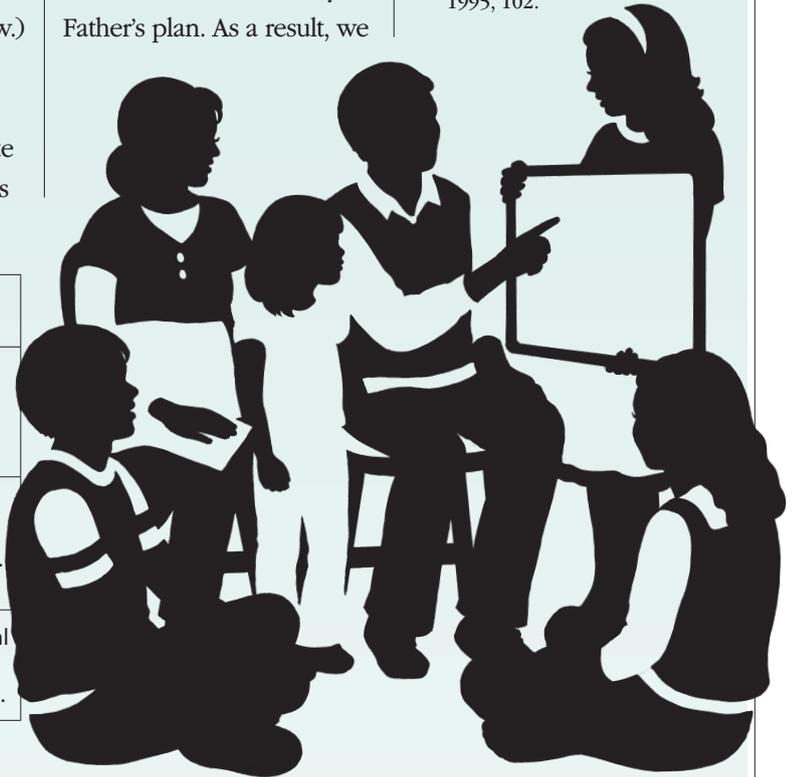
can fortify ourselves against worldly teachings.

Lindsey Spjut Schlensker,
Ohio, USA

NOTE

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.

WHAT THE FAMILY PROCLAMATION TEACHES	WHAT THE WORLD TEACHES
“Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.”	Gender doesn’t really matter, and it’s something you can choose.
“The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave.”	This life is it. There is no plan. Relationships end when we die.
“The family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”	The family is an outdated social construct resulting from the necessities of past generations.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Helps for Home Evening

“Dating and Virtue,” on page 14: Prayerfully study the article and select the suggestions that apply to your family. You could discuss, role-play, or list the principles taught and create a personal plan of action. If age appropriate, conclude by reading the sidebars from *For the Strength of Youth*.

“The Church’s Humanitarian Effort,” on page 62: After reading the accounts from the article, invite

your family to share how they felt and what they learned about the Church’s humanitarian efforts. Consider asking what they can do locally as well as globally to follow the Savior’s admonition: “The works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do” (3 Nephi 27:21).

“Bringing Christ into Our Home,” on page 8: After reading this article as a family, you may want to set a goal to memorize “The Living Christ” and gather pictures of the Savior to help family members “always remember him” (Moroni 4:3).

Dating and VIRTUE

Give things your own spin as you help your children prepare for dating.

From an interview with Beth and Andy Spjut, whose sons are married, and Steve Spjut, a young man who is currently dating.

A recently made headlines in the Mormon community. The article, “Dating and Virtue,” was published in the November issue of *For the Strength of Youth*. The article discusses the challenges of dating in a world where many young people are looking for a “hookup” culture. The authors, Beth and Andy Spjut, share their own experiences and offer practical advice for parents and young people alike. The article is a must-read for anyone interested in the topic of dating and relationships.

I understand the position of dating and virtual relationships. The first thing I notice when I read the article is how much it resonates with me. I have been in a similar situation, and I can relate to the authors' concerns. The article is a great resource for parents and young people alike, and it provides a lot of helpful advice. I am glad to see that the Church is addressing this issue and providing guidance to its members.

There is a big challenge today and being to the next generation. We need to teach the youth that the principles of the living Christ are not just for the past, but they are for the future. We need to help them understand that the principles of the living Christ are not just for the past, but they are for the future. We need to help them understand that the principles of the living Christ are not just for the past, but they are for the future.

ILLUSTRATION BY BETH WHITTAKER

WOULD YOU PRAY WITH ME?

"I will be back in a few minutes," my Thai host father said on his way out the front door. At least, I *think* that's what he said. My comprehension of the Thai language was sketchy at best.

I had lived in Thailand for about four months as a community service volunteer, and although I could speak basic Thai, I still had a lot to learn. I had just changed areas, but my new host family already understood that I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I did my best to explain my values and even gave the family a Thai Book of Mormon and a *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet.

As I waited for my host father to come home, I sat on the living room

floor and began studying a Thai phrase book. Suddenly, a strong impression came to me to invite him to pray with me. It had occurred to me before to ask him, but the impression had never come so powerfully. During my time in Thailand, I had shared the gospel on many occasions, but I had never asked anyone to pray with me.

My host father and I had a good relationship. I even called him "Dad," which he seemed to appreciate. I felt excited and then nervous. What if he told me no? What if he felt uncomfortable around me for the rest of my time with his family? Should I chance ruining our relationship? To make matters worse, I didn't know how to pray in Thai. I didn't even know enough Thai

to ask my host father to pray, so I asked my Heavenly Father for help.

Shortly afterward, I heard a loud clang as the front gate closed. As my host father entered, he greeted me and announced that he was going to bed. I realized that I couldn't let this opportunity pass. As I opened my mouth to speak, I immediately knew what to say and how to say it in Thai.

"Dad, in America I used to pray with my family, and I really miss doing so. Would you pray with me?" I was surprised by his response.

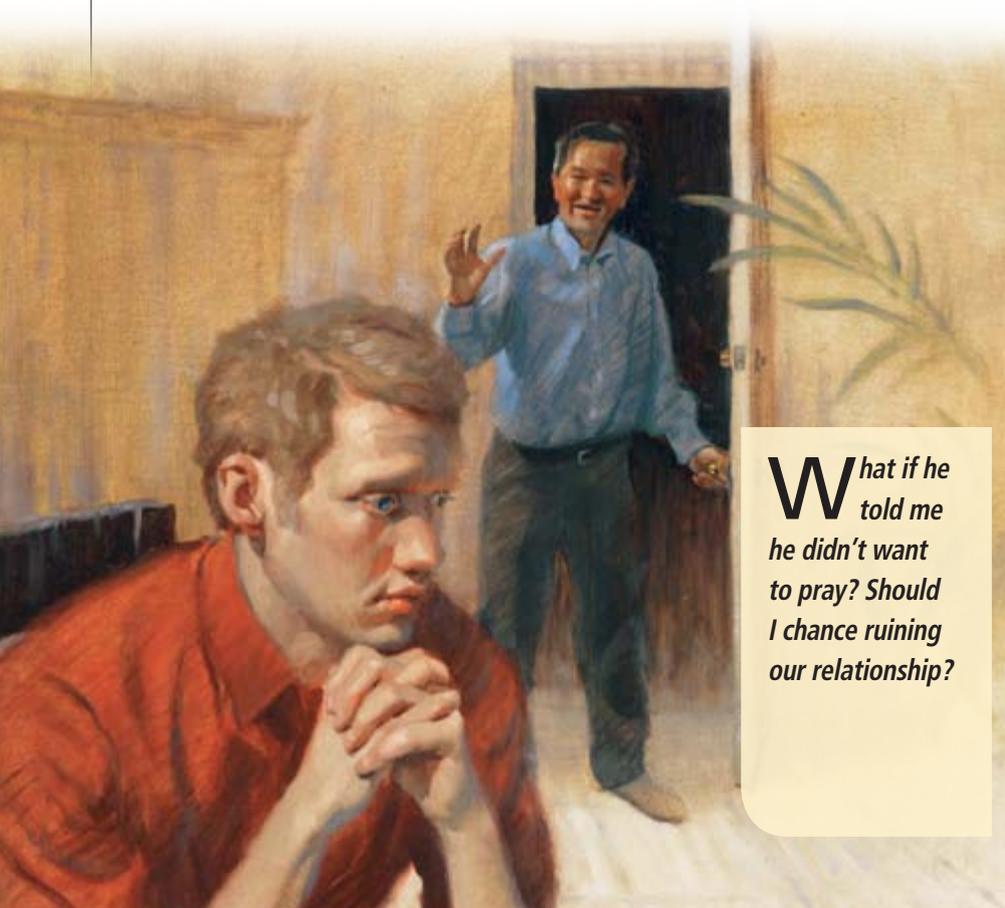
"Jon," he replied, "of course I would. Teach me how."

I then explained in Thai what prayer is but decided to say my prayer in English. I knew God was listening, and I knew my host father felt the Spirit. My eyes welled with tears as he followed the conclusion of my prayer with "amen."

I can't express in words the joy and love I felt for my host father and my Heavenly Father. That experience gave me confidence and led to more experiences in sharing the gospel with others. Unfortunately, my host family never accepted my invitation to attend the local branch, but I know that the knowledge I shared with them will benefit them sooner or later.

Though we may not always see the fruits of our labors in this life, I learned that planting gospel seeds can bless at least one life—your own. And in the Lord's time, those seeds may bless the lives of others. ■

Jonathan H. Bowden, Utah, USA



What if he told me he didn't want to pray? Should I chance ruining our relationship?

WOULD IÑAKI EVER COME HOME?

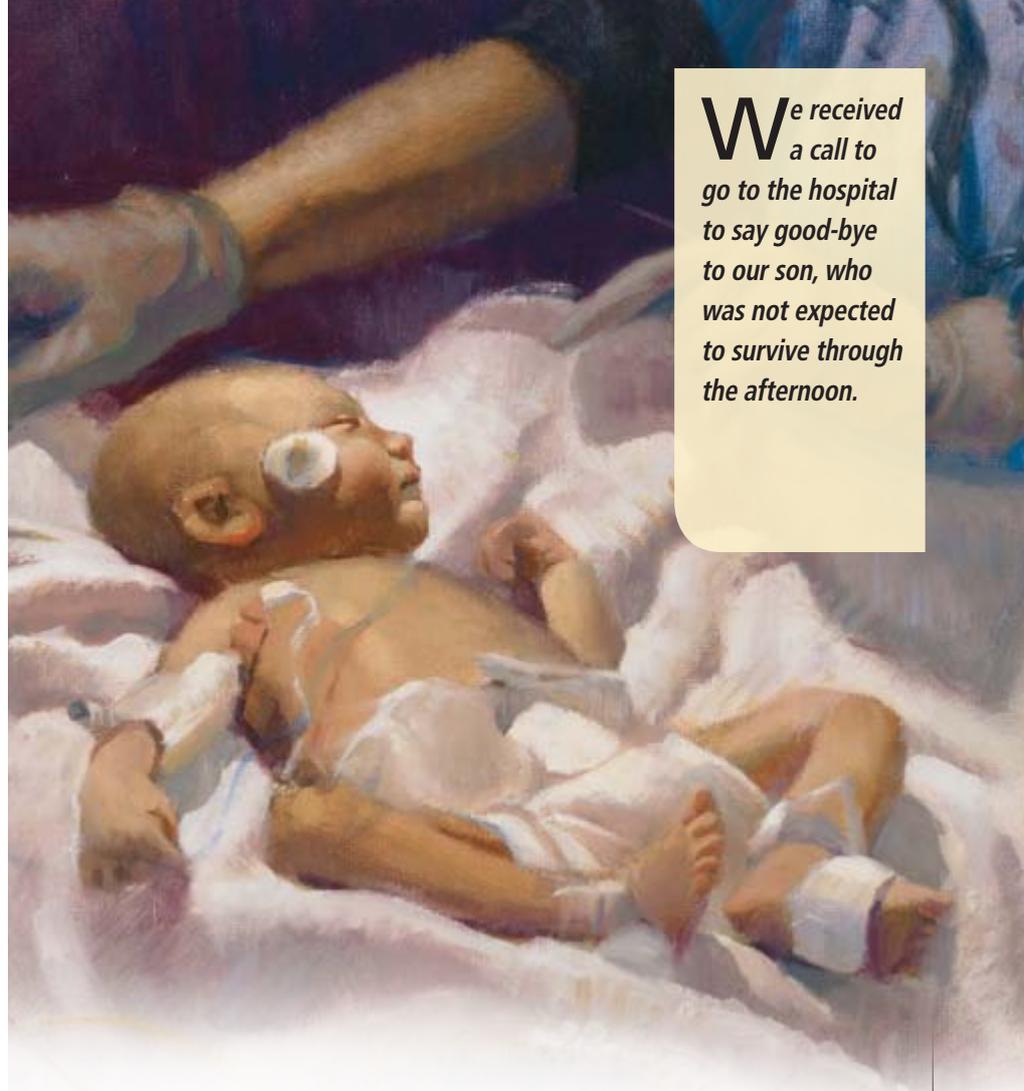
After only 23 weeks gestation, our third son, Iñaki, was born via emergency cesarean section. He weighed only 1 pound, 4 ounces (560 g) and measured 12.2 inches (31 cm).

Because our son was so premature, there was not much chance he would survive. Our doctor asked us if we really wanted physicians to help him, thus prolonging the inevitable. I answered that as long as he was alive, we had to give him a chance. Then I asked God for a miracle.

Iñaki received a blessing of health that first night. During the next four long months, he suffered a perforation in his intestines, a brain hemorrhage, and a collapsed lung. Because of his circumstances, we received permission to give him a name and a blessing in the hospital.

Throughout this process, we met other parents who suffered just as we did, and we offered each other support and comfort. We also shared our testimonies of the gospel with everyone we could.

One day we received a call to go to the hospital to say good-bye to our son, who was not expected to survive through the afternoon. When we arrived, we held him and spoke to him. Seeing him in his weak condition was indescribably painful. For the first time, my husband and I realized that



We received a call to go to the hospital to say good-bye to our son, who was not expected to survive through the afternoon.

we were just temporary guardians for this child of God. All we could do to help him was pray and ask Heavenly Father for His will to be done. Iñaki clung to life that afternoon, and we are grateful that he continued to do so in the days that followed.

During the four months Iñaki spent in the neonatal intensive-care unit, we repeatedly saw the power of the priesthood in action as Heavenly Father blessed our son through the hands of physicians and priesthood holders—eventually healing him, to the amazement of the doctors.

In October 2008, Iñaki came home. We have learned many things as

a family through this experience. We know that our Heavenly Father loves us and that He works miracles and preserves His Saints despite the trials we must endure. And we understand better the purpose of eternal families, the important role they play in the plan of happiness, and how generous our Heavenly Father is with His children.

Today we are a different family, more united and more aware of the suffering and needs of those around us—all because of our son and the miracle he has wrought in our lives. ■

Paulina del Pilar Zelada Muñoz,
Santiago, Chile

GOD WILL BLESS ME

I was serving in the mission office of the El Salvador San Salvador Mission when the mission president transferred me to an area that had been closed for many years. The leaders of the branch there had not only prayed and fasted that missionaries would return, but they had also prepared for that day.

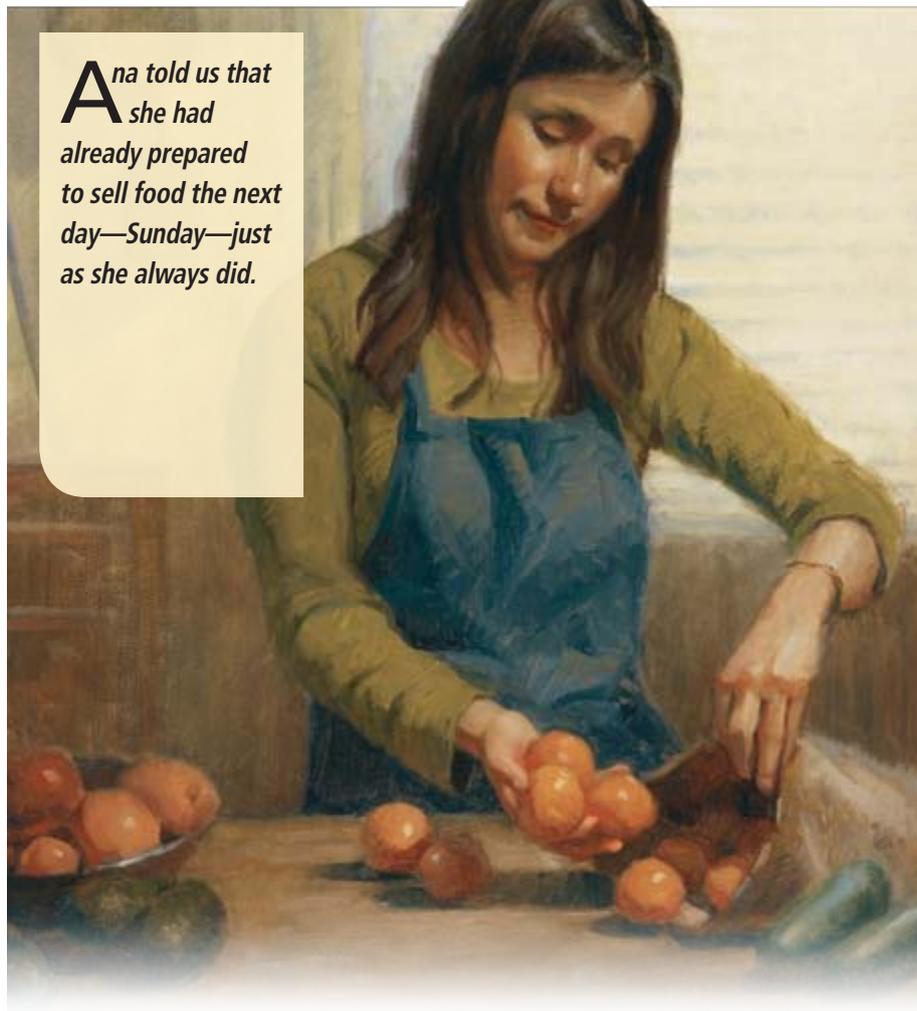
When I arrived, every family in the branch had friends who were ready to receive the missionaries. One member introduced us to a lady named Ana Oviedo, who sold fruit and homemade food on one of the busiest street corners in the city. While she was there selling food one Saturday morning, we asked if we could visit her at her home and share a message about Jesus Christ. She accepted.

When we arrived that night, Ana and her four children were waiting for us. We introduced ourselves and started teaching them. We felt inspired to teach about the blessings of keeping the Sabbath day holy. We also taught the family about tithing and the promises made by the prophet Malachi (see Malachi 3:10–12).

In response, Ana told us that she had already prepared to sell food the next day—Sunday—just as she always did. We then offered a prayer, asking Heavenly Father to bless this poor family, which needed the mother's income.

The following day we were surprised to see her come to church with

Ana told us that she had already prepared to sell food the next day—Sunday—just as she always did.



her children. We welcomed them and asked her what had happened with the food she had prepared to sell.

“Elders, I spent last night pondering God’s promises,” she said. “He will bless me.” Then she added, “Elders, where do I pay my tithing?”

We were moved by her show of faith, and we prayed that the Lord would answer our prayers for this family.

The next evening we went by her house again. She was crying tears of gratitude because God had blessed her so greatly that day. She said she had been selling food on that corner her whole life—Monday through

Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.—and that she always had leftover items that didn’t sell. But that Monday she had sold all of her food by 1:00 p.m.

Heavenly Father had answered our prayers. The Lord continued to bless Ana, and she no longer needed to sell food on the Sabbath. Her children were soon baptized, but Ana’s husband would not consent to her baptism. Nevertheless, she remained faithful to the gospel and attended church until the day she died.

I know Heavenly Father keeps His promises when we obey His commandments with all our heart. ■

Julio Cesar Merlos, Texas, USA

JIM NEEDED MY HELP

Shortly after our marriage in the Salt Lake Temple, Jim and I found ourselves living in a rented cottage on the Oregon coast. Jim was a topographic engineer for the government, in charge of checking and correcting a map of the Oregon coastline. Each morning he would leave with another engineer to continue the work of the previous day. His work was difficult because the coast was heavily forested.

One evening as I was about to start dinner, a strong impression came into

my mind that my dinner preparations were not important. Jim would not be home for dinner that night. Another thought followed: Jim was in trouble and needed my help!

I did not hear a voice, but the message came as clearly into my mind as if it had been spoken. I had to help him, but where was he? He worked each day along the coast, but I had no idea where he was working that day. I felt impelled to get in the car and drive to the main highway, but in which

direction should I turn? With only slight hesitation, I felt that I should turn south. I then passed many side roads, any one of which could have been the area of Jim's work.

I was impressed to leave the highway and follow one of the single-lane roads. It was raining, and after a mile or two the road became a muddy trail. I decided I had better turn around and head back. It was getting dark, and I thought, "It was silly of me to have come."

But no sooner had I turned onto the highway than I came upon two tired, despondent engineers, so covered with mud that no one else would have wanted to pick them up. Jim and his co-worker told me that their truck had become stuck in a mud hole. They had tried to free it but finally left it and hiked through dense undergrowth back to the main highway.

"How did you know where we were?" they wondered, relieved that I had found them. My relief was equal to theirs as I explained how I had been guided by the Spirit.

As Jim and I knelt in prayer that evening, we gave thanks for the influence of the Holy Ghost, which had come to me in answer to my husband's prayers for help. ■

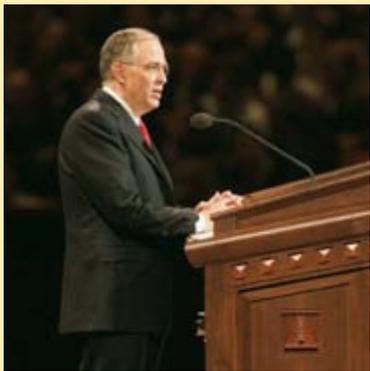
Jean Partridge, Utah, USA

I was impressed to leave the highway and follow one of the single-lane roads. It was raining, and after a mile or two the road became a muddy trail.



Small & Simple Things

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).



THE INSPIRATION BEHIND GENERAL CONFERENCE

Have you ever wondered if general conference speakers are assigned topics? Last conference Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: “There are no assigned subjects, no collaboration of themes. The Lord’s way, of course, is always the best way. He takes the individual prayerful efforts of each speaker and orchestrates a spiritual symphony full of revelation and power. Repeated themes, principle building upon principle, prophetic warnings, uplifting promises—the divine harmony is a miracle!” (“Tell Me the Stories of Jesus,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 108).

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD

The Conference Center in Salt Lake City: Celebrating 10 Years

Here are some things you might not know about the Conference Center, which was dedicated on October 8, 2000, by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008).

- First use: 170th Annual General Conference, April 1 and 2, 2000
- Total attendance at events since its dedication: 6.9 million people attending 4,577 events
- Total visitors who have toured the building: 4.8 million
- Total dignitaries who have toured the building: 5,500
- Number of musical performances, including *Music and the Spoken Word*, held in the building: 311
- Number of Christmas-related performances held in the building: 17 different events with 49 total performances
- Art exhibits displayed in the building: Hall of the Prophets, Arnold Friberg Art Gallery, and art from the Church’s International Art Competitions



On the Calendar

Don’t forget: September 25 is the general Relief Society meeting, and general conference is on October 2 and 3. Check with your priesthood leader or at conference.lds.org for information about broadcast times and locations. In many cases, you can watch general conference via the Internet.



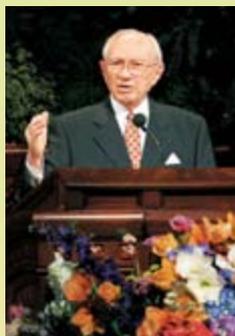
DID YOU KNOW?

The Pulpit in the Conference Center

The pulpit in the Conference Center has a unique story. Following is President Gordon B. Hinckley's account:

"I love trees. When I was a boy we lived on a farm in the summer, a fruit farm. Every year at this season we planted trees. I think I have never missed a spring since I was married, except for two or three years when we were absent from the city, that I have not planted trees. . . .

"Some 36 years ago I planted a black walnut [tree]. It was in a crowded area where it grew straight and tall to get the sunlight. A year ago, for some reason it died. But walnut is a precious furniture wood. I called Brother Ben Banks of the Seventy, who, before giving his full time to the Church, was in the business of hardwood lumber. He brought his two sons, one a bishop and the other recently released as a bishop and who now run the business, to look at the tree. From all they could tell it was solid, good, and beautiful wood. One of them suggested that it would make a pulpit for this hall. The idea excited me. The tree was cut down and then cut into two heavy logs. Then followed the long process of drying,



first naturally and then kiln drying. The logs were cut into boards at a sawmill in Salem, Utah. The boards were then taken to Fetzter's woodworking plant, where expert craftsmen designed and built this magnificent pulpit with that wood.

"The end product is beautiful. I wish all of you could examine it closely. It represents superb workmanship, and here I am speaking to you from the tree I grew in

my backyard, where my children played and also grew.

"It is an emotional thing for me. I have planted another black walnut or two. I will be long gone before they mature. When that day comes and this beautiful pulpit has grown old, perhaps one of them will do to make a replacement. To Elder Banks and his sons, Ben and Bradley, and to the skilled workers who have designed and built this, I offer my profound thanks for making it possible to have a small touch of mine in this great hall where the voices of prophets will go out to all the world in testimony of the Redeemer of mankind."

From President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "To All the World in Testimony," Liahona, July 2000, 6; Ensign, May 2000, 6.



Dinnertime— a Learning Time

Turn dinnertime into learning time. All you have to do is keep a few Church curriculum items handy at the dinner table. In our house we often use materials that teach our children. For instance, we have referred to the *Faith in God for Girls* guidebook, the *Young Women Personal Progress* booklet, and the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet. Of course, we also keep the scriptures nearby.

Sometimes we read a few paragraphs and discuss them. Other times we look up scriptural references. We've even memorized the fifth article of faith and discussed its meaning as we ate.

When you occasionally set the table with these visual reminders, it's easy to remember how important it is to feed ourselves spiritually as well as physically.

Serena Gedlaman, Alberta, Canada

Note: The Faith in God for Boys and Fulfilling My Duty to God guidebooks are also available. All items listed above can be ordered at no charge at LDS distribution centers or online at www.ldscatalog.com. U.S. and Canada residents may also call the Salt Lake Distribution Center at 1-800-537-5971.

News of the Church

Role of Members Important in Sharing the Gospel Online

By Breanna Olaveson

Church Magazines

Missionaries across the world have encountered a problem in recent years: after only a visit or two, an investigator who had shown real interest cuts off contact. Researchers have found that most of those investigators have one thing in common: they lose interest after finding negative, inaccurate information about the Church online.

Six years ago 80 percent of search engine results for the term “Mormon” were negative or inaccurate. Today the situation has improved.

In some countries, Internet search results for “Mormon” are now up to 80 percent positive.

Why the significant change? In addition to official Church Web

Members are playing an increasingly vital role online as more and more people investigate the Church via the Web.

sites, unofficial Web sites sharing positive information about the Church are spreading across the Web. Individuals are using blogs to share their values, and gospel messages are making appearances on social networking sites. In short, because of how members are using it, the Internet is also helping bring people to the full-time missionaries.

Many Church members have been inspired by the counsel of Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who said, “May I ask that you join the conversation by participating on the Internet to share the gospel and to explain in simple and clear terms the message of the Restoration.”¹

Here is a look at some of the ways members of the Church are using the Internet to spread the gospel in simple, yet meaningful ways.

New Mormon.org

Mormon.org, an official Church Web site and a well-established missionary tool, has been redesigned to connect users directly with Church members using personal profiles.

The new Mormon.org allows members to create profiles explaining their beliefs and lifestyle.

Visitors can view these profile pages and learn more about the Church directly from its members.

“We want visitors to get to know members of the Church and interact with them,” said Ron Wilson, manager of Internet and marketing in the Church’s Missionary Department.



(For more information on these profiles and other features on the new Mormon.org, see accompanying story.)

The More Good Foundation

The More Good Foundation is a nonprofit organization created by Church members that works to give the Church a positive online presence. Though the foundation is not directed or sponsored by the Church, it has played an important part in improving the Church's online presence.

The founders of the More Good Foundation began to study search engines and how they selected results. They learned that Google, a popular Internet search engine, allows one site to occupy only two spaces on a results page. That means that even if LDS.org has hundreds of relevant pages, only two will appear as search results. That left a lot of open space for negative sites, and people seemed to gravitate to sites that were unrelated to the Church as an institution.

"They're looking for their peers' perspectives rather than trusting the organization's," said Jonathan Johnson, president of the More Good Foundation. "If we understand that principle, we will understand why our leaders say we as members can be more effective. We avoid the walls that are created when people see someone in an official capacity."

The More Good Foundation gained rights to over 1,400 URLs and enlisted Church members to create Web sites that discuss gospel principles. Members associated with the More Good Foundation have developed 320 sites in as many as 12 languages. They have also posted over 1,900 videos on YouTube.

Blogs

For members who don't have the time or skills to create an entire Web site, blogging offers a convenient alternative. Blogs (short for "weblogs") are simple Web sites that are easy to maintain and usually free.

Hundreds of members of the Church throughout the world are using their blogs to share the gospel with family and friends. It's normal for bloggers to share things that are important to them, so it's a natural place to talk about the gospel.

One young mother who shares her faith online has developed a loyal following. Stephanie Nielson started a blog, nieniedialogues.blogspot.com, where she chronicled her life as a stay-at-home mom. She continued updating her blog after she survived a plane crash in 2008 that left her visibly scarred but spiritually rededicated.

A Mormon Messages video titled "My New Life" relates Stephanie's story and her message of motherhood and beauty. "They're the same thing to me," Stephanie says on the video. Stephanie shares the gospel on her blog through her posts and includes a large button with a link to LDS.org. She also offers visitors a free copy of her "favorite book"—the Book of Mormon—that she will send "anywhere in the world . . . anywhere!"

Social Media Web Sites

Millions of people are connecting on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and Church members are sharing the gospel there too.

Information tends to spread quickly and easily on social networks, which makes it an appealing way to share the gospel. At LDS.org, all items in the Gospel Library section feature a "Share" tool, which allows users to easily share links to Church magazines articles, general conference talks, and lesson manuals on various social media sites.

Social network users can also become a fan of the Church's official Facebook pages. The Church has more than 280,000 fans, the Book of Mormon has more than 162,000 fans, and thousands more users have joined other Church-affiliated pages. When a Facebook user joins and participates in a group, his or her friends are notified. Thus, the friends of hundreds of thousands of Facebook users have been exposed to the Church through Facebook.

Church members are also using Twitter, a social networking Web site used to send brief messages (“tweets”) via the Internet, to share the gospel. Most notably, general conference was Twitter’s top trend in April 2009,² meaning general conference was mentioned in more tweets than any other subject.

The Church has also established a presence on YouTube, a popular video posting Web site, which has generated a positive reaction from members and nonmembers alike. Every Mormon Messages video, like all others

posted to YouTube, can be easily posted on a blog or shared via e-mail, Facebook, or Twitter.

The Internet provides a way for Church members to reach people in ways unimaginable a generation ago, and as technologies improve, so will Church members’ ability to share the gospel. ■

NOTES

1. M. Russell Ballard, “Sharing the Gospel Using the Internet,” *Liahona*, June 2008, N1.
2. “Top Twitter trend: LDS General Conference,” Mary Richards, *ksl.com*, April 6, 2009. <http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&sid=6074101>.

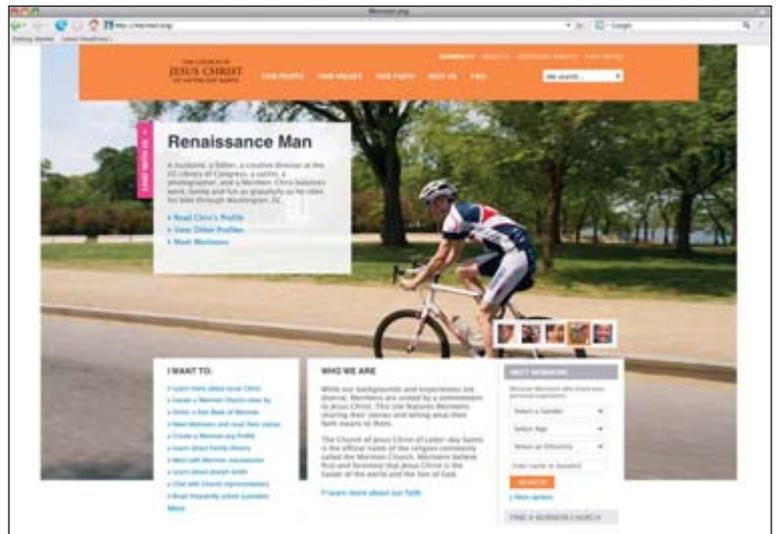
Mormon.org Redesign Connects Members and Investigators

Since its launch in 2001, Mormon.org has helped people get straightforward, honest answers to their questions about the Church. Those answers came primarily from Church headquarters.

Mormon.org’s most recent update—including a complete redesign—still offers plenty of answers and a way to contact missionaries. But now, thanks to a new online profile feature, many answers come directly from Church members around the world.

Visitors to the site will be able to sort thousands of member profiles by gender, age, ethnicity, religious background, and other qualifiers to find Church members who are similar to themselves. Once on a profile page, users can read testimonies, ask further questions, and in some cases, connect with

The redesigned Mormon.org makes an effort to connect investigators with members of the Church.



Church members on social networking Web sites. This peer-to-peer contact allows investigators to get a non-authoritative viewpoint of the Church.

“When people search the Internet for information, they give more credence to the opinions of their peers than to what an organization says about itself, especially when it

comes to organized religion,” said Elder Richard G. Hinckley, Executive Director of the Missionary Department. “That is why member profiles are such a valuable part of the new Mormon.org.”

The new Mormon.org is divided into four major areas, each focused on teaching about a certain aspect of the Church:

Our People, Our Values, Our Faith, and Frequently Asked Questions.

Our People

This section contains the member profiles, allowing investigators to learn more about the gospel by “meeting” those who have gained testimonies of the restored gospel.

“The one thing that helps people get past misconceptions about the Church is if they’ve had the opportunity to know a Mormon,” said Ron Wilson, manager of Internet and marketing for the Missionary Department. “They realize the negative things they might be hearing about the Church don’t line up with the lives their Mormon friends are living.”

Our Values

The Our Values section teaches what members do as a result of their beliefs. It explains some of the Church’s priorities, including humanitarian aid, families, education, service, and family history. This section will help investigators connect Church doctrine with the way members live their lives.

Our Faith

The Our Faith section explains fundamental doctrines of the Church. Everything in this section of the site can answer the question, “What do Mormons believe?” This section also provides context for other areas of the site. Visitors to the site can learn about our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, the Restoration of the gospel, Joseph Smith, the plan of salvation, the Book of Mormon, and other topics.

Frequently Asked Questions

Church members create the content for this section by answering questions on their personal profiles. They answer FAQs in their own words, helping visitors to learn about the Church from its members. ■

New Building Design Saves Energy, Resources

Think of the new meetinghouse in Farmington, Utah, USA—complete with solar panels and wider hallways—as a test drive.

The building, along with four others in Utah and Nevada, is part of a new pilot program that will influence future building designs. They were built to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification requirements, designed to reduce water use, waste, and pollution. The solar panels will prevent two million pounds of carbon dioxide pollution over the next 25 years, and the other buildings have special light-colored roofs that will reduce cooling costs.

In addition, the Church is saving money.

“These projects are both environmentally friendly and cost-efficient,” said Jared Doxey, director of the Church’s Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Division. “It makes sense to build them this way.”

But wise construction practices are nothing new for the Church. Designs for existing meetinghouses already met 75 percent of LEED certification requirements.

Dozens of other improvements are also making their debut—from larger classrooms to a fan-shaped chapel that holds more people but sits them closer to the pulpit.

The new buildings also have Webcasting capabilities so meetings can be broadcast via the Internet without a satellite dish. In fact, Webcasting technology could replace satellite dishes altogether.

“Webcasting expands the Brethren’s reach,” Brother Doxey said. “They can deliver messages in one place and be heard in any meetinghouse with a broadband Internet connection.” ■

IN THE NEWS

Ongoing News Program Shows Church in Action

The World Report, a semiannual news program produced by the Church, will air on Saturday, October 2, between sessions of general conference. *The World Report* outlines major events in Church history from the past six months.

“*The World Report* shows the Church in action. It is one way of illustrating how people are living the principles they’re learning about in Sunday School,” said Michael Purdy, executive producer of *The World Report*.

The broadcast includes coverage of temple and other building dedications, milestones in Church history, major Church initiatives, and significant events. It also depicts the stories of Latter-day Saints throughout the world as they build the kingdom through service.

The World Report will be broadcast in American Sign Language, Bislama, Cantonese, Cebuano, English (with subtitles), Fijian, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Kiribati, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Tagalog, and Tongan. In areas where the broadcast is not available in the local language, *The World Report*

will be broadcast in English.

After general conference, DVDs of *The World Report* will be available in distribution centers and through LDSCatalog.com in the languages listed above. It will also be available online at lds.org/videos and newsroom.lds.org. ■

CORRECTION

In “New Orleans Members Exemplify the Rescue” on page 77 of the August 2010 *Ensign*, the article should have stated that Terry Seamons was called as branch president shortly after he moved to New Orleans in 2007. He succeeded President David Van Dam, who spent countless hours helping branch members through the disaster’s aftermath. ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Laie Temple Rededication Scheduled

After extensive renovations, the Laie Hawaii Temple will be rededicated in three sessions on November 21, 2010, following a public open house from October 22 to November 13 and a cultural celebration on November 20. The rededication will be broadcast within the Laie and Kona temple districts. The temple was the Church’s fifth, dedicated in 1919 by President Heber J. Grant and rededicated in 1978 by President Spencer W. Kimball.

Church Releases Mobile Phone Apps

The Church has released mobile phone applications to help members study the gospel even on the go. The Gospel Library application allows users to bookmark, highlight, and make notes as they read from the scriptures, general conference talks, and Sunday manuals. The Mormon Channel application broadcasts the Church’s official radio station and contains the scriptures, general conference talks, and Church magazines. Visit mobile.lds.org for information about compatibility. All the applications are free.



Cebuano, Tagalog Triples Available Online

Cebuano and Tagalog editions of the triple combination, containing the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price, are now available online. They can be accessed at scriptures.lds.org/ceb and scriptures.lds.org/tgl, respectively. The sites include footnotes, maps, and photographs, and allow readers to mark the scriptures and perform key word searches. The scriptures site now includes 17 languages, with Japanese, Indonesian, and Thai to be added by 2011. ■

In Other Church Magazines

THE NEW ERA

First Response

A young man has to use his first aid training twice to save lives. In “Guided To Do First Aid” on page 24, he credits the inspiration of the Holy Ghost for being able to respond when needed.

Learn Service

After hearing about tragedies that have happened around the world, have you felt like you wanted to help? Read about what some teens are doing for Samoa, Haiti, and elsewhere in “Learning to Serve” on page 34.



Making Good Choices

Elder Paul V. Johnson of the Seventy uses some stories from his own life as he talks about making choices that affect the lives of teens in “Making Righteous Choices” on page 40.

THE FRIEND

Family History Library

Take a tour of the Family History Library on pages 6–7 in the September 2010 *Friend* as a part of the “A Year on Temple Square” series. Learn fun facts about family history and find out about why family history work is important. Then turn to pages 24–25 to find out how you and your children can do family history work together.



Conference Fun

Do you have a special activity or tradition that you and your family take

part in at conference time? The *Friend* wants to know about it. Read on page 22 about some of the activities *Friend* readers do. Then use the form on page 48 to send the *Friend* some of your own traditions or ideas.

COMMENTS

Great Magazines

Each time I open one of the Church magazines, the smiles begin. I am amazed, excited, shedding tears, or a combination of the above. I want to read every single article and to keep most of them in my head or accessible. I advertise the magazines at church and to my family and friends.

I'm thrilled by the new eye-catching format. I marvel that nearly every theme or message is presented in an exciting, inviting manner. Seeing the Lord's hand in all this, I marvel at the prayers and dedication of your staff as you respond in this season to the greater needs and challenges of Church members.

You have added references to articles and additional resources in the other magazines: games, songs, videos, and other ways to learn and build testimonies. I discover sources of joy, humor, encouragement, and unification for our youth and their families and leaders as they seek strength and hope. Our young people are rising to the challenge, becoming a lighthouse to those seeking a safe journey.

What great inspiration, resources, preparation, and courage you offer to Church members in this new version of the Church magazines. They are road maps to incredible blessings for members throughout the world.

Carol Hansen
California, USA

LESSONS FROM AN AQUARIUM

By Minerva G. Harkness

A member of our bishopric knew that my nine-year-old daughter kept an aquarium and one day asked if she might want some more fish. His family was going on vacation and needed to empty their aquarium. The offer was immediately accepted, and to my daughter's delight, a pregnant female guppy was among the group.

Upon coming home from church one afternoon, my daughter did her routine check on the aquarium to see if each fish was happy and healthy. To her surprise, she saw four tiny, newborn fish. The mother guppy had begun to deliver. Acting quickly, she moved the babies to the safety box that would protect them from the bigger and more aggressive fish. In all of the excitement, however, one baby guppy was lost. Crying with disappointment, my daughter located it lying among the tiny rocks on the bottom of the aquarium. She tried to scoop it into her net to be placed in the safety box, but she couldn't move the tiny guppy without injuring it.

All the other tiny guppies were caught, and although the safety box teemed with dozens of new babies, my daughter's attention was still intently focused on the one fallen among the stones. She sat ready to help it into the box as soon as it could move. She even refused dinner as she sat attentively by her aquarium for about four hours.



My daughter's concern for one tiny lost fish made me think of someone for whom we are never lost and never insignificant.

Watching her struck some familiar and tender chords. I thought of the Good Shepherd, who leaves His ninety and nine to look for the one who is lost (see Luke 15:3–8; John 10:11–14). All of us know how it feels to be lost or afflicted or spiritually sick. Yet our Savior never gives up on us. He is always there with outstretched arms, ready and willing to rescue us, strengthen us, and bless us.

Though we may not always realize it, our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ, tenderly and closely watch over us night and day, deeply concerned about our well-being and the roads we choose to walk. With love unbounded, They give Their angels charge concerning us, waiting for us to gather enough strength and faith to find safety and peace in Their arms.

Later that day my daughter's concern for that guppy paid off. After her long, tedious hours of waiting and hoping, the tiny fish finally wiggled and then slowly swam out of the rocks. Carefully she placed it in the comfort and security of the safety box. That was witness enough for me of the sustaining power of love. ■



WORDS OF CHRIST

Missionaries, by Howard Post

“Ye shall go forth in the power of my Spirit, preaching my gospel, two by two, in my name, lifting up your voices as with the sound of a trumpet, declaring my word like unto angels of God.

“And ye shall go forth baptizing with water, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . .

“And again, the elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel. . . .

“And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:6–7, 12, 14).



have come to love and appreciate a group of people who seek no reward, no honor, and no other worldly emoluments. They seek only to glorify our Father in Heaven. They are our senior missionaries: wonderful, seasoned brothers and sisters who are quietly and diligently helping 'to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness.' See Elder Kent D. Watson, "Our Senior Missionaries," page 26.