



THE New Era

JANUARY

2006

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The New Era Magazine
Volume 36, Number 1
January 2006

*Official monthly publication
for youth of
The Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints*

The *New Era* can be found
in the Gospel Library at
www.lds.org.

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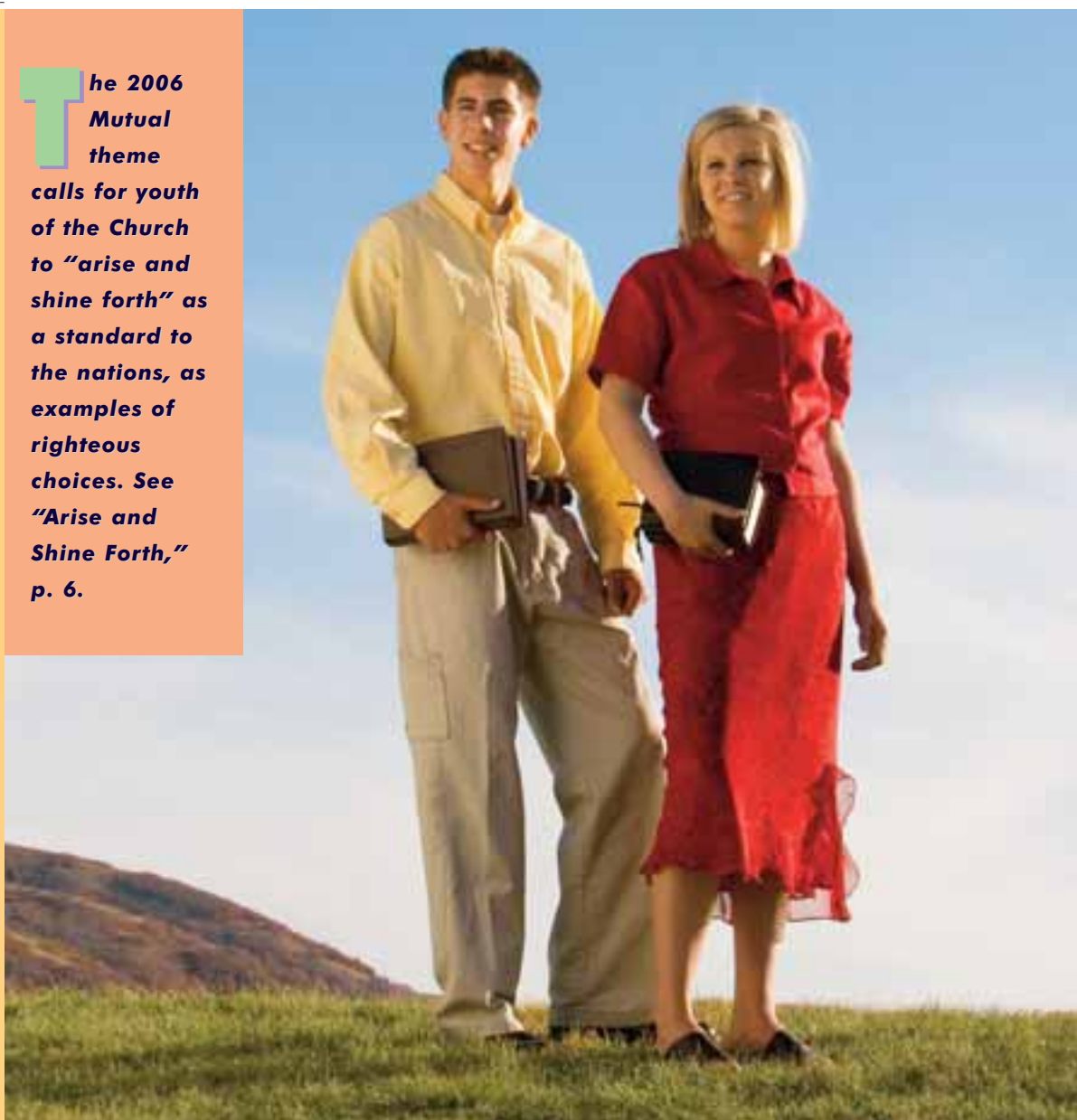
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84126-0368, USA.

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Cover photography:
Craig Dimond (back)

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Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah, and

at additional mailing offices.

The *New Era* (ISSN 0164-5285)

is published monthly by The

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints, 50 E. North Temple

St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-

3220, USA.

POSTMASTER: Send address

changes to Distribution

Services, Church Magazines,

P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City,

UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information:

Publication Agreement

#40017431.

THE SPECIAL LANGUAGE

thine
THOU THEE

thine

THEE

OF Prayer

BY ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

When I was young, I learned that great respect was owed to those who held the office of bishop. As a sign of that respect, we always addressed our bishops as “Bishop Christensen” or “Bishop Calder.” We never called our bishop “Mr.” or by his first name, as we did in speaking to others. With the bishop, we always used an honored title.

The words we use in speaking to someone can identify the nature of our relationship to that person. They can also remind the speaker and listener of the responsibilities they owe one another in that relationship. The form of address can also serve as a mark of respect or affection.

So it is with the language of prayer. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches its members to use special language in addressing prayers to our Father in Heaven.

When we go to worship in a temple or a church, we put aside our working clothes and dress ourselves in something better. This change of clothing is a mark of respect. Similarly, when we address our Heavenly Father, we should put aside our working words and clothe our prayers in special language of reverence and respect. In offering prayers, members of our Church do not address our Heavenly Father with the same words we use in speaking to a fellow worker, to an employer, or to a merchant in the marketplace. We use special words that

have been sanctified by use in inspired communications, words that have been recommended to us and modeled for us by those we sustain as prophets and inspired teachers.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said, “In all our prayers, it is well to use the pronouns *thee*, *thou*, *thy*, and *thine* instead of *you*, *your*, and *yours* inasmuch as they have come to indicate respect.”¹ Numerous other Church leaders have given the same counsel.²

Examples of Prayer

The special language of prayer serves an important purpose. We know this because of modern revelations and because of the teachings and examples of modern prophets. The way we pray is important.

The words *thee*, *thou*, *thy*, and *thine* occur throughout the prayers the prophets of the Lord have revealed for use in our day.

A revelation given in 1830, the year the Church was organized, directs that the elder or priest who administers the sacrament “shall kneel . . . and call upon the Father in solemn prayer, saying:

“O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ” (D&C 20:76–77, 79).

The prayer offered at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in 1836 is another model that illustrates the language of prayer



As we gain experience as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we need to become more mature in all of our efforts, including our prayers. Those who wish to show respect will take the time to learn the special language of prayer.

thee, thou, thy,

TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR PRAYERS

In addition to Elder Oaks's ideas, try these suggestions:

- Say the Lord's name slowly and reverently when you finish saying a prayer. Praying in the name of Jesus Christ is an important part of prayer. Closing your prayers slowly will remind you of that.
- Remember the difference between public and private prayers. In public prayers, like in seminary or at church, you are expressing to Heavenly Father the desires and gratitude of everyone there. Save personal requests for your personal prayers.
- Avoid "vain repetitions." Jesus taught: "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (3 Nephi 13:7). If you're not careful, it's easy to get into a rut of saying the same things the same way in your prayers. Instead, be sincere when you pray, and think about what you are saying.

used by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"And now, Holy Father, we ask thee to assist us, thy people, with thy grace, in calling our solemn assembly, . . .

"That thy glory may rest down upon thy people, and upon this thy house, which we now dedicate to thee, that it may be sanctified and consecrated to be holy, and that thy holy presence may be continually in this house" (D&C 109:10, 12).

This prophetic model of the language of prayer has been faithfully followed in all of the sacred petitions by which the prophets have dedicated temples to the Lord.

To cite more recent examples, we are all aware that the prayers offered at general conferences of the Church always use the special language of prayer we have learned from the examples of modern prophets and teachers.

We are also guided by the special language we read in the prayers recorded in the King James Version of the Bible and in the Book of Mormon.

We have scriptural record of three beautiful translated prayers the Savior offered during His earthly ministry. They are models for all of us. Notable in each of these prayers are the words *thee*, *thou*, *thy*, and *thine* instead of *you*, *your*, and *yours* (see Matthew 6:9; 3 Nephi 13:9; John 17:1, 3; 3 Nephi 19:20–21).

Thee, Thou, Thy, and Thine

The special language of prayer that Latter-day Saints use has sometimes been explained by reference to the history of the English language. But the history of English usage is not the point.

Scholarship can contradict mortal explanations, but it cannot rescind divine

commands or inspired counsel. In our day the words *thee*, *thou*, *thy*, and *thine* are suitable for the language of prayer, not because of how they were used anciently, but because they are currently obsolete in common English discourse. Being unused in everyday communications, they are now available as a distinctive form of address in English, appropriate to symbolize respect, closeness, and reverence for the one being addressed.

More Mature Prayers

I hope this counsel that we use special language in our prayers will not be misunderstood.

Literary excellence is not our desire. We do not advocate flowery and wordy prayers. We wish to follow the Savior's teaching, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matthew 6:7; see also 3 Nephi 13:7). Our prayers should be simple, direct, and sincere.

We are especially anxious that our position on special language in prayers not cause some to be reluctant to pray in our Church meetings or in other settings where their prayers are heard. We have particular concern for converts and others who have not yet had experience in using these words.

I am sure that our Heavenly Father, who loves all of His children, hears and answers all prayers, however phrased. If He is offended in connection with prayers, it is likely to be by their absence, not their wording.

For a quiz on using *thee*, *thou*, *thy*, and *thine* correctly, see p. 22 of this issue.

and thine

When one of our daughters was about three years old, she did something that always delighted her parents. When we called her name, she would usually answer by saying, “Here me is.” This childish reply was among the sweetest things her parents heard. But when she was grown, we expected her to use appropriate language when she spoke, and of course she did. As the Apostle Paul said, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (1 Corinthians 13:11).

The same is true of prayer. Our earliest efforts will be heard with joy by our Heavenly Father, however they are phrased. They will be heard in the same way by loving members of our Church. But as we gain experience as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we need to become more mature in all of our efforts, including our prayers.

Those who wish to show respect will take the time to learn the special language of prayer. Persons spend many hours mastering communication skills in other mediums, such as poetry or prose, vocal or instrumental music, and even the language of access to computers. The manner of addressing our Heavenly Father in prayer is at least as important as these.

The language of prayer is easier and sweeter to learn than any other tongue. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “It is a great thing to inquire at the hands of God, or to come into His presence.”³ The special language of prayer reminds us of the greatness of that privilege. I pray that all of us will be more sensitive to the importance of using this reverent and loving language as we offer our public and private prayers. **NE**
From an April 1993 general conference address.

NOTES

1. *Faith Precedes the Miracle* (1972), 201.
2. See Stephen L Richards, in Conference Report, Oct. 1951, 175; Bruce R. McConkie, “Why the Lord Ordained Prayer,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1976, 12; and L. Tom Perry, “Our Father Which Art in Heaven,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 13.
3. *History of the Church*, 1:339.



We have
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offered during His
earthly ministry.
They are models
for all of us.

ARISE AND SHINE FORTH

“Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations” (see D&C 115:5).



“It is a time to do what is right regardless of the consequences that might follow. It is a time to be found keeping the commandments. It is a season to reach out with kindness and love to those in distress and to those who are wandering in darkness and pain. It is a time to be considerate and good, decent and courteous toward one another in all of our relationships. In other words, to become more Christlike.”

—President Gordon B. Hinckley, “This is the Work of the Master,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 71.



This past year, we celebrated “a great and a marvelous work.” We rejoiced together as our testimonies of the Restoration of the gospel and of the Prophet Joseph Smith were strengthened. Now it is our exciting opportunity to “arise and shine forth, that [our] light may be a standard for the nations.” With testimonies of the restored gospel vibrant and strong, we can now share our feelings, our experiences, and our talents with the world. What a glorious responsibility it is to be shining examples—to share our testimonies of the Restoration by living gospel standards and serving others!

The Savior taught, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Christ is the perfect example. If we truly follow Him, we, too, will be “lights” to those around us.

The First Presidency has said, “We have great confidence in you. . . . We pray for each of you. . . . We pray that you will be worthy to carry on the responsibilities of building the kingdom of God and preparing the world for the Second Coming of the Savior” (*For the Strength of Youth* [2001], 2–3).



The Young Men General Presidency: Charles W. Dablsquist II (center), Dean R. Burgess (left), Michael A. Neider (right).



The Young Women General Presidency: Susan W. Tanner (center), Julie B. Beck (left), Elaine S. Dalton (right).

We are grateful for valiant youth who show their love for the Savior by letting His light shine forth in their lives. As you follow the Lord and live the standards He has given us, you will experience joy and happiness. And the example you set will bless the world.

We love you. We pray for you. We bear testimony that the Lord loves you and needs you to help build His kingdom. You can be a light that dispels darkness, revealing by your example the path to celestial glory in the kingdom of God. “Arise and shine forth,” that the Spirit of the Lord may continue to bear witness of the Restoration of the gospel through you. **NE**

ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR THIS YEAR'S MUTUAL THEME

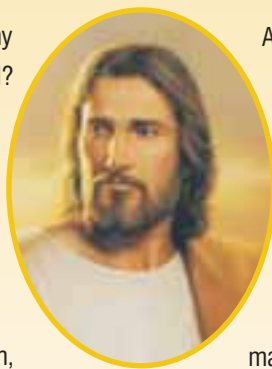
- Find and read scriptures that talk about being an example.
- Have a testimony meeting at sunrise.
- Memorize the words to “High on the Mountain Top” (*Hymns*, no. 5).
- Perform an anonymous act of service.
- Read about the title of liberty in the Book of Mormon (see Alma 46:11–27). Make a flag or banner representing your ideals.
- Role-play some of the stories in the scriptures with your Mutual group or family. Dress like the people in the scriptures might have dressed, and memorize and present their testimonies as given in the scriptures.
- Plan a family home evening based on the Mutual theme. Present it to your family with your parents’ guidance.

A LIGHT TO THE WORLD

How can you tell if you have a testimony of Jesus Christ and His restored gospel? Is it by the words you say? Is it by where you spend Sundays? Is it by the things you do?

One of the best measures of your testimony of Jesus Christ is how you treat others. When you love the Lord Jesus Christ and turn your heart to Him, you will automatically turn to those in need, especially those in need of coming to Christ.

The scriptures remind us, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32). There are other examples from the scriptures of those who have turned testimony into action.



Alma and the sons of Mosiah changed and went about preaching the gospel after they were visited by an angel. Enos also wanted to share what he knew to be true after he received forgiveness in answer to his prayers.

The path you follow on earth may not always be easy. But you can be assured that the Lord has not sent you here to fail. You will succeed as you follow the prophet and stand strong. As your testimony grows in intensity and strength, you will be able to help friends and family strengthen their testimonies. It is time to arise and shine forth. **NE**

THE ANSWER I FORGOT

BY DAVID A. PINKSTON

*My LDS cousin seemed to have all the answers about religion.
His beliefs sounded awesome, but I had my doubts.*

I grew up in another religion and believed I was in the right church. My aunt and uncle's family were Latter-day Saints, but I didn't really understand their faith and didn't try to. Then in 1996 my aunt telephoned me and asked if I wanted to go to a youth camp at Brigham Young University. Being only 14, I didn't want to go but agreed to anyway.

At first I felt out of place because I was different. Then I met up with my cousin, Adam. He was friendly and included me in everything. The week went great.

On Thursday evening, we were in our room when Adam began to ask me about my beliefs. I was happy to share but could not answer a lot of his questions. I asked him if he knew the answers. He told me about our premortal life and how God has a plan for us. He told me about how the early Church members fell into apostasy and how the gospel was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. He told me how the Book of Mormon came forth.

We talked for about two hours. It sounded awesome, but I had my doubts. Adam told me to pray to God and ask Him if the Church was true. So I waited until Adam was asleep and did just that.

The next morning, I woke up feeling peaceful and happy. I felt the Church was true, but I didn't say anything.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

More stories of testimony and conversion are found in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org. See "The Challenge to Become" (*New Era*, Aug. 2002) by Elder Dallin H. Oaks, "How I Found the Truth" (*New Era*, Dec. 2002) by Erin Marshall, and the June 2002 *New Era* special issue: "Building Your Testimony."

Adam gave me a Book of Mormon, and I went back home to St. Louis, Missouri. I was scared to tell my family and go forward with something so big, and I soon lost the spiritual feeling I had come home with. I put my copy of the Book of Mormon in my closet.

Six years later, after a lot of tough times and losing interest in my religion, I felt the need to find the right church. I visited different churches but never felt that I had found the right one. I just about gave up hope.

One day I was cleaning my closet, and buried deep down was that Book of Mormon. This time I read it. While reading I remembered that night at youth camp and what I had felt. I called my uncle and aunt and asked if I could go to church with them.

There I met the missionaries and began taking the discussions. Four months and four missionaries later, I was baptized.

It has been almost three years since my baptism. I recently returned from serving a mission in the Belgium Brussels/Netherlands Mission, where I followed my cousin Adam's example and testified of the Restoration of Christ's true Church and gospel.

How remarkable and powerful are the seeds that people plant in others. **NE**



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE PERFECT?

BY ELDER CECIL O. SAMUELSON
Of the Seventy

Worthiness and perfection don't mean the same thing. All of us are "works in process."



Some become so obsessed or consumed with their every thought, action, and response, that they may become far too extreme in their own perceptions of what is expected of them.

For over 20 years I was a professor and practitioner of medicine, and I have a concern that I know is shared by other General Authorities. A matter of great concern for some of you is the issue that mental health professionals describe as “perfectionism.”

Interestingly, often those who struggle the most with issues of perfectionism are among the most talented people. They have often been excellent students, model children, and outstanding young people. Some, however, become so obsessed or consumed with their every thought, action, and response, that they may become far too extreme in their own perceptions of what is expected of them.

Continue in Patience

There is an understandable goal to follow the Savior's direction to “be ye therefore perfect” (Matthew 5:48). While this goal is admirable and appropriate, it is unfortunate that some consider that this perfection must occur immediately. A careful study of the footnote in our scriptures to this verse teaches us that the notion of being perfect means that we are “complete, finished, fully developed.” Thus, while we should be

engaged in the process of perfection, we need to acknowledge that achieving this goal will likely take a long time for all of us. The Lord said, “Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until

ye are perfected” (D&C 67:13). This is good advice for all of us.

There clearly are some things in which you can be perfect. The payment of tithing and the behavioral aspects of the law of chastity are examples. There are other things, however, that most of us will need to work on throughout our entire lives and yet not reach the perfection that is eventually promised until the

eternities if we are true and faithful. Matters such as having absolute faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, a complete understanding of the scriptures, always controlling our thoughts and our tongues are all issues that require persistence and patience.

Worthiness and Perfection

Occasionally, for well-motivated and highly devoted Latter-day Saints, confusion occurs about the differences between worthiness and perfection. Worthiness and perfection don't mean the same thing! All of

“We all need to remember: men are that they might have joy—not guilt trips!”

—Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Perfection Pending,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86.



Those suffering from perfectionism tend to be wonderful, contributing, and effective people, and yet may feel that no matter what they do, it is never enough.

Each of us needs to be absolutely honest with him or herself. Most of us do not always see ourselves as others see us or even as the Lord may see us.



us are “works in process.” We can be worthy while still needing improvement.

Be sure that you do not have higher standards for yourself or others than the Lord has established. Find satisfaction in your progress while acknowledging that perfection may still be distant.

Our perceptions of ourselves may or may not be accurate, but more frequently than we may expect, they may differ from how others view us. Those suffering from perfectionism tend to be wonderful, contributing, and effective people, and yet may feel that no matter what they do, it is never enough. These good people suffer from exaggerating their minor mistakes, weaknesses, or shortcomings to the point that they may become dysfunctional.

Please note that I am not against modesty or humility. These are important and even cardinal virtues. Jesus taught us that we should be meek but not masochistic. When we become obsessed with our deficiencies or weaknesses and so focused upon them that we—of necessity—neglect everything else, then we are out of balance. The Lord shares an important insight: “And if men

come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves

before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:27).

This is the Lord’s formula and promise for dealing with our weaknesses. We need to recognize them, but we do not glory in them or magnify them. For some of them, we do need to get appropriate help early.

Each of us needs to be absolutely honest with him or

herself. Most of us do not always see ourselves as others see us or even as the Lord may see us. That is one of the reasons that we are provided with devoted and capable Church leaders to counsel with us, teach us, and support us. We must be absolutely honest with them in all the matters of our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

Wisdom and Order

Too many of us tend to glory in or dwell on our weaknesses, temptations, and

“Worthiness is a process, and perfection is an eternal trek. We can be worthy to enjoy certain privileges without being perfect.”

—Elder Marvin J. Ashton (1915–1994),
“On Being Worthy,”
Ensign, May 1989, 20.

shortcomings. We must recognize them, get help when that is appropriate (see Editors' note on this page), but move on as soon as possible and not be preoccupied with them. But when serious problems or challenges are facing us, neglecting them or repressing them almost always makes them worse rather than causing them to go away.

Let me assure you that you are literal sons and daughters of our loving Heavenly Father, who knows you and cares about you. This you must not only know but must never forget. If you always do your best with realistic expectations and understanding of both your strengths and weaknesses, you will be able to be an important part of this great work.

In King Benjamin's wonderful address, the people under his stewardship were corrected, instructed, and inspired. He taught them of the Savior's Atonement and also the capacity that they could have to put off the "natural man" and become saints (see Mosiah 3:19). He taught them of their tremendous responsibilities and

"The Church is 'for the perfecting of the saints' (Ephesians 4:12); it is not a well-provisioned rest home for the already perfected."

—Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004),
"A Brother Offended,"
Ensign, May 1982, 38.

helped them understand how they might retain a remission of their sins through faithfully keeping the covenants they had made and the commandments they had received. After all of this, remember these words of this wise prophet-king: "And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength" (Mosiah 4:27). All that we do must be done in "wisdom and order."

May the Lord bless us all to understand clearly our potential and place. May we have the courage to stand tall in the face of our

challenges, the wisdom to get help when we need it, and the faith to know that the Lord will bless His servants who are doing their best. **NE**

From a devotional given on March 19, 2002, at the Provo Missionary Training Center.

*Editors' note: There are many places you can get help if you feel you need it: your family, your bishop, or a gospel-oriented professional counselor. If professional assistance is needed or you want to find out more about perfectionism, go to www.ldsfamilyservices.org. To learn more about how to become perfect without being a perfectionist, read "Perfection Pending" by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86).*

WHAT IS PERFECTIONISM?

Perfectionism is a medical condition characterized by severe self-criticism and self-doubt, often accompanied by anxiety, depression, or obsessive-compulsive behavior. It can lead to

appetite and sleep disturbances, confusion, problems in relationships, inability to concentrate, procrastination of important tasks, and, if left untreated, major depression, anxiety disorders, and suicide.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Doing Your Best

You desire to give things your best efforts and are satisfied when you do.

You know it's okay if you make a mistake. You move on and see your mistake as an opportunity for growth or learning.

You want to do your personal best, and you try not to compare your achievements to those of others. You don't need to be the best at all things.

You can find joy in doing the things you love, and you can get things accomplished.

Trying to do your best and perfecting yourself "line upon line" with the Savior's help is Christ-centered because you need the Atonement.

Perfectionism

You have a list of "shoulds" and "have to's" and are dissatisfied even if you complete them.

Mistakes bring feelings of self-hatred. You don't want to do anything because you are afraid of failure.

You feel tremendous pressure to earn others' approval. You must be the best or "perfect" in your tasks.

Your need to do things perfectly leads to procrastination until you have time to do it "perfectly," and you feel driven by fear or duty instead of love.

Perfectionism is self-centered. You measure yourself against your own standards and against others' standards, not God's.

Q & A

“How can I prepare to teach the gospel on my mission?”

NEW ERA

Teaching by the Spirit is at the heart of missionary work. The Holy Ghost can guide you and your companion to know what to say. And if you can help investigators recognize the Spirit as you teach, they will be more likely to gain a testimony, find the answers they are looking for, and become converted. You can prepare to teach on your mission by learning the gospel, gaining a testimony of it, and taking opportunities to practice teaching.

Learn the gospel. You need to understand the gospel well so you can teach it clearly and simply. Could you explain to an investigator what the resurrection is? why prophets are important? why the Restoration was necessary?

The Lord said, “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed” (D&C 11:21). You can obtain the Lord’s word by studying the scriptures and teachings of latter-day prophets. Scripture mastery verses are especially helpful to missionaries; these verses can help you answer many of the questions investigators will have. General conference talks often address gospel

■ **Teaching by the Spirit on your mission helps people come unto Christ.**

■ **Prepare now by taking opportunities to teach and testify of the gospel.**

■ **Become familiar with Preach My Gospel and the scriptures, especially scripture mastery verses.**

■ **Strengthen your testimony by praying about the gospel, by learning to recognize the Spirit, and by thinking about what the gospel means to you.**

questions, and the booklet *True to the Faith* has clear, brief explanations of gospel topics. Prayerfully study alone and with others at church, in family home evening, and in seminary.

Strengthen your testimony. As you learn the gospel, pray for the Spirit to testify to you. Think about what the gospel means to you. When you teach, sharing personal feelings about a gospel principle often invites the Spirit. For instance, after explaining the resurrection, you could testify that it gives you comfort to know that you will see your deceased family members again.

Practice teaching in family home evening, when you go home teaching, and, if possible, in seminary and your Sunday classes. Take a mission preparation class, where you can practice teaching in a safe environment. Go on exchanges with the missionaries to see how they teach, and bear your testimony when invited. Bearing your testimony can be as simple as saying how a gospel principle has helped you.

Become familiar with *Preach My Gospel*, the new guide to missionary service. It



READERS

includes suggestions on improving your teaching skills and recognizing the Spirit. It also presents, in five lessons, the doctrines you will be teaching on your mission. *Preach My Gospel* (item no. 36617) is available at distribution centers and at www.ldsacatalog.com.

Teaching interested investigators will be one of the highlights of your mission. As you teach by the Spirit, your testimony will grow, along with theirs. You will enjoy seeing others come unto Christ as they obey the principles you teach them. **NE**



Volunteer to give devotionals in seminary. Bear your testimony in sacrament meeting and to friends and family. I volunteered to teach our Sunday School lesson once when our teacher needed a substitute. It was a wonderful experience. The best way to get ready to teach is to take opportunities to teach. It will boost your confidence and ability as you gain more experience in sharing what you know to be true.

Sarah R., 18, Idaho



Prepare to teach by going home teaching. This will help you with your people skills and to learn how to teach a lesson. Also you can do family home evening lessons.

Garrett D., 13, California

As my brother prepared to go on his mission, he was praying a lot more and a lot longer. He was constantly reading the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon. During sacrament meeting he would take notes, and when he came home he would

ask our family what we thought the talks meant. He had the constant desire to make sure my family knew of his testimony and of his desire to serve the Lord. His dress and appearance improved, and he had a stronger desire to enter the temple. I think if anyone does as my brother did, they will be better prepared to teach the gospel.

Jaci S., 13, California

In your daily scripture study, record your thoughts, feelings, and impressions. Record the principles you learned that day, and apply them in your life. Then you will be more sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Effective teaching comes from the standard works, by the Spirit, backed up by a personal testimony of the truths gained through living the gospel.

Sister Apple Jane Atanante, 22, Philippines Manila Mission



Two things have been of great worth to me on my mission: love and an ability to listen. Being able to listen helps us understand investigators' concerns. Developing these two qualities—as well as study of the Restoration, Atonement, and faith—can help prepare anyone to teach on their missions.

Elder Nathaniel H. Gwinn, 21, Wisconsin Milwaukee Mission



Study the scriptures. You can't touch someone else's heart with the scriptures if you haven't studied them yourself. You need to read and gain a testimony of the things you read.

Seminary and scripture mastery are wonderful ways to gain a better understanding of the gospel.

Lindsey S., 18, North Carolina

I think the most important thing you should be doing is building your testimony. You'll be fine if you go on your mission with strong faith in what you're teaching. You can strengthen your testimony by reading the scriptures and praying about what you read. Attending church is also important.

Courtney F., 19, Arizona



We challenged our young men to better prepare themselves to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . They need to be anxious, willing, and committed to serve so they can reach new levels of spirituality as gospel teachers. They need to know the message of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and teach it with power in their own words under the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit."

—Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Essential Role of Member Missionary Work," *Ensign*, May 2003, 37.



Go to seminary, and make a habit of studying the scriptures daily, something you will be doing on a mission. Also, make a list of the ways the gospel blesses you, and think about why other people would want to hear the gospel message, which would bring them those blessings as well.

Wendi R., 17, Logan



Prepare by learning how to listen to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Praying with all your heart, being Christlike, and studying the words of the Lord and His prophets will help you be in tune with the Spirit.

Jaclyn S., 15, Virginia



To teach effectively as a missionary, you must become familiar with the language of the Spirit, which comes as you repent daily and live the gospel. And you must know the gospel. Study the doctrines by topic, especially from the Book of Mormon.

Elder Bryan Stoddard, 20, Illinois Peoria Mission

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send your answer to the question below, along with your name, birth date, ward and stake (or branch and district), and a photograph (including your parent's written permission to print the photo if you are under 18) to:

Q&A, New Era

50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA

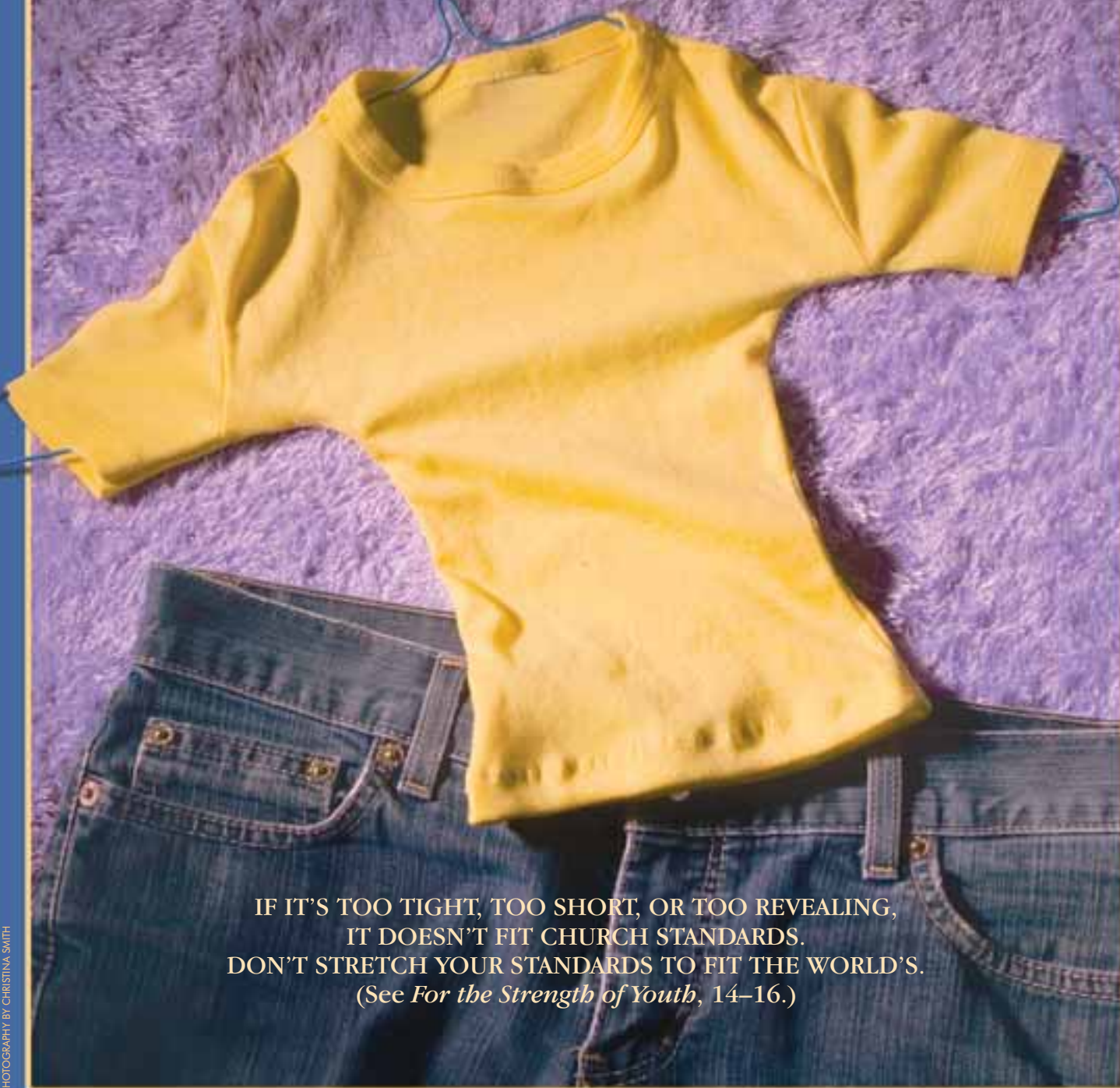
Or e-mail: newera@ldschurch.org

Please respond by February 15, 2006.

QUESTION

"Why do people who are doing wrong seem to be having so much fun? It doesn't seem fair."

ARE YOUR
STANDARDS
SHRINKING?



IF IT'S TOO TIGHT, TOO SHORT, OR TOO REVEALING,
IT DOESN'T FIT CHURCH STANDARDS.
DON'T STRETCH YOUR STANDARDS TO FIT THE WORLD'S.
(See *For the Strength of Youth*, 14–16.)

AT HOME IN MOZAMBIQUE

Through their dedicated service, youth in Mozambique help others feel right at home.

BY BENJAMIN THOMAS GARRISON

Mozambique. The name, for some, conjures images of exotic wildlife, lush green vegetation, or white-sand beaches. More likely, it will send the average person scrambling for a map to discover its location in southeast Africa. But for Maria da Conceição, it means home. And thanks to the efforts of members in the Inhamítua Branch and a few missionaries, Maria now has a place in Mozambique to call her own.

Maria is a tiny woman with a gigantic spirit. Abandoned by her husband and oldest daughter, she was left to rear two small children on her own. Crippled by a debilitating disease she has had since birth, Maria struggled to pay the rent each month.



Mozambique youth gather to serve others.



In a country that has high unemployment, work and money are nearly impossible to come by. Yet Maria managed to make a meager living and do the best she could.

I was a full-time missionary in Mozambique. When I first met Maria, I was impressed by her positive attitude and zest for life. She worked relentlessly in her *machamba* (large garden) to provide for two children and herself and to pay rent on a small mud house.

Church members helped by providing food and medical care. Tragically, Maria's two children died within three weeks of each other due to

disease and no access to the right medical facilities. Death and suffering are common in Mozambique.

Serving as the branch president for our tiny branch, I was extremely concerned for Maria. Both the youth and adult members of our isolated branch did everything they could to help Maria. Some worked in the *machamba*, others offered food, and a few even helped pay the rent; but she needed a permanent answer.

Late one night, while I was pondering and searching for an answer, inspiration came to me in the form of an idea for an ambitious youth project: building a home

Maria needed help, and members and missionaries in the Inbamízua Branch in Mozambique jumped at the opportunity to make her life a little better.



Elder Garrison with Maria da Conceição outside her home.



for Maria. My companion, Elder Bis-Neto, and I proposed our idea to the younger members of the branch, and they jumped at the chance to help build Maria a house. There was little money and a great deal of work to be done, but with many willing hands and a vision of a traditional African mud-and-stick house, a plan took shape, and the youth went to work.

Walking with Wood

Everyone got down to business immediately. First job: get wood.

A trip into the African jungle to gather wood for building a home is not a job for the fainthearted. The youth and missionaries made many two-hour trips through thick, swampy savannas, endless rice fields, dense overgrown jungles, and waist-deep mud to find the perfect trees with which to build Maria's house. Using machetes, we hacked down the slender trees and then organized them into bundles for the journey back. Some of the youth used tall wild grass to quickly weave hats to help protect their heads from the rough logs.

The most difficult leg of the journey now began. Carrying a heavy load on our heads, scratching our way through the dense undergrowth, and battling the scorching African sun, we hauled our loads back. As we walked, the youth sang hymns of Zion, with smiles on their faces.

Alves Elídio Eguimane Razão, 18, says, "It was a lot of hard work, and we loved every minute of it!"

The wooden frame went up stick by stick, with care given to ensure a sturdy and lasting structure. Many generous hands constructed the roof by laying down strips of plastic, which were secured with mats of woven weeds. This roof would need to repel the violent storms of the annual rainy season.

Making Mud

From mud walls to mud floors to mud pies, mud was

the menu for most building days. Barrel after barrel of rich brown dirt was hauled in and then drenched in water. Dozens of youth and other branch members turned out to help hand mix the mud and cover the frame house. The exterior was done first, followed by the interior walls and partition. After we had packed the

walls with several inches of strong, dried mud, the house started to take shape. To jazz up the interior, a special layer of mud was carefully applied to create the floor and solid water-resistant surfaces.

These days were full of hard work, but the atmosphere abounded in good humor and many smiles, not to mention the surprised eyes of the neighbors as they watched missionaries and youth carrying large bundles of sticks and gallons upon gallons of water and slinging handfuls of mud.

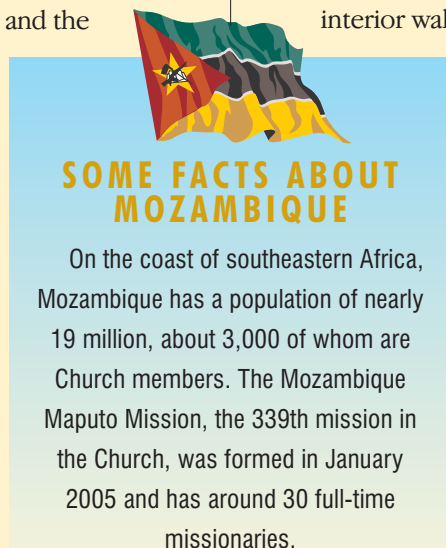
Finally the door was hung, a lock installed, and the house was done. After more than 1,000 service hours, given by more than 40 members and a number of missionaries, Maria da Conceição had a beautiful home of her own.

In addition to completing Maria's home, a number of other good things happened as a result of the project.

Helder Manuel Tomo, 19, helped build the home before he was a member of the Church. He says, "Building Maria's house was great! I first went to church with Jonqueiro, a great friend of mine who was about to serve a mission. I really enjoyed church, yet I felt like the 'new guy.'"

Spending time building the house helped Helder get to know the youth in the branch. "This new feeling of belonging and having so many friends is what sealed my decision to be baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I was baptized by Jonqueiro. I am so grateful that he invited me to church and helped me 'belong' through this great service project."

Jonqueiro Alai Malaica, 22, says, "It was a great service



project for all of the members. It wasn't easy, but it was most certainly worth it." He says it brought the whole branch together.

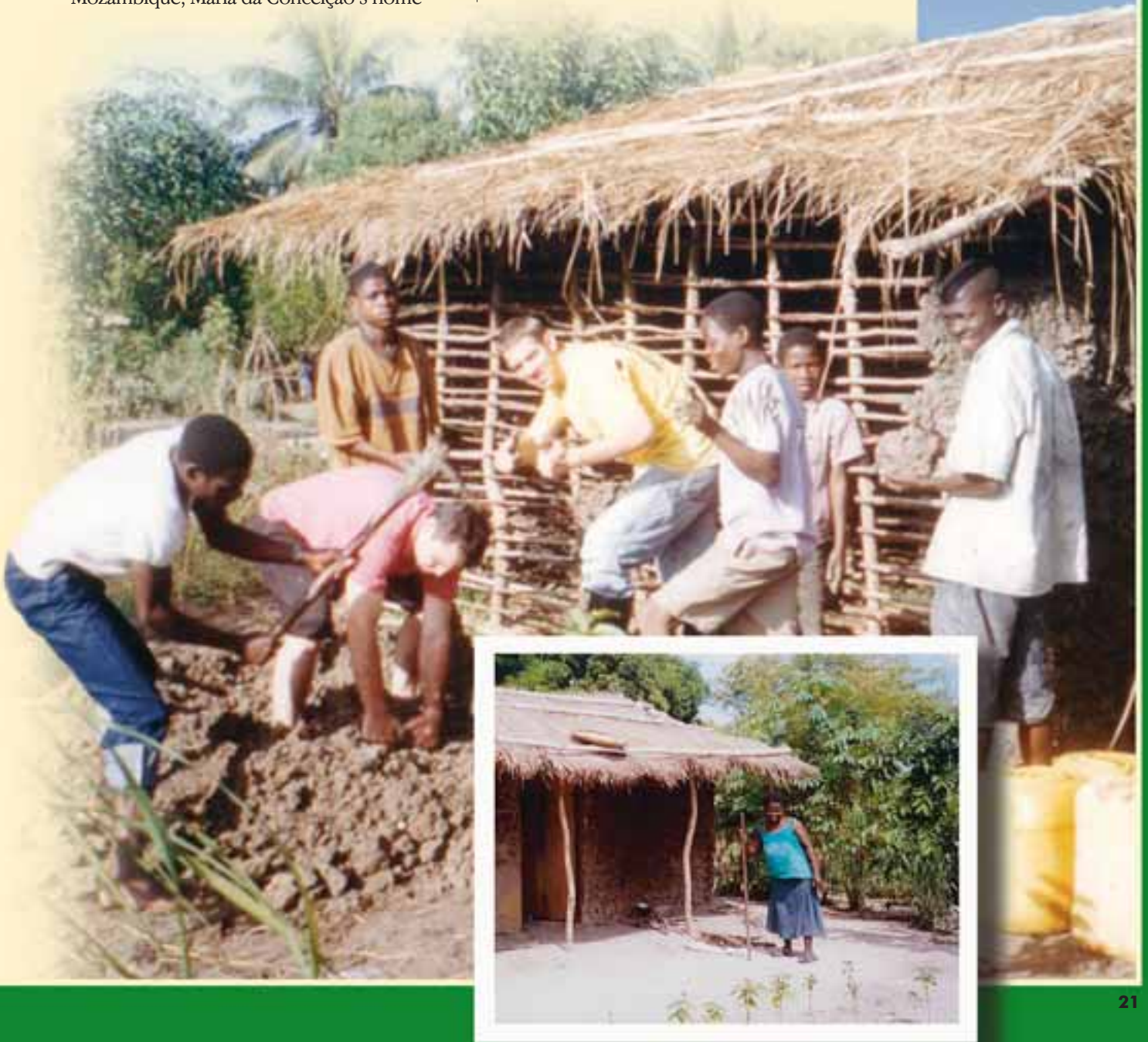
"I'm also grateful for the youth and the friendship they showed to Helder," says Jonqueiro. Helder is now working hard as a branch missionary and plans to go on a mission.

On a tiny plot of land, in a remote village of Mozambique, Maria da Conceição's home

stands as a testament of love and obedience to the principles of the gospel. Maria and the members of the Inhamizua Branch have learned that, amid the harsh trials of life, there is hope to be found when Church members work together to make good things happen. **NE**

Editors' note: *The members of the Inhamizua Branch did not stop with Maria's house. The volunteers and missionaries have since rebuilt two other houses.*

More than 1,000 hours of service from more than 40 volunteers mean Maria has a new home and a more comfortable life.





PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

RECOMMIT TO RECORD IT

January is a good time to recommit to regularly write in your journal. Remember that it's not only the amazing things you do that you could write down, but also the everyday things that really show who you are. If you're having trouble coming up with topics to write about, try something like this: "The first thing I can remember about my childhood is . . ." or "My best memory of school is . . . because . . ."

For more ideas on what to write, read last January's Idea List, "Jazz Up Your Journal" (*New Era*, Jan. 2005, 15) or "Diary and Journal Ideas" (*New Era*, Mar. 1977, 39), by William G. Hartley. You can find these online in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org.

"Get a notebook, my young folks, a journal that will last through all time, and maybe the angels may quote from it for eternity. Begin today and write in it your goings and comings, your deepest thoughts, your achievements and your failures, your associations and your triumphs, your impressions and your testimonies" (President Spencer W. Kimball [1895–1985], "The Angels May Quote from It," *New Era*, Oct. 1975, 5).

Test Your Prayer I.Q.

Do you ever get confused with the *thees* and *thous* of prayer? Here's a little exercise that can help you practice the special language of prayer. Fill in the blanks using *thee*, *thou*, *thy*, or *thine*. For the answers, see the references for these two prayers.

From Joseph Smith's dedicatory prayer at the Kirtland Temple:

"And now, Holy Father, we ask _____ to assist us, _____ people, with _____ grace, in calling our solemn assembly, . . .

"That _____ glory may rest down upon _____ people, and upon this _____ house, which we now dedicate to _____, that it may be sanctified and consecrated to be holy, and that _____ holy presence may be continually in this house" (D&C 109:10, 12).

From President Wilford Woodruff's (1807–98) dedicatory prayer of the Salt Lake Temple:

"Our Father in heaven, _____ who hast created the heavens and the earth, and all things that are therein;

_____ most glorious One, . . . we, _____ children, come this day before _____, and in this house which we have built to _____ most holy name, humbly plead the atoning blood of _____ Only Begotten Son, that our sins may be remembered no more against us forever, but that our prayers may ascend unto _____ and have free access to _____ throne, that we may be heard in _____ holy habitation" (in Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Salt Lake Temple," *Ensign*, Mar. 1993, 2).

It Happened in January

January 4, 1852: The Church's first branch in Australia was organized in Sydney. It had 12 members.

January 10, 1892: The Church organized its first Sunday School for the deaf, in the Salt Lake City 19th Ward.



January 1, 1971: The Taiwan Mission was organized (Taipei Taiwan Temple, left). There are now three missions in Taiwan: the Kaohsiung, Taichung, and Taipei missions.



January 9, 1999: Ground was broken in the same country for two new temples: the Ciudad Juárez Mexico (left) and the Villahermosa Mexico Temples (below, left).



January 1, 2000: The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles issued "The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles" (*New Era*, Apr. 2000, 20), an official declaration of their testimonies of the Savior. This document is included in the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth*.

THE LIVING CHRIST

THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

As we commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ two millennia ago, we offer our testimony of the reality of His matchless life and the infinite virtue of His great atoning sacrifice. None other has had so profound an influence upon all who have lived and will yet live upon the earth.

He was the Great Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Messiah of the New. Under the direction of His Father, He was the creator of the earth. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). Through sinless, He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. He "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38), yet was despised for it. His gospel was a message of peace and goodwill. He exhorted all to follow His example. He walked the roads of Palestine, healing the sick, casting the blind to see, and raising the dead. He taught the truths of eternity, the reality of our premortal existence, the purpose of our life on earth, and the potential for the sons and daughters of God in the life to come.

He instituted the sacrament as a reminder of His great atoning sacrifice. He was arrested and condemned on spurious charges, convicted to satisfy a mob, and sentenced to die on Calvary's cross. He gave His life to atone for the sins of all mankind. He was a great vicarious gift in behalf of all who would ever live upon the earth.

We solemnly testify that His life, which is central to all human history, neither began in Bethlehem nor concluded on Calvary. He was the Father of the Father, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh, the Redeemer of the world.

He rose from the grave to "become the first-fruits of them that sleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). As Risen Lord, He visited among those He had loved in life. He also ministered among His "other sheep" (John 10:16) to ancient America. In the modern world, He and His Father appeared to the boy Joseph Smith, ushering in the long-promised "dispensation of the fulness of times" (Ephesians 1:10).

Of the Living Christ, the Prophet Joseph wrote: "His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying, 'I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father'" (D&C 110:3-4).

Of Him the Prophet also declared: "And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he liveth!"

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

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

We declare in words of solemnity that His priesthood and His Church have been restored upon the earth—"built upon the foundation of . . . apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20).

We testify that He will someday return to earth. "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together" (Isaiah 40:5). He will rule as King of Kings and reign as Lord of Lords, and every knee shall bend and every tongue shall speak in worship before Him. Each of us will stand to be judged of Him according to our works and the desires of our hearts.

We bear testimony, as His duly ordained Apostles—that Jesus is the Living Christ, the immortal Son of God. He is the great King Immanuel, who stands today on the right hand of His Father. He is the light, the life, and the hope of the world. His way is the path that leads to happiness in this life and eternal life in the world to come. God be thanked for the matchless gift of His divine Son.

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

January 1, 2000

THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE

Handwritten signatures of the members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



HOW WELL DO YOU COMMUNICATE?

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught: "When the Savior was giving Peter some leadership training he said, 'When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren' (Luke 22:32).

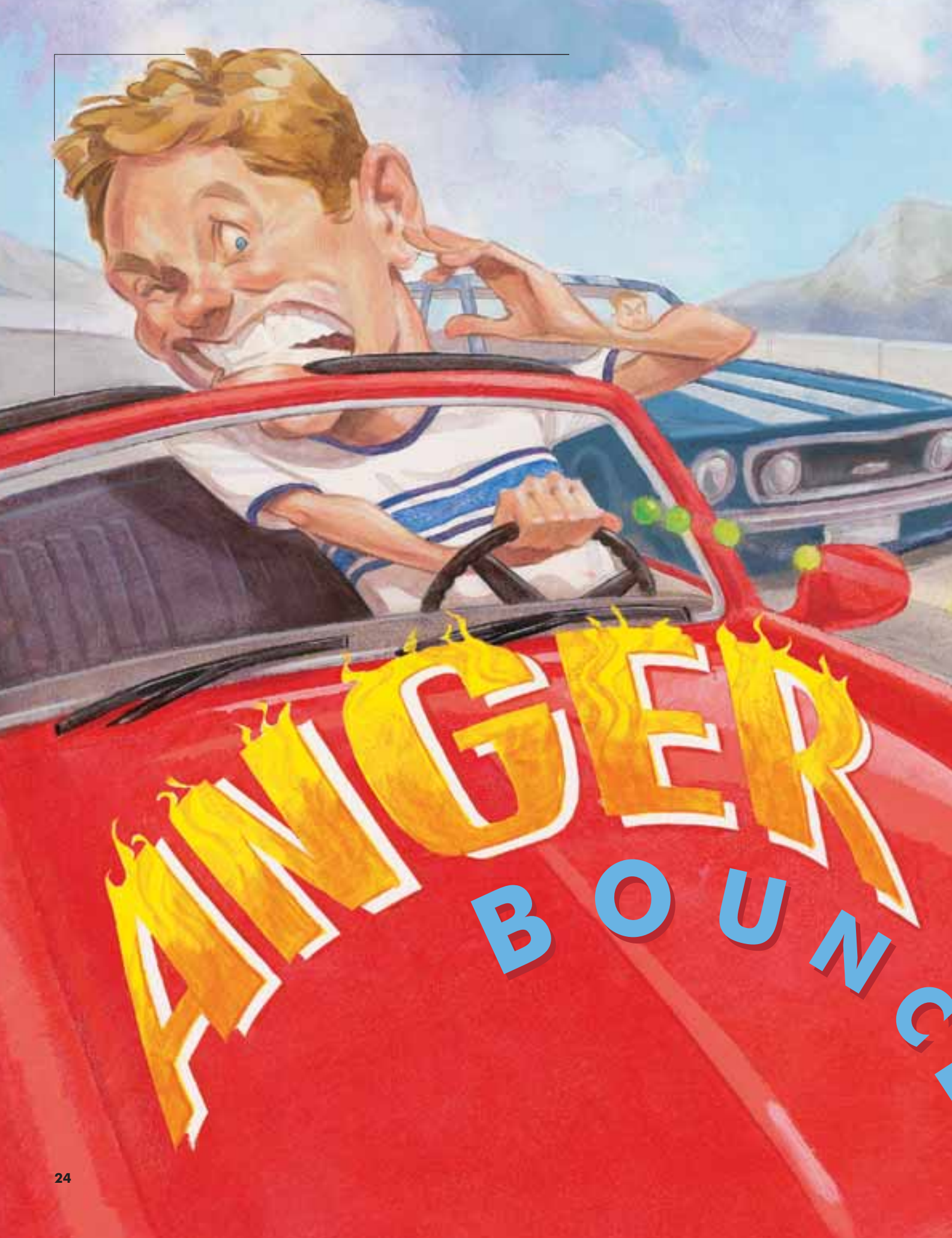
"It is interesting that he used the word *strengthen*. It is very difficult to strengthen without being a good communicator. Often problems develop, not because the plan is faulty,

but because the communication is inadequate" ("These I Will Make My Leaders," *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 36).

So when you are planning with your family, class, or quorum, remember to communicate. And to communicate you will not only need to talk, you will need to listen. Listen to those you have a leadership responsibility over, listen to your parents and youth leaders, and most important, listen to the Spirit.

"Unless you are fully engaged in living the gospel—living it with all of your 'heart, might, mind and strength' (D&C 4:2)—you cannot generate enough spiritual light to push back the darkness."

—Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Out of Darkness into His Marvelous Light," *Ensign*, May 2002, 71.



I raced down the highway, keeping pace with the cars surrounding me. I was on my way back from watching a high school basketball tournament, and my heart still thumped from the excitement of the games.

Because of the tournament, the traffic was heavy and full of erratic teenage drivers. To my right, a car full of teenage boys sped past me trying to find space ahead of me in my lane. I put on a burst of speed, leaving no room for my opponent to slide in ahead of me.

This tactic made the boys in the car mad, and they yelled at me through the window. I pretended to ignore them, but secretly I enjoyed goading them. I slowed down just long enough to let them almost get ahead of me, but then I sped up at the last moment to keep them from changing lanes.

As we jockeyed back and forth, pride overcame us as the battle continued. We drove aggressively only to try to upset each other.

Finally the driver of the other car darted into a small space ahead of me, cutting me off. This time it was my turn to be infuriated.

I laid on the car horn for a solid 10 seconds and sped up to the point of nearly rear-ending the car.

But my honking and tailgating didn't have a calming effect on me. My anger had built to the point where I would do anything to get back at them. I looked around in my car for something to throw out my window at the other car. I found a small green rubber ball in my cup holder. It would be the perfect thing to throw at them.

I rolled my window down, again speeding up until my bumper was close to the other car. I hurled the ball with all my might, but because I had only an elementary knowledge of kinetic motion, I didn't understand that the ball would not have enough force to catch up to the car in front of me.

Instead the ball hit the asphalt of the road in front of me and bounced up, smacking right into my windshield. I jumped back in fright. As I regained control of my car I noticed a small chip in the windshield where the ball had hit so violently.

I pulled over to the side of the road and inspected the window. Other than the chip, everything was all right. I was not hurt, and the chip was small enough that there was no danger my windshield would crack. But I felt foolish and ashamed at what I had done. Why had I been so angry? I was the one at fault. I had put myself and others in danger just to get even with someone I had goaded into cutting me off. What was I thinking?

My anger didn't do anything to the kids in front of me. Instead it bounced back and hit me square in the face—or windshield, in this case. In that moment I decided to try and let a cool, calm temperament rule my actions, not a hot and angry one.

Since then, I have had opportunities to have the windshield fixed. I declined each time, however, deciding to keep the chip as a reminder that being angry won't solve my problems. Anger only bounces back. **NE**

EXTRA! EXTRA!

To learn more about controlling your anger, read these articles in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org: "Slow to Anger" (*Ensign*, Feb. 2003), by Elder Gordon T. Watts; and "Agency and Anger" (*Ensign*, May 1998), by Elder Lynn G. Robbins.

BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE
Church Magazines

MAYOR FOR A

Imagine you're a young Latter-day Saint living in Trujillo, Peru. Now imagine you're the mayor.

One local newspaper ran a story about Amy Arreátegui Pozo. In the newspaper photographs (opposite page), Amy meets with the full-time mayor of Trujillo and goes over the schedule for her day as mayor.

It's tough making the right choices when you're 15 years old. But when your decisions affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, the pressure gets a little greater. That was the situation facing Amy Arreátegui Pozo when she was selected from 123 students to be the mayor of Trujillo, Peru, the third largest city in the country. Mayor for a day, that is.

When Amy was a Mia Maid in the Mousserat Ward, Trujillo Perú Laureles Stake, she attended a secondary school called the Academy of Engineering. "One of my goals," says Amy, "was to become the student mayor [like a student-body president] from this school, and I did. That was my dream. My next goal was to win the 'Mayor for a Day' contest, and here I am. I finally made it. What helped me win was my confidence in myself."

Of course, showing that she had a lot of great ideas about improving schools and neighborhoods in the city also helped. Coming up with these ideas for the contest was a lot of work, but deciding which ones to include was pretty easy. To decide, Amy used a method she's come to depend on—a method that has given her the confidence she talks about. It's the process of asking and receiving answers through prayer.

"Always go to Heavenly Father when you're making a decision, and you will always make the right choice," Amy says. That's one reason she could handle the responsibility so well when the city of Trujillo issued the resolution recognizing her as "mayor for a day." The city council acted to accept her activities during her 24 hours as mayor. All contracts, decisions, and authorizations would be legally binding.

Mayor for a Day

Amy arrived at the city hall at 7:30 a.m., even before Mayor José Murgia Zannier, Trujillo's mayor for more than 10 years. After being officially installed in her post, she met with Mayor Murgia to go over the day's schedule and coordinate some details. Thus began her busy day as mayor.

In the mayor's official vehicle, Amy made a visit to inspect a park where the city plans to build a sports and recreation center. She then visited a public school, where she met with the principal and surveyed the progress on the

DAY



...en conferencia de prensa
...uchísimo por hacer..."

apoyando con la construcción de
dos aulas, pero lamentablemente
la municipalidad no puede sum-
ar a todos por falta de presun-
tos.

Finalmente, ¿cuál sería tu análisis de la ciudad de Trujillo?

«En el área y recorrido que he recorrido por algunas zonas de Trujillo, me he dado cuenta de la «exuberante» actividad trujillana. En una ciudad que muchos trujillanos



The experience Amy had while serving as mayor for a day opened her eyes to the

many needs within her community. One of those needs—education—was already a primary focus of Amy’s plans and programs. But Amy realizes that while school is important, there are other aspects of our lives that should take precedence over a secular education.

“I feel that here in Trujillo, which is considered the culture capital of Peru, many put the Church aside and put more focus on their studies,” Amy says. “There are many youth within the Church who don’t go on missions so they can continue with their schooling at the university or who stop going to institute classes and church meetings.”

So while Amy studies hard in school and plans to become a psychologist, she also works hard in her calling as a Sunday School teacher and on her personal spiritual progression. She understands that there is a time for everything: a time for study, a time for church, and a time for friends, family, and fun.

It’s a question of perspective and priority. Amy explains: “The prophet wants the youth to get as much schooling as possible, and the Lord will always prepare the way for us to do it, so we don’t have to leave the Church to do something that is secular. Even though it’s important to get an education, it’s more important to do what our Heavenly Father commands.”

Principles over Peers

The youth in Peru face many of the same challenges youth face all over the world. The temptations to follow the ways of the world call loudly: pornography, immorality, and dishonesty.

“Fashion and all the trends like music are also a problem because most of us are surrounded by nonmembers, so at times it’s easy to be led by our peers and not our principles,” Amy says. She warns that we should not give in to pressure from those who would have us relax our standards. “Another problem,” she says, “is that when a young person joins the Church, they sometimes lose friends.”

Amy feels blessed that she has found friends and strength among her family, ward members, and fellow seminary students. They have been there to support and encourage her to follow the Lord.

Confidence in Your Decisions

Now that Amy has had a taste of what it’s like to be mayor of Trujillo, what are her plans for the future? “I will start out as a student mayor,” Amy explains, “and then perhaps become mayor of a local unit, and then mayor of a district, and then become the first woman president of Peru.”

Amy says that many young people lack the confidence to set goals and reach them because they don’t understand why they’re here on earth and what they should do in their lives. By building her life around the gospel, Amy has gained the confidence to succeed in whatever she righteously desires.

“I’ve grown closer to my Heavenly Father by praying and asking for His confirmation in whatever decision I have to make,” she says. “It is very special for me to feel His Spirit and know He approves of my choices. By having His approval, I feel that things will always, always turn out well.” **NE**

The newspaper photograph (opposite page) shows Amy as she opens a newly renovated city park. Amy (center front) stands with her friends from seminary.

THE PRICE FOR GOOD THINGS



We pay the price for good things in advance with our patience, humility, and obedience.

BY ELDER CARLOS E. AGÜERO

Area Seventy
South America South Area

Personal experience has taught me that the Lord knows us better than we know ourselves and that we can trust in the promises made by priesthood leaders, knowing they come from the Lord through His Spirit. That Spirit will confirm to us that those promises will come to pass if we are faithful to the commandments.

When I was 14, I met two American missionaries. I was interested in hearing about the Book of Mormon, so we set an appointment for them to visit me. My entire family listened to the first discussion, but none of them were interested in continuing. I had felt something and sensed the message was true, so I asked my parents for permission to continue receiving the missionary discussions. They agreed, and when I was almost 15 years old, I entered the waters of baptism in the Godoy Cruz Branch, Mendoza Argentina District.

The next year I faced a great trial in my life: my parents separated. Thankfully, I had

the Church during that difficult time and the support of excellent teachers, leaders, and friends. At about that same time, after being ordained a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood, I baptized my 11-year-old sister.

Learning a New Language

I worked full-time for the next few years, attending school in the evenings. When I was 19, I sent in my mission papers. I will always remember the day I received my call to the France Paris Mission. It was signed by President Joseph Fielding Smith, dated June 16, 1972, just weeks before he passed away.

After going through endless formalities to obtain a passport (I was underage, my parents were separated, and I was of military age), I was finally able to leave for my mission, a year and a half after completing my papers. I flew to Paris, France, with only my five years of high school French and without knowing any English. The zone conferences in my mission were in English. And I hadn't been endowed yet because there were no temples in South America at that time.

One month after I began my service, President Willis D. Waite sent me with a young Frenchman, Jean Collin, to receive my endowment in the Swiss Temple. We traveled all night by train and spent three emotional and spiritual days there.

Six months into my mission, I had a special interview with my mission president during one of our mission conferences. In essence President Waite told me, “Elder Agüero, I’m going to give you an assignment. You have to learn English because when you return home you will be a member of a stake presidency, a mission president, and a leader in the Church. You will need English to communicate with the General Authorities.”

I laughed, perhaps because at the age of 20 I couldn’t see myself in these positions and because I came from a new stake in Argentina that was among only three that had been organized in the country.

He said, “Don’t laugh, Elder Agüero. I’m being serious.”

I felt the Spirit very strongly through this man, my leader, who then explained to me the way in which I was to fulfill this assignment.

He said, “From now on, you will speak only in English, every day, for half the day, with your companion.”

My companion received the same instructions in his interview, and we started doing so. It was extremely difficult for me at first, but later after much effort, I began





Because I followed my mission president's counsel to learn English, after my mission I was able to interpret for several General Authorities, including Elder Hartman Rector Jr. of the Seventy.

suddenly began to understand every word. The miracle did not end there. Over time I came to serve as the mission's financial secretary, which helped me read and write English. I tried to understand the language by reading *Church News*, the *Ensign*, and other English materials. Through these I was able to get a feeling for the English language, which is still with me today.

Interpreting in the Temple

Shortly after I returned from my mission, my stake president asked me to interpret for Elder Hartman Rector Jr., then of the Seventy, who had come to Mendoza, Argentina, to preside over a stake conference. These marvelous opportunities have continued over the years. I interpreted for President Thomas S. Monson and other General Authorities during the 11 dedicatory sessions of the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple.

to understand basic ideas. I prayed at night, crying many times out of frustration and helplessness because I wanted to be obedient to the task I had been given.

After some months and a few companions later, the miracle came. While a missionary was giving a beautiful talk in English during a zone conference, I

During four of those sessions, I read the dedicatory prayer in Spanish from the pulpit in the celestial room. My voice broke up several times because of my emotions; tears filled my eyes and flowed down my face. I was reading the inspired prayers and promises for my country from Heavenly Father, who lives and reveals His will, just as He did 12 years earlier through my mission president when I accepted the challenge to learn English.

I also interpreted for the prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley, during the four dedicatory sessions of the Montevideo Uruguay Temple and the four dedicatory sessions of the Asunción Paraguay Temple.

It's difficult for me to explain how sacred those moments were for me when I stood alongside prophets, seers, and revelators in the Lord's house. I felt somewhat like Peter, James, and John when they had the amazing experience of seeing Jesus transfigured. Peter expressed my feelings when he told Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here" (Matthew 17:4).

From these and other experiences, I learned how the Lord works in our lives. The price for good things is paid in advance by our patience, humility, and obedience, especially during trials. If you don't give up during your trials or let frustration and discouragement overcome you, trials will refine you spiritually and prepare you for better things. You will see the fulfillment of beautiful miracles in your life. **NE**

Elder Carlos E. Agüero served as an Area Seventy from 1996 to 2005.



RYAN STOKER

"You're cold?
Wow, wait 'til winter
comes!"

"Remember,
Son, if at first you don't
succeed, make sure
you're not driving my
car at the time."



RANDY GLASBERGEN

"I thought I was just
a 16-year-old girl."

laurel \ˈlôr-əl, ˈlär-\ *n* [ME *lore*l, fr. OF *lorier*, fr. *lor* laurel, fr. *L. laurus*] **1** : any of a genus (*Laurus* of the family Lauraceae, the laurel family) of trees or shrubs that have alternate entire leaves, small tetramerous flowers surrounded by bracts, and fruits that are ovoid berries; *specif* : a tree (*L. nobilis*) of southern Europe with foliage used by the ancient Greeks to crown victors in the Pythian games **2** : a tree or shrub that resembles the true laurel; *esp* **2** : MOUNTAIN LAUREL **3** : a crown of laurel : HONOR — *usu.* used in pl.



When my friend enrolled her son in a private kindergarten class, she was told to leave him for the day to be observed for placement in either the higher- or lower-level class. At the end of the day, the principal, who was not a member of the Church, said her son would be in the higher class and added—offhandedly—that most Latter-day Saints were.

My friend asked how he knew they were LDS.

He replied, "It's easy to tell the Mormon kids. When you ask them to line up, they fold their arms."

—Jacqueline F., New Mexico

WHO'S IT

I realized that even if I never viewed pornography myself, it could still hurt me if people I loved chose to look at it.

NAME WITHHELD

Pornography's poison also affected my feelings of self-worth as a young woman.

My brothers and I did everything together growing up. We journeyed together from training wheels to driver education class. They asked me to dance when no one else would and stayed up late getting my advice about the girls they liked. They've always been my best friends and protectors. I want to marry someone who loves and respects me the way my brothers do.

But there's something that poisons the kind of relationship I'm looking for. I first became aware of it with a close friend of mine. He and I grew up together from Primary lessons to high school dances and cared about each other deeply. I was excited to see him get ready to serve a mission. Then one day he had a look on his face that made me think he was going to announce he had a terminal illness. He blurted out he would have to delay his mission because of morality problems he'd had that started with pornography. I felt so bad for him. I still cared about him and all the memories I had with him, but the blow was a difficult one for me to handle.

My experience with my friend made me think. Even if I never viewed pornography myself, I realized it could still hurt me if

people I loved chose to look at it.

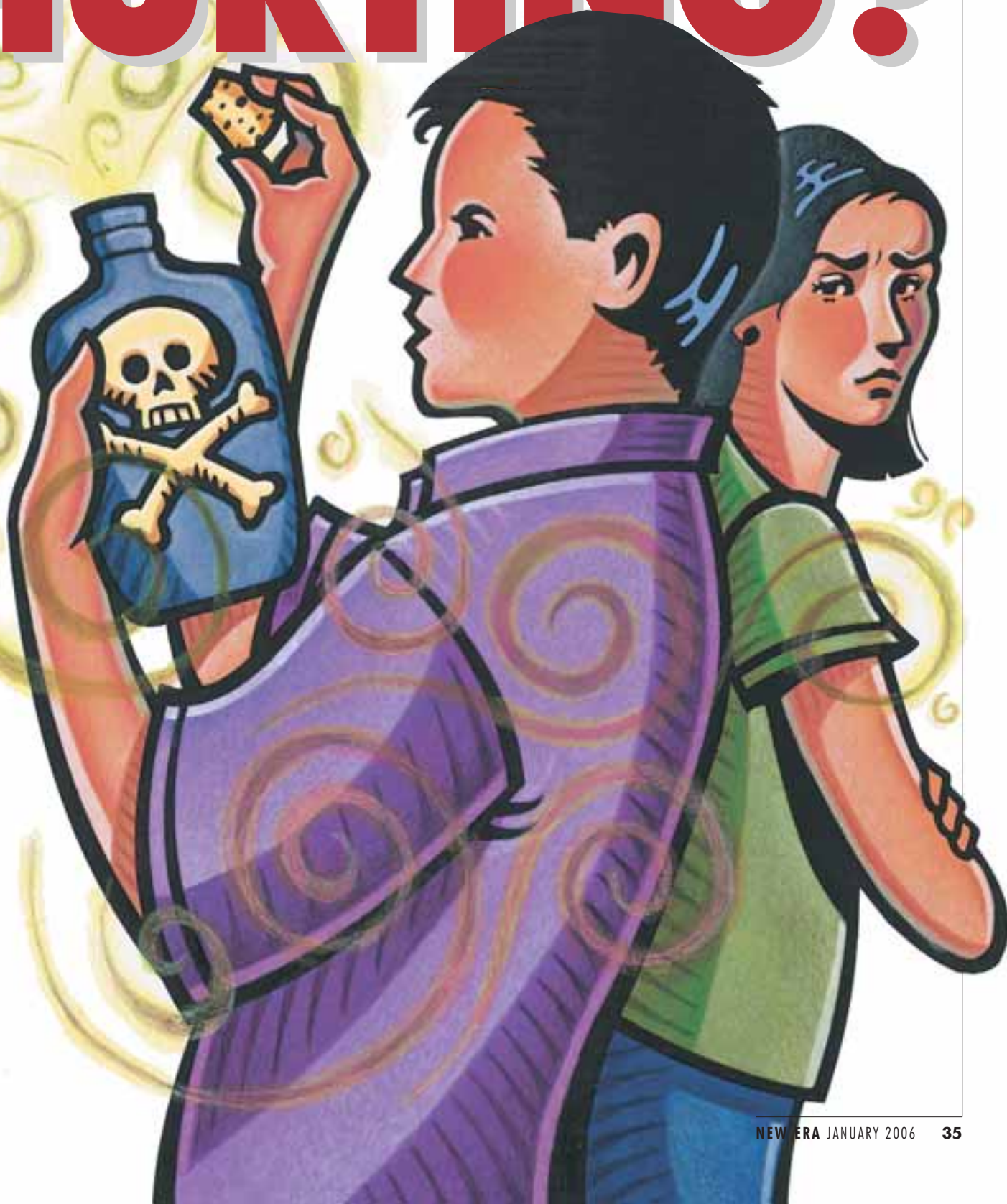
As I reached the age to seriously consider marriage, I discovered an even more personal way pornography could hurt me. As I dated one young man, we became close enough that I told him about my fear of pornography. Being sensitive to my fears, he told me about his struggles with it. He told me he didn't realize at the time that his choice to view pornography would hurt someone he hadn't met yet.

By now I was carrying around a bundle of questions that grew larger the more I realized how widespread pornography's poison was. Did every boy have problems with pornography? The more I thought about the effects of pornography, the more discouraged I became. Most young women feel insecure about their appearance, and I was no exception. Pornography's degrading emphasis on the physical only increased the pressure I already felt about my appearance. Every time a boy looked at me I thought, "What is he really thinking?"

I might have been overwhelmed by my fears if I didn't have such good, loving brothers. I knew there must be other guys like them.

Then one day I was shopping with my

HURTING?



EXTRA! EXTRA!

For more information on avoiding pornography, you can read these articles in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org: Q&A: "Pornography is ruining my life. . . ." (*New Era*, Aug. 2005); "A Tragic Evil among Us" (*Ensign*, Nov. 2004), by President Gordon B. Hinckley; and "Danger Ahead! Avoiding Pornography's Trap" (*New Era*, Oct. 2002).

younger brother. As we were driving home, he said that every store we went in had posters and magazines with inappropriate images of women displayed everywhere. His voice was full of nervousness as he proceeded to tell me he had looked a little at pornography and later repented of it but felt so discouraged when everywhere he went he was bombarded with it. He mentioned that my other brothers had struggled with similar problems.

At first I didn't know what to think. I couldn't believe that my brother had involved himself in something like that. But looking at his eyes filled with tears and pain made me realize how hard it is to stay clean in a world where we are confronted by inappropriate images every day.

I could tell that my little brother felt horrible, but I wanted him to know how pornography made me feel. I told him how hurt and how afraid I felt because of pornography and the power it had over those I cared about. He listened intently and said he hadn't realized how awful it made girls feel. He apologized for hurting me.

Satan wanted my brothers

and friends to believe that if viewed in private, pornography wouldn't hurt anyone. Satan also wanted to convince me that I could never trust anyone and that I would never be truly loved.

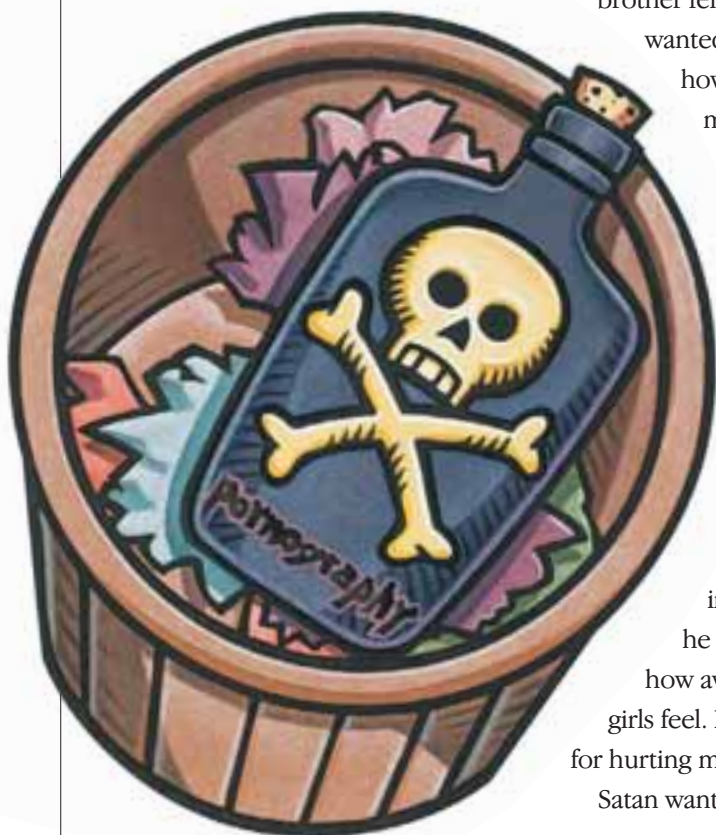
Satan is a liar.

My dad's example gives me hope. He cherishes and respects my mother. Every time women or physical love are displayed in inappropriate ways on TV, my dad changes the channel. I see the deep respect and love my parents have for each other, and that's what I want for myself and my brothers in our future marriages. That kind of love is seldom portrayed in movies and never in pornography.

My brother later told me that every time he saw women displayed inappropriately, he thought of not disappointing me and turned the other way. These images became less enticing as he realized that he was looking at someone's mother, sister, wife, or daughter, that he was hurting people he loved, and that he could poison the way he would see his future wife.

Understanding what pornography does to my brothers and to me only strengthens their resolve to stay away from it. And now that I'm more aware of what boys are facing, I do everything I can to help them stay strong, like trying to dress modestly, choosing not to watch inappropriate movies or TV shows, and letting them know how I feel when they talk about women in inappropriate ways. **NE**

Your bishop or branch president can provide much needed spiritual guidance and help with pornography-related problems. For professional help, contact the LDS Family Services office nearest you by visiting www.ldsfamilyservices.org or by e-mailing lds-fshelp@ldschurch.org.





INCLUDING EVERYONE

Have you ever felt left out? Or have you ever known someone who didn't quite fit in and was excluded by others? Whether it happened at school, church, or in some other setting, most people have felt that way at some time in their lives.

Here are some tips from the youth in the Handen Ward, Stockholm Sweden South Stake, on how to cope with feeling left out and how to help others feel welcome.

Feeling Included

- Always remember, it's not worth it to lower your standards to fit in.
- Being excluded hurts, but don't become angry or hold a grudge; this will only make you feel worse.
- Try to be with people who make you want to be better, who encourage you to live the gospel, and whom you feel good around.
- Improve yourself and learn new skills. Joining a school club and learning to play a sport are good ways to meet people with similar interests.
- Go to Church youth activities and participate willingly.
- Try hanging out with your family. You can find some of your best friends right at home.
- Be the best person you can be. You will find friends

who appreciate you for the good person you are.

- Don't wait forever for someone to ask you to be his or her friend. Go out and be a friend to others.

Including Others

- Make the effort to talk to new people at school or church. Introduce them to others with similar interests.
- Invite someone who might need a friend to a school or Church activity.
- Stand up to people who intentionally make others feel unwelcome. Be an example of one who includes and loves others.
- Sit beside someone who is sitting alone, or invite him or her to sit with you and your friends. Ask how he or she is doing.
- If you're not sure how to help someone, pray about it. Heavenly Father knows just what that person needs and can help you help him or her. Be sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit teaching what you should do or warning what you should not do.
- If you are at a dance, ask someone who hasn't danced that night to dance with you.
- It's difficult sometimes to be outgoing and to help others, but try anyway. **NE**

THE *Gift* OF TAGALOG

BY ANGELA WOODS ANDERSON

“We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth.”
—Articles of Faith 1:7

I longed to be able to communicate in Tagalog directly to her. She finished talking, and I found myself talking to her, in fluent Tagalog, saying everything I had thought and felt prompted to say.

In 1989, when I was called to the Philippine Islands to serve a mission, the main language of the Philippines—Tagalog—was not taught in the Provo Missionary Training Center. I arrived in the Philippines to a warm welcome by an English-speaking Filipina companion but understood virtually nothing that was said in Tagalog.

Although she translated the discussions for me and each thing I said, I was eager to learn the language. I asked her questions about the language over and over, and she never hesitated to help me. I gradually began to understand and speak a little Tagalog. About eight months into my mission, I could understand almost everything said in Tagalog, but I still spoke mainly English with a little Tagalog in nearly every sentence.

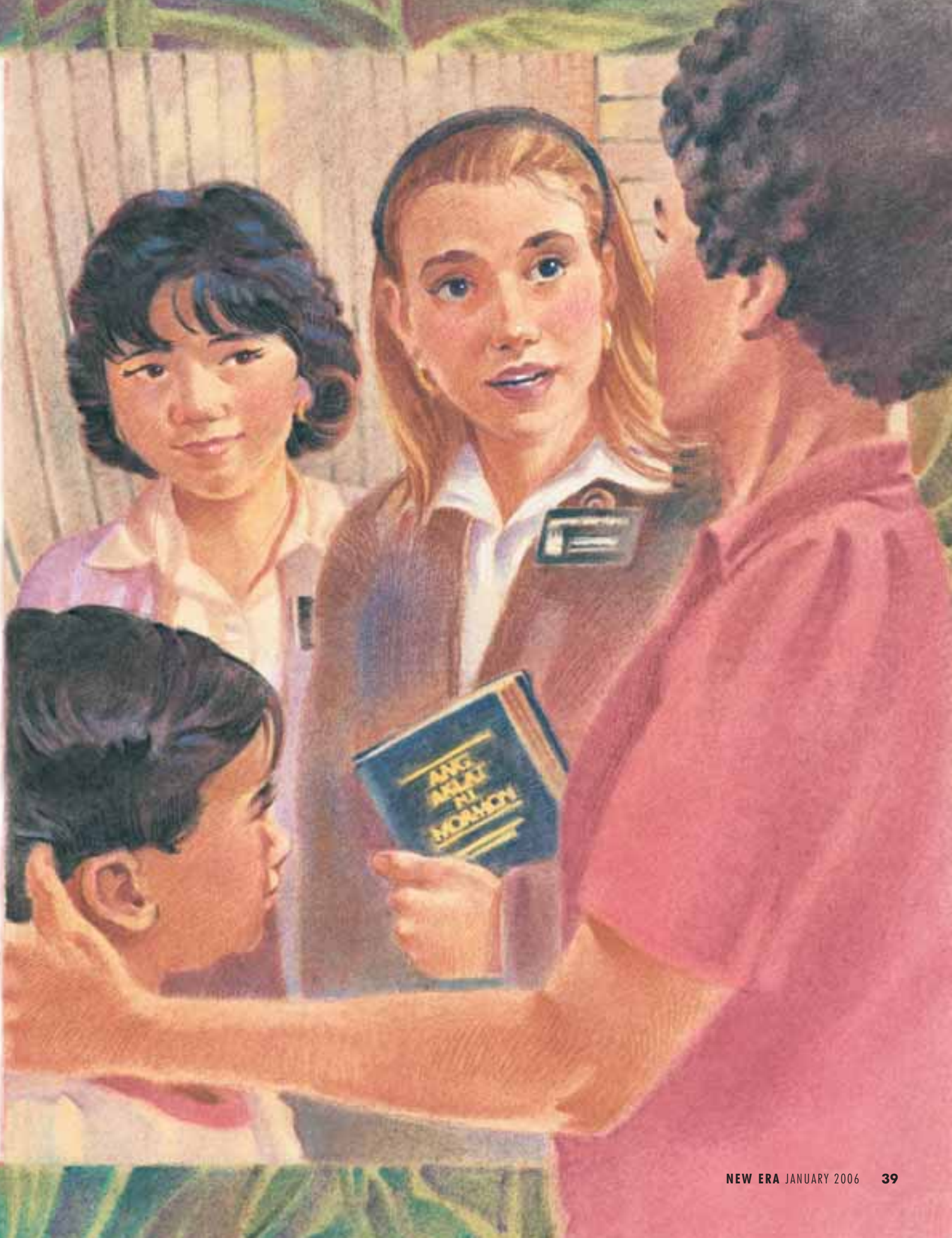
My companion and I visited a new convert, Sister Salvation, who, like many other converts, had become converted through her love of the Book of Mormon. She had eight children, with two still at home. She had lived through multiple typhoons that had destroyed or damaged

her palm-leaf hut each time. She was a widow and over her lifetime had experienced the loss of three husbands.

She often gave a strong testimony about the Book of Mormon. She said that when she felt “weighed down with trials,” she opened the Book of Mormon and read. After some time she felt as if the problems had “lifted” off her, and she had peace of mind because she felt that everything would work out and God would bless her. She said the book is like her friend, and sometimes she found herself waking up clasping and holding the book tightly, as if in a hug.

She said all these years she had been longing for something that would bring her such comfort and felt she had found it in the Book of Mormon, as she had never felt so close to the Savior. She said she loved the book so much, and she talked of how much happiness and enlightenment it brought her.

One day we stopped by her home during a difficult time in her life. As she spoke in Tagalog, my mind was filled with answers to her concerns, all passages from the Book of Mormon. These were passages I had not



had been asked to speak in church that Sunday, but I couldn't remember the passages word for word or the language! It was then that I realized how the Lord had given me "the gift of speaking with tongues" (Omni 1:25).



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

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

—President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)
"Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon,"
Ensign, Nov. 1988, 6.

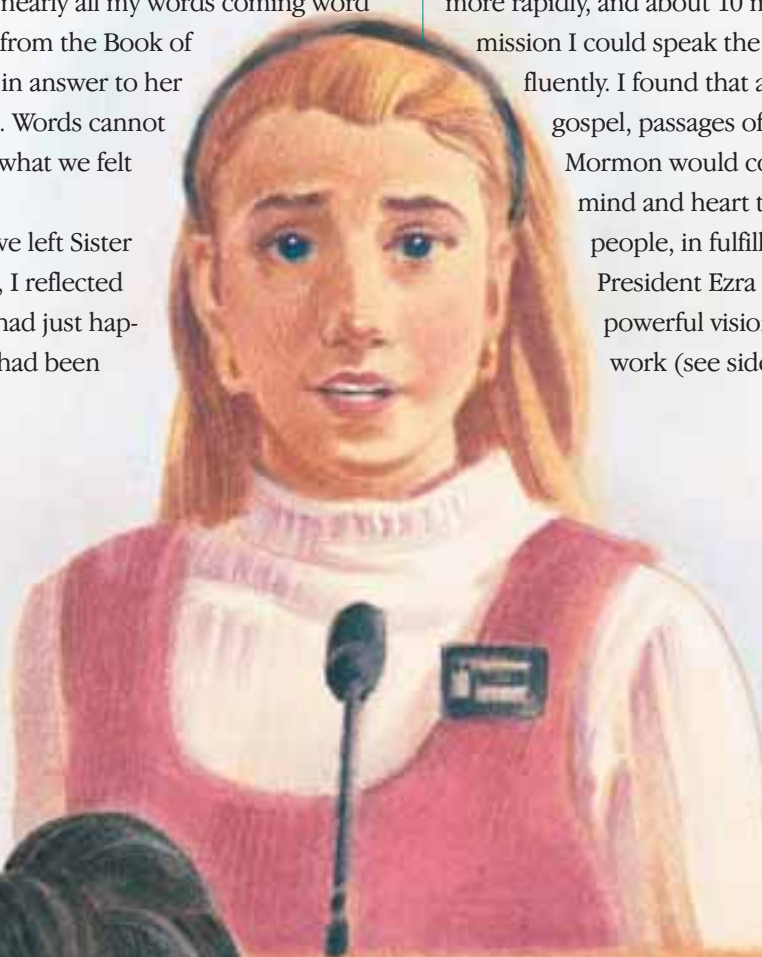
previously memorized but had impacted me and now were coming to my mind word for word. The more she spoke, the more I longed to be able to communicate in Tagalog directly to her rather than through my companion. She finished talking, and I found myself talking to her, in fluent Tagalog, saying everything I had thought and felt prompted to say.

Tears flowed freely from her and my companion, in part because they knew they were witnessing a miracle. I spoke for about 20 minutes, nearly all my words coming word for word from the Book of Mormon in answer to her concerns. Words cannot describe what we felt that day.

After we left Sister Salvation, I reflected on what had just happened. I had been

asked to speak in church that coming Sunday and thought, "I'll just say some of what I said today now that I can speak Tagalog and quote passages from the Book of Mormon." I recalled what I said but found that I couldn't remember the passages word for word or the language! It was then that I realized how the Lord had given me "the gift of speaking with tongues" (Omni 1:25).

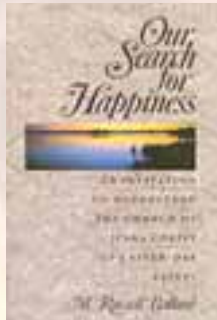
In the weeks that followed I continued to have similar experiences, though on a smaller scale. The language came to me more rapidly, and about 10 months into my mission I could speak the language fluently. I found that as I taught the gospel, passages of the Book of Mormon would come into my mind and heart to share with the people, in fulfillment of President Ezra Taft Benson's powerful vision of missionary work (see sidebar). **NE**



Next month in this series, a young woman who believes the Bible to be the word of God learns about the Book of Mormon.

Searching for Happiness

Elder M. Russell Ballard's book *Our Search for Happiness* is a simple guide to the basic doctrines of the Church. The book explains concepts like the Atonement, the Apostasy, and the priesthood in language suitable not only for Church members, but also for others who want to learn more. Many personal stories from Elder Ballard's life and other anecdotes make *Our Search for Happiness* easy to read and understand. It is one of the few books missionaries are allowed to take with them on their missions. You can find this book at a distribution center or at www.ldscatalog.com (item no. 80870).



to the gateway alive? Will they overcome the shadows that chase them mercilessly? Journey with them to find the answers in *Leven Thumps and the Gateway to Foo*, by Obert Skye.

Screwtape Letters

The Screwtape Letters is sometimes quoted in general conference because of the book's insights on how to overcome temptation. This short satire by C. S. Lewis, a popular 20th-century Christian author, is a series of fictional letters from Screwtape, an older devil, to Wormwood, a devil-in-training. As Wormwood learns the art of deceiving humans from his more experienced uncle, Screwtape, the reader will also gain insights and learn to watch out for pitfalls of temptation. This book is available in most bookstores.



Standards or Guardrails?

If you've ever wanted a little more explanation on Church standards, then *Are Your Standards Fences or Guardrails?* by John Bytheway is a good read for you. John Bytheway, in his highly entertaining way, talks to you one-on-one in this book about the why's and what's of Church standards on music, modesty, dating, and more. He even writes a little about how to be truly happy and invites you to remember that "there's a big difference between a fence that says 'KEEP OUT!' and a guardrail that says 'BE SAFE!'"



Scripture Sleuth

If you like mystery, adventure, and the scriptures, you'll like *The Book of Mormon Sleuth* by C. B. Andersen. Though the plot slows down at times to let you catch your breath, Andersen keeps readers on the edge of their seats throughout much of the book, which is the first in a series. Explore Church history and the scriptures—while being chased by a treasure-hungry maniac—with Brandon, Jeff, and their siblings, as they find themselves caught up in a mystery that is more than 100 years old. **NE**



Foo's Gold

A boy who can see the future, a girl who can freeze anything, a mischievous catlike creature, and a talking toothpick go on a journey to discover the mysterious gateway to Foo. Oh, and one more thing—the fate of the world rests in their hands. Will Leven ever be able to master his future? Will he and his friends make it



Editors' note: These reviews do not constitute official Church endorsement of these books, but the books have been carefully reviewed to ensure that Church standards are observed. The books mentioned in this review are available from most Latter-day Saint book retailers, such as Deseret Book (deseretbook.com) and Seagull Book & Tape (seagullbook.com).

RUNNING ON FAITH

BY AUBREE NIELSEN

During May, I had the opportunity to run in the Utah High School State Track Championships. I ran in three events, and it was a great experience. But my state track experience did not compare to the experience I had the day before the meet.

For a few months, my ward had been planning to go to the Manti Utah Temple to perform baptisms for the dead. I was so excited to go, but then I found out it was the day before the state track meet. I wasn't sure what I should do. I had been working all season to prepare for my events, and I thought I needed as much rest as possible before I ran. We'd definitely get home from the temple late, and I needed to be in bed earlier than that.

I asked myself, "What is more important: getting rested for state track or serving at the temple?" I knew where the Lord wanted me to be and where I wanted to be, so I was determined to be there.

At the temple, I felt the Spirit of the Lord, and it brought me great peace. I didn't even think about running the whole time I was there. I knew I was in the right place, helping others who had gone before me. The feeling was wonderful!

The next day, my nerves were calm, and I ran the best I ever had. I knew I was blessed because of my faith in choosing to go to the temple. I have a testimony of the temple, and I know the value of the work that goes on there. This experience is one that I will treasure in my heart forever. **NE**

SMALL BLESSINGS

BY MICHELLE GLAUSER

"I must have missed the bus," I thought. For 15 minutes, I had been waiting in the icy gutter that was my bus stop, with no bus in sight. The day was unusually cold. Despite my puffy coat, I couldn't stay warm. I felt hopeless, standing in the dark, in the cold, waiting for a bus that had probably already come and gone.

Finally, I sent a plea heavenward: "Heavenly Father, please just help me get to school." It was simple but desperate and pleading.

A car on the other side of the road pulled over and turned around. As it neared, I saw the public transportation logo on the car. A woman

I couldn't believe what I had just heard—surgery. All I could think about was why me? Why now? What will I do? It was my senior year in high school. I was captain of the volleyball team, an all-region team member, and I had a scholarship to play volleyball in college. A little later I would be basketball captain and have an opportunity to play basketball in Australia for the state of Arizona.

All my hopes and dreams were swept away. Wasn't I living righteously? I couldn't stop thinking about why this had to happen to me. Doesn't Heavenly Father love me?

While doing my regular seminary reading, I came across the book of

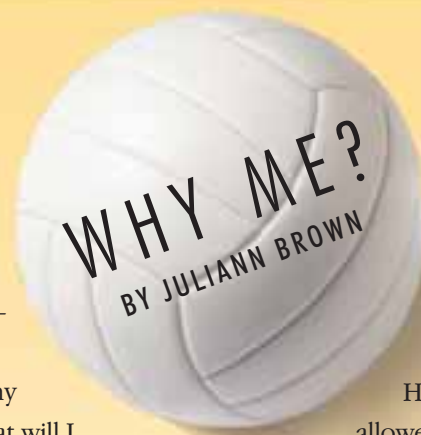
Job. He was very faithful and always loved and feared the Lord. Even when Heavenly Father allowed Satan to take away Job's riches and family, then covered him with boils and illnesses, Job still loved the Lord and never doubted.

I thanked her repeatedly.

"Thank you for using public transportation," she responded.

I sent another thanks heavenward as I warmed my hands.

A lot of the time, our blessings come through other people. No matter how small a blessing is, I know that I still need to thank the Lord. He is mindful of me, so I need to be mindful of Him. **NE**



I was in tears. I realized that Heavenly Father does love me and that this was just one little trial that would only make me a better person. I began my prayer that night thanking Him for the trials I have and for helping me come closer to Him.

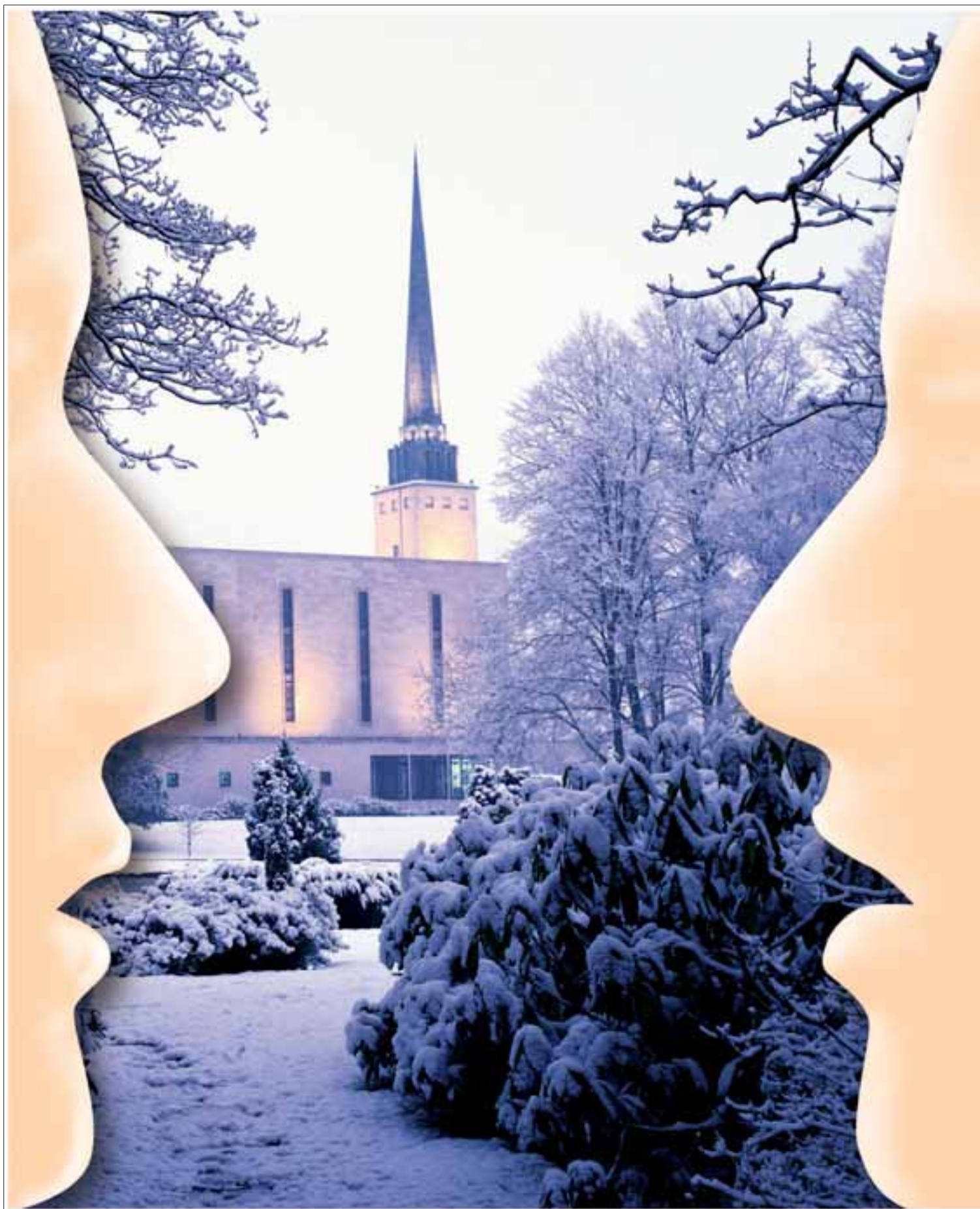
There isn't a day that goes by that I don't thank my Heavenly Father for the wonderful lesson I learned from Job that night. **NE**

INSTANT MESSAGES features personal experiences, insights into favorite hymns and scriptures, and other uplifting thoughts. If you have a personal experience that has strengthened your testimony and you'd like us to consider it for Instant Messages, please send it to

*New Era, Instant Messages
50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA*

*Or e-mail it to
newera@ldschurch.org*

Please limit submissions to 400 words or fewer. They may be edited for length and clarity.



How to Talk about THE TEMPLE

BY SHANNA BUTLER

Church Magazines

I swallowed hard when I was about to tell my father I was going to be married in the temple—probably even harder than my husband did when he was asking my dad for permission to marry me. My father is a good man of another faith. I had told him many times before that when I got married it would be in the temple. He had never seemed upset at that, but I didn't know if now, when it was really going to happen, he would be hurt or angry at not being able to see his only child get married.

Gratefully, my father was more concerned with my happiness than with being able to come into the temple. But even though he was understanding, some others could not understand why the Church would be so “strict.”

These people are not alone in asking questions about the temple. Many people think the Church is secretive about the temple. But I know that what the prophets have said is true: *The temple is sacred, not secret.*¹

Even though we should not talk in detail about what happens in the temple, there are certain things we can say to those who ask

us questions such as “What do you do in the temple?” and “Why can't I go into your temple?” Here are some questions you might be asked and some good information you can share with those seeking answers about Latter-day Saint temples.

“Why does your Church have temples?”

Throughout history the Lord has commanded His people to build temples.² When the Church was restored, the Lord commanded the Prophet Joseph Smith to build temples. The temple is the house of the Lord.³ In the temple, sacred ordinances are performed that could not be done anywhere on earth except in these dedicated buildings.⁴

Temples are special and sacred to Church members because the ordinances performed there prepare them to return to God's presence and to be joined to their families for eternity.

“Why can't I go into your temple?”

Since the temple is a sacred place where sacred covenants are made, one who enters must be a Church member who is

When I had to tell my father I would be married in the temple, I realized how hard it can be to talk about the temple. Even though we shouldn't talk in detail about what happens in the temple, there are helpful things we can say to those who have questions.



spiritually prepared and living Church standards.

Any adult who has been a Church member for at least a year and who lives worthy to receive a temple recommend from his or her bishop or branch president may enter the temple. Living worthy of entering the temple includes living a pure life, being honest, keeping the Word of Wisdom, and paying tithes and offerings, among other requirements.

“What do Church members do in the temple?”

In the temple, Church members participate in sacred ordinances, such as eternal marriage, where a couple is joined, or sealed, as husband and wife for this life and all eternity. The temple is also a place of instruction and worship, where members make covenants to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, Church members perform ordinances, such as baptism and confirmation, in behalf of those who have passed away without the opportunity of accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ. Temple workers are volunteers.

“Why do Church members take little suitcases or bags to the temple?”

Inside the temple, Church members change out of their street clothes and wear modest, simple white clothing. White symbolizes purity and reverence. They bring their temple clothing to the temple with them in their bags.

“What does the temple look like inside?”

At a temple open house (held before a temple is dedicated), visitors are welcome to walk through and see what the interior of the temple looks like. Temples are beautifully decorated and kept very clean. There are rooms



PREPARING TO ENTER THE TEMPLE

“Because a temple is sacred, the Lord asks that it be protected from

desecration. Anyone may enter who is willing to prepare well for that privilege. The concept of preparation prevails in other fields of endeavor. I remember when I was but a young boy, I told my parents I wanted to attend the university. They said I could, but only if I worked hard in preliminary schooling and met all the requirements for admission to the university. Similarly, we must qualify for admission to the temple. We prepare physically, intellectually, and spiritually.”

—Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Prepare for Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2002, 18–19.

within the temple to serve various purposes, such as holding marriage ceremonies. Temple grounds and visitors’ centers are usually open for viewing also. Photos of temple interiors can be found in the two booklets mentioned in the last paragraph of this article.

To find out the hours or location of a temple in your area, go to www.lds.org/temples. Or to search for more articles about temples, go to the Church magazines online at www.lds.org, and click on “Gospel Library.”

“How do I find out more?”

For more information you can share with others, go to www.lds.org/temples. There, you will find more about the history and purposes of temples, answers to frequently asked questions, and how family history work relates to temple work.

For more help answering questions about the temple, you can read *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (item no. 35863) or *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (item no. 36793). You can also find *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* in English at www.lds.org. Click on “Gospel Library,” “Church Publications,” “Curriculum,” and then “Optional Courses.” **NE**

NOTES

1. See David O. McKay, “The Purpose of Temples,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1972, 38.
2. See 1 Chronicles 22; Ezra 3–6; Zechariah 6:13; 2 Nephi 5:16; Helaman 3:14.
3. See D&C 88:119; 97:12, 15. For more about the history and purposes of temples, see Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple*.
4. See D&C 124:37–40.



Ideas for Using the 2006 Mutual Theme

These ideas could be used by Young Women or Aaronic Priesthood classes, as a combined activity, or in family home evening. They may also fulfill experiences in Personal Progress and Duty to God.

- Consider having the teens give a presentation about Church standards and provide everyone in your ward with a copy of the wallet-sized *For the Strength of Youth*.
- As Aaronic Priesthood quorums and Young Women classes, show others in your community your “light” by doing a service project that will make a difference. Invite others from the community to help.
- Highlight the talents and creativity in your ward. Write a poem or story, compose a musical number, choreograph a dance, memorize scriptures, or do a dramatic reading. Invite parents and ward members to a display and program showcasing these talents.

- After reading the Book of Mormon, write your testimony in the front of a copy. Give it to a friend. Or save this book to give to your future children. Each time you read the Book of Mormon, add to the written testimony in this copy.
- If your church building is close to your school, plan a seminary breakfast and invite some of your non-member classmates. Explain what you do at seminary.
- Identify specific ways you can be a “light” for others. Pick one to incorporate into your life.
- Say hello to 10 people who you normally don’t greet at school. Try this with 10 different people every day for two weeks. Report to your Young Women or Aaronic Priesthood class about the results.
- Look in the hymnbook for all the songs that have to do with *light* or *Christ*. As a class, pick one of these hymns to learn.

SUNDAY LESSON HELPS

In addition to the Resource Guides (printed in May and November in the *Ensign*), Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood teachers may find these additional resources helpful in enhancing lessons 1–5.

Young Women Manual 1**Lesson 1 A Daughter of God**

Poster, “Shrinking Standards?” this issue, 17.

Susan W. Tanner, “We Are Daughters of Our Heavenly Father, Who Loves Us,” *New Era*, Oct. 2003, 10.

Lesson 2 Jesus Christ, the Savior

Henry B. Eyring, “Always Remember Him,” *New Era*, Dec. 2005, 12.

Ezra Taft Benson, “The Greatest Event in History,” *New Era*, Apr. 2004, 44.

Lesson 3 Following the Example of Jesus Christ

Nancy Checketts, “Caroling with Chrsllyn,” *New Era*, Dec. 2005, 26.

Q&A (struggle to always remember Him), *New Era*, Jan. 2005, 16.

Lesson 4 Seeking the Companionship of the Holy Ghost

H. David Burton, “Who’s Asking?” *New Era*, Dec. 2003, 38.

Q&A (difference between inspiration and my own thoughts), *New Era*, Apr. 2003, 16.

Lesson 5 Finding Joy in Our Divine Potential

Cecil O. Samuelson, “What Does It Mean to Be Perfect?” this issue, 10.

Gordon B. Hinckley, “How Can I Become the Woman of Whom I Dream?” *New Era*, Nov. 2001, 4.

Aaronic Priesthood Manual 1**Lesson 1 The Priesthood**

H. David Burton, Richard C. Edgley, Keith B. McMullin, “The Miracle of the Priesthood,” *New Era*, Apr. 2004, 12.

Thomas S. Monson, “Priesthood Power,” *New Era*, May 2001, 4.

Lesson 2 The Calling of a Deacon

Christine Reid, “The Deacons of Coventry,” *New Era*, Jan. 2005, 12.

Judith P. Taylor, “Here I Come, Dad,” *New Era*, Apr. 2001, 26.

Lesson 3 Administering the Sacrament

Matthew Baker, “Sacrament Service,” *New Era*, Oct. 2002, 20.

John W. Yardley, “Happiness Every Week,” *New Era*, May 2004, 12.

Lesson 4 Gathering Fast Offerings

Q&A (should give fast offerings, even if it is small), *New Era*, May 2003, 16.

Mark E. Squires, “You Can’t Fit a Chicken in an Envelope,” *New Era*, May 2001, 38.

Lesson 5 Faith in Jesus Christ

Henry B. Eyring, “Always Remember Him,” *New Era*, Dec. 2005, 12.

Stephen E. Robinson, “Believing Christ,” *New Era*, Apr. 1994, 46.

GOING OUT?

Thank you so much for putting in the Q&A on boyfriends and girlfriends in the September 2005 *New Era*! Last year I attended a middle school, and there was a lot of pressure on “going out.” After much consideration and prayer, I concluded that it was practically dating, and it was hard for me to stick to my standards when the other members of the Church around me didn’t agree. After reading your article I felt reassured that I had done the right thing. I am so grateful I kept my standards even when there was a lot of pressure to do otherwise. Thank you so much!

Rachel D., Texas

CLOSE TO THE SPIRIT

The *New Era* is such a blessing to me. I read it every chance I have, and I can always find an article that applies to me or that would interest me sometime in the near future. The Q&As are wonderful, and they seem to be focused towards a variety of personalities of people in the Church. Many times they help me recognize that I need to do better in a certain area of doctrine that I thought I was doing all right with. On Sundays I love to read the *New Era* and the scriptures because they help keep me close to the Spirit.

Thomas B., Utah

REACHING MY GOALS

I really appreciated the *New Era* Poster in the September 2005 issue (“Finish”). I was beginning to doubt if my goals were really possible to fulfill because they seem so out of reach. Seeing that picture really helped me realize that the goals I have aren’t impossible after all. All I have to do

is endure to the end, and I’ll get there. I hope everyone else got as much out of it as I did because it’s so true! It really hit home because I run track, but I never thought of it like that before. Thank you

so much for that amazing picture. It was more than just a picture to me—it was an inspiration.

Brittany B., Idaho

POSTERS

Are there any plans to produce more poster cards or posters? I would also like to see the posters in CD-Rom PDF format.

As a young single adult with Asperger’s syndrome, I understand things literally. The posters help me understand concepts that I would be confused by as “foreign concepts.”

The posters are very much what I “picture” in my mind. Otherwise I would need a dictionary and a thesaurus to have Latin and Greek root words explained to help me understand English expressions.

Alexander M., Texas

Editors’ note: Posters can be found and downloaded at www.lds.org. Go to the Gospel Library, click on Church Publications in HTML format, and find the issue of the poster you want. Or, to purchase New Era Poster sets and poster cards, go to www.lds.org, Order Church Materials, Pictures and Visual Aids, New Era Posters. We are happy to note we have a new poster set available for purchase (Liahona Poster Set 3/ New Era Poster Set D).

We love hearing from you. Write us at the following address. Please include the names of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

*New Era
We’ve Got Mail
50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA*

Or e-mail us at

newera@ldschurch.org

Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.

“The posters help me understand concepts [and] are very much what I ‘picture’ in my mind.”



OUR PURPOSE

BY WILLIAM BRODEGARD

In order to find the purpose
Of our own life,
We have to
Lose it.
We have to stop worrying
About our own well-being,
Our own happiness,
And just think about how we can help
Another brother get home.
And then maybe
We can find our own path
By showing
Our brother the way back.



*“Christ is the perfect example.
If we truly follow Him,
we, too, will be
‘lights’ to those around us.”*

See “Arise and Shine Forth,” p. 6.