

Ensign



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Ecce Homo (Behold the Man!), by Antonio Ciseri

“And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

“Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him. . . .

“I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

“(For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

“And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas. . . .

“Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

“But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

“And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

“And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. . . .

“And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

“. . . He delivered Jesus to their will” (Luke 23:13–14, 16–18, 20–25).



MESSAGES

FIRST PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

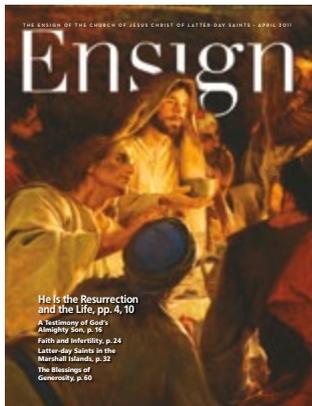
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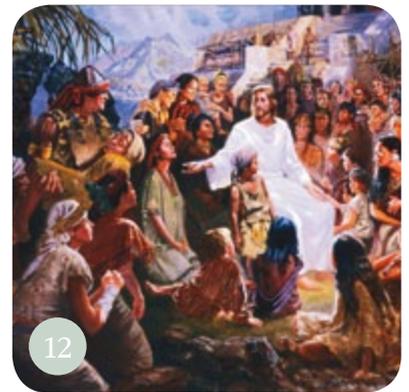
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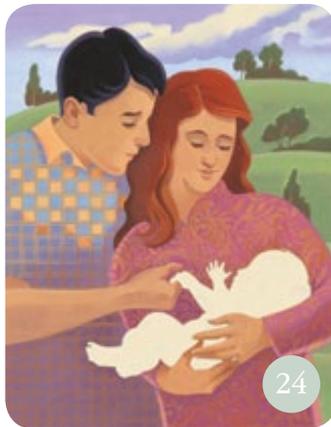
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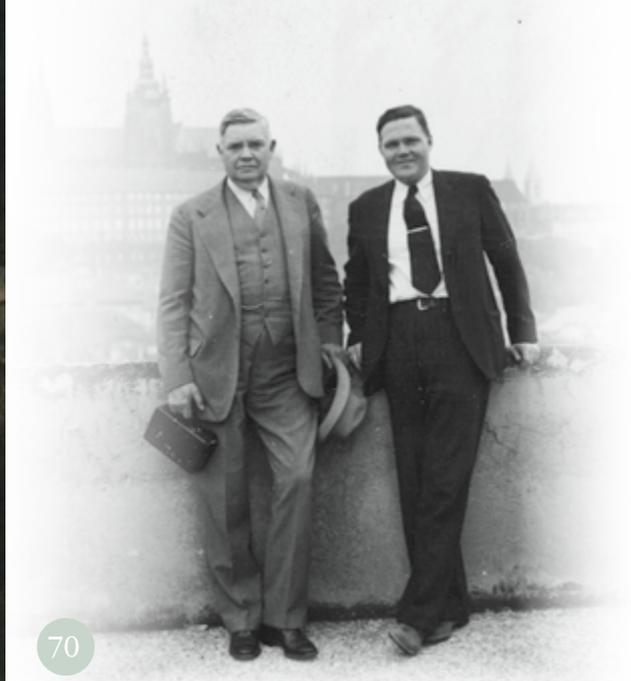
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Date _____ Ward or branch _____

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Tithing	\$	
Fast offering	\$	
Ward missionary	\$	
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Why We Build Temples



A Commandment with Blessings

From the days of the Old Testament, the Lord has commanded His people to build temples—sacred structures where He could teach, guide, and bless them. For example, the Lord told the Israelites to build a portable tabernacle that would be their temple while they traveled in the wilderness (see Exodus 26–27; 40:31). Additional Old Testament references to temples are found in 2 Chronicles 3:1–14; 7:1–2 (Temple of Solomon) and Ezra 3:1–13; 6:3 (Temple of Zerubbabel).

When Jesus Christ was on the earth, the only existing temple was known as the Temple of Herod, Jesus was often found in this temple (see, for example, Luke 2:40–49; Matthew 21:12–14).

After the rejection and deaths of Jesus's Apostles, there were no temples on the earth for many centuries. When the gospel of Jesus Christ was restored in the early 1800s, the Lord again commanded His people to build temples (see D&C 58:119; see also section 95). The earliest temples of the restored Church were built in Ohio, Illinois, and eventually in Utah. Today, the Church has 133 operating temples around the world. Regardless of the place or time period, temples are the most sacred place on earth—a place where earth and heaven meet and where we feel close to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.



Continued on the next section: [What Happens in Temples 1](#)

Print
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Why Mormons Build Temples



Throughout history, the Lord has commanded His people to build temples. Temples are heavenly houses of the Lord. They are holy places of worship where individuals make sacred promises with God.

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

— Luke 2:46

Temple Gallery



The temple like us, exists on, stands as a beacon for all to see, and points us toward eternal glory. Enjoy these beautiful images.

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WHY WE BUILD TEMPLES

The Lord has long commanded His people to build temples. Learn more about the purpose and blessings of these sacred structures. Visit lds.org/church/temples/why-we-build-temples.

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

Please submit articles through ensign.lds.org, or send them to Ensign Editorial, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. Authors whose work is selected for publication will be notified.

By President
Thomas S. Monson



He Is Not Here, but Is Risen

Today only ruins remain of Capernaum, that city by the lakeshore, heart of the Savior's Galilean ministry. Here He preached in the synagogue, taught by the seaside, and healed in the homes.

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus took a text from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isaiah 61:1; see also Luke 4:18)—a clear pronouncement of a divine plan to rescue the sons and daughters of God.

But Jesus's preaching in Galilee had been merely prelude. The Son of Man had always had a dread rendezvous to keep on a hill called Golgotha.

Arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane after the Last Supper, deserted by His disciples, spat upon, tried, and humiliated, Jesus staggered under His great cross toward Calvary. He progressed from triumph to betrayal, torture, and death on the cross.

In the words of the song "The Holy City":

*The scene was changed. . . .
The morn was cold and chill,
As the shadow of a cross arose
Upon a lonely hill.¹*

For us our Heavenly Father gave His Son. For us our Elder Brother gave His life.

At the last moment the Master could have turned back. But He did not. He passed beneath all things that He might save all things: the human race, the earth, and all the life that ever inhabited it.

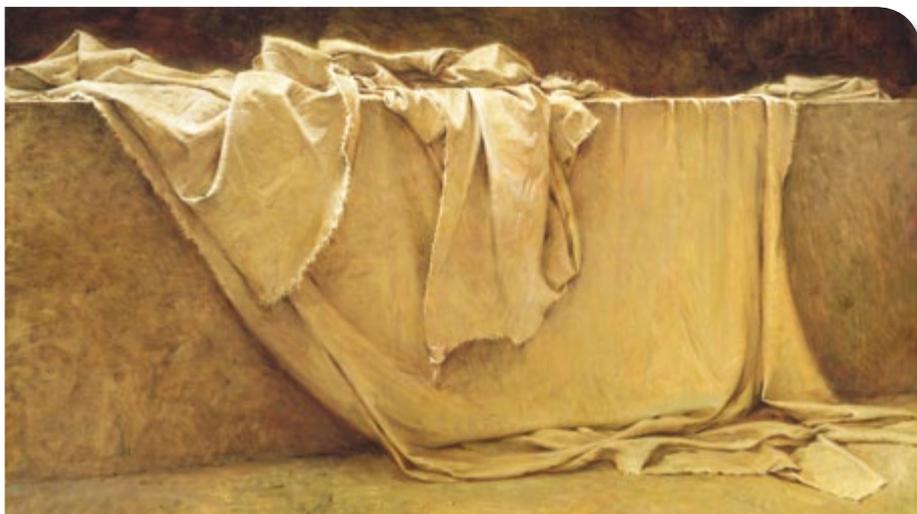
No words in Christendom mean more to me than those spoken by the angel to the weeping Mary Magdalene and the other Mary as they approached the tomb to care for the body of their Lord: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen" (Luke 24:5–6).

With this pronouncement, those who have lived and died, those who now live and one day will die, and those yet to be born and yet to die had just been rescued.

As the result of Christ's victory over the grave, we shall all be resurrected. This is the redemption of the soul. Paul wrote:

"There are . . . celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another



glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

“So also is the resurrection of the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:40–42).

It is the celestial glory that we seek. It is in the presence of God that we desire to dwell. It is a forever family in which we want membership.

Of Him who delivered each of us from endless death, I testify He is a teacher of truth—but He is more than a teacher. He is the exemplar of the perfect life—but He is more than an exemplar. He is the great physician—but He is more than a physician. He is the literal Savior of the world, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, the Holy One of Israel, even the risen Lord, who declared, “I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 110:4).

“Oh, sweet the joy this sentence gives: ‘I know that my Redeemer lives!’”²

Of this I testify. ■

NOTES

1. Frederick E. Weatherly, “The Holy City” (1892).
2. “I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” *Hymns*, no. 136.

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

Good teachers encourage unity among those they teach. As people share their insights and listen to one another respectfully, they not only enjoy a positive atmosphere for learning but also become more unified (see *Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999],

63). Unity will develop among those you teach as you and they reverently bear testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection. This unity can help families follow President Monson’s counsel to become a “forever family.”



YOUTH

He Showed Us the Way to Return Home



The Savior came to the earth to show us how to live the plan that was authored in heaven—a plan that, if lived, will make us happy. His example showed us the way to return home to our Heavenly Father. No other who has ever lived has been so ‘steadfast and immovable’ (Mosiah 5:15). He was never distracted. He was focused on carrying out the will of the Father, and He remained true to His divine mission. . . .

“You are a part of that wondrous plan that was presented in the premortal realms. Your coming to the earth now has been anticipated since the plan was accepted. Your position in time and place is no accident. Your ‘exceeding faith and good works’ (Alma 13:3) then has laid the foundation for what you may accomplish now if you are faithful and obedient. . . . You have a great work to do. In order to accomplish your divine mission and live the plan of happiness, you too must be steadfast and immovable.”

Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president, “At All Times, in All Things, and in All Places,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 116.

CHILDREN

We Can Be Forever Families

President Monson teaches that through the power of the Savior’s Atonement, we can be together again with our families after death. Bring this family together by following the instructions below.

Instructions: The family members at left are separated from each other and from the Savior by death. Make a copy of this page, print it from www.lds.org, or make your own illustration to demonstrate how the Savior can bring us together. Fold the page at each dotted line so that the stars at the bottom of the page touch each other, hiding the dark areas.





Faith • Family • Relief

The Purpose of Relief Society

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

When our presidency was first called, we were given some resources about the history of Relief Society. We studied them prayerfully, wanting to know the purpose of Relief Society and what the Lord would have us do. We learned that the purpose of Relief Society as established by the Lord is to organize, teach, and inspire His daughters to prepare them for the blessings of eternal life.

To fulfill this purpose of Relief Society, the Lord has commissioned each sister and the organization as a whole to:

1. Increase in faith and personal righteousness.
2. Strengthen families and homes.
3. Provide relief by serving the Lord and His children.

We can do this work in the Lord's way only when we seek, receive, and act on personal revelation. Without personal revelation, we cannot succeed. If we heed personal revelation, we cannot fail. The prophet Nephi instructs us that the Holy Ghost will show us "all things what [we] should do" (2 Nephi 32:5). We must allow ourselves to be still enough and quiet enough to listen to the voice of the Spirit.

Sisters, we have a vital role to play in helping build the kingdom of God and preparing for the Lord's coming. In fact, the Lord's work cannot be accomplished without the help of His daughters. Because of that, the Lord expects us to increase our offering. He expects us to fulfill the purpose of Relief Society as never before.

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

From the Scriptures

Deuteronomy 6:5–7; Luke 10:30–37;
James 1:27; 2 Nephi 25:26; Mosiah 3:12–13

To read about a woman who was an example of faith and personal righteousness, see page 38.

What Can I Do?

1. What inspiration have I received to help my sisters increase in faith and personal righteousness and strengthen their families and homes? What relief can I provide?
2. How will I use this message to strengthen my faith and increase my own commitment to personal righteousness?

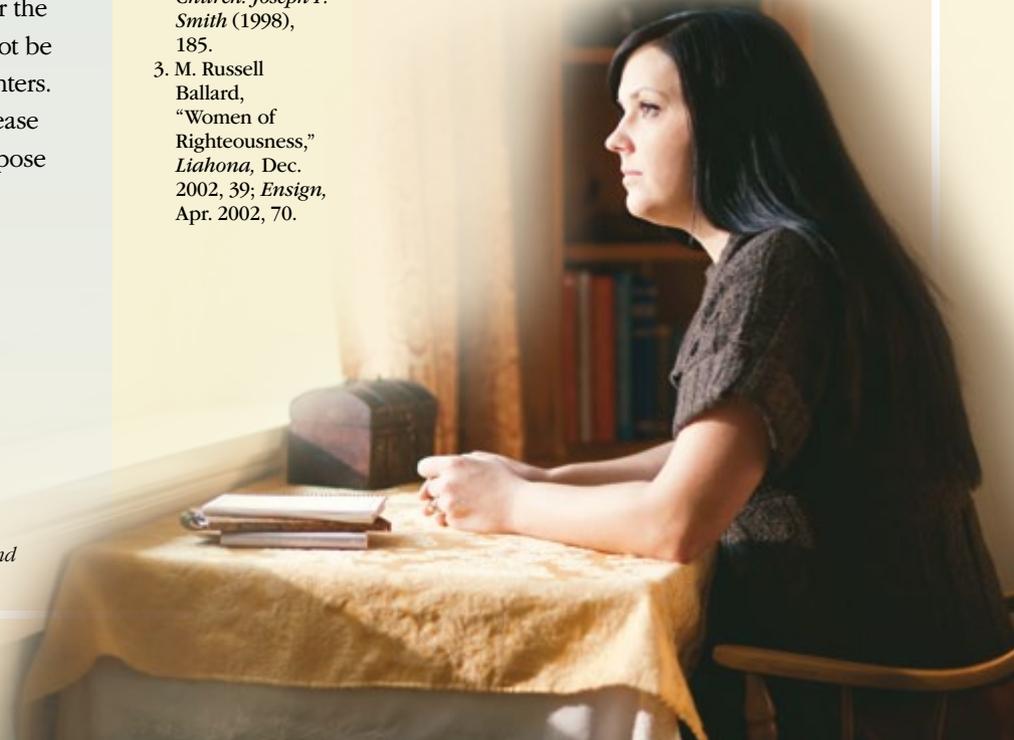
For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:25.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 185.
3. M. Russell Ballard, "Women of Righteousness," *Liahona*, Dec. 2002, 39; *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 70.

From Our History

At a June 9, 1842, meeting of the Relief Society, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught the sisters that their society was "not only to relieve the poor, but to save souls."¹ This statement of a spiritual as well as a temporal purpose has characterized Relief Society throughout its history. In 1906 President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) taught: "[Relief Society] has not only to deal with the necessities of the poor, the sick and the needy, but a part of its duty—and the larger part, too—is to look after the spiritual welfare and salvation of the mothers and daughters of Zion; to see that none is neglected, but that all are guarded against misfortune, calamity, the powers of darkness, and the evils that threaten them in the world."² In 2001 Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reiterated, "Every sister in this Church who has made covenants with the Lord has a divine mandate to help save souls, to lead the women of the world, to strengthen the homes of Zion, and to build the kingdom of God."³ ■



Repent, Turn to the Lord, and Be Healed



THE BLESSINGS OF REPENTANCE

“Sin is the willful transgression of divine law. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is the gift of God to His children to correct and overcome the consequences of sin. . . .

“The gift of the Atonement of Jesus Christ provides us at all times and at all places with the blessings of repentance and forgiveness.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Point of Safe Return,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 99, 101.

“Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more” (D&C 58:42).

By David L. Frischknecht

Curriculum Department

Recently a good and faithful woman I know was seriously injured in a car accident. Included in her injuries were broken ribs and broken vertebrae. Part of her rehabilitation required that she wear a brace on her back and neck so she couldn’t move them. The brace looked very uncomfortable. But it was necessary. It provided the condition through which her back and her neck could heal.

Repentance is like that brace. When we sin, we injure our soul, and divine treatment is needed to make us whole again. Repentance provides the condition that allows the Savior, through the power of the Atonement, to *heal* us (see 3 Nephi 9:13). If some part of repentance is not comfortable—like a brace on a broken back—we need to repent anyway.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught: “True repentance brings us back to doing what is right. To truly repent we must

recognize our sins and feel remorse, or godly sorrow, and confess those sins to God. If our sins are serious, we must also confess them to our authorized priesthood leader. We need to ask God for forgiveness and do all we can to correct whatever harm our actions may have caused. Repentance means a change of mind and heart—we stop doing things that are wrong, and we start doing things that are right. It brings us a fresh attitude toward God, oneself, and life in general.”¹

When we successfully complete the repentance process, the result is healing, relief, and happiness. Dorothy J. R. White wrote:

*Consider tears that fall on the outside,
Yet wash the inside clean.*²

The Lord pleads with insistence, love, and persuasion that we repent, because He wants to heal us. He suffered in His body and spirit to pay the penalty for our sins if we repent. He explains:

“For behold, I, God, have suffered



The prodigal son humbly returned to his father and said, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son” (Luke 15:21). His father welcomed him home. So does our Heavenly Father welcome us when we repent.

these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

“But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I;

“Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

“Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.

“Wherefore, I command you again to repent” (D&C 19:16–20).

May we repent now, turn to the Lord, and be healed. ■

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Point of Safe Return,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 100.
2. Dorothy J. R. White, “Repentance,” *Ensign*, July 1996, 27.

What are the blessings of repentance and forgiveness?

- The Holy Ghost will verify to us that we are forgiven.
- God will take away the burden of guilt for our sins.
- We will enjoy the influence of the Holy Ghost in greater abundance.

For more information on this topic, see Ezekiel 33:15–16; Alma 12:33–34; 36:13, 17–20; and Boyd K. Packer, “The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 18–21.

WHY DOES REPENTANCE HEAL US?

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles helps answer this question in his general conference talk “Repent . . . That I May Heal You” (*Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 40–43). The prophet Alma also helps us understand repentance and the Atonement (see Alma 42).

1. Our repentance allows us to access Christ’s Atonement and be healed. Christ’s suffering in Gethsemane and on Golgotha atoned for the sins of all of us. He is able and eager to forgive our sins.
2. When we sin, we turn away from God. This injures our spirit.
3. When we repent, we “re-turn” to God. This helps our remorse to subside. Forgiveness also takes “away the guilt from our hearts” (Alma 24:10) and brings “peace of conscience” (Mosiah 4:3), thus healing us.

Consider sharing with someone your testimony of the blessings that have come to you as a result of repentance.

JESUS CHRIST ATONED FOR OUR SINS

One of the reasons we are here on earth is to learn to obey God's commandments. Except for Jesus Christ, who lived a perfect life, everyone who has lived upon the earth has sinned (see Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8). Sin is when we willfully break God's commandments, and all sins have a punishment attached to them. When we sin, justice requires that we suffer the punishment (see Alma 42:16–22).

Ultimately, the consequence of any sin is separation from God (see 1 Nephi 10:21). This separation is so severe that we cannot repair it on our own.

To overcome this separation, our

Heavenly Father provided a way for His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself the burden of our sins, making it possible for us to be spiritually clean and reunited with Him. This is the plan of mercy.

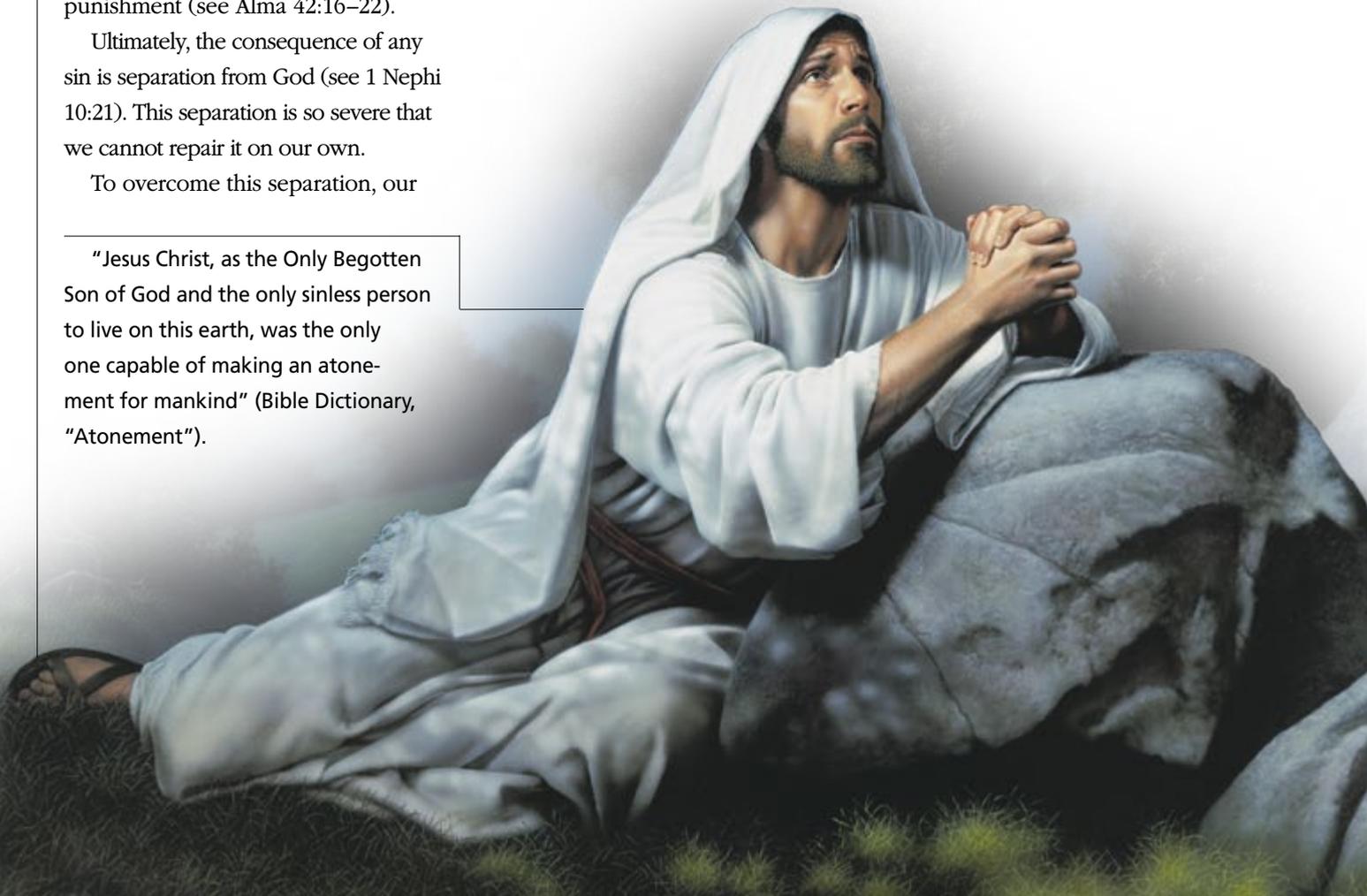
The Savior taught, "For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; but if they would not

repent they must suffer even as I" (D&C 19:16–17).

As part of His Atonement, Jesus suffered for our sins in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross of Calvary. By repenting of our sins, we can bring the power of His Atonement into our lives.

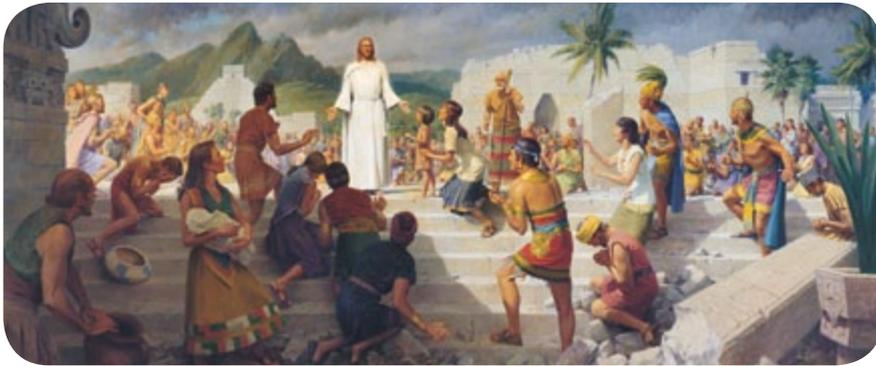
Jesus Christ, who willingly atoned for our sins, said:

"Jesus Christ, as the Only Begotten Son of God and the only sinless person to live on this earth, was the only one capable of making an atonement for mankind" (Bible Dictionary, "Atonement").



The Atonement also provides the following blessings:

1. Resurrection to all who are born on earth (see Alma 11:42–45).



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

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

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

For more information, see *Gospel Principles* (2009), 59–66; and *True to the Faith* (2004), 14–20.



3. Ability to find peace in times of trial because Jesus took upon Himself our pains and sicknesses (see John 14:27; Alma 7:11–12).

“Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

“Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God.

Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved” (3 Nephi 9:21–22).

2. Eternal life in God’s presence for all children who die before they arrive at the age of accountability, age eight (see Mosiah 3:16; 15:24–25; Moroni 8:8–12).



4. Compensation to the righteous for the inequities of this life (see Preach My Gospel [2004], 52).



Families

That Pray Together

By Diane M. Ferguson, Church Magazines

When the Savior visited the Americas, He counseled the Nephites, “Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name, that your wives and your children may be blessed” (3 Nephi 18:21). Praying with our families helps us align our will with our Heavenly Father’s, resulting in blessings of strength, comfort, and inspiration that enable our families to experience the love of the Savior more abundantly. Below, families share how praying together has helped them grow closer to each other and to the Savior.

Improving Communication

Praying together unites families under a banner of common goals as family members pray for and hear others concerns. Serena Gedlaman of Canada says, “As a family we began to discuss our blessings and needs before prayer time. Perhaps our children were grateful for a recent blessing. Maybe they were worried about their participation in an important event or a friend in need. We talked about anything we felt should be brought before the Lord.

“Communicating like this as a family brought change. We focused on our blessings and became more supportive as we learned of one another’s challenges. Our family has a testimony of the power of sincere prayer.”

Away from Home

Those who do not live with their families can still benefit from family prayer. Chris Burnham from California, USA, says, “While I was on my mission in Argentina, my parents would write every week that they were praying for me. Even though I wasn’t there to actually hear the words of their prayers, imagining them kneeling together and thinking of me helped me see how much they love me. I know that praying as a family has brought us closer together.”

Although roommates may not be from the same family, roommate prayers can help strengthen relationships and build testimonies of the gospel. At first, Cheryl Merrick of Utah, USA, struggled to get along with her college

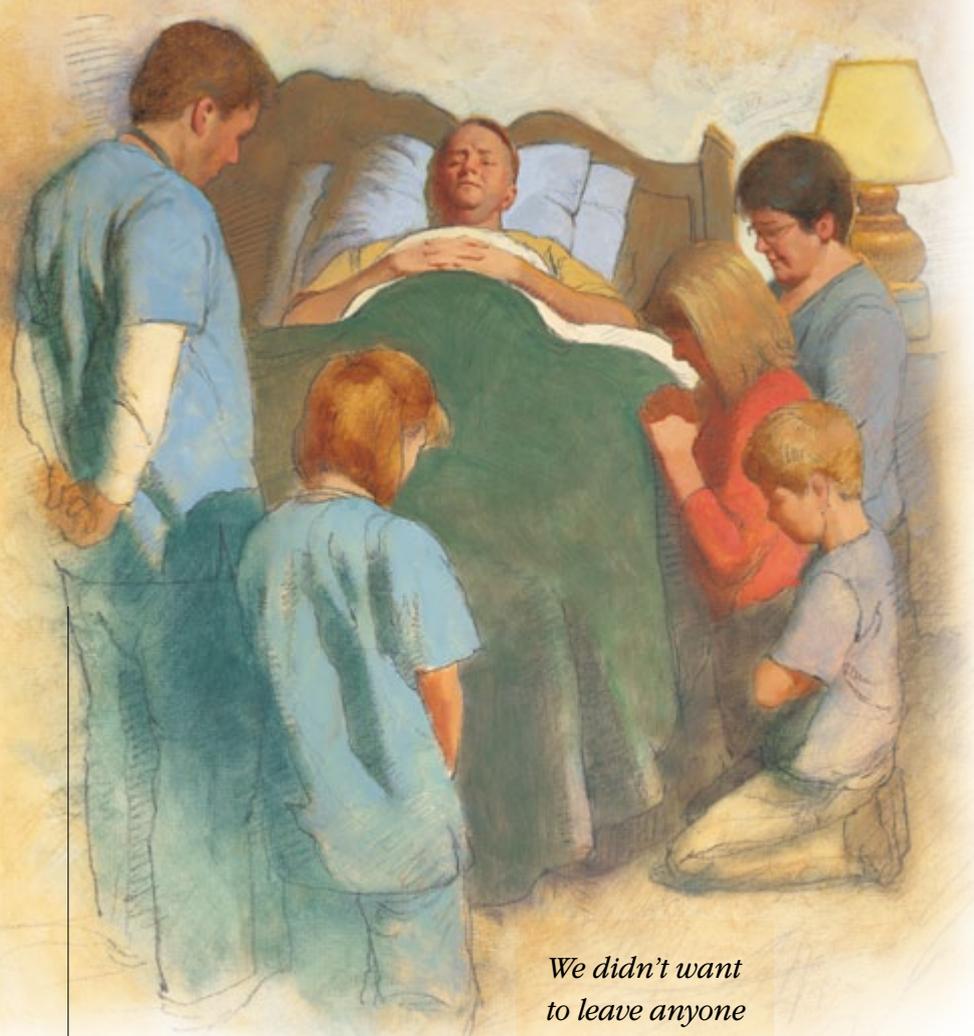


PAINTING BY GLEN S. HOPKINSON

roommates. She says, “Basically we just came and went, ignoring each other as much as possible. But after a few weeks, we all became ill with the flu. After spending a week helping each other survive, we all knew we had to make some changes, and we decided to start praying together daily.

“It turned out that the only time we could be together was at six in the morning. I can still see one roommate sitting there half asleep with curlers in her hair, but she always made it.

“I was astounded at the difference that prayer made in helping six women live together in a very small house. As we prayed together each day, our love for each other grew. We shopped and cooked together. We helped each other through difficult times, and we became friends.”



A Leap of Faith

Beverly Crowter of the United Kingdom and her family prayed together on a regular basis. As her husband's multiple sclerosis began to take a serious toll on his health, Beverly says, "We reached a point where he needed the assistance of caregivers to get him up and dressed each morning. Our 10-year-old son, Daniel, would need to leave for school before the caregivers had finished, but we didn't want any member of the family left out of family prayer.

"We made a decision to have the caregivers take a short break from helping my husband so we could hold family prayer before Daniel left, and we invited the caregivers to join us. It was very spiritual to have them kneel with us as we sought the Lord's

We didn't want to leave anyone out of family prayer, so we invited the caregivers to join us.

protection for that day. One of the caregivers did not believe in God and initially would stand in the far corner of the room while we prayed. Over time his heart softened, and he stood near us. He developed a great respect for my husband's strong faith, which led to many discussions about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"It required a leap of faith for us to invite the caregivers to kneel in family prayer with us. We were blessed with a greater outpouring of the Spirit in our home."

On the Land or the Sea

Don Robertson of Utah remembers how his testimony of family

and personal prayer strengthened him while he was training to be an electronic technician in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He says, "I was excited for this opportunity, but I soon discovered that grading in the class was based on the class average. Many of my classmates had attended or even graduated from college and were much better prepared than I was with only a high school education. I loved the course, but my test scores were below average. I was worried and wondered what I should do.

"I began studying every spare minute, from early in the morning until lights-out at night until it became an obsession. After a week or so, I noticed that I was losing my self-confidence, sense of humor, and ability to relax. I asked myself, 'Where can I go for help, and who would even understand my situation? What can I do?'

"The crisis reached a climax when the commander of the school called me into his office and told me that because of my grades I would need to leave school and go into the regular navy. Then he paused for a moment and asked if I would like another chance. I said, 'Oh, I would like another chance!'"

This time, Don knew where he could turn for help. He says, "Family prayer was common in our home. As a result, we children grew up with the habit of personal prayer. It was natural, in this overwhelming predicament, for me to turn to Heavenly Father. At night, I would pull the covers over my head and plead with all of my heart for help.

"I continued to study the best I could. One day, while I was walking alone through the hall, I felt a strong impression to just continue studying

and praying. I recognized immediately that it was an answer to my prayers and felt a great load removed from me. I exclaimed to myself enthusiastically, 'Well, I can do that!'

Don forged ahead with greater confidence and faith. He says, "My worry had been replaced with the faith and hope that I could succeed. I was able to graduate and go on to serve in the navy with a sure faith in the Lord that has never left me. How thankful I am for good parents who taught me through family prayer that Heavenly Father will always be there."

A Child's Prayer

Bonnie Adams of California received an answer to a personal question one hectic morning during family prayer. Running late, she told her children that there would not be enough time to pray together. She says, "To my surprise, my children objected. I said, 'OK, but I'm too grumpy this morning. Who will say it?'

"My youngest replied, 'I will, Mommy.'

"My little boy said things only Heavenly Father could know about my so-called problem, without realizing it. He asked Heavenly Father to bless me because I was having a hard time and he missed my smile. The prayer gave me an answer I'd been searching for, an answer I needed to hear.

"After the prayer, I opened my eyes and immediately smiled a real, sincere, ear-to-ear smile, though my eyes were brimming with tears. I kissed my boys and walked them to school.

"When I came home, I knelt down again to thank my Heavenly Father for my child's beautiful prayer and for the comfort I had found through family prayer."



THE POWER OF FAMILY PRAYER

A prominent American judge was asked what

we as citizens of the countries of the world could do to reduce crime and disobedience to law and to bring peace and contentment into our lives and into our nations. He carefully replied, 'I would suggest a return to the old-fashioned practice of family prayer.'

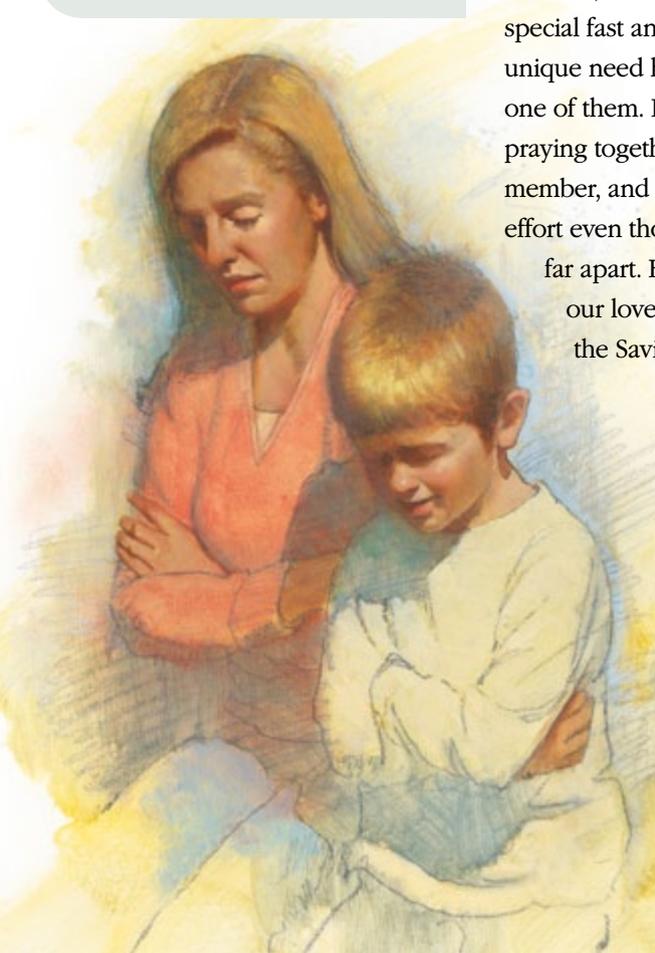
"As a people, aren't we grateful that family prayer is not an out-of-date practice with us? There is no more beautiful sight in all this world than to see a family praying together. There is real meaning behind the oft-quoted 'The family that prays together stays together.' "

President Thomas S. Monson, "Come unto Him in Prayer and Faith," *Ensign*, March 2009, 5.

Fortifying Our Families

Whether we struggle with challenges, live away from home, or want to unify the members of our family, the Lord blesses us when we pray with our families. Jill Malczyk from New York says, "Family prayer has always started and finished each day. Kneeling together in a circle is such a stabilizing gesture of reverence and seems to bring everyone into focus. Even though our children are all married and have their own families, my husband and I continue to have morning and evening prayer together. We need that prayer in the morning to fortify ourselves for the demands of the day, and our prayers at night give us the opportunity to thank a kind and merciful Father in Heaven for all that He has blessed us with that day.

"Many times, I have called all the children, asking them to join in a special fast and prayer whenever a unique need has come about for any one of them. I love knowing we are all praying together for a specific family member, and it becomes a united effort even though everyone lives so far apart. Family prayer strengthens our love for each other and for the Savior." ■



My little boy said things only Heavenly Father could know about my problems.



By Elder Brent H. Nielson
Of the Seventy

I Need Thee Every

If the Savior of the world felt the need for constant prayer, how much greater is our need?



Prayer is more than a quick morning and evening ritual, more than an acknowledgment for a few seconds each day that God is there, and more than a cry for help.

On August 20, 1974, I was serving as a full-time missionary in northern Finland. I had been in the country only 13 days, and I was overwhelmed with my new calling and with learning a complex language in a faraway place. But that afternoon I had the opportunity of a lifetime.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), who was scheduled to speak that evening at a conference, asked our mission president if he could spend the afternoon with the full-time missionaries. About 30 of us gathered in a small chapel in Oulu, Finland, to spend the afternoon with the prophet.

President Kimball began the meeting by asking the missionaries to share their testimonies. Afterward, he told us that his new calling as President of the Church had come to him unexpectedly. He had thought that President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) would serve for many years as President of the Church.

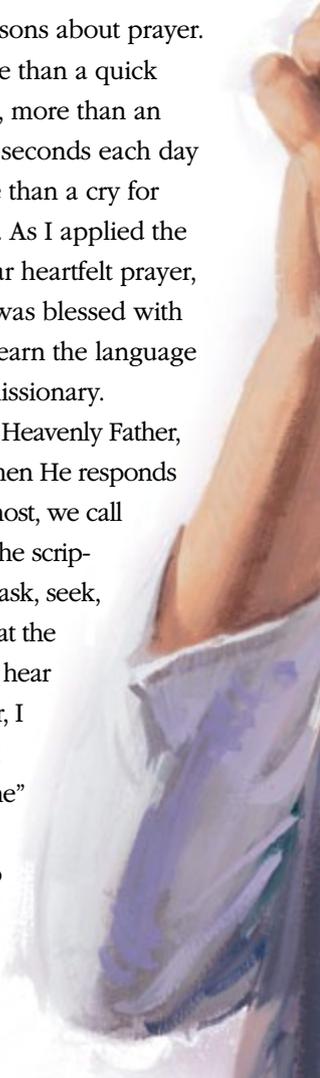
President Kimball then expressed his great need for constant prayer and communication with Heavenly Father in his new calling. He said that his favorite hymn was “I Need Thee Every Hour.” I will never forget him reciting the words of the hymn with his distinctive voice:

*I need thee, oh, I need thee;
Every hour I need thee!
Oh, bless me now, my Savior;
I come to thee!¹*

I was struck at that moment with the realization that if this great, humble prophet felt the need for constant communication with the Lord, then certainly a new missionary like me had an even greater need. As I returned to our apartment that evening and for many days thereafter, I poured out my heart to Heavenly Father in prayer, asking Him to lift me up in my new assignment. As I did so I learned some important lessons about prayer. I learned that prayer is more than a quick morning and evening ritual, more than an acknowledgment for a few seconds each day that God is there, and more than a cry for help when I was in trouble. As I applied the important practice of regular heartfelt prayer, the heavens opened and I was blessed with the revelation I needed to learn the language and fulfill my calling as a missionary.

When we speak with our Heavenly Father, we refer to that as prayer; when He responds by the power of the Holy Ghost, we call that revelation. Throughout the scriptures, we are encouraged to ask, seek, and knock. “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

While serving as a bishop and stake president, I



Hour

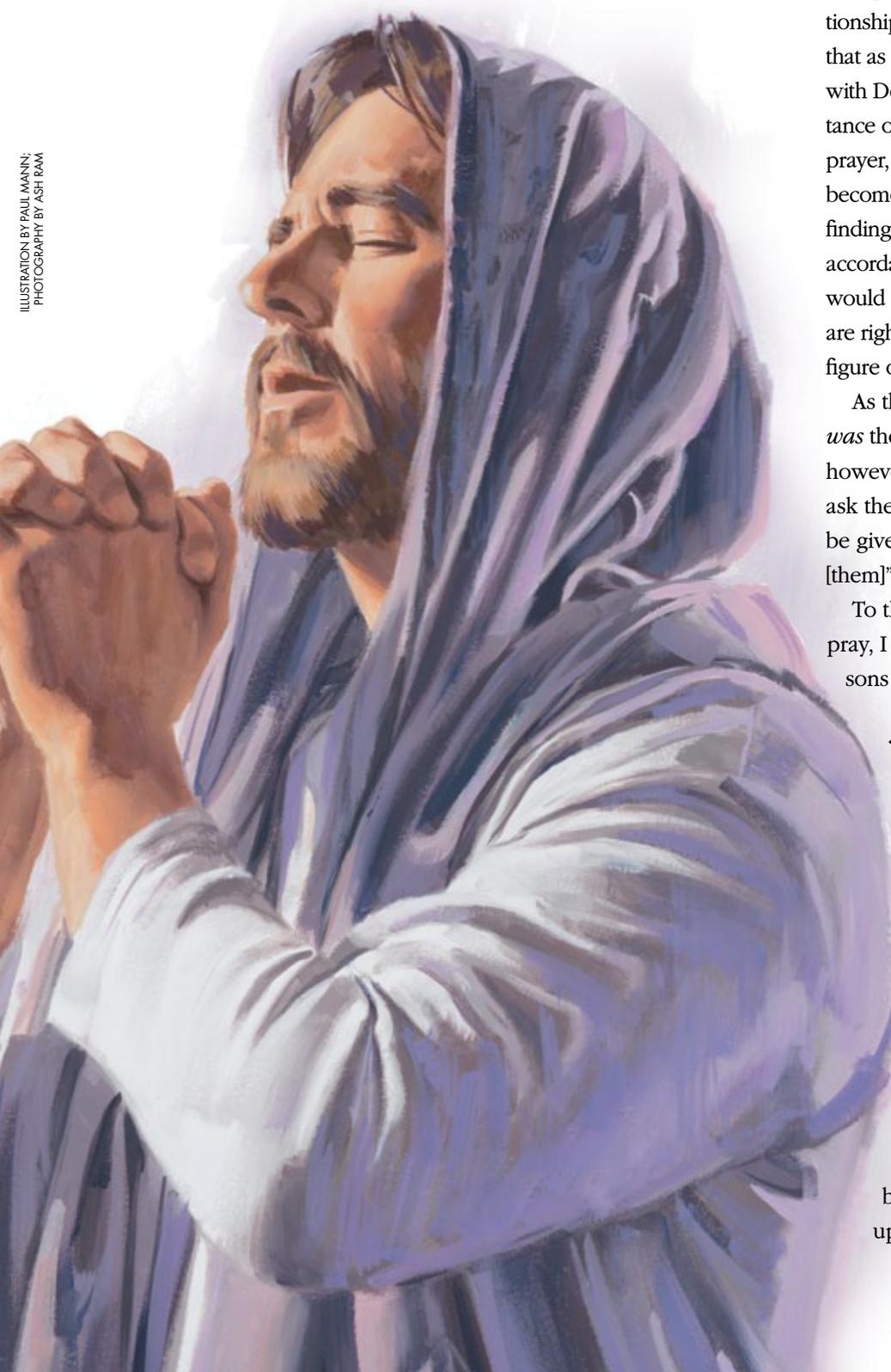


ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL MANN;
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ASH RAM

occasionally met with members who were experiencing difficulty in their lives. As we talked together, I would often inquire about their patterns of prayer and their personal relationship with their Heavenly Father. I observed that as we become casual in our relationship with Deity² and as we minimize the importance of constant communication through prayer, we may begin to feel overwhelmed, become confused, and even be deceived, finding ourselves doing things that are not in accordance with God's will. Many members would respond to my question by saying, "You are right, I need to pray more. But now let's figure out how to solve my problem."

As they began to understand that prayer *was* the answer to many of their difficulties, however, they learned that "whatsoever [they] ask the Father in [the Son's] name it shall be given unto [them], that is expedient for [them]" (D&C 88:64).

To those who might ask why they should pray, I would respond with four simple reasons that have helped me:

1. The Lord has commanded us to pray.

After Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden, an angel told them, "Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore" (Moses 5:8).

When the brother of Jared became casual in his relationship with Deity, the Lord chastised him because "he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord" (Ether 2:14).

We can only imagine the wonderful lessons the brother of Jared must have learned during that three-hour discussion.

In our day the Lord has instructed priesthood holders to “exhort [members of the Church] to pray vocally and in secret” (D&C 20:47).

2. We pray for forgiveness, to avoid temptation, and to conquer Satan.

During His earthly ministry, the Savior taught His disciples to pray. His prayer included this important statement:

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:12–13).

He taught his senior Apostle, Peter:

“Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

“But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:31–32).

It is no surprise that as the Savior visited those who had been spared from destruction on the American continent, he taught:

“Behold, . . . ye must watch and pray always lest ye enter into temptation; for Satan desireth to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.

“Therefore ye must always pray unto the Father in my name” (3 Nephi 18:18–19).

Through modern revelation the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that prayer would allow him to conquer Satan and escape his servants. “Pray always, that you may come off conqueror; yea, that you may conquer Satan, and that you may escape the hands of the servants of Satan that do uphold his work” (D&C 10:5). The Prophet was also taught:

“And again, I will give unto you a pattern in all things, that ye may not be deceived; for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations—

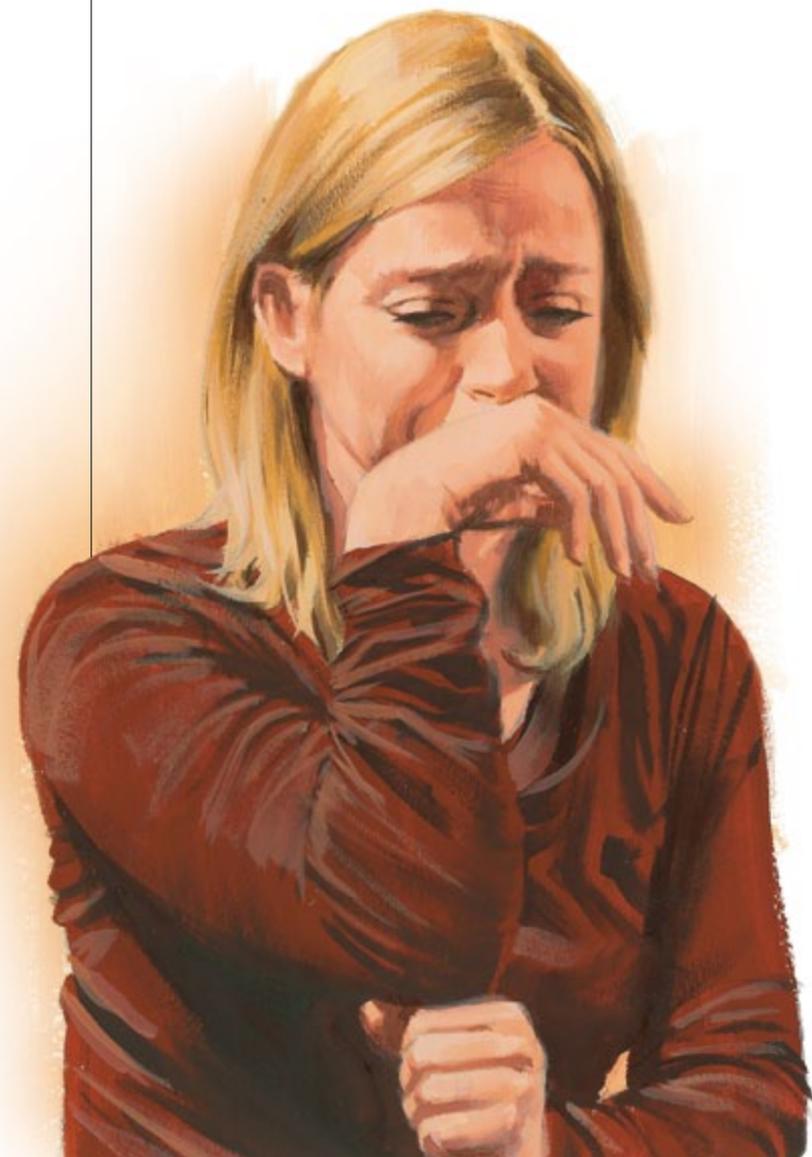
“Wherefore he that prayeth, whose spirit is contrite, the same is accepted of me if he obey mine ordinances” (D&C 52:14–15).

3. We pray to give thanks and to request temporal and spiritual blessings.

We pray to give thanks for our blessings. Through modern revelation we learn that we “must give thanks unto God in the Spirit for whatsoever blessing [we] are blessed with” (D&C 46:32).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “Temporal and spiritual blessings follow proper prayer. As all the revelations show, the portals of heaven swing wide open to those who pray in faith; the Lord rains down righteousness upon them; they are preserved in perilous circumstances; the earth yields her fruits to them; and the joys of the gospel dwell in their hearts.”³

Alma prayed for the people of Gideon, stating, “And



now, may the peace of God rest upon you, and upon your houses and lands, and upon your flocks and herds, and all that you possess, your women and your children, according to your faith and good works, from this time forth and forever” (Alma 7:27).

The Bible Dictionary offers this statement about prayer’s purpose: “The object of prayer is not to change the will of God, but to secure for ourselves and for others blessings that God is already willing to grant, but that are made conditional on our asking for them.”⁴

Is it possible that the Lord has blessings in store for us that He is waiting for us to request? Those who make prayer a constant part of their lives will testify that the portals of heaven swing wide open to them.

4. We pray to receive personal revelation.

Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah grew up together as close friends. Fourteen years after the sons of Mosiah went to preach the gospel to the Lamanites, Alma met his friends on their way to Zarahemla. In my scriptures I have written “revelatory process” beside the scriptural account of their reunion. Alma was happy to see the sons of Mosiah, but “what added more to his joy, they were still his brethren in the Lord; yea, and they had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth; . . . and they had searched the scriptures diligently. . . .

“But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation” (Alma 17:2–3).

Revelation comes as we follow this important pattern. Our prayers, when combined with fasting and pondering the scriptures constitute the revelatory process. Ponder the following verse: “If thou shalt ask, thou

shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal” (D&C 42:61).

The Savior’s Example

Perhaps the most instructive counsel on prayer occurred as the resurrected Savior visited the Nephites. As He ministered to the people, He prayed after almost everything He did. He healed the sick, and then He knelt and prayed (see 3 Nephi 17:15). After the multitude was baptized, the Savior “departed out of the midst of them . . . and bowed himself to the earth” and prayed (3 Nephi 19:19). He taught the people to pray, and then He “turned from them again, and went a little way off and bowed himself to the earth; and he prayed” (3 Nephi 19:27).

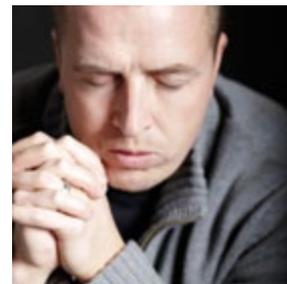
If the Savior of the world felt the need for constant prayer, how much greater is our need? The Savior clearly understood, as did President Kimball many years ago in Finland, that prayer is essential to our earthly existence.

Nearly four decades have passed since I met President Kimball in Finland, but his simple, powerful instruction remains etched in my memory:

*I need thee, oh, I need thee;
Every hour I need thee!
Oh, bless me now, my Savior;
I come to thee!* ■

NOTES

1. *Hymns*, no. 98.
2. See *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 135.
3. Bruce R. McConkie, “Why the Lord Ordained Prayer,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1976, 9.
4. Bible Dictionary, “Prayer.”



Our prayers, when combined with fasting and pondering the scriptures, constitute the revelatory process.

A COVENANT IS FOREVER

When it comes to decisions I have made as part of a covenant with a loving Heavenly Father, it doesn't matter what the world says.

By Marta Valencia Vásquez

When I was a teenager, our Young Women president gave each young woman a gift: a picture of the temple. She talked to us about covenants and living clean lives. Then she encouraged us to set a goal to go to the temple one day.

I took this sister's counsel to heart and decided to make preparation a priority. There was no temple in Costa

Rica at that time, but I did know from my recent baptism what a covenant was, and I looked forward to the opportunity to make additional covenants with the Lord.

No one else in my family was a member of the Church then, so the gospel was not taught in our home. Still, I decided that I could learn about gospel standards on my own and

follow them. My preparation included attending seminary, even though it was held very early in the morning. It included not dating until I reached age 16. And it meant living the law of chastity—certainly not something popular or even common among most of my peers, but something I knew I could do because I had covenanted with the Lord that I would.

Studying the scriptures, both in seminary and on my own, strengthened my resolve to live a chaste, clean life. I remember being particularly inspired by the 2,000 stripling warriors. As it says in Alma 53:20–21, these young men “were exceedingly valiant



FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUNG ADULTS

“I have only one question: Are you going to follow the true and living prophets or not? It really isn't any more complicated than that. The standard of the Church with regard to morality is clearly outlined in the ‘For the Strength of Youth’ pamphlet, which you haven't outgrown, even

though many of you are no longer in Young Men and Young Women. If you choose to read anything that contains material that is contrary to the moral standards of the Church, then you are placing yourself and your own wisdom above the counsel of God's prophets—a course of action that would indeed be very unwise. As soon as people begin to think that they know better than God or his oracles, or that counsel given doesn't apply to themselves, they are stepping

onto a slippery slope that has claimed far too many victims already. It takes faith—real faith, unequivocal and unreserved—to accept and attempt to live by prophetic counsel even when you don't completely understand it. Such simple faith has the power to guide you safely through every challenge you may face in your life.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “When Shall These Things Be?” in *Brigham Young University 1995–96 Speeches* (1996), 189.



for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted. . . . They were men of truth and soberness, for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him.” I too wanted to be faithful in the things I’d been entrusted with, including my baptismal covenants.

Additional understanding of covenants came when I was called to serve in the El Salvador San Salvador East Mission. When I received my endowment in the temple, Doctrine and Covenants 82:10 came to my mind: “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.” Throughout my mission, that idea of covenants—of us doing our part and

The covenants I made at baptism and the covenants I made in the temple are as valid today as the day I made them.

the Lord doing His—motivated me to do my best. As I did so, my companions and I were blessed in our work.

My mission was many years ago, but I continue to find strength from keeping my covenants. I have since been blessed to serve for seven years in the San José Costa Rica Temple. Serving as a temple worker gave me regular opportunities to remember the covenants I had made. I have found similar reminders in serving in the Young Women organization,

where I have tried to teach the importance of covenants just as my leaders taught me.

Keeping our covenants is not always easy. For instance, many people see the law of chastity (or, in some cases, religious behavior in general) as outdated. Fortunately, I don’t feel added pressure from those who don’t share my beliefs or from the passage of time. I look back on what I felt as a young woman when our leader encouraged us to prepare and live for temple covenants. The decision I made then is one I’ve followed to this day.

I can stand firm in my decisions because they weren’t decisions I made just by myself, for myself. Rather, they are decisions I have made as part of a covenant with a loving Heavenly Father. It doesn’t matter what the world says. I promised the Lord that I would obey His commandments. It is a matter of honor. The covenants I made at baptism and the covenants I made in the temple are as valid today as the day I made them. A covenant with God is forever.

Living the way God has asked us to live isn’t always easy, but I testify that it is possible. We can gain confidence and power from living our covenants, and we can be sure that Heavenly Father will never leave us alone. With Him on our side, we can do all things (see Moroni 7:33). ■

LISTENING AT LAST

Name withheld

While in college, I was blessed with a challenging internship in a city far away from home. An old friend of mine was living nearby, and though we didn't share the same faith, our differences had not stopped us from being casual friends.

When I first met Madeline (name has been changed), we were both working with another young woman who was a great example of a Latter-day Saint. I remember the Spirit pointing out subtle differences between each young woman, explaining how even small choices can set a course for later in life. I have actually remembered these spiritual impressions for years.

Now back in contact after a few years, Madeline and I planned a time to get together. When the evening arrived, I became surprisingly nervous. I took a train to her city, and as I got closer, a voice inside my mind and heart said, "You're supposed to date only people who have high standards."

"This isn't a date," I thought. "I'm just getting together with an old

friend." The Spirit repeated the warning, pushing until I realized it was indeed a date and I began to wonder about my friend's current standards and lifestyle. "She knows I'm LDS," I rationalized. "She's familiar with my standards, and there won't be a problem."

I did, however, begin to wonder if the "subtle differences" I had noted before had caused our paths to diverge more than I expected. So I followed the prompting of the Spirit, and I called my friend to cancel. I was so afraid of offending her. How could I explain spiritual impressions to a friend who doesn't appreciate the mission of the Holy Ghost?

I explained that I wasn't comfortable with one of the activities we had planned and hoped this would give me an acceptable reason for getting out of the evening. She was disappointed and offered to change our plans. I was relieved and agreed to the change because I thought, "Maybe the activity was why the Spirit was warning me." But the

anxiety I was feeling would not go away.

We had a fun time that night, but from time to time, the Spirit told me the earlier warning was important. At first nothing seemed concerning, but as the evening progressed, it became clearer that while we may have come from similar backgrounds, we were headed in completely different directions. Our standards were not the same—even in small things. When

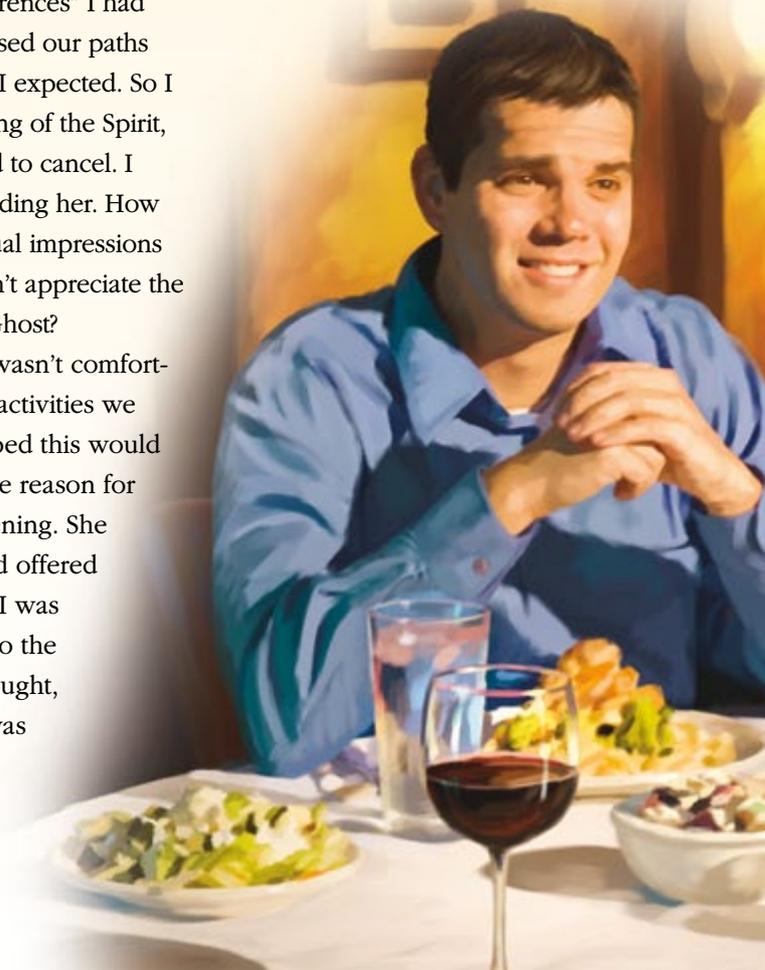
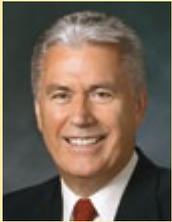


ILLUSTRATION BY JEFF WARD



BARELY OFF COURSE?

“All too often . . . we set out on what we hope will be an exciting journey only

to realize too late that an error of a few degrees has set us on a course for spiritual disaster.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “A Matter of a Few Degrees,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 58–59.

“She’s an old friend, and it isn’t a date,” I told myself. So why did the Spirit keep warning me I shouldn’t be there?

she ordered wine, I explained that I would rather not pay for alcohol. She respected my wishes and paid for it herself.

My spiritual anxiety continued to grow as the evening wore on. As dinner wrapped up, I was on the edge of my chair, ready to go, because I knew the evening’s last train was leaving soon and I lived too far away to take a taxi. Aware of my worry, my friend said I could sleep at her place. Now the Spirit would not leave me alone, confirming what I already knew: staying was not an option.

As I walked her home, I worked hard to look calm. “Are you sure you don’t want to stay?” she asked. I was sure. She wasn’t forward or offensive, but the Spirit quietly spoke more clearly than the sound of thunder.

I could not miss my train!

I waited until I knew she was inside, then ran as fast as I could to reach the train station in time. I couldn’t help thinking of Joseph in Egypt when he ran from temptation (see Genesis 39:7–12).

As I think back over the happenings of that night, I feel both fear and gratitude: fear for what might have been and gratitude for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit spoke, and even though I should have done so sooner, I’m glad I finally listened.

It’s obvious that my view of the situation that night was definitely not as clear as the Lord’s. As Isaiah recorded:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8–9).

Some choices we face in life are quickly made and forgotten. There are other choices that come with lessons we would do well never to forget. I am so thankful to know that when we heed the promptings of the Holy Ghost—and when we do so immediately—we can more easily stay on the path Jesus Christ set for us to follow. ■



FAITH AND Infertility

By **Melissa Merrill**

Church Magazines

*Infertility can be heartbreaking.
Four couples share how they maintained faith and hope.*

Infertility: it was the last thing Brenda Horrocks ever expected to hear from her doctor. She and her husband, Brad, had been married for four years, and although she had experienced complications with her menstrual cycle from the time she was a teenager, doctors had told her and Brad that with “a little help,” they would be able to have a baby. “A little help turned into a lot of help,” Brenda says, and after multiple fertility treatments over several years, the Horrockses were told that the likelihood of their being able to conceive was extremely small.

Infertility is not uncommon—some 15 percent of couples in the United States have difficulty conceiving a child;¹ other countries throughout the world show similar figures. In 40 percent of instances, the wife is infertile. In another 40 percent, the problem rests with the husband. In 10 percent of cases, both are infertile, and in the remaining 10 percent, the cause is unknown.² In the context of the Church, where the family is celebrated as the fundamental unit of society³, not having children can be an especially difficult challenge.

Yet as Brad and Brenda and many others can attest, God does not leave His children alone in their trials. “Never give up,” Brad recommends. “There’s always hope. Heavenly Father always has something in store for us. We have found that over and over again.”

Here, the Horrockses and three other couples who have dealt with the challenges of infertility—Dave and Angie Belnap, Phil and Valerie Hochheiser, and Curtis and Melody Linton—share how they saw the Lord’s hand guiding them through their challenges.

Dealing with Grief

Brenda’s grief at the diagnosis was so overwhelming that she began questioning her mission in life, she says.

“I felt lost for a long time. I felt I had no purpose. That’s the ultimate goal, isn’t it, to get married and have a family? I still knew I was a daughter of God, but I hated that I couldn’t be a co-creator with Him. I felt broken, like I wasn’t a real woman.”

Brenda tried “swimming through” her grief for several months and even years. At one point, it became so severe that she felt prompted to seek professional counseling.

“I realized the grief was inhibiting my progression,” she says. She asked Heavenly Father to guide her in a search for the right counselor and began meeting with one who was able to offer the help Brenda needed.

“As I went to my appointments and continued to do my homework [usually assigned reading], my heart was being prepared for healing,” Brenda recalls. “Many of my fears and pains started to subside, and a new person was emerging.”

Brenda notes that while some well-meaning people tried to assist by suggesting what might be wrong with her or what she could try, that didn't help. "I just needed people to buoy me up as I struggled and to acknowledge that what I was going through was difficult."

Angie Belnap and her husband, Dave, learned after four years of marriage that they most likely wouldn't be able to conceive. Angie recalls going through all of the stages of grief but finding herself returning over and over to the anger stage.

"I remember wondering how something that was so important in life could be denied me," she says. "My feelings of hurt and what seemed to me to be spiritual abandonment manifested themselves through anger. I was very angry. Angry at myself. Angry at my husband. Angry at God."

But Angie started working through her grief by focusing on aspects of her life she *could* control rather than on those she couldn't. Angie, who worked as a third-grade teacher, looked for ways she could improve her skills at work. She also read a lot—"there was always a book on my nightstand," she recalls—and pursued other self-improvement projects. "I couldn't change the infertility, but I could progress in other areas of my life," she says.

She also found it helpful to keep a journal. "I didn't always feel that I could talk to people about what I was going through, but I could get my feelings 'out there' by writing them down. That helped a lot."

Debunking Spiritual Myths

Angie's husband, Dave, grew up with four sisters and two brothers and always expected to have a large family of his own. However,

when years passed without any children for him and Angie, Dave began to wonder if it were a consequence of inadequate spirituality.

"We tried to stay positive," Dave says, "but it was hard. I knew the importance of starting a family, but because we weren't able to have biological children, I felt like I was being punished or short-changed."

Like Dave, many people facing infertility look for the reason behind the struggle and sometimes blame themselves. Such thoughts and feelings can sting even more when others make well-intended but hurtful comments, often laced with misguided beliefs.

For instance, Melody Linton recalls sitting in testimony meeting and hearing new mothers say things like, "God trusted me enough to bless me with this baby."

"I can understand why they said it," Melody admits. "It's a fair statement. But in my situation without a child, I couldn't help but think, 'God doesn't trust me.'"

"I don't know that I felt angry at Heavenly Father, but I felt forsaken by Him," she continues. "I felt so left out. Why were all these other women getting to experience pregnancy? I had tried to live my life worthily and do things I knew to be correct. So why wasn't it happening for me?"

Eventually, Melody found solace in the writings of Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) on adversity.⁴

"The tables turned for me," she says. "I began to think, 'Why *not* me?' I'm strong enough to handle this." She knew that with the support of her husband, Curtis, and in the strength of the Lord, she could face her challenges.

Brenda points out that it's important to continue to trust in the Lord, even when what is

The Horrocks Family



The Belnap Family



happening isn't what we want. "For a while, I thought if I had enough faith, I would be cured," she says. "But sometimes having faith means trusting in and listening to the Lord even when we are *not* cured. What we want won't always match what He has planned for us."

She recalls a Sunday School lesson in which a bishopric member shared an important message about faith—one she's clung to ever since. He said, "When someone has an ailment or an illness and they are healed as the result of a blessing, their faith is being strengthened. But for those who aren't healed but continue faithful, their faith is being perfected. The first is a faith-promoting experience. The second is faith-perfecting."

Turning to—Not Away from—Each Other

Infertility can cause a lot of couples to reevaluate their plans for their lives and in some cases, their very relationships. When Curtis and Melody's doctor suggested a particular fertility treatment—one of their last options—Melody was ready to move ahead, while Curtis had significant reservations. At this crossroads, Curtis recalls, he retreated deeper within himself and escaped by exercising and working more.

Melody, meanwhile, felt stagnant. "While we were trying different procedures, I felt productive and proactive, and that brought a tremendous sense of hope," she says. "But when we were stalling and nothing was moving forward, that killed me."

The couple had worked hard for years to encourage each other in their education, careers, and other interests. This had carried over into their infertility challenges as well, such as when Curtis went to doctor appointments with Melody or she supported him as he sought refuge in bike rides and other physical activity.

"Trying to support Melody is what had saved me through all of this," he says. But as Melody sunk deeper into sadness, Curtis felt powerless in knowing how to help her. They were, it seemed, at an impasse.

That changed, Melody says, when she ultimately realized

that they needed to be united as a couple. While she did not share her husband's reservations about the proposed procedure, she could respect them. "One no meant two no's," she says. Together, they began exploring other options.

Phil and Valerie Hochheiser discovered that when the stresses of infertility were too much—especially because, like the Lintons, they came to stages of understanding at different times—they could find relief in focusing on their marriage.

For instance, varying the routine gave the couple something besides fertility testing and treatments to think about. Phil says it was helpful to break away by going to the movies or taking a walk. He and Valerie also "took a couple of

trips to put everything behind us for a bit. Otherwise, infertility could have run our days and nights," he says.

To further strengthen their relationship, the Hochheisers wrote each other notes, went on dates, made anniversaries or other dates special by splurging on a hotel room, made efforts to look attractive for each other, sent flowers, and started saying "I love you" more often. "It's easy when you're feeling depressed to let some of these areas slide—or to not try anything at all—but by making a conscious effort, we were able to handle things with a better sense of well-being and unity," Valerie says.

Physical intimacy also played an important role, Valerie adds. "Intimacy in marriage has several 'functions'—procreation, yes, but also bonding and unifying a couple in their marriage. Going through infertility reaffirmed in my mind the importance of intimacy in our marriage."

That stronger marriage, in turn, brought blessings of its own.

"It helped me realize amid a lot of unknowns that I was really blessed to have a husband who is good to me, who loves me, and who was willing to work through this together," Valerie says. "It didn't mean that we got rid of the ups and downs. It didn't mean that there weren't times that were scary. But we've learned so much and grown much closer because of what we've been through."

*I couldn't change
the infertility,
but I could progress
in other areas of my
life. . . . I finally
realized that
infertility wasn't
a punishment. It was
my refiner's fire."*

—Angie Belnap

Serving Others

Phil and Valerie readily acknowledge that it took more than turning toward each other, important as that was. They also needed to turn outward to others in the healing process.

Valerie remembers finding joy in her service in the Young Women organization. Focusing on those she served helped her deal with her own challenges, and occasionally, she even found personal solutions in the process.

“I remember one particular lesson teaching about having an eternal perspective. We discussed how different our own view is from Heavenly Father’s. For some reason, that particular lesson—while I was in the middle of serving others—had a big impact on me. It helped me see a little bit more clearly that my struggles were only temporary ones.”

Phil, too, had significant experiences reaching out to others. He remembers finding—and later sharing—Alma 26:27: “Now when our hearts were depressed, and we were about to turn back, behold, the Lord comforted us, and said: Go amongst thy brethren, the Lamanites, and bear with patience thine afflictions, and I will give unto you success.”

“I identified with the ‘when our hearts were depressed,’ phrase,” says Phil. “Dealing with infertility is such an up-and-down cycle, and you feel that way a lot of the time. But I learned to ‘bear with patience’ my afflictions and, as Ammon and his brethren were instructed to do, serve others. So that’s what we did. We found ways to reach out to others and lift them up. We didn’t yet know what the ‘success’ would be, whether it would be pregnancy or adoption or something else, but we trusted that it would happen.”

Reaching Out to a Support Network

Because of infertility’s personal nature, some couples may decide not to talk about it with other people. The Hochheisers, for instance, waited until Valerie was about to undergo surgery before they brought it up to their families.

“It was hard for my family, my mom in particular, to have not been informed all along,” Valerie recalls. “She felt I

hadn’t wanted to include her and let her be my support. But we were struggling to figure things out ourselves. It would have been really hard to answer questions when we weren’t yet sure what we were dealing with.” Moreover, they didn’t want to trouble others with their struggles.

Of course, people handle unexpected situations differently, Phil points out. “Later on, I realized the biggest help was having a strong support group outside of the two of us—people who could see the whole picture, or even someone who had been through what we were experiencing.”

Once they started talking to other people, Valerie and Phil realized they weren’t alone.

“There are people out there; there are support groups, both in person and online,” Phil concludes. “Look for help.”

Curtis and Melody found some of their greatest strength in such support groups, specifically Families Supporting Adoption through LDS Family Services. Although they were nervous about going to their first meeting, when they walked into the room, Melody says, “I saw in every woman’s eyes what I felt in my heart. I felt safe and knew that I could share what I was experiencing.”

“Within the support group,” Curtis adds, “we were Curtis and Melody dealing with this challenge of infertility, not infertility in the form of Curtis and Melody.” That realization, he says, was paramount.

“There’s nothing in the scriptures or anywhere in the gospel that teaches us to suffer in silence,” Curtis continues. “That’s a cultural thing. When you suffer in silence, you suffer more deeply. We went through periods where we were waiting for someone to take the first step to us. Be willing to approach others first. Share your story; you’ll find that others will often open up after that.”

Looking to the Lord

Eventually, the paths of the Belnaps, Hochheisers, Horrockses, and Lintons led them all to adoption. And while their children have brought great joy to each couple,

“What I would have planned for our life would pale in comparison to what God has given us. What He has in mind for His children is better than anything we could ever design.”

—Brenda Horrocks

healing, they say, comes from the Lord—not from adopting or conceiving.

“I finally realized that infertility wasn’t a punishment,” Angie says. “Once I was past the point of anger and bitterness, I was willing to hear the Spirit and receive direction about what we were supposed to do. Of course, that comes at different points for everyone. Infertility was my refiner’s fire. My faith was strengthened through those difficult years.”

“I had never really thought about adoption, but when Dave and I had been married almost five years, we moved into a ward where we met a couple who had adopted, and we started asking them questions and learning about the process. In receiving direction from the Lord that adoption was the path we were to pursue, I felt physical and spiritual weights lifted from my shoulders. The realization of God’s plan for our family gave me peace.”

“One of the gospel principles I’ve learned to appreciate through our experience is that Heavenly Father has a plan for each of us,” Dave adds. “Sometimes we get caught up in the one-size-fits-all mentality, and we feel that our lives should look like other people’s lives. But that’s really not true. Everyone has different trials, and Heavenly Father is aware of those. If we are humble enough to follow the plan He has for us, we’ll be happy.”

Valerie Hochheiser agrees that relying on and trusting in the Lord is crucial. “I learned that we had to do everything in our power but then ultimately turn it over to Him,” she says. “Sometimes that means letting Him tell us which direction to go. Other times it’s a matter

The Hochheiser Family



The Linton Family

of choosing a direction and letting Him confirm the decision.

“I think that was part of our learning process,” she continues. “I remember at one point telling Heavenly Father that we no longer knew what to pray for. We could pray for this to work or that to work, but mostly we just wanted to be ready for the blessings that Heavenly Father was ready to send us.”

Seeking Heavenly Father’s comfort and guidance will help us make the best decisions regardless of our circumstances.

“I have learned to trust in Him, to follow the Spirit, and to feel at peace because God’s plan is the one that will benefit me the most,” Brad says. “There’s more to life than we can imagine.”

Brenda agrees. “His gifts are the best gifts,” she says. “He loves us so much. What I would have planned for our life would pale in comparison to what He has given us. We need to trust and know that He will give to us immeasurably. What He has in mind for His children is better than anything we could ever design.” ■

For additional information on this topic see Ana Nelson Shaw, “Being Sensitive to Couples without Children,” Ensign, Aug. 2000, 61. You can also visit the Counseling and Resources section of ldsfamilyservices.org.

NOTES

1. “Age and Female Fertility,” The American Fertility Association, www.theafa.org/library/article/age_and_female_fertility/.
2. “Who’s Infertile? Us?,” The American Fertility Association, www.theafa.org/library/article/whos_infertile_us/.
3. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
4. See, for example, Neal A. Maxwell, “Content with the Things Allotted unto Us,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 72–74; Neal A. Maxwell, “Plow in Hope,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 59–61; or Neal A. Maxwell, “Encircled in the Arms of His Love,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 16–18.



Just the Same

By Diana Lynn Lacey

*Sometimes—
God sends rain
Straight from the sky
To nourish the young flower
and it grows.*

*Sometimes—
God sends rain from the sky
To the mountaintops,
Then over hills and through valleys
Until it reaches the flower
and it grows, just the same.*

*Sometimes—
God sends a child
Straight from His realm
Into a mother's arms
and love grows.*

*Sometimes—
God sends a child
From heaven to another's arms,
Then over hills and through valleys
Until he reaches the arms of his mother
and love grows, just the same.*



"All of This Blesses Me"

By Michael R. Morris

Church Magazines

If it's Saturday, you'll find Elvira Guagliarello busily working in the kitchen of her home in Puerto Madryn, located on the shores of Argentina's Nuevo Gulf in the southern province of Chubut.

She measures out flour and water and then reaches for other ingredients. She says little as she works, her actions speaking louder than her words. After all, she's on the Lord's errand.

"I feel good because I know I am doing something good," says Sister Guagliarello as she mixes the ingredients. She thinks of the Savior as she works, happy with the thought that the product of her service will help other members of the Church remember Him.

Sister Guagliarello, age 82, enjoys serving as a visiting teacher, helps direct the music in her ward, and makes bread for use in the ordinance of the sacrament—a calling she has magnified for nearly 10 years. She

prepares a loaf of bread for herself earlier in the week, but on Saturdays she sets aside time to make bread "especially for the Church," she says. "I say to myself, 'I have to make bread, and I have to go to church.' I don't want to fail."

Health permitting, she also attends the temple—making an annual 20-hour bus trip north to the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple.

"Sister Guagliarello is always happy to serve in every way she can," says her bishop, Jesús Santos Gumiel. "Ward members know they can count on her. Despite her age, she is faithful in preparing the bread every Saturday and in coming to church every Sunday. She's a good example."

Sister Guagliarello met the full-time missionaries in 1962 in Mar del Plata, south of Buenos Aires, while working in a boarding house where they lived. When she recognized them knocking



Elvira Guagliarello

on doors 15 years later, after she had moved to Puerto Madryn, she took the discussions, was baptized, and began her life of service in the Church.

Today she lives by herself, but she doesn't feel alone. She has her scriptures and her ward family, and she communes frequently with her Heavenly Father through prayer. In addition, she enjoys the companionship of the Spirit, which the Lord has promised to those who serve Him by serving others.¹

"All of this blesses me," Sister Guagliarello says with a smile. "The Church puts us to work, and that makes me happy. I have always found joy in serving our Father in Heaven." ■

NOTE

1. See Henry B. Eyring, "In the Strength of the Lord," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2004, 19; see also John 14:16–18; Doctrine and Covenants 88:3.

MAKING THE MOST OF SENIOR YEARS

The key to feeling useful and overcoming loneliness is to look for ways to help others who are

in need. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) suggested that senior members of the Church consider serving in the following ways:

1. Working in the temple and attending often.
2. Collecting and writing family histories.
3. Becoming involved in missionary service.
4. Building family togetherness.
5. Accepting and fulfilling Church callings.
6. Rendering Christlike service.
7. Staying physically fit, healthy, and active.

From Ezra Taft Benson, "To the Elderly in the Church," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 4–6.



Sailing True

IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

By Joshua J. Perkey

Church Magazines

Ancient mariners traveled the seas guided by the positions of the sun, moon, and stars. At night they kept their eyes keenly focused on the North Star, its fixed position providing a heavenly anchor for sailors, helping them sail a true course to their destination.

In the Marshall Islands of the Pacific Ocean, sailors discovered another technique. There, wave patterns, or ocean swells, flow between the atolls and islands in a consistent pattern. A well-trained mariner can travel hundreds of miles by following an intricate web of swells—each like a one-way street—from one island or atoll to the next. Those who know where the swells are and where they flow can lead other travelers safely to their destinations.

Likewise, Jesus Christ is our perfect example, whose true light guides us. His laws and ordinances, like the

ocean swells, can lead us safely to our heavenly home. Yet for all of us, there are others whose service and support work in concert with the Master Navigator's role. In the following stories, three Marshallese members share how others helped them navigate life's rocky shoals and storms to lead them unto Christ.

The Influence of a Righteous Woman

Hirobo Obeketang sits back on his couch and smiles. He and his wife, Linda, have just finished holding family home evening with four of their children and the sister missionaries. They also treated the missionaries to a fish dinner, complete with eyes and tail—a tradition in Majuro, the capital of the Marshall Islands. As Hirobo describes his life, he expresses how grateful he is for the Church, the



*As we sail through the rocky shoals of life,
each of us benefits from the guidance of
faithful members to help us make our way
back to our heavenly home.*

gospel, and his family,
especially his wife.

It is June 2009. One day earlier the Majuro Marshall Islands Stake was created, and Hirobo was called to serve as the first stake executive secretary. Hirobo, as new stake president Arlington Tibon describes him, “is very, very strong,” one of the faithful leaders of the island.

But Hirobo is the first to point out that until recently that wasn’t the case. In fact, he credits his wife with being the strong one—the one who made the difference in his life. He explains, “I was baptized when I was eight years old, but when I was 16, I became less active.”

A few years later he and Linda began living together, though they weren’t married. Linda was not a member of the Church. In 2000, shortly after Linda discovered that Hirobo had been baptized as a child, she became interested in the Church and began meeting with the sister missionaries.

“She studied for two years and decided she wanted to be baptized,” Hirobo recalls. “We had to get married first, but I wasn’t interested in getting married. I was confused; I was really into the world’s temptations. I didn’t understand the importance of family, and I didn’t really care or listen to anybody.”

Linda, though not baptized, raised their children in the Church. Every year she asked Hirobo to marry her so she could get baptized; each time he said no. Over the years two of their daughters were baptized, but Hirobo did not attend their baptisms.

Then, in 2006, their nine-year-old son, Takao, passed away

from a seizure and high fever. About 300 members from the Majuro district came to the funeral to support the family.

“Their support was a really big thing for me,” Hirobo says. “I started to think that God was probably telling me something.”

He began thinking about how he was the reason his wife couldn’t get baptized, even though he was a member of the Church. “She was getting stronger and stronger. She was really inspiring me,” he recalls.



“So I sat down and thought about how I was halfway through my life. I asked myself, ‘Am I going to continue doing what I am doing? Do I have a chance to work for God for the second half of my life?’ I started saying my prayers and thinking about coming back to church to start working for God.”



Hirobo began studying with the missionaries and relearning doctrine. President Nelson Bleak of the Marshall Islands Majuro Mission befriended him, as did other members, including then-district president Arlington Tibon. Finally, Hirobo committed to return, and the next thing he knew, he was attending not just sacrament meeting but also Sunday School and priesthood meeting. At last, Hirobo made up his mind.

“When I came back, I said, ‘This is it. This is what I’m going to do.’ And it changed my life completely.”

Hirobo and Linda were married on August 30, 2008. He soon received the Aaronic Priesthood and baptized his wife. Two months later Hirobo received the Melchizedek Priesthood and was called as the district executive secretary.

Hirobo looks at his wife and smiles. “She couldn’t believe I was the one who baptized her,” he says. “Imagine—it took her eight years, from 2000 to 2008. She is amazing.”

The Example of a Righteous Father

Sometimes our guide, like a mariner, works closely with us, teaching us what we need to know so we can successfully navigate life. In many cases the mariner accomplishes this by setting the example for us to follow. Such was the case with Patricia Horiuchi’s father, Frank.

After meeting the missionaries, Frank began regularly inviting them over for dinner. Soon he started taking the lessons. But no one else in his family wanted anything to do with the Church. “When we saw the missionaries coming,” Patricia says, “we would all run away—me and my younger brothers and sisters.”

Then Frank was baptized in July 2007 by the mission president, Nelson Bleak. It was a defining moment for Patricia and her siblings.

“I saw my father starting to change,” she says. “I knew that if the gospel could touch my father’s heart, it could touch mine and change my life. So I decided to study with the sister missionaries, and they challenged me to study the Book of Mormon and the Bible. My brother and I had had a fight before that, and I had never forgiven him. Then I read in the scriptures that if you forgive others, God will forgive you.” (See 3 Nephi 13:14–15.)

Patricia realized she had to forgive her brother in order to begin changing her life, be clean, and have peace. So she did.

“After I threw away my bad attitudes and changed to a new person who kept the commandments, I was so excited. I knew I had to get baptized so I could be in the true Church,” she says. “The Church put me on the right track. It separated



me from bad influences. It taught me to respect my parents, to stay in school, and to keep on the right track.”

The Influence of a Righteous Man

Lydia Kaminaga, like Hirobo Obeketang, was born into the Church but became less active during her teen years. But the story

Above left: Hirobo Obeketang (also shown with his family on the previous pages) works as a hotel manager. Below: Patricia Horiuchi was a leader for the Marshall Islands' first young single adult conference in June 2009 (bottom right).



UNIVERSAL CHALLENGES

Though geography, culture, and distance may separate them from other Latter-day Saints, members in the Marshall Islands explain that they face many of the same challenges all members do.

Gary Zackious (right), a stake young single adult leader, says that “people come up to you and say, ‘We don’t need a prophet today, and we don’t need any more scripture.’ Some members don’t really read the scriptures or understand them, so when someone tells them something that slackens their belief, they back off from what they know is true.”



For Gary, the solution is simple: “I was challenged by the missionaries to pray about the Book of Mormon, the Restoration, and Joseph Smith to know if they are true. One night I was praying on my knees. I felt the Spirit. It was a feeling I had never experienced before. I know the things I was taught by the missionaries are true. Reading the Book of Mormon strengthened my testimony as a young convert.” From his baptism to his mission to today, Gary says, “My testimony has grown as I read the Book of Mormon and study the scriptures and the words of the prophets.”

Ernest Mea (right), who works with Gary as a Church translator in the Marshall Islands, says that a lot of young people get caught in immorality. He keeps on the strait and narrow path by engaging in wholesome activities with like-minded friends. “Before my mission, we played basketball at the church every day but Sunday and Monday,” he says.



For Michael Lone (right) of the Jenrok Ward, joining the Church in 2006 came at a price: he couldn’t continue living at home. Showing faith and conviction, he was baptized anyway.



Just a year later he was called on a mission—to the Marshall Islands. More recently, Michael’s family has begun to show interest in the Church and to study with the missionaries.



of her journey back is as remarkable as it is distinct.

Lydia and her husband, Kaminaga Kaminaga, both grew up in the Church. “I never had any doubt about the teachings of the Church,” says Kaminaga. “I’ve always believed them.”

But life moved differently for Lydia. When she was in seventh grade, she says, “I was the only Mormon in my school, and I felt left out. I did what my friends were doing. I got my priorities wrong.”

Lydia’s parents sent her to Provo, Utah, USA, to live with family, hoping their influence might inspire Lydia to live the gospel. Though she learned things that helped her later in life, at the time she wasn’t interested in Church activity.

Lydia moved back to the Marshall Islands in January 2002, just a month after Kaminaga returned from serving a mission in Japan. They met shortly thereafter. Although Lydia was not living Church standards, Kaminaga kept coming to her house pretending that he wanted to visit her nephew, Gary Zackious.

Eventually, Kaminaga made up his mind

“I have a strong testimony of repentance,” says Lydia Kaminaga, shown here with her husband, Kaminaga, and their daughter, Wellisa.



to talk to her parents about going out on dates—wholesome, clean activities—with Lydia. Although they initially tried to dissuade him, Kaminaga says he “finally told them, ‘There’s still a chance for her to change.’ When I said that, the whole feeling in the room changed. Her dad cried and said, ‘I’ve always wanted her back in the Church. You can try.’”

At first Lydia didn’t take Kaminaga seriously. After all, he was a clean-cut returned missionary, and she hadn’t been active.

“But he saw something I didn’t see,” Lydia explains. Since



she wasn't dating anyone, she agreed to go out with him. "He brought me back. Being his girlfriend, I had to set my standards straight. He reminded me of my covenants made at baptism. He reminded me of all the things I really missed a lot, like reading scriptures and family home evening. Kaminaga and I did service projects together. We read the Book of Mormon. We went to firesides. He showed me how to live differently. Going to church was not just sacrament meeting but also Sunday School and Relief Society too."

As they spent time together on dates that were wholesome and uplifting, Lydia's life began to change and her testimony grew. She still had to clear some things up, however.

"It was hard coming back," she admits. "Repentance is not easy, but I have a really strong testimony of repentance. In a lot of ways, our dating was about getting to know each other more and about getting me back to church, to see things differently."

"It's about relationships," adds Kaminaga.

Lydia and Kaminaga were married on November 28, 2002. A year later they were sealed in the Laie Hawaii Temple and attended Brigham Young University–Hawaii. Now they live in the Marshall Islands with their three children. Lydia serves as their ward's Sunday School teacher for the young men and young women, and Kaminaga serves as the Young Men president.

As Hirobo, Patricia, and Lydia testify, when we exercise patience and persistence and seek the blessings of the Lord, many things are possible. Those who follow the Savior and listen to the promptings of the Holy Ghost can, like the ancient mariner guiding travelers home, make all the difference in another person's life. ■

FIRST STAKE IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

For years Church members in the Marshall Islands have desired to have a stake there. On June 14, 2009, their desires were fulfilled. Elder David S. Baxter of the Seventy, who organized the stake, explains: "It is remarkable how the membership grew in the past couple of years. The stake was created because the development of the Church there made it inevitable. But it has been a long time in coming. Members had to overcome a number of challenges."



Marshall Islands stake president Arlington Tibon (above) taught members while he served as district president that if they wanted a stake, they would have to work for it. He instructed district leaders to teach members from Malachi 3 and 3 Nephi 24 about the blessings of paying tithing. Leaders also encouraged youth and adults to study the Book of Mormon. They even held a successful event where the youth read the Book of Mormon for 12 hours straight.

President Tibon also set a goal to get members to understand "how important it is to be sealed in the temple," explaining that receiving "the endowment helps them overcome a lot of things, makes them different, changes their lives."

Under President Tibon's leadership, members in the Marshall Islands visited two temples: one in Tonga and one in Hawaii. Each visit came after significant sacrifice. But, as Angela Tibon, President Tibon's wife, says, those trips "have had a great impact on how committed members are to Heavenly Father and to the Church."

"Yes," echoes President Tibon, "we saw the spiritual life here in Majuro go way up."



Rebecca Swain Williams: STEADFAST & IMMOVABLE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RICHARD HULL

Despite her family's hostility toward the Church, this early convert remained faithful and devoted to the work.

By Janiece Lyn Johnson

In June 1834 a young mother who was faced with being disinherited by her father wrote a bold and moving letter sharing her conviction of the Restoration. Although she must have known her prospects of changing his mind were dim, Rebecca Swain Williams nevertheless stood firm despite the impending consequences. She declared to her father, Isaac, that the Book of Mormon and the Church were true, just as the Prophet Joseph Smith described, and that she had heard the Three Witnesses “declare in public meeting that they saw a Holy Angel come down from heaven and [bring] the plates, and la[y] them before their eyes.”¹

Rebecca’s testimony is moving not just for the power it demonstrates but also because of her unshakable testimony and indomitable will. Despite her father’s rejection and the fact that her husband, Frederick G. Williams,

became disaffected from the Church for a time, Rebecca never allowed her faith to waver. Tireless and unyielding, Rebecca stands as an example to us today of how we can remain firm and steadfast in the face of life’s greatest challenges, even when those closest to us may reject our faith and spurn us.

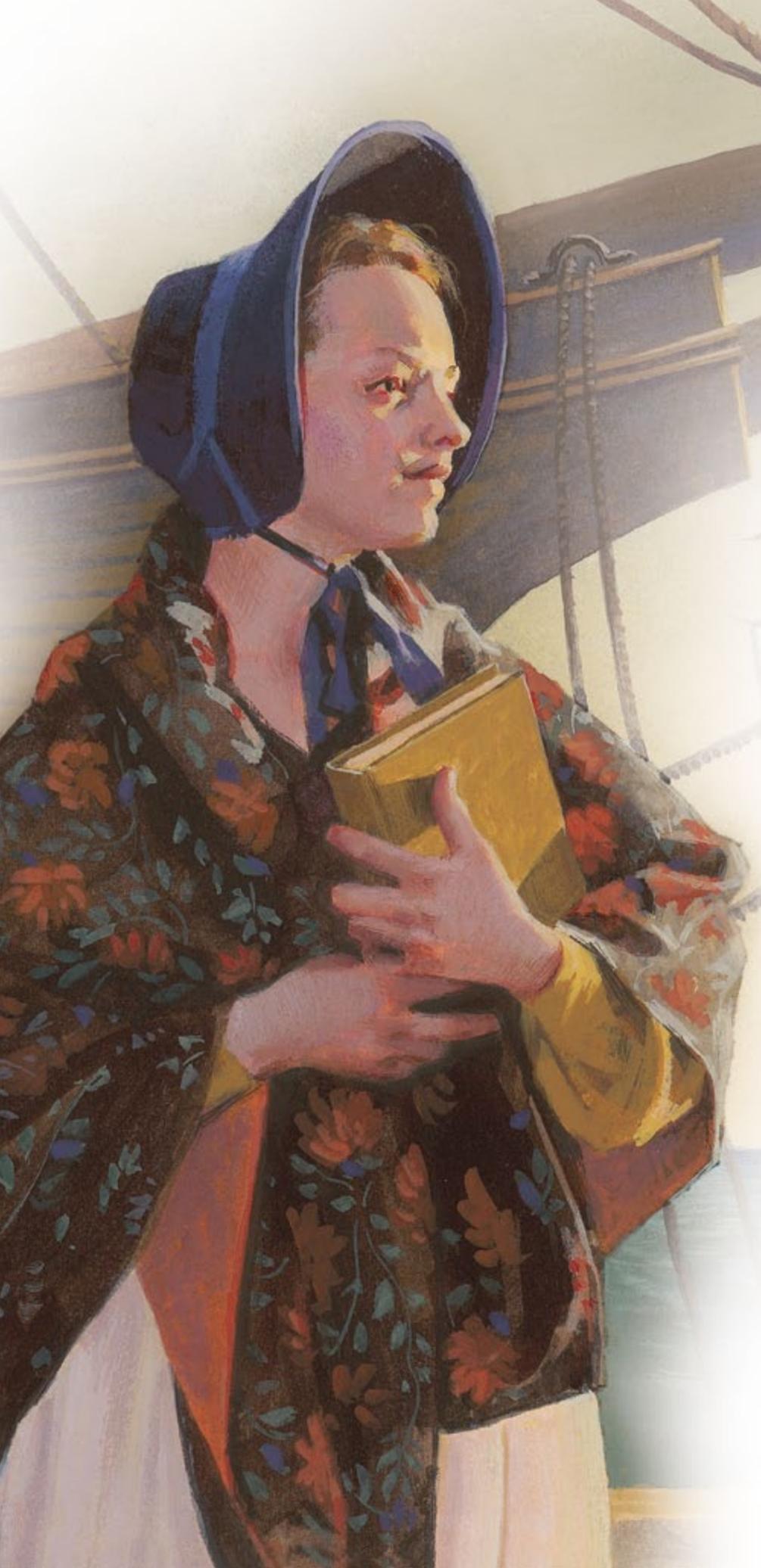
Conversion to the Church

Born in Pennsylvania, USA, in 1798, Rebecca Swain was the youngest of 10 children.² When she was about nine, her family moved to Niagara, near the United States–Canada border. They were close enough to Fort Niagra that they could hear the gunfire when the fort was attacked during the War of 1812. Even as a young girl Rebecca showed her fearlessness. Once, while traveling alone through the woods, she met a bear face-to-face on the trail. Having a parasol in her hand, she opened and closed it several times

in the bear’s face, and it ran away.³

When Rebecca was 17, she crossed Lake Ontario to visit her sister in Detroit. On the voyage she met the tall, dark-eyed pilot of the ship, Frederick Granger Williams. Their frequent visits quickly transformed affection into love, and the two were married in late 1815. The Williamses moved around the great Western Reserve of Ohio, USA, before finally settling in Kirtland around 1828. Her husband took up the practice of medicine and became rather well known for his abilities, and Rebecca learned to help him with procedures. Together they had four children.

In the fall of 1830, the first Mormon missionaries arrived in Kirtland. Rebecca listened to them with interest and attended all of the missionaries’ meetings; she even brought her children. Frederick attended as often as his medical practice would allow. The two would study, discuss, and learn together, but Frederick was less certain in his



commitment. Meanwhile Rebecca became convinced of the truthfulness of the gospel.

A family biographer later described Rebecca as a kind of Eve in the Garden of Eden: she was “the first to see the necessity” to step into full fellowship in the gospel covenant.⁴ She was baptized in October 1830.

Frederick still vacillated. Sometimes he wanted to leave the Church alone but in the end could not because he felt drawn back to that sacred, new book of scripture: the Book of Mormon. As the Spirit worked in him, he recognized the truthfulness of the gospel and followed Rebecca’s example by being baptized.

Dedicated Service

As the Church quickly became central to Frederick and Rebecca’s lives, the impact on their family was immediate. Frederick was ordained an elder right after his baptism and confirmation. The very next day, he enthusiastically accepted an assignment to leave within a few weeks to serve a mission with Oliver Cowdery. They anticipated the mission would last three weeks; in reality it became a 10-month trip to Missouri. His long absence from home was the first of many such periods for Rebecca. Because of Frederick’s missionary efforts and his calling into the First Presidency, he was frequently away. Rebecca, like many early Mormon women, spent long months tending their home and raising their children without the help of her husband.

Despite the work, Rebecca continued faithful and served willingly. The Prophet Joseph Smith and his family lodged in the Williamses' home for a time when the Smiths first moved to Kirtland. Rebecca proved loyal to the Prophet and his family as she cared for them through trying times. Once a mob came and surrounded the home looking for Joseph. Rebecca disguised Joseph in her bonnet and cloak. Joseph was able to leave the house and pass through the crowd to safety.

In March of 1832, Rebecca again provided invaluable aid to the Prophet when a mob burst into the John Johnson farm in Hiram, Ohio, and brutally assaulted Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. After beating Sidney senseless and attempting to pour poison down Joseph's throat, the mob tarred and feathered the Prophet. When Emma Smith saw her husband, she thought the tar was blood and fainted.⁵ Rebecca and Frederick spent that night peeling tar from Joseph's bleeding and torn body and caring for the Smith children. Their succor was helpful, as Joseph found the strength to preach the next morning.

Sharing the Gospel with Conviction

One of Rebecca's most abiding hopes was that her family, her father in particular, would accept the restored gospel and receive the joyous blessings of the faith. She had, like Lehi, tasted of the love of God and wanted to share it with those closest to her (see 1 Nephi 8:12). With that in mind, Rebecca eagerly wrote to her family about her

conversion and testimony and the great joy she felt as a member of the Church.

However, Rebecca's conversion infuriated her father. In his terse response he demanded that she leave the Church. But Rebecca would not be swayed. She responded, as a family historian describes, that "she was more firm than ever in her conviction of the truth of Mormon doctrines" and included her own powerful testimony.⁶ To her sorrow this letter did not produce the results she had hoped for. Her father threatened to disown her and vowed to cut off all communication with her if she did not leave the Church.

Still, Rebecca did not yield and continued her efforts to share the gospel. In 1834 she wrote another letter—the only one to survive—to her father, revealing the depth of her faith and the pain she felt that he refused to accept anything of the Mormons.

Her father had read newspaper reports attacking the Church, particularly with regard to the Book of Mormon and the testimony of the Three Witnesses, and tried to dissuade Rebecca on these accounts.

"It gives me pain to hear that your mind is so much disturbed about the Book of Mormon," she wrote. Quoting scripture from the Book of Mormon and from Joseph Smith's new revelations, Rebecca shared her witness of the Book of Mormon. She also explained that the book prophesied of the selection of three witnesses to it. As evidence, she quoted the ancient prophet Ether, who said that "in the mouth of

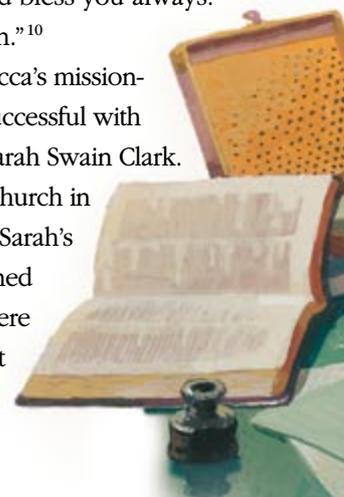
three witnesses" would the truth of the book "be established" (Ether 5:4).⁷

Rebecca then described how she had personally seen the Three Witnesses—David Whitmer, Martin Harris, and Oliver Cowdery—and heard them testify of having seen an angel and the gold plates. After defending their testimonies and character, she urged her father to further investigate the work. For, she wrote to her father, should "you and mother know the circumstances as we do in relation to this work, I am persuaded you would believe it."⁸

Echoing Moroni's promise at the end of the Book of Mormon, Rebecca pled that her family would ask God if "he would enlighten [their] minds in the way of truth." And then she planned to send a missionary "capable of teaching the Gospel as it is in Jesus," to further help them.⁹ In the end her father would have nothing to do with it.

Even her letters to her brother John—to whom Rebecca was particularly close—were returned unopened. On the back of one of the returned letters, John wrote, "Father forbids me read your letter, or to write to you. Goodbye and God bless you always. Your brother, John."¹⁰

However, Rebecca's missionary efforts were successful with her eldest sister, Sarah Swain Clark. Sarah joined the Church in Michigan in 1832. Sarah's daughters also joined the Church and were faithful throughout their lives.



Faithful to the End

No matter the heartache and pain Rebecca felt from her father's choices, she still loved him. She wrote: "My heart mourns for my relations according to the flesh. . . . I pray the Lord to comfort you in your last day with his Holy Spirit and may they be your best days. . . . I hope your mind will be composed concerning this work. Be assured that we feel firm in the cause knowing that the Lord is at the helm."¹¹

Rebecca had to contend not only with her father's disbelief but also with problems in her husband's commitment to the faith. During 1837 and 1838, her husband, Frederick, then a member of the First Presidency, was repeatedly at odds with other Church leaders. He even left the Church for a time and was excommunicated.

However, not long after, Frederick humbled himself, rejoined the Church, and died in full fellowship. We do not have a record of Rebecca's feelings at the time, but she would not regret her allegiance with

the Saints and remained committed.

When rumors of Frederick's dissent reached Rebecca's father in New York, Isaac hoped that Rebecca would renounce the faith as well. However, Rebecca sent him a letter that demonstrated her continued fidelity. After reading her response, Isaac slowly shook his head and said, "Not one word of repentance."¹²

Rebecca remained stalwart in her defense of Joseph Smith and the restored Church. And in spite of the sacrifices caused by choosing the Church over her father, Rebecca continued to honor him. She valued what her father had taught her, and she expressed her love and gratitude for him. She closed her 1834 letter noting that she would "ever remember the instruction . . . I have received from my beloved Father."¹³

In 1839 Rebecca's father died. Just three years later she lost her husband. Despite these painful difficulties, Rebecca's faith and courage endured. When the Saints trekked

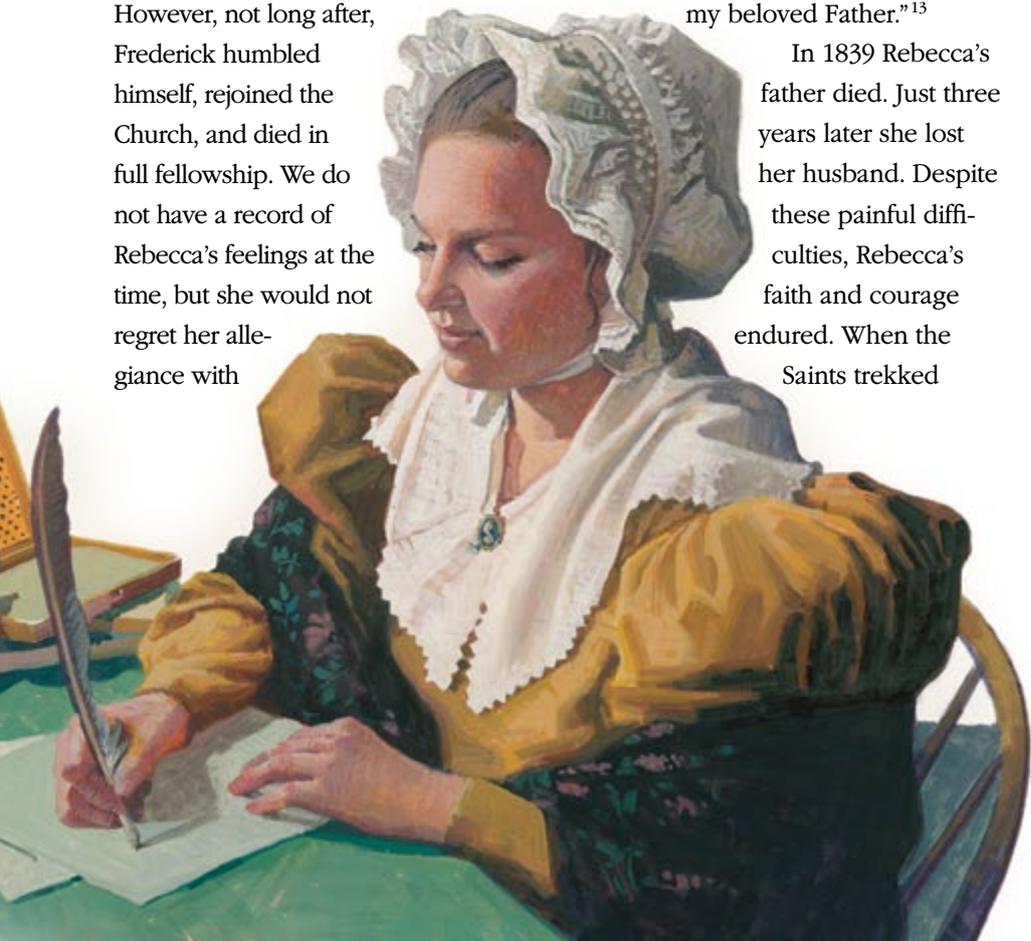
west to Utah, she traveled with her son Ezra's family and drove her own team. She later took charge of a farm on Mill Creek. When the Salt Lake Tabernacle was completed and the Saints were asked to donate what they could, she gave a set of silver spoons to be used in making trays for the sacrament table. And finally in 1860, though she was very frail, when President Brigham Young called upon her family to settle in remote Cache Valley, Utah, she willingly relocated once more—again driving her own team.

Rebecca died in Smithfield, Utah, on September 25, 1861. She stayed true to her beliefs, her knowledge of truth, and what she had experienced. She remained "steadfast and immovable" to the end (Mosiah 5:15). ■

Spelling and punctuation modernized.

NOTES

1. Rebecca Swain Williams to Isaac Fischer Swain, June 4, 1834, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
2. Biographical information comes from Nancy Clement Williams, *Meet Dr. Frederick Granger Williams . . . and His Wife Rebecca Swain Williams: Read Their True Story in the First Introduction—after 100 Years* (1951); and Frederick G. Williams, "Frederick Granger Williams of the First Presidency of the Church," *BYU Studies*, vol. 12, no. 3 (1972): 243–61.
3. Williams, *Meet Dr. Frederick Granger Williams*, 5.
4. Williams, *Meet Dr. Frederick Granger Williams*, 55.
5. *History of the Church*, 1:263.
6. Williams, *Meet Dr. Frederick Granger Williams*, 63.
7. See also Rebecca Williams letter of June 4, 1834.
8. Rebecca Williams letter of June 4, 1834.
9. Rebecca Williams letter of June 4, 1834.
10. In Williams, *Meet Dr. Frederick Granger Williams*, 63.
11. Rebecca Williams letter of June 4, 1834.
12. George Swain letter, Mar. 17, 1839, typescript, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
13. Rebecca Williams letter of June 4, 1834.





Carl Bloch

REACHING TOWARD HEAVEN



Through May 7, 2011, Brigham Young University Museum of Art is hosting *Carl Bloch: The Master's Hand*—an exhibit of Bloch's paintings and etchings. Admission is free, but visitors must register for tickets—at CarlBloch.byu.edu.

Nine years in the making, the exhibit highlights four larger-than-life altarpieces of Christ from churches in Denmark and Sweden, and one former altarpiece. This is the first time they have been shown together.

In 1973 President Thomas S. Monson traveled to Frederiksborg Castle in Hillerod, Denmark, to see 23 of Carl Bloch's paintings

of the life of Christ. Dawn Pheysey, curator of this exhibit quotes President Monson as saying, "When I see a Carl Bloch painting, I feel . . . the spirit of Jesus and His ministry comes alive. I want to follow [His example], and, as a result, the depiction becomes a vibrant lesson of life."¹

Many Latter-day Saints feel the same. In Bloch's own time, art critic Karl Madsen said of him that he "reached higher toward the great heaven of art" than anyone else. And Bloch said of his work, "God helps me . . . and then I'm calm."

THE DOUBTING THOMAS, 1881 (Far left)
Courtesy of Ugerlose Kirke, Ugerlose, Denmark

This altarpiece is based on John 20:25, when Thomas said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK AT BETHESDA, 1883 (Background)

This former altarpiece depicts the scene described in the fifth chapter of John: "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk" (John 5:8).

In September 2001, Brigham Young University acquired this painting from Bethesda Dansk Indre Mission in Copenhagen.



Latter-day Saints first saw 16 of Bloch's paintings of the Savior in full color in the November 1962 *Improvement Era*. Today copies of Bloch's paintings of Christ hang in LDS temples, meetinghouses, visitors' centers, and also appear in Church magazines, manuals, and other materials.

"Bloch's works illuminate the life and mission of the Savior with extraordinary power and insight," says Campbell Gray, director of the BYU museum. "His paintings affirm Christ's mission of salvation."

NOTES

1. All quotes are from the Salt Lake Tribune, Saturday, Nov. 6, 2010, C3 or the Deseret News, Sunday, Nov. 7, 2010, E3, except as noted.
2. Jay M. Todd, "The Life of Christ: Painted by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834–90)," *Ensign*, Jan. 1991, 30.
3. Doyle L. Green, "The Life of Jesus in Pictures," *The Improvement Era*, Nov. 1962, 820.

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, 1878–79 (Left)

Courtesy of Sankt Hans Kirke, Odense, Denmark

Jay M. Todd wrote, "In Carl Bloch's work we see the spirit of that which John the beloved wrote of Jesus:

*'In him was life; and the life was the light of men' (John 1:4)."*²

THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS, 1863 (Below) Courtesy of Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, © SMK Foto.

"When Jesus learned that Jairus's daughter was dead, He said, "Be not afraid, only believe." At her home, He said, "the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." Then he took the hand of the twelve-year-old girl and said, "Arise," and she "arose" (see Mark 5:36, 39, 41–42).





CHRISTUS CONSOLATOR, 1881
 (Above) Courtesy of Sofia Albertina Kyrka, Landskrona parish, Church of Sweden

"It was [Bloch's] tender and sensitive soul that defined his ability to portray the plights of others with kind consideration," says Dawn Pheysey, "and his deep-seated faith that enabled him to render compelling images of the Savior with devotion and love."

CHRIST BLESSING THE LITTLE CHILD, 1873 (Right) Courtesy of Sankt Nikolai Kirke, Holbaek, Denmark

Bloch's "powerful use of light and shadow, . . . his accurate draftsmanship and the all but perfect structural qualities of his figures, . . . give a highly realistic quality to his paintings," wrote Doyle Green.³





COURTESY BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART

CARL HEINRICH BLOCH
Self-portrait, 1886

- Born in 1834 in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- At 15, admitted to the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts.
- At 25, received a travel scholarship to Rome, where he painted his first masterpiece—*The Liberation of Prometheus*.
- At 31, commissioned to create 23 paintings for the King's Oratory chapel at Frederiksborg Castle, which took him 14 years to complete.
- At 34, married Alma Trepka while in Rome. The happy and prosperous couple had eight children.
- Commissioned to paint eight large-scale altarpieces.
- Died in 1890 leaving behind more than 250 paintings and 75 etchings.





By Elder D. Todd
Christofferson

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



TO ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM

When we always remember the Savior, we can “cheerfully do all things that lie in our power,” confident that His power and love for us will see us through.

The sacramental prayers confirm that one of the central purposes of the sacrament as instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ is that we might “always remember him” (D&C



20:77, 79). Remembering the Savior obviously includes remembering His Atonement, which is symbolically represented by the bread and water as emblems of His suffering and death. We must never forget what He did for us, for without His Atonement and Resurrection, life

would have no meaning. With His Atonement and Resurrection, however, our lives have eternal, divine possibilities.

I wish to elaborate on three aspects of what it means to “always remem-

ber him”: first, seeking to know and follow His will; second, recognizing and accepting our obligation to answer to Christ for every thought, word, and action; and third, living with faith and without fear so that we can always look to the Savior for the help we need.

You and I can put Christ at the center of our lives and become one with Him as He is one with the Father. We can begin by stripping everything out of our lives and then putting it back together in priority order with the Savior at the center.



1. Seek to know and follow the will of Christ just as He sought the will of the Father.

The sacramental blessing on the bread commits us to be willing to take upon us the name of the Son “and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given [us]” (D&C 20:77). It would also be appropriate to read this covenant as “always remember Him to keep His commandments.” This is how He always remembered the Father. As He said, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek

not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me” (John 5:30).

Jesus achieved perfect unity with the Father by submitting Himself, both body and spirit, to the will of the Father. Referring to His Father, Jesus said, “I do always those things that please him” (John 8:29). Because it was the Father’s will, Jesus submitted even to death, “the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father” (Mosiah 15:7). His focus on the Father is one of the principal reasons Jesus’s ministry had such clarity and power.

In the same way, you and I can put Christ

at the center of our lives and become one with Him as He is one with the Father (see John 17:20–23). We can begin by stripping everything out of our lives and then putting it back together in priority order with the Savior at the center. We should first put in place the things that make it possible to always remember Him—frequent prayer and scripture study, thoughtful study of apostolic teachings, weekly preparation to partake of the sacrament worthily, Sunday worship, and recording and remembering what the Spirit and experience teach us about discipleship.

Other things may come to your mind particularly suited to you at this point in your life. Once we make adequate time and means for these matters in centering our lives in Christ, we can begin to add other responsibilities and things of value, such as education and family responsibilities. In this way the essential will not be crowded out of our lives by the merely good, and things of lesser value will take a lower priority or fall away altogether.

I recognize that aligning our will to that of Jesus Christ as He aligned His will to the Father's is something not easily achieved. President Brigham Young (1801–77) spoke understandingly of our challenge when he said:

“After all that has been said and done, after he has led this people so long, do you not perceive that there is a lack of confidence in our God? Can you perceive it in yourselves? You may ask, [Brother] Brigham, do you perceive it in yourself? I do, I can see that I yet lack confidence, to some extent, in him whom I trust.—Why? Because I have not the power, in consequence of that which the fall has brought upon me. . . .

“ . . . Something rises up within me, at times[,] that measurably draws a dividing line

between my interest and the interest of my Father in heaven; something that makes my interest and the interest of my Father in heaven not precisely one.

“I know that we should feel and understand, as far as possible, as far as fallen nature will let us, as far as we can get faith and knowledge to understand ourselves, that the interest of that God whom we serve is our interest, and that we have no other, neither in time nor in eternity.”¹

Though it may not be easy, we can consistently press forward with faith in the Lord. I can attest that over time our desire and capacity to always remember and follow the Savior will grow. We should patiently work toward that end and pray always for the discernment and divine help we need. Nephi counseled, “I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul” (2 Nephi 32:9).

I witnessed a simple example of this kind of prayer when Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and I were assigned to conduct a videoconference interview of a couple in another country. Shortly before going into the studio, I reviewed once again the information we had collected about the couple and felt I was prepared for the interview. A few minutes before the appointed time, I saw Elder Oaks sitting alone with head bowed. In a moment he raised his head and said, “I was just finishing my prayer in preparation for this interview. We will need the gift of discernment.” He had not neglected the most important preparation, a prayer to consecrate our performance for our good and the Lord's glory.

Whatever we “get away with” in life or manage to hide from other people, we must still face when the inevitable day comes that we are lifted up before Jesus Christ, the God of pure and perfect justice.



2. Prepare to answer to Christ for every thought, word, and action.

The scriptures make it clear that there will be a great day of judgment when the Lord will stand to judge the nations (see 3 Nephi 27:16) and when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is the Christ (see Romans 14:11; Mosiah 27:31; D&C 76:110). The individual nature and extent of that judgment are described by Alma in the Book of Mormon:

“For our words will condemn us, yea, all our works will condemn us; we shall not be found spotless; and our thoughts will also condemn us; and in this awful state we shall not dare to look up to our God; and we would fain be glad if we could command the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us to hide us from his presence.

“But this cannot be; we must come forth and stand before him in his glory, and in his power, and in his might, majesty, and dominion, and acknowledge to our everlasting shame that all his judgments are just; that he is just in all his works, and that he is merciful unto the children of men, and that he has all power to save every man that believeth on his name and bringeth forth fruit meet for repentance” (Alma 12:14–15).

When the Savior defined His gospel, this judgment was central to it. He said:

“Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me.

“And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had

been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

“And for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works” (3 Nephi 27:13–15).

Being “lifted up upon the cross” is, of course, a symbolic way of referring to the Atonement of Jesus Christ by which He satisfied the demands that justice may have upon each of us. In other words, by His suffering and death in Gethsemane and on Golgotha, He paid all that justice could demand of us for our sins. He therefore stands in the place of justice and is the personification of justice. Just as God is love, God is also justice. Our debts and obligations now run to Jesus Christ. He, therefore, has the right to judge us.

That judgment, He states, is based on our works. The especially “good news” of His gospel is that He offers the gift of forgiveness conditioned on our repentance. Therefore, if our works include the works of repentance, He forgives our sins and errors. If we reject the gift of pardon, refusing to repent, then the penalties of justice that He now represents are imposed. He said, “For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; but if they would not repent they must suffer even as I” (D&C 19:16–17).

Always remembering Him, therefore, means that we always remember that nothing is hidden from Him. There is no part of our lives, whether act, word, or even thought, that can be kept from the knowledge of the Father and the Son. No cheating on a test, no instance of shoplifting, no lustful fantasy or indulgence, and no lie is missed, overlooked, hidden, or forgotten. Whatever we “get away with” in life or manage to hide from other people, we must still face when the inevitable day comes that we are lifted up before Jesus Christ, the God of pure and perfect justice.

This reality has helped impel me at different times either to repentance or to avoid sin altogether. On one

occasion in connection with a home sale, there was an error in the documentation, and I found myself in a position where I was legally entitled to get more money from the buyer. My real estate agent asked if I wanted to keep the money since it was my right to do so. I thought about facing the Lord, the personification of justice, and trying to explain that I had a legal right to take advantage of the buyer and his mistake. I couldn’t see myself being very convincing, especially since I would probably be asking for mercy for myself at the same time. I knew I could not live with myself if I were so dishonorable as to keep the money. I replied to the agent that we would stick with the bargain as we all understood it originally. It is worth a great deal more to me than any sum of money to know that I have nothing to repent of in that transaction.

In my youth I once was negligent in a way that caused a minor injury to one of my brothers. I did not own up to my stupidity at the time, and no one ever knew about my role in the matter. Years later I was praying that God would reveal to me anything in my life that needed correction so that I might be found more acceptable before Him, and this incident came to my mind. I had forgotten about it, but the Spirit whispered that this was an unresolved transgression I needed to confess. I called my brother, apologized, and asked for his forgiveness, which he promptly and generously gave. My embarrassment and regret would have been less had I apologized when the accident happened.

It was interesting and significant to me that the Lord had not forgotten about that event of the distant past even though I had. Sins do not take care of themselves or simply fade away. Sins do not get “swept under the rug” in the eternal economy of things. They must be dealt with, and the wonderful thing is that because of the Savior’s atoning grace, they can be dealt with in a much happier and less painful manner than directly satisfying offended justice ourselves.

We should also take heart when thinking of a judgment in which nothing is overlooked because this also means that no act of obedience, no kindness, and no good deed however small is ever forgotten, and no corresponding blessing is ever withheld.

We know that challenges, disappointments, and sorrows will come to each of us in different ways, but we also know that in the end, because of our divine Advocate, all things can be made to work together for our good.



3. Fear not and look to the Savior for help.

In the infant days of the Restoration, Jesus counseled and comforted Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, who were working to translate the Book of Mormon and who would soon have the priesthood conferred upon them. Joseph was 23 years old at the time, and Oliver was 22. Persecution and other obstacles were frequent if not constant. In these conditions, in April 1829 the Lord spoke these words to them:

“Fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail.

“Behold, I do not condemn you; go your ways and sin no more; perform with soberness the work which I have commanded you.

“Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.

“Behold the wounds which pierced my side, and also the prints of the nails in my hands and feet; be faithful, keep my commandments, and ye shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. Amen” (D&C 6:34–37).

Looking unto the Savior in every thought is, of course, another way of saying “always remember him.” As we do, we need not doubt or fear. The Savior reminded Joseph and Oliver as He reminds us that through His Atonement He has been given all power in heaven and earth (see Matthew 28:18) and has both the capacity and will to protect us and minister to our needs. We need only be faithful, and we can rely implicitly on Him.

Preceding the comforting revelation to Joseph and Oliver, the Prophet endured a poignant, painful experience that taught him to look to the Savior and not fear the opinions, pressures, and threats of men.

In June 1828 Joseph allowed Martin Harris to take the first 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to show to family members in Palmyra, New York. After Martin failed to return as promised, an anxious Joseph traveled by stagecoach to his parents' home in Manchester Township, New York. The Prophet immediately sent for Martin. When Martin arrived, he admitted that he did not have the manuscript or know where it was.

Joseph exclaimed: "Oh! My God, my God. . . . All is lost, is lost. What shall I do? I have sinned. It is I that tempted the wrath of God by asking him for that which I had no right to ask. . . . Of what rebuke am I not worthy from the angel of the Most High?"

The next day the Prophet returned to Harmony. Once there, he said, "I commenced humbling myself in mighty prayer before the Lord . . . that if possible I might obtain mercy at his hands and be forgiven of all that I had done which was contrary to his will."²

After chastising Joseph for fearing man more than God, the Lord told him:

"Thou art Joseph, and thou wast chosen to do the work of the Lord, but because of transgression, if thou art not aware thou wilt fall.

"But remember, God is merciful; therefore, repent of that which thou hast done which is contrary to the commandment which I gave you, and thou art still chosen, and art again called to the work" (D&C 3:9–10).

"For a time, the Lord took the Urim and Thummim and the plates from Joseph. But these things were soon restored to him. 'The angel was rejoiced when he gave me back the Urim and Thummim,' the Prophet recalled, 'and said that God was pleased with my faithfulness and humility, and loved me for my penitence and diligence in prayer, in the which I had performed my duty so well as to . . . be able to enter upon the work of translation again.' As Joseph moved forward in the great work before him, he was now fortified

by the sweet feelings of receiving the Lord's forgiveness and a renewed determination to do His will."³

The Prophet's determination to rely upon God and not fear what men could do became fixed after this experience. His life thereafter was a shining example of what it means to remember Christ by relying upon His power and mercy. Joseph expressed this understanding during his very difficult and trying incarceration at Liberty, Missouri, in these words:

"You know, brethren, that a very large ship is benefited very much by a very small helm in the time of a storm, by being kept workways with the wind and the waves.

"Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed" (D&C 123:16–17).

In short, to "always remember him" means that we do not live our lives in fear. We know that challenges, disappointments, and sorrows will come to each of us in different ways, but we also know that in the end, because of our divine Advocate, all things can be made to work together for our good (see D&C 90:24; 98:3). It is the faith expressed so simply by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) when he would say, "Things will work out."⁴ When we always remember the Savior, we can "cheerfully do all things that lie in our power," confident that His power and love for us will see us through.

May we always remember Him—"that [we] may always have his spirit to be with [us]" (D&C 20:77). I bear my witness of the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. I bear witness of the reality of the living, resurrected Lord. I bear witness of the infinite and personal love of the Father and the Son for each of us, and I pray that we will live in constant remembrance of that love in all its expressions. ■

From an address delivered at Brigham Young University–Idaho on January 27, 2009. To listen to the address in English, visit web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches/default.aspx.

NOTES

1. Brigham Young, "Discourse," *Deseret News*, Sept. 10, 1856, 212.
2. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 69, 71.
3. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 71.
4. In Jeffrey R. Holland, "President Gordon B. Hinckley: Stalwart and Brave He Stands," *Liahona*, June 1995 special edition, 6; *Ensign*, June 1995, 4.

THE Purifying Power OF GETHSEMANE



**By Elder Bruce R.
McConkie (1915–85)**

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

Bruce R. McConkie was born on July 29, 1915, in Michigan, USA. He was sustained to the First Council of the Seventy on October 6, 1946, and was ordained an Apostle on October 12, 1972. He died on April 19, 1985, in Salt Lake City, Utah. This address was delivered in general conference on April 6, 1985.

I feel, and the Spirit seems to accord, that the most important doctrine I can declare, and the most powerful testimony I can bear, is of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

His Atonement is the most transcendent event that ever has or ever will occur from Creation's dawn through all the ages of a never-ending eternity.

It is the supreme act of goodness and grace that only a god could perform. Through it, all of the terms and conditions of the Father's eternal plan of salvation became operative.

Through it are brought to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Through it, all men are saved from death, hell, the devil, and endless torment.

And through it, all who believe and obey the glorious gospel of God, all who are true and faithful and overcome the world, all who suffer for Christ and His word, all who are chastened and scourged in the cause of Him whose we are—all shall become as their Maker and sit with Him on His throne and reign with Him forever in everlasting glory.

In speaking of these wondrous things, I shall use my own words, though you may think they are the words of scripture, words spoken by other apostles and prophets.

True it is they were first proclaimed by others, but they are now mine, for the Holy Spirit of God has borne witness to me that they are true, and it is now as though the Lord had revealed them to me in the first instance. I have thereby heard His voice and know His word.

In the Garden of Gethsemane

Two thousand years ago, outside Jerusalem's walls, there was a pleasant garden spot, Gethsemane by name, where Jesus and His intimate friends were wont to retire for pondering and prayer.

There Jesus taught His disciples the doctrines of the kingdom, and all of them communed with Him who is the Father of us all, in whose ministry they were engaged and on whose errand they served.

This sacred spot, like Eden where Adam dwelt, like Sinai from whence Jehovah gave His laws, like Calvary where the Son of God gave His life a ransom for many, this holy ground is where the sinless Son of the Everlasting Father took upon Himself the sins of all men on condition of repentance.



these infinite agonies—this suffering beyond compare—continued for some three or four hours.

His Arrest, Trial, and Scourging

After this—His body then wrenched and drained of strength—He confronted Judas and the other incarnate devils, some from the very Sanhedrin itself; and He was led away with a rope around His neck, as a common criminal, to be judged by the arch-criminals, who as Jews sat in Aaron's seat and who as Romans wielded Caesar's power.

They took Him to Annas, to Caiaphas, to Pilate, to Herod, and back to Pilate. He was accused, cursed, and smitten. Their foul saliva ran down His face as vicious blows further weakened His pain-engulfed body.

With reeds of wrath they rained blows upon His back. Blood ran down His face as a crown of thorns pierced His trembling brow.

But above it all He was scourged, scourged with 40 stripes save one, scourged with a multi-thonged whip into whose leather strands sharp bones and cutting metals were woven.

Many died from scourging alone, but He rose from the sufferings of the scourge that He

We do not know, we cannot tell, no mortal mind can conceive the full import of what Christ did in Gethsemane.

We know He sweat great goutts of blood from every pore as He drained the dregs of that bitter cup His Father had given Him.

We know He suffered, both body and spirit, more than it is possible for man to suffer, except it be unto death.

We know that in some way, incomprehensible to us, His suffering satisfied the demands of justice, ransomed penitent souls

from the pains and penalties of sin, and made mercy available to those who believe in His holy name.

We know that He lay prostrate upon the ground as the pains and agonies of an infinite burden caused Him to tremble and would that He might not drink the bitter cup.

We know that an angel came from the courts of glory to strengthen Him in His ordeal, and we suppose it was mighty Michael, who foremost felt that mortal man might be.

As near as we can judge,

No mortal mind can conceive the full import of what Christ did in Gethsemane.

might die an ignominious death upon the cruel cross of Calvary.

Then He carried His own cross until He collapsed from the weight and pain and mounting agony of it all.

Upon the Cross

Finally, on a hill called Calvary—again, it was outside Jerusalem’s walls—while helpless disciples looked on and felt the agonies of near death in their own bodies, the Roman soldiers laid Him upon the cross.

With great mallets they drove spikes of iron through His feet and hands and wrists. Truly He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.

Then the cross was raised that all might see and gape and curse and deride. This they did, with evil venom, for three hours from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Then the heavens grew black. Darkness covered the land for the space of three hours, as it did among the Nephites. There was a mighty storm, as though the very God of nature was in agony.

And truly He was, for while He was hanging on the cross for another three hours, from noon to 3:00 p.m., all the infinite agonies and merciless pains of Gethsemane recurred.

And, finally, when the atoning agonies had taken their toll—when the victory had been won, when the Son of God had fulfilled the will of His Father in all things—then He said, “It is finished” (John 19:30), and He voluntarily gave up the ghost.

In the Spirit World

As the peace and comfort of a merciful death freed Him from the pains and sorrows of mortality, He entered the paradise of God.

When He had made His soul an offering for sin, He was prepared to see His seed, according to the messianic word.

These, consisting of all the holy prophets and faithful Saints from ages past; these, comprising all who had taken upon them His name, and who, being spiritually begotten by Him, had become His sons and His daughters, even as it is with us; all these were assembled in

the spirit world, there to see His face and hear His voice.

After some 38 or 40 hours—three days as the Jews measured time—our blessed Lord came to the Arimathean’s tomb, where His partially embalmed body had been placed by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

His Resurrection

Then, in a way incomprehensible to us, He took up that body which had not yet seen corruption and arose in that glorious immortality which made Him like His resurrected Father.

He then received all power in heaven and on earth, obtained eternal exaltation, appeared unto Mary Magdalene and many others, and ascended into heaven, there to sit down on the right hand of God the Father Almighty and to reign forever in eternal glory.

His rising from death on the third day crowned the Atonement. Again, in some way incomprehensible to us, the effects of His Resurrection pass upon all men so that all shall rise from the grave.

As Adam brought death, so Christ brought life; as Adam is the father of mortality, so Christ is the father of immortality.

And without both, mortality and immortality, man cannot work out his salvation and ascend to those heights beyond the skies where gods and angels dwell forever in eternal glory.

A Knowledge of the Atonement

Now, the Atonement of Christ is the most basic and fundamental doctrine of the gospel, and it is the least understood of all our revealed truths.

Many of us have a superficial knowledge and rely upon the Lord and His goodness to see us through the trials and perils of life.

But if we are to have faith like Enoch and Elijah, we must believe what they believed, know what they knew, and live as they lived.

May I invite you to join with me in gaining a sound and sure knowledge of the Atonement.

We must cast aside the philosophies of men and the



immortality and eternal life.

If there had been no Fall of Adam, by which cometh death, there could have been no Atonement of Christ, by which cometh life.

His Atoning Blood

And now, as pertaining to this perfect Atonement, wrought by the shedding of the blood of God—I testify that it took place in Gethsemane and at Golgotha, and as pertaining to Jesus Christ, I testify that He is the Son of the living God and was crucified for the sins of the world. He is our Lord, our God, and our King. This I know of myself, independent of any other person.

I am one of His witnesses, and in a coming day I shall feel the nail marks in His hands and in His feet and shall wet His feet with my tears.

But I shall not know any better than I know now that He is God's Almighty Son, that He is our Savior and Redeemer, and that salvation comes in and through His atoning blood and in no other way.

God grant that all of us may walk in the light, as God our Father is in the light, so that, according to the promises, the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, will cleanse us from all sin. ■

Subheads added; capitalization, punctuation, and spelling standardized.

wisdom of the wise and hearken to that Spirit which is given to us to guide us into all truth.

We must search the scriptures, accepting them as the mind and will and voice of the Lord and the very power of God unto salvation.

As we read, ponder, and pray, there will come into our minds a view of the three gardens of God—the Garden of Eden, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the Garden of the Empty Tomb, where Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene.

The Creation, Fall, and Atonement

In Eden we will see all things created in a paradisiacal state—without death, without procreation, without probationary experiences.

We will come to know that such a creation, now unknown

to man, was the only way to provide for the Fall.

We will then see Adam and Eve, the first man and the first woman, step down from their state of immortal and paradisiacal glory to become the first mortal flesh on earth.

Mortality, including as it does procreation and death, will enter the world. And because of transgression, a probationary estate of trial and testing will begin.

Then in Gethsemane we will see the Son of God ransom man from the temporal and spiritual death that came to us because of the Fall.

And finally, before an empty tomb, we will come to know that Christ our Lord has burst the bands of death and stands forever triumphant over the grave.

Thus, Creation is father to the Fall; and by the Fall came mortality and death; and by Christ came

The effects of His Resurrection pass upon all men so that all shall rise from the grave.



Bringing clean water to impoverished rural areas is just one of the life-changing projects supported by members of the Church through LDS Philanthropies.

G BLESSED TO GIVE

By Evelyn Jeffries

How the work of LDS Charities is blessing countless lives around the world—including those of the givers.

John and Elizabeth (real names withheld by request) live in a modest home with their six young children. John worked as an electrical engineer for a company in which he purchased a small amount of stock. Several years later, John and Elizabeth redeemed the stock for far more than they had paid. About that same time, their last child was born. When the child didn't breathe and couldn't cry, his life was saved through neonatal resuscitation. Elizabeth says, "We were so grateful the doctors and nurses knew what to do and had the wherewithal to help our child to live. We realized we could have lost him."

When the stock sale proceeds arrived, John and Elizabeth decided they wanted to help somebody else. An article in the *Church News* described how neonatal

resuscitation could save many babies through training and technology. John also recalled that while on his mission in Argentina, he had served a family that had asked for a blessing for their sick baby. John was appalled by conditions at the hospital when he went to give the baby a blessing. The baby later died, and John felt bad that the child couldn't be saved.

With John's mission memories and their own recent experience in mind, the couple donated half of their stock sale earnings to help newborn children in developing countries. Elizabeth explains: "We were trying to say thank you to Heavenly Father for the things he'd already given us. We're excited that a relatively small amount of money can make a huge difference in another country. We're so impressed by what's going on. I hope at some point that we can do something else."

LDS Philanthropies

Elizabeth and John made their donation through LDS Philanthropies, a department of the Office of the Presiding Bishopric responsible for encouraging and facilitating voluntary donations to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its charities. These donations are made by members who feel that they can afford to give after paying tithes and other offerings. Those charities include Humanitarian Services, the Missionary Fund, the Perpetual Education Fund, the Temple Patron and Construction Funds, Church and Family History, and the four LDS universities and colleges.

McClain Bybee, Managing Director of LDS Philanthropies, explains that the role of LDS Philanthropies is to be “the matchmakers—to learn what the donors’ dreams are and what cause they want to support, and then match them with that program in the Church that can help them fulfill their dream. The Church is the charitable organization that sponsors these programs, the Brethren approve these programs for the support required, and the various Church institutions are the vehicles for carrying out that work. It’s an amazing and effective system. And it’s done the Lord’s way.”

Those who donate through LDS Philanthropies come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some are well-known and might be considered wealthy. But many come from modest backgrounds and live otherwise ordinary lives in ordinary neighborhoods. What distinguishes them is that when the Lord has blessed them beyond what they really need, their eyes and hearts have turned to those with unmet needs. They show how ordinary people can turn their own blessings into blessings for others.

“I’ve Always Had Enough”

Leah Christensen grew up on a farm in Bloomington, Idaho, USA. Her parents barely had enough to support the family of 10, much less to finance college. In 1949, Leah borrowed \$200 from her former 8th-grade teacher

“It’s an amazing and effective system. And it’s done in the Lord’s way.”

to pay the first semester’s tuition at LDS Business College in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA. Although a “nervous little country girl,” she loved the one-year course. After she completed it, College President Kenneth Bennion recommended her for a secretarial position with the Dean of Students at then Utah State College. Leah accepted the position as she had discovered her natural abilities and her love of learning. She went on to earn a degree in business education and then a master’s degree.

Years later when she was widowed for the second time, Leah tithed the proceeds from her husband’s insurance settlement and then made a significant gift to the LDS Business

College. A matching donor doubled the amount of her gift, and Leah hopes to increase that endowment even more. Now over 80 years old, she says, “Those nine months with LDS Business College played such a significant role in my life. I’d like others to have the same success I had as a result of borrowing that \$200 from my 8th-grade teacher. I’ve always had enough, and those who have enough



PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE LEWIS, BYU-IDAHO

should share with those who don't. I've always felt the blessings from giving to others are greater than those I'd receive otherwise. I'm not a wealthy woman, but if there's anything left, it will go to [charity]. Our wealth is not ours. It belongs to the Lord."

"I Feel Like a Different Person"

George (real name withheld by request), a retired research physicist, says his charitable giving began "for selfish reasons." Following his wife's death in 2002, he wrote their love story. In doing so, he realized her greatest gift was charity. George felt he needed to acquire her same gift. The scripture that motivated him was Moroni 7:47: "Charity is the pure love of Christ . . . and whoso is found possessed of [charity] at the last day, it shall be well with him."



PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN ANDREWS, PERPETUAL EDUCATION FUND

Above and left: Advanced education, vocational or academic, is key to both family financial security and the capacity to make a greater contribution in the community.

George was interested in the Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) proposed by President Hinckley in 2001.¹ So he started donating to the PEF on a regular basis. He also started traveling to Central and South America, where he was struck by how happy the people were, even though they often had very little. On a trip to Machu Picchu, Peru,



SACRIFICE IS MADE SWEET TO US

"I pray that we will freely give. I pray that we will be touched by the feelings of others, that we will give without feelings of compulsion or expectation of gain, and that we will know that sacrifice is made sweet to us when we treasure the joy it brings to another heart."

President Henry B. Eyring, "Giving with Joy," *Liahona*, December, 1996, 14.

George met a Peruvian woman and little girl. He gave a sack of candy to the little girl. She carefully pulled out pieces of candy, and gave one to each person present before she finally put one in her own mouth. George couldn't get the incident out of his mind. He realized: "That was my Father in Heaven telling me I had a long way to go. I call it 'The Parable of the Little Peruvian Girl.' Sharing with others before yourself is obviously important to the Lord." After that George began to donate regularly to Humanitarian Services causes.

George feels he has been blessed with greater patience and love for his fellow man as a result of his charitable giving. Referring to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (see Luke 10:30–37), he said the Lord wants us to act—not just feel charity. Another blessing is the growth of his testimony, specifically the sure knowledge that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. The Holy Ghost has borne witness to him of that. George says, "It is important for people to use their agency. This is how I use mine. Charitable giving reminds us of what He did. His whole life was giving, including His ultimate sacrifice. I hope I've changed. I think I have. I feel like a different person."

From Generation to Generation

William (Bill) and Beth Brotherson were farmers and ranchers in the Uintah Basin in Utah, USA, and taught their children to give through their example. They supported many young people on missions. Bill loved studying about the setting of the Savior's life and teachings in the Holy Land. Although he never personally traveled there, Bill developed a love for the region's past spiritual history and its future significance. "It would have been wonderful to hear Jesus as he gave his Sermon on the Mount and to



Humanitarian projects supported by LDS Philanthropies bring improved health and nutrition through initiatives like measles vaccinations and promoting local food production.

walk with him as he journeyed in Palestine,” Bill once said. “But fortunately we do not need to have been there in order to follow him today. His message is universal.”

It might seem that there would be little, if any, connection between the lives of Bill and Beth Brotherson in a remote farming community in rural eastern Utah and the Church’s interests in the Holy Land. But the Lord touched the hearts of the Brothersons, prompting them to contribute generously to the creation on the Mount of Olives of a memorial to Elder Orson Hyde, who had dedicated the land of Israel for the latter-day gathering. Theirs was a quiet and crowning gift of consecration. When Bill died, his children, learning from the example he set, funded a scholarship in their father’s name.

One of his sons, Jack Brotherson, a retired BYU botany professor, and his wife, Karen, who taught in the English department, continued to give when the opportunity presented itself. In 1990 their oldest son, Mark, was killed in an auto accident. Shortly after his death, they learned Mark, who was unmarried, had a \$50,000 life insurance policy from a job he had recently taken. As the beneficiaries on the policy, the Brothersons endowed a scholarship in the History Department in Mark’s name. Also, the Brothersons have helped finance the missions of many young people from their stake, continuing the legacy left by their parents.

Tuned in to the Vision

Like the Brothersons, Kim and Jennifer Bertin have made charitable giving a family affair. A successful orthopedic surgeon, Kim was attending a medical conference at a lavish resort in Texas, USA, when the thought struck him: “Does all this really matter?” He and his wife met with an estate attorney to set up a family foundation for charitable giving. Their five children sit on the board, and as a group they make decisions about donating to various charities. The children continually search out and research causes. Jennifer says, “You haven’t affected charity until you pass it on to the next generation. Our children are ‘tuned in,’ with a vision that has extended past their daily lives.” Kim adds, “We were concerned about how to instill in our children a desire to help others.” Kim and Jennifer feel they have done this by teaching their children to give to those in need.

In 2008, the Bertins made a trip to Uganda and Kenya to see firsthand the results of some of their donations. Jennifer compiled a beautiful scrapbook of narration and photographs showing a water treatment facility, gardens, and farms with cows, pigs, and chickens—all designed to raise standards of living and encourage self-reliance. Kim described the experience as “Christmas,” a “spectacular eye-opening” as to what the Church is doing with the donations through service missionaries. He also remarked



on the incredible efficiencies of the administration of the projects. Kim and Jennifer's observations motivated them to give even more and to encourage others to donate.

The Bertins feel they have been blessed as a result of donating to Church causes. In addition to their close ties with their children, they feel that as they have recognized others in need and done something about it, they have come to a greater realization of their own blessings.

Even small donations can bless others' lives. Jennifer said, "Everyone can find a little bit to give in a way they haven't thought of before. . . . If one million people donate \$5 each, the resulting \$5 million will have an unbelievable impact. Everyone can be part of the unbelievable."

Giving the Lord's Way

Ron Taylor, communications manager for LDS Philanthropies, says, "Motivation for giving comes from a wide variety of reasons, but when we follow the Spirit's promptings to give, we find great joy and spiritual strength in doing so. At the same time, the Lord uses those who consistently give as a channel to bless the lives of others. He blesses them with an abundance—whatever that may be. All are edified. It's a wonderful partnership with the Lord." ■

NOTE

1. See Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Perpetual Education Fund," *Ensign*, May 2001, 51.

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THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GIVE

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) said: "Our Heavenly Father expects that we do more with our riches than build larger barns to hold them. Will you consider what more you can do to build the kingdom of God? Will you consider what more you can do to bless the lives of others and bring light and hope into their lives?"¹

Donations often come not from prosperous business people or large philanthropic foundations and trusts, but from devoted members who have lived carefully and frugally, conscious of their stewardship over the gifts the Lord has given them. Making a donation can be as simple as writing a check and filling out one or more of the "Other Offerings" entries on tithing slips, or as complex as establishing a testamentary trust or charitable foundation. Some donors investigate the various approved opportunities online and make a donation through ldsp.org.

Many donors use Facebook and other online social networking tools to combine resources to increase donations to causes within the Church.

Donors may give cash or any number of other assets, such as stock or real estate. Timing of gifts may vary. Donors may wish to make a gift now, or they may want to consider planning a gift for the future. LDS Philanthropies, along with the family's professional advisors, can help donors determine a course that best fits their situation. There are no costs associated with LDSP services, and 100 percent of every gift goes to the institution and purpose intended by those making the gift.

For information on donating to LDS Philanthropies call 1-800-525-8074, e-mail at ldspanthropies@ldschurch.org, or go to ldsp.org.

NOTE

1. Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Earthly Debts, Heavenly Debts," *Ensign*, May 2004, 40.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY

Tithing and Other		Ward
Date		
Name (last, first, middle). Use the same		
Full address		
Tithing	Fast offering	\$
Ward missionary		
General missionary		
Book of Mormon		
Humanitarian aid		
Temple construction		
Perpetual education		
Other (specify)		

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THE CHURCH

I didn't want to have anything to do with the Church when my wife asked if the missionaries could teach our sons. But I didn't say no because she was already a member.

When the missionaries started coming to our home twice a week, I would go to my friend's house next door. My friend was a strong member of another Christian church. Every time I visited with him, he wanted to talk about the Bible. I told him I was not into that sort of thing and didn't want to study religion. But he kept trying to convince me, and I finally said yes. So for a long time I studied the Bible with my friend while

the missionaries taught my boys.

One day it was time for the missionaries to come to our house. But instead of leaving, I decided to stay in the next room. As the missionaries started teaching my sons, I found myself wanting to hear more. I moved closer and closer to the door to hear better. They were teaching my sons about apostles and prophets.

Later I realized I wanted to learn more. I spoke with the missionaries

and decided to take the discussions from them—privately. My wife was always there, but no one else knew about it.

So when the missionaries came to teach my

boys twice a week, I would go to my friend's house. Then, on a different day, they would teach me.

One day when my friend said something bad about the Church, I refuted what he said. Like many people in the Marshall Islands, he did not know much about the Church and misunderstood some things Latter-day Saints believe. When he said other negative things, I again defended the Church.

That's how it went for seven months. Then one day I realized that the Holy Ghost had been confirming to me that everything the missionaries were teaching me was true. I realized I needed to get baptized, even though I still knew so little about the gospel.

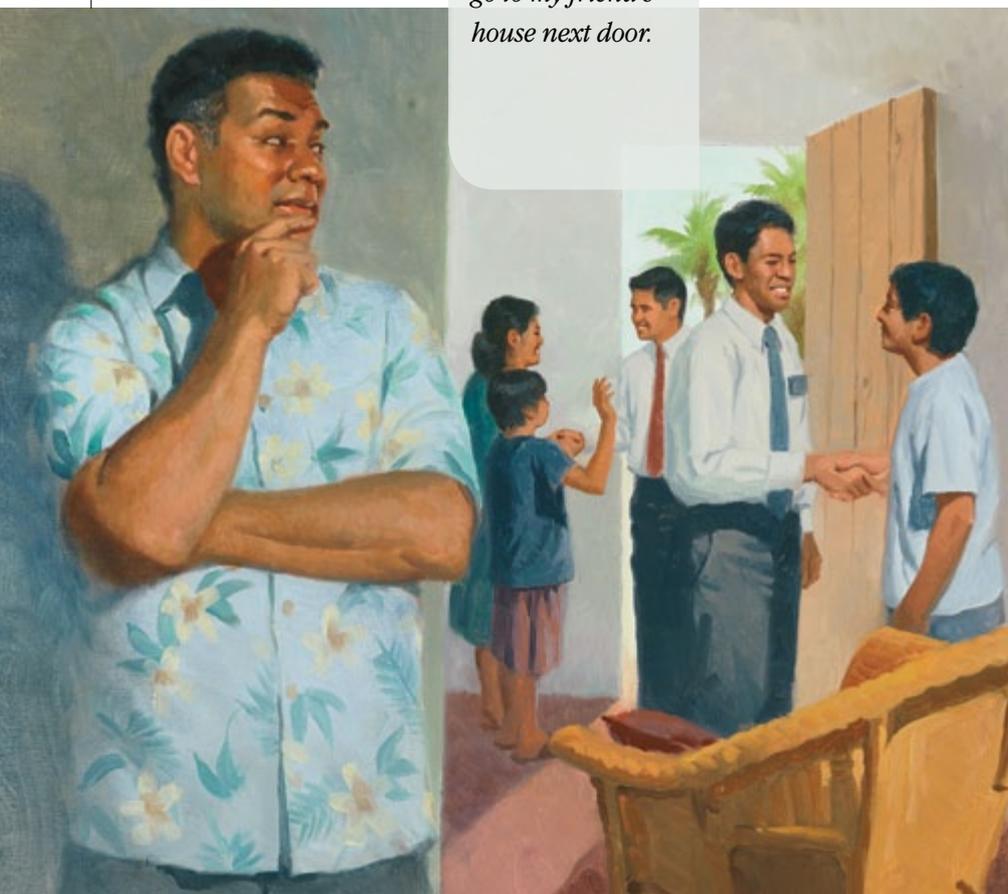
After my baptism in 2007, I was so happy. We started saving money to go to the temple in Hawaii, where my wife, our three children, and I were sealed in December 2008.

Being a member of the Church has made a huge impact on my life. I decided to quit my second job entertaining at a restaurant because I would come home late and my garments would be saturated with tobacco smoke. Despite the loss of that extra income, the Lord has taken care of us.

I know the Church is true and that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God because of the Spirit that I have felt and the blessings I have received. ■

Tanintoa Sexton, Marshall Islands

When the missionaries started coming to our home twice a week, I would go to my friend's house next door.



MY CROSS-STITCH PONIES

I have a cross-stitched picture of two pinto ponies that I worked on for about a year. It was almost completed when I discovered I'd made a mistake in the color of one of the ponies. Since it was a possible color for a horse's hide, I didn't realize my mistake until I saw that the color of the pony clashed with the adjacent colors on the canvas.

I was devastated. I had spent all that time working on the picture, and the thought of taking out all the stitches of the wrong color was almost overwhelming. With tears in my eyes, I opened the trash can and threw the picture in.

I sat down at the table where I kept my sewing supplies to mourn the loss of my pretty pony picture and move on to other projects. But I couldn't do it—I couldn't just let go of the project I had worked so hard on. I opened the trash and retrieved the cloth. I found a knot on the back of the offending color and snipped it carefully. Turning the picture over, I began removing the thread.

Sometimes the removal went quickly. Other times I found it wasn't so easy. I wasn't sure how to undo what I had done. Sometimes I had to cut the thread one stitch at a time. My son remarked that he was impressed that I would go to all that work to make it right. It was only a cross-stitched picture, after all.

As I removed the stitches, I began

to think of repentance and how hard it has been to correct some of the errors I have made. True repentance requires intense desire, labor, and suffering, but it is worth the effort.

As I restitched the horse, I was reminded that repentance allows Jesus's Atonement to remove the stain of sin from my life and help me begin anew. My "repentance ponies" hang in my home, a gentle but vivid reminder to do what is right, never give up when I fall short, and remember that through repentance, the Atonement will make up the difference. ■

Sandra Jennings, New Mexico, USA

I had spent all that time working on the picture, and the thought of taking out all the stitches of the wrong color was almost overwhelming.



BUT THERE'S NO CHURCH HERE

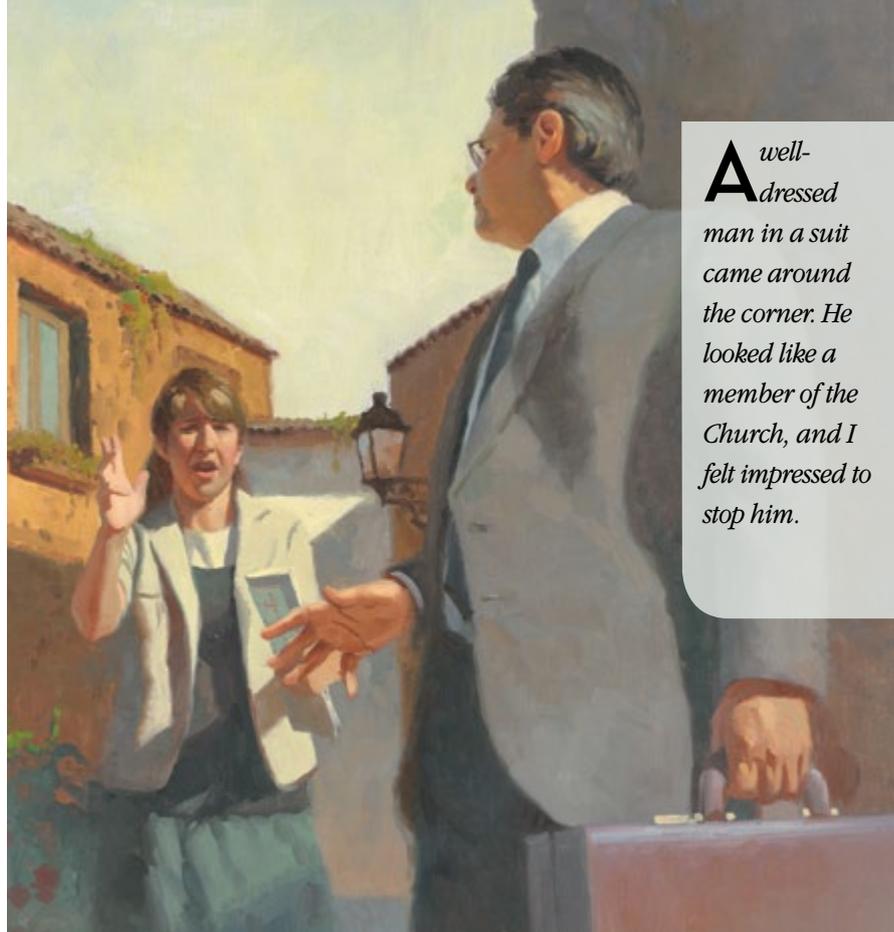
During a trip to the Mediterranean, I diligently attended Church meetings wherever I could. In Seville, Spain, I enlisted the aid of a hotel receptionist, the local telephone directory, and a city map to help me find the local Latter-day Saint meeting-house. I wrote down the address and the name of the Church in Spanish. Saturday evening I prayed to know what time the meetings started, and I felt a strong impression that I needed to be there by 10:00 a.m.

Just before I left for church at 9:30 on Sunday morning, I prayed again that I would be able to find the meetinghouse. Following my map, I began to navigate a maze of narrow streets. It was a delightful morning. I passed cafés and a bird market full of squawking birds.

I made it to the designated address only to find nothing that remotely resembled a church. I walked up and down the street looking in vain. I was confused and anxious, and it was almost 10:00 a.m.

Finally, I prayed to my Father in Heaven: "Thou hast commanded me to go to church, and here I am, but there's no church here."

Just then a well-dressed man in a suit came around the corner. He looked like a member of the Church, and I felt impressed to stop him. In a somewhat garbled manner, I



A well-dressed man in a suit came around the corner. He looked like a member of the Church, and I felt impressed to stop him.

told him I was looking for a church. He said something I didn't understand, and I looked perplexed. So he opened his briefcase, and I saw two leather-bound books that looked like scriptures. I handed him my slip of paper on which I had written "La Iglesia de Jesucristo" (The Church of Jesus Christ). He smiled and pointed back along the way I had come, and together we walked to church. The building was located at a different address just a few minutes away and was easy to miss if you didn't know it was there. It was set back in a small square, behind large gates.

At the meetinghouse I soon found out that the man who had helped me was none other than the bishop of the ward and that the meetings began at 10:30 a.m. I had arrived with time to spare.

During the ward's fast and testimony meeting, I felt impressed to

bear my testimony. With a missionary translating my words from English into Spanish, I bore my testimony and described how the Lord had provided a way for me to get to church. The bishop then bore his testimony and explained that he had to park farther away that morning, so he was later than normal. When he saw me, he thought I looked like a member of the Church, so he stopped to help me. He then spoke of members who are lost spiritually and said we have to help them find the Church.

Over the years my memories of the sights of Seville have faded, but my memory of finding the church there hasn't. That memory is a testimony to me of the great love our Father in Heaven has for us and that His hand is visible in my life if I just look for all the things that "work together for [my] good" (Romans 8:28). ■

Julie Ismail, Western Australia, Australia

HIS SUFFERING EASES OURS

As a nurse in the newborn intensive care unit, I care for sick, sometimes very small, babies. One night I was assigned to a little boy born 17 weeks early and weighing just over one pound (0.5 kg). His hands were tiny, his little legs about as big around as my finger, and his feet about the size of my thumb. Because of his severe respiratory problems, doctors didn't expect him to live through the night.

A quiet hush falls over the entire unit when a newborn is fighting for life. There is increased stress on everyone, especially the baby's nurse, and tonight that was me. His parents had been with him most of the day, but they were exhausted. His mother had returned to her room for some much-needed rest.

The baby's private room contained an isolette (incubator), monitors, ventilator, and IV pumps, which were keeping him alive. Because he was so ill and needed such intensive care, I wasn't assigned any other patients that night. I would be at his side all night, busy with medications, monitoring, treatments, and tests.

As the night wore on, I tried to imagine how I would feel if I were his mother. The heartache would have been unbearable.

I gently washed his face, touched his little hands and feet, gingerly changed and positioned him in a soft new blanket. I wondered what else

I could do for my little patient. What would his mother do? What would Heavenly Father want me to do?

This precious, innocent little spirit would soon be returning to his Father in Heaven. I wondered if he was afraid. I thought of my own children. When they were young and scared, I had sung to them. "I Am a Child of God" was their favorite. Choking back tears, I sang to the baby.

As a nurse I saw the tubes and the blood, counted the rise and fall of the baby's chest, listened to the beating of his heart, and watched the numbers on the monitors. As a Latter-day Saint I saw a celestial spirit and marveled at the plan of salvation.

As the night progressed, his health deteriorated. He eventually developed a condition that caused him to bleed into his lungs.

In the morning my little patient slipped silently through the veil. He left his mother's arms and was "taken home to that God who gave [him] life" (Alma 40:11).

I grew closer to the Savior and Heavenly Father that night. I developed a greater understanding of the Lord's love for mankind—and His love for me. I was reminded, even surprised, by the depth of love I felt for Him. And I felt a desire to be more kind, more gentle, more forgiving, more compassionate—more like Him—one day and one heartbeat at a time. ■

Barbara Winter, Arizona, USA

Choking back tears, I sang "I Am a Child of God" to the baby.



Small & Simple Things

*“Out of small things proceedeth that which is great”
(D&C 64:33).*

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD



The Marshall Islands

Although Church members visited the Marshall Islands during World War II, official missionary work did not begin there until February 1977. That year Elder William Wardel and Elder Steven Cooper from the Hawaii Honolulu Mission were assigned to work in the area. With the assistance of Eldred Fewkes, a member of the Church who had moved to the Marshall Islands for work, they arranged to hold Church services in a building of another church.

That first year the missionaries baptized 27 converts. Three years later the Marshall Islands became part of the Micronesia

Guam Mission. In 1984 the Majuro Marshall Islands District was formed. Church membership continued to grow, leading to the formation of a second district in 1991 on the atoll Kwajalein. In 2006 the Marshall Islands Majuro Mission was created. The next three years saw a large increase in active membership due to activation efforts, convert baptisms, and strengthening local leadership. The result was that on June 14, 2009, the Majuro Marshall Islands Stake was organized.

To read stories of faith and conversion of members in the Marshall Islands, see page 32.

Learning from Conference

Our children are now grown and have their own homes and families, but we have found a great method of learning together from the words of the prophets. During the month following each general conference, I study the addresses on www.conference.lds.org and select quotations that give direction, guidance, and comfort. I collect enough that there is one quote for each day during the upcoming six months. (For example, during April, I find a quote a day for May 1–October 31.) Then I give copies of these quotes to each of our children.

As a complement to their own study of conference, these quotes of the day often become a topic of conversation among family members. It is a wonderful experience to review the counsel of the prophets during the months following general conference, even when we live miles apart.

Christine Tippetts, Utah, USA

THE CHURCH IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS	
Membership	4,486
Missions	1
Stakes	1
Districts	1
Wards/Branches	11

LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH © ISTOCK; BOTTOM RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY LIBRARY

J. Reuben Clark Jr.: A Man of Uncommon Gifts



Joshua Reuben Clark Jr. was born in Grantsville, Utah, on September 1, 1871. Though he had little formal education and was unable to attend high school, his mother had tutored him, and he loved learning. He graduated first in his class from the University of Utah with a bachelor of science degree and went on to receive a law degree from Columbia University law school in New York City.

Brother Clark married Luacine Annetta Savage in the Salt Lake Temple in 1898, and they became the parents of four children.

Armed with his law degree and a brilliant mind, J. Reuben Clark Jr. went on to a distinguished legal and civil service career that culminated in his being named U.S. ambassador to Mexico in 1930. That career ended, however, when Brother Clark was sustained as Second Counselor to President Heber J. Grant in the First Presidency on April 6, 1933. Although he was a high priest at the time, he was not a General Authority. He was ordained an Apostle when he was subsequently sustained as First Counselor to President Grant in October

President Clark (left) with Lamont Toronto, mission president.



The First Presidency in 1945 (from left): J. Reuben Clark Jr., Heber J. Grant, and David O. McKay.

1934. President Clark went on to serve as a counselor to Presidents George Albert Smith and David O. McKay.

Among his many contributions to the Church, one that stands out is the example of humility he set when David O. McKay became President of the Church. He called President Clark to be his Second Counselor. Because President Clark had been serving as First Counselor in previous First Presidencies, some apparently thought he had been slighted, but President Clark explained: “In the service of the Lord, it is not where you serve but how. In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, one takes the place to which one is duly called, which place one neither seeks nor declines.”¹

President Clark died on October 6, 1961.

NOTE

1. J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, Apr. 1951, 154.

LDS EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE SERVICES WORKSHOP

LDS Employment Resource Services offers a workshop to help those who are looking for work, wanting to enroll in school, or starting a business. The workshop helps people define their career goals and develop confidence in their ability to succeed. It is designed to be instructional, interactive, motivating, and fun. Individuals who apply what they learn in the workshop are often able to

find work in less time than they would otherwise.

The workshop includes topics such as identifying career goals, finding resources to achieve one’s goals, writing résumés, and succeeding in a new job.

To find if there is a workshop location near you, ask your bishop or branch president or visit www.ldsjobs.org and click on “Find a Center.”

“REMEMBER NOW THY CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH” (ECCLESIASTES 12:1)

The scriptures chronicle the ministries of the prophets and apostles. Many of these leaders knew God from their youth. Here are five scriptural accounts that describe the experiences of some of these future leaders.



- John the Baptist, who was called to prepare the people for “the coming of the Lord,” was “ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old unto this power” (D&C 84:27–28).

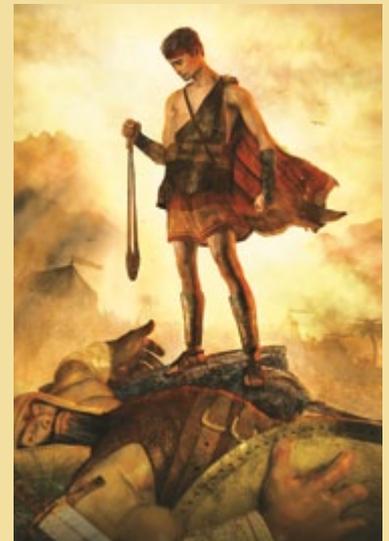


- King Josiah, crowned at age eight, spent his 31-year reign helping the Jews become converted to the gospel (see 2 Kings 22).

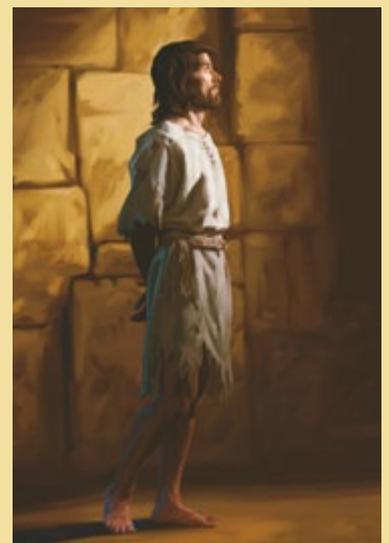
- Mormon was about 10 years old when Ammaron chose him to be the next keeper of the records (the plates of Nephi). At about age 16 Mormon led the Nephite armies. (See Mormon 1:2–4; 2:1–2.)



- David was a mere “stripling” (a young man) when he slew Goliath, perhaps the same age as the soldiers in Helaman’s army (see 1 Samuel 17:49–56; Alma 53:22).



- Joseph was 17 when he was sold into Egypt, where “the Lord was with Joseph” (see Genesis 37:2, 27–28; 39:2).





Focusing on Easter Worship

To help my children separate our Easter worship from the worldly aspects of the celebration, I prepared a special family home evening lesson. First, to help them understand the sacredness of Easter, I had my young son put pictures of the Easter events into a timeline: the Last Supper, the Savior in Gethsemane, His arrest and Crucifixion, the body in the tomb, and the Resurrection. We talked about each picture and how people must have felt.

Second, after having this spiritual part of the lesson, we talked about the commercialized things we see at Easter: bunnies, eggs, candy, and so on. We noticed that none of these things were part of the original story of Easter. Then we discussed the differences in what they made us think of.

For our family, this has been a good way to participate in the seasonal activities without losing the focus of the Savior and what He did for us.

Eliana Osborn,
Arizona, USA



ILLUSTRATION BY BETH WHITTAKER

HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

“To Always Remember Him,” page 48: After reading the article, reflect as a family on Elder Christofferson’s counsel: “We can begin by stripping everything out of our lives and then putting it back together in priority order with the Savior at the center.” Discuss ways to implement this in your family. Consider talking about some of the blessings Elder Christofferson mentions that come as we “always remember the Savior.”



“Families That Pray Together,” page 12: As you read the experiences in this article, invite family members to make a

list of things they can do to strengthen family prayers. Make a goal to implement one thing during the coming week. At your next family home evening, you could ask family members to share the experiences and feelings they had during the past week regarding family prayer.

“I Need Thee Every Hour,” page 16: As part of the lesson, consider summarizing what Elder Nielson learned from President Kimball about the need for “constant prayer and communication with Heavenly Father. Share the “four simple reasons” he suggests for praying. Encourage family members to briefly discuss each of these reasons and then read the explanations. You may want to close by singing President Kimball’s favorite hymn, “I Need Thee Every Hour.”

Handbook Training Emphasizes Work of Salvation

By Adam C. Olson

Church Magazines

During a worldwide leadership training in February 2011, members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles instructed participants on using the new handbooks more effectively. The meeting was a follow-up to the November 2010 worldwide leadership training in which the handbooks were introduced.

The speakers emphasized how to use the handbooks in a more inspired way, the importance of understanding the doctrinal foundation of the new handbooks, how to apply the principles of adaptation to Church programs, how the handbooks' changes can be applied to carry out the work of salvation, and the role of women in councils.

Participating in the broadcast were President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency; Elders Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales, Jeffrey R. Holland, David A. Bednar, Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson, and Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Elders Craig C. Christensen, Bruce D. Porter, and W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy; and the general presidents of the auxiliaries.

More Inspired Use of the Handbooks

Calling the meeting a “second opportunity to discover how to use the handbook more effectively,” President Eyring encouraged leaders to increase their capacity to receive revelation.

“Only by the Spirit will you know how to apply what you read in the handbook,” he said. “. . . It may seem to you impractical to expect or even hope for the stream of revelation you need in your daily service. It will not come without faith and hard work, but it is possible.”

President Eyring promised that as leaders work and pray to “understand and follow the words of life” given to them, the Lord will help them give service and leadership beyond their own powers.

Doctrinal Foundation of the Handbooks

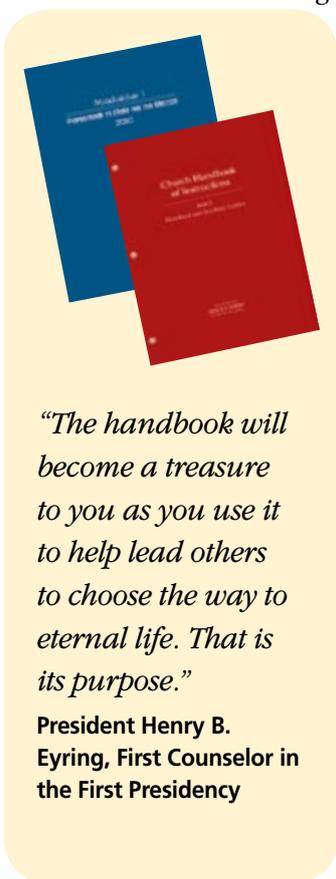
“[The handbook] is doctrinal,” said Elder Oaks, “and it is shorter than the prior handbook because on many subjects it refrains from stating rules or giving directions. Instead, it gives principles that inspired leaders can apply . . . according to their local circumstances.”

Elder Bednar and Elder Christofferson warned leaders against skipping the beginning chapters of *Handbook 2* to get to the policies in the chapters thereafter. The earlier chapters lay a doctrinal foundation for understanding and applying the principles and policies that follow.

Principles of Adaptation

“On matters of doctrine, covenants, and policies established by the First Presidency and the Twelve, we do not deviate from the handbook,” said Elder Nelson. “Adaptability is allowed on some other activities to meet local circumstances.”

According to Elder Porter, chapter 17, “Uniformity and Adaptation,” was included to help local leaders follow the Spirit and determine when it is appropriate to adapt certain programs. The chapter explains what cannot be changed and gives five conditions



“The handbook will become a treasure to you as you use it to help lead others to choose the way to eternal life. That is its purpose.”

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

under which adaptations may be made: family circumstances, limited transportation and communication, small quorums or classes, insufficient number of leaders, and security conditions.

“Appropriate adaptations do not weaken the Church. They strengthen it,” said Elder Porter in an address read by Elder W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy. In making inspired adaptations, local leaders should not feel they are settling for less than the ideal. “Every unit of the Church has access to the doctrines, the ordinances, the priesthood power, and the gifts of the Spirit necessary for the salvation and exaltation of God’s children,” Elder Porter wrote.

The Work of Salvation

Changes made throughout *Handbook 2* are meant to further the work of salvation. President Eyring said: “The handbook will become a treasure to you as you use it to help lead others to choose the way to eternal life. That is its purpose.”

Chapter 5 specifically brings together under the title “The Work of Salvation in the Ward and Stake” a number of topics previously treated separately, including member missionary work, convert retention, activation, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel.

“Paul said that in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times, all things will be gathered together in one in Christ,” said Elder Bednar (see Ephesians 1:10). “There’s one work.”

Elder Cook helped clarify how some of the policy changes in *Handbook 2* contribute to the work of salvation. He emphasized the importance of bishops and ward councils meeting welfare needs now that a welfare meeting no longer exists. He explained the increased role of Melchizedek Priesthood leaders in counseling with quorum



members. He further clarified changes that allow fathers who are not fully temple worthy to participate in ordinances and blessings of family members in certain circumstances.

In the work of salvation, priesthood leaders should consider the next ordinances an individual needs and how to assist in that preparation.

Women in Council

Elder Scott expressed concern that in some places, leaders miss opportunities to include women when counseling together. “When [women] can be encouraged to take part freely in ward council meetings, their ideas are always helpful and inspirational,” he said.

Leaders can encourage participation by calling on sisters by name and by expressing gratitude for insights and recommendations offered, Elder Scott explained.

Anticipated Results

Elder Nelson concluded the training by expressing three hopes: that simplification will allow the time and resources of members to be utilized with greater effectiveness, that the power of the priesthood will grow in each priesthood holder to bless every individual and every family in the Church, and that each member may feel a greater sense of devotion and discipleship. ■

More Online

Find audio, video, and text of both worldwide leadership training broadcasts at lds.org/menu/service/serving-in-the-church.

Handbook 2 can be found online at lds.org/handbook/handbook-2-administering-the-church.

The new Leadership Training Library will be available on the Serving in the Church section of lds.org by mid-2011.

Auxiliary Panels Use New Training Library

During the February 2011 worldwide leadership training, the general presidents of the Church's auxiliaries participated in panel discussions that used examples from a new online training resource.

The Leadership Training Library is a collection of real-life examples of leaders serving around the world that model principles found in *Handbook 2*. Shot in Brazil, England, Guatemala, and Korea, the videos are currently in translation and will be available online later in 2011.

Using these videos, the auxiliary general presidents, under the direction of Elders Robert D. Hales and Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Elder Craig C. Christensen of the Seventy, discussed three important principles found in *Handbook 2*.

1. Prepare Spiritually

"It is amazing how the Lord looks and waits for ways to bless us," explained Rosemary Wixom, Primary general president, after viewing an example of how a Relief Society leader from South Korea earnestly asked for and received inspiration as she planned a meeting.

Elder Andersen, discussing with Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president, and Sister Wixom, said, "This is a spiritual work. It can only be done in the Lord's way." Panel members discussed how preparing spiritually allows leaders to focus on individuals, tailoring activities, lessons, and assignments to meet their needs. "Revelation is scattered among us," Elder Andersen testified.

2. Participate in Councils

A true story of ward council members in Guatemala working together to successfully invite a family to return to full activity in the Church provided an opportunity for Elder Christensen to lead a discussion on working together in councils with all five auxiliary presidents: Sister Beck; Sister Wixom; Russell T. Osguthorpe, Sunday School general president; Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president; and David L. Beck, Young Men general president.

The panel discussed how the combined efforts of council members can help ward members progress, how active council members reduce the bishop's load, and how leaders and members should listen, share, and seek the Lord's will concerning ward members.

3. Minister to Others

The focus of the third video was a young man in England who is striving to stay fully active in the Church. The panel, moderated by Elder Hales and including Brother Osguthorpe, Brother Beck, and Sister Dalton, identified the importance of leaders working with parents, in Church councils, and with youth.

"If you will do exactly as you've seen today," Elder Hales concluded, "talk about [the video examples], discuss them, and take them to the Lord . . . you will be guided and directed on how you can help and strengthen and accomplish what you need to do in the callings which you've been given." ■

Need Growing Internationally for Indexers

By Hikari Loftus

Church Magazines

All over the world, people are searching for their ancestors. And all over the world, other people are making that search possible.

FamilySearch indexing, introduced in 2006 and powered by volunteers worldwide, is the process of taking physical records (such as those found on microfilm) and entering the information they contain into a searchable online database.

With 122,000 LDS and non-LDS active indexers having completed 547,978,000 records so far, FamilySearch indexing has had notable success. However, those who coordinate indexing have a new goal: indexing records in languages other than English.

"More and more of the names we are indexing aren't English names," said Jim Ericson, product marketing manager for FamilySearch. "We are trying to get people who speak different languages more involved so we can do a better job with non-English names."

Although indexing in English continues to grow, it



is far surpassed by the growth of international records. Projects are emerging from a variety of countries as more governments and records custodians become aware of the services provided by FamilySearch, Brother Ericson said.

To begin, FamilySearch employees take records and digitize them. These copies are then gathered into small groups called “batches,” available to volunteers online. Volunteers log into FamilySearch, download a batch, and enter the data they see on the screen. That data is later made available more widely to family history researchers.

FamilySearch indexing volunteers might include people whose native language is not English (the site is currently available in 11 different languages), but it could also include people who have language skills from missionary service, school, or other training.

The Church owns some 2.4 million rolls of genealogical microfilm, totaling some 15 billion records to be indexed. Countless other physical records exist throughout the world.

“We need more people engaged in indexing,” Brother Ericson said, “and we are asking people to share this program with their friends and family members, whether or not they are members of the Church.” ■

BEGIN INDEXING NOW

Get started by going to indexing.familysearch.org.

Select one of seven languages to work in from the drop-down menu.

Click on **Get Started**. The indexing software will automatically download and launch the application.

Practice with a training batch to become familiar with the software.

Start indexing! You can select a batch from any project, organized by countries. ■

FamilySearch indexing coordinators have a new goal for volunteers: indexing in languages other than English.

IN THE NEWS

Mormon Tabernacle Choir to Tour East Coast

This year the Mormon Tabernacle Choir will tour a section of North America’s east coast, opening the tour on June 20 in Norfolk, Virginia.

On Wednesday, June 22, the choir will perform in Vienna, Virginia.

They will perform in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on Thursday, June 23.

On Saturday, June 25, the choir will hold matinee and evening concerts in Chautauqua, New York.

On Monday, June 27, the choir will hold matinee and evening performances in Toronto, Canada.

Tickets for all concerts are on sale. More information can be found online at mormontabernaclechoir.com and on the choir’s Facebook page.

Mormon Channel, Your Channel

In May 2009, the Church launched Mormon Channel, a 24-hour-a-day, 7-days-a-week radio program found at radio.lds.org. Since then, this official Church media channel has grown to include Mormon Messages on YouTube and a



podcast site on iTunes, all accessible from mormonchannel.org.

Thousands Find Synergy at RootsTech Conference

Some 3,000 genealogy and technology enthusiasts from around the world—with thousands more participating online—participated in the first annual RootsTech Family History Conference, held in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.

The three-day conference, hosted by FamilySearch—a service provided by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—was designed to bring together those who are involved with family history work and those who create the technology they use.

Conference participants chose from more than 40 classes on various genealogical and technological interests. Vendors featured the latest products, tools, and services. ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Local Church Members Respond to Disasters in Australia

Between December's flooding that continued into January and Cyclone Yasi making landfall in northern Queensland on February 2, Australia has been hard hit by natural disasters in early 2011.

Local Church members in southern Queensland have assisted with cleanup, fundraising, assembling cleaning kits, and distributing relief supplies. Local Church leaders began coordinating relief efforts with government officials.

"One in a Million" Shares Children's Stories

As the Church reaches one million Primary children, the *Friend* is sponsoring the "One in a Million" project featuring photo and audio slideshows of individual Primary children around the world.

The slideshows are made to create a sense of community among the worldwide Primary. They will be added to throughout the year and can be viewed at lds.org/friend.

Distribution Services Merges with Deseret Book

To improve efficiency and better serve Church members, Distribution Services

has expanded an agreement with Deseret Book to provide Church-produced materials through Deseret Book outlets. Under the new agreement, Deseret Book will offer Distribution materials according to prices and policies established by the Church.

Visit Newsroom.lds.org for more details and information.

Latter-day Saint Charities Provides Clean Water

Nearly a billion people on the earth lack access to clean water, often resulting in water-borne diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, and typhoid. But since 2002, the Church has helped seven million people in more than 5,000 communities obtain access to clean water sources. "Water Is Happiness," available on news.lds.org, shows the story of LDS Charities bringing clean water to a village in Sierra Leone. ■

"Water is Happiness" on news.lds.org tells about clean water coming to Sierra Leone.



CROWN OF THORNS, CROWN OF VICTORY

By Larry Hiller

Church Magazines

August in the Holy Land. Around us the ruins of Capernaum shimmered in the afternoon heat. It was a fascinating place to be, but our guide and a nearby cicada had both been droning for some time, and my mind began to wander.

Suddenly I was alert as the guide pointed to the tree that shaded us and said offhandedly, “They call that the ‘crown of thorns’ tree.” I looked up at the leafy branches. Where were the thorns? Reaching, I gingerly pulled a small branch closer.

There, among the delicate leaves, I saw the thorns. Slender and green, wickedly sharp and as long as my thumb, they couldn’t be seen from more than a few feet away. But anyone coming into contact with one of those leafy twigs would certainly feel pain.

I thought of the many paintings I had seen of the Savior standing before a mockery of a court, robed in purple and wearing a crown of twisted, dry, thorny vines. Suddenly it occurred to me that a slave or soldier tasked with making that crown might want to work with supple green branches like those of the tree overhead—not with brittle, dry twigs. More tellingly, the purpose of the crown was not just to inflict pain but to taunt and mock.

In the ancient world a green, leafy crown or



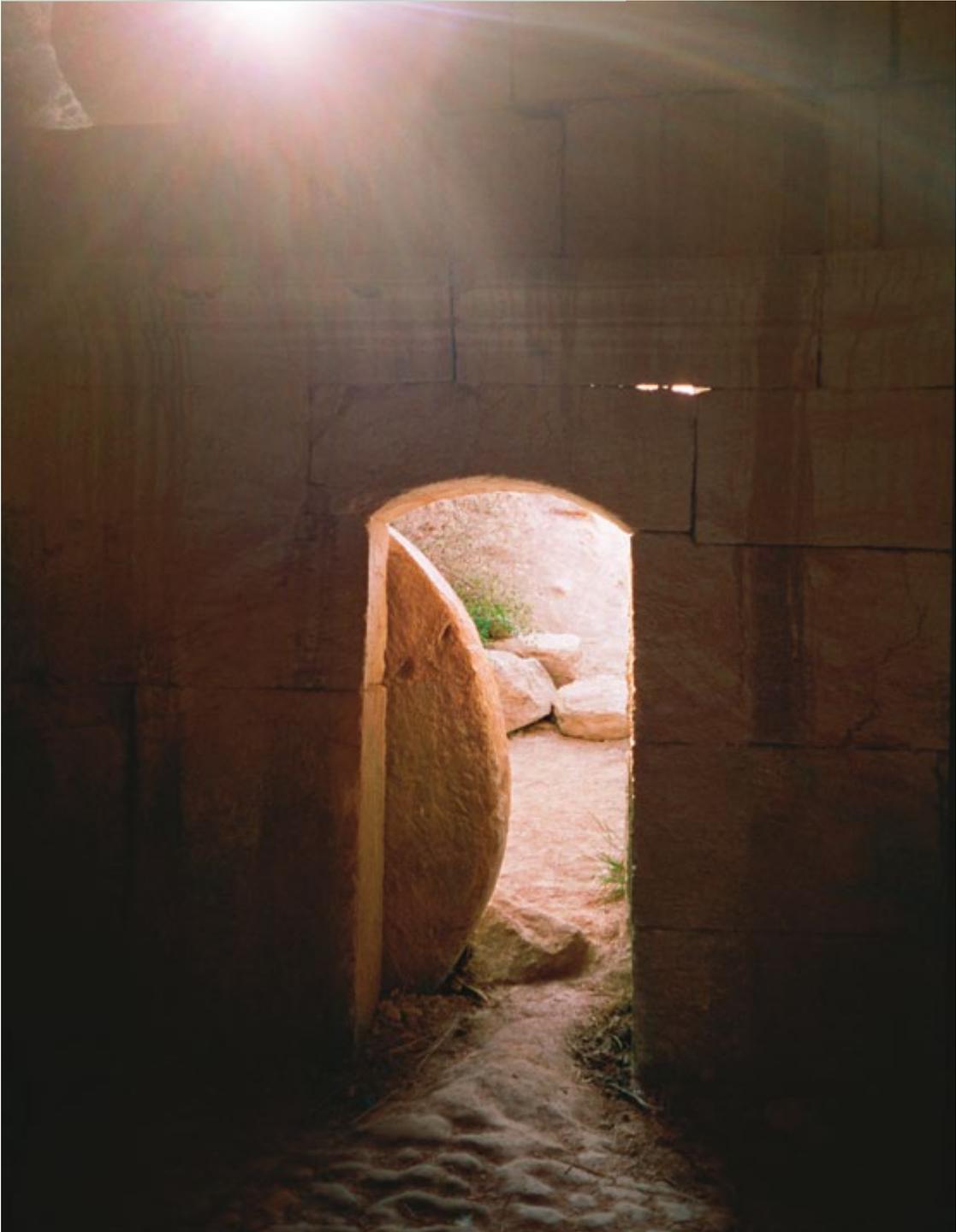
For me the crown of thorns has become a symbol of the Savior’s awareness of all our hidden pains—and His ability to heal them.

wreath—usually of fragrant laurel leaves—was often given to the winners of contests and battles. Laurel wreaths adorned the images of kings and emperors. Perhaps the cruel crown pressed down on the Savior’s brow was leafy and green in sardonic reference to that ancient honor. It’s just supposition, not a matter of doctrine. But for me, visualizing it that way brings one aspect of the Atonement more clearly into focus: the Savior is aware of our sorrows, and He is able to heal us.

The robe placed on Him was a mocking symbol of royalty. It covered the welts and gashes of the scourging He had just suffered. In the same way, a leafy crown of thorns would appear to be a victor’s garland but would actually hide the pain it inflicted.

So many of us bear unseen hurts. The hymn teaches that “in the quiet heart is hidden sorrow that the eye can’t see” (“Lord, I Would Follow Thee,” *Hymns*, no. 220). But the Savior *does* see. He is well acquainted with private anguish. His whole ministry was lived in anticipation of the Atonement and Resurrection. Yet those He taught and blessed and healed did not know. Even His own disciples remained unaware.

The Savior sees past the “robes” and “crowns” that mask our sorrows from others. Having suffered “pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind,” He is full of mercy and knows how to succor us when we lay our burdens at His feet (see Alma 7:11–12). His is the balm that can heal even deep and hidden wounds. And the crown He holds out to us is truly the victor’s. ■



Resurrection Morning, by Steven Edwards

During His mortal ministry, Christ told His disciples that “the Son of man must . . . be slain, and be raised the third day” (Luke 9:22).

After He was crucified, “Mary Magdalene and the other Mary [came] to see the sepulchre.

“And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and

came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. . . .

“And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

“He is not here: for he is risen, as he said” (Matthew 28:1–2, 5–6).



Remembering the Savior obviously includes remembering His Atonement, which is symbolically represented by the bread and water as emblems of His suffering and death,” writes Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “We must never forget what He did for us, for without His Atonement and Resurrection, life would have no meaning. With His Atonement and Resurrection, however, our lives have eternal, divine possibilities.” See “To Always Remember Him,” page 48.