

Choosing Kindness



**From an interview with
Elder Paul V. Johnson
of the Seventy; by
Hilary Hendricks**

Charity . . . is kind (Moroni 7:45).

In third or fourth grade a friend and I were riding our bicycles home from school. Some older children saw us riding by and started chasing us. I was terrified! We rode as fast as we could, with the bullies on their bikes just behind. When we made it safely to my friend's house, I promised myself that I would never be a bully. Of course, I wasn't always perfect. But I did try to look out for classmates whom others did not treat kindly. When I stood up for these friends, I felt the Savior's love for them and for me.

I learned kindness from many people. One of these was my grandmother Amalie



**Elder Johnson's grandmother,
Amalie Hollenweger Amacher**

Hollenweger Amacher. She joined the Church as a young woman in Switzerland and later immigrated to northern Utah. Although she always spoke with an accent, there was no mistaking her meaning when we grandchildren needed correction. She wanted us to learn to obey and to treat people well, and she wasn't afraid to tell

us so.

Once Grandma caught me speaking disrespectfully to

my parents. She let me know that she was not pleased with my tone of voice. I was grateful for the reminder to speak kindly. For years after her death, whenever I was faced with a decision, I asked myself, "What would my grandmother think?" Her love for the Lord and her love for me made me want to follow her example.

My grandmother loved babies and children—her grandchildren especially. She was not a wealthy woman. As a widow, she worked hard in her orchard and garden, growing much of her own food. The money she did have, she eagerly shared with others. Every year at Christmastime she bought gingerbread men for the children in her Junior Sunday School class (similar to Primary). On each grandchild's baptism day, she presented him or her with a beautiful, leather-bound Bible. I used the Bible from my grandmother throughout my youth and on my mission to Norway. Inside the cover, in her handwriting, are the words: "To dear Paul from his Grandmother Amacher on his 8th birthday." When I look at those scriptures, well-used and so lovingly given, I think of the gift of my grandmother's faith.

During the years she lived in my parents' home, she told us Church history and scripture stories at bedtime. The way

Grandmother spoke of Jesus Christ, I knew she loved Him. One afternoon my cousin and I went into Grandmother's room for a visit. She looked at us thoughtfully.

"Now, children, I'm going to die pretty soon," she said. "And when I'm gone, I know you will feel sad. But I don't want you to cry too much. I will be with Jesus and with your Grandpa Amacher, you know." Grandma's faith helped me come to know Jesus Christ.

I was blessed as a young child to have my grandmother close to me. Her love helped me understand the way the Lord loves us. As children, you can look around you for someone who is kind—someone who reminds you of what you think the Savior is like. Watch the things this person does, the way he or she treats other people. Pray for the gift of charity.* Then, as you treat others kindly and try to do what Jesus would want you to do, you will be filled with that love. ●

*See Moroni 7:45–48.



Far left, wearing bow tie, with his parents and brothers and sisters



Riding a pony with his brother Brad behind him

Elder and Sister Johnson and their family

