

**At age 3, with his parents,  
Lionel and Maries Gillespie**



# Honoring Our Parents



**From an interview  
with Elder H.  
Aldridge Gillespie  
of the Seventy,  
currently serving in  
the North America  
Southeast Area  
Presidency; by Jan  
Pinborough**

*Honour thy father and mother (Mark 10:19).*

**N**ot every child has parents who go to church, keep the Word of Wisdom, and hold family home evening.

When I was a child, my parents did not do these things. Because of that, I learned three very important lessons I would like to share with you.

First, I learned to follow the good examples of other people who came into my life. Second, I learned to be strong in what Heavenly Father wanted me to do, no matter what choices other people made. And third, I learned that the best way I could honor my parents was by doing what Heavenly Father wanted me to do.

My father seldom went to church, even though his family had been members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for seven

generations. He and my grandfather worked together to build roads in the Mojave Desert, so my father was away from home much of the time. When I was eight months old, my mother died, and I went to live with my mother's parents, Grandpa and Grandma Baird.

Then my father remarried, and when I was seven, we moved from California to Manti, Utah. There we lived on a big dairy farm. Most important, my Grandma and Grandpa Giles (my new mother's parents) and several aunts and uncles and their families lived there, too. They were active in the Church, and for the first time in my life, I saw people praying and studying the scriptures in their homes.

One of the people who influenced me most was my Uncle Jimmy. He was 13, just six years older than I was, and he became



**At age 2**

like my older brother. Uncle Jimmy was lots of fun. He'd hook up a sled to our big dog, Tony, and take me for a ride over the ice and snow.

At Christmastime, we often went together to hunt for a Christmas tree. After finding the right tree, we cut it down and brought it home. Grandmother popped lots of popcorn for us to string and gave us colored paper to make into ornaments.

One of my jobs was to help Uncle Jimmy on his delivery rounds in the milk truck. One of my older uncles drove, and we would run to the doorstep of each house, pick up the empty milk bottles, and leave full bottles in their place.

Wherever Uncle Jimmy went, I went. And since Uncle Jimmy went to church, so did I. Sundays started awfully early. First I went out to help feed and milk the cows. Then I came home, cleaned up, and dressed for church. I didn't own a suit, but my mom and dad made sure my best clothes were clean. When I turned eight, I was baptized by my Uncle Grant.

After Grandpa Giles died, there was arguing about how to operate the farm. Eventually the family business fell apart, and my family moved to Kaysville, Utah.

When I was 14, our family moved back to Manti. I had a bedroom upstairs, and my only window faced the Manti Temple. I spent a lot of nights looking at the temple, wondering what my future would hold.

When I was in my late teens, I began to think about serving a mission. By then, my father had died and my mother didn't have very much money. I felt a lot of pressure to stay home and help my mother. Then one night I went up into the hayloft to think and pray. There I had a clear and strong impression: I needed to serve a mission.

That was the best decision I had ever made. It changed my life. Doctrine and Covenants 31:5 became a guide: "Therefore, thrust in your sickle with all your soul, and your sins are forgiven you, and . . . your family shall live." I decided to trust that the Lord would take care of

my family while I worked hard on my mission. And the Lord was faithful to His promise. My mother was well taken care of while I was away.

While I was on my mission, I traveled for a few days with Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. I was his temporary driver and companion. It was the first time I had been so close to an Apostle of the Lord. I heard him pray and testify. I saw what he focused on, what he talked about, and what he was like when he was not in public. I saw how he treated other people and how thoughtful he was of their needs. I decided that this was the kind of man I wanted to become.

Boys and girls, if you do good things on your own, your parents will eventually praise you for it. In part because of my mission, my mother became active in the Church. Honoring your parents doesn't always mean doing exactly what they do. It means

doing what Heavenly Father wants you to do. Even if your mom and dad don't go to church, you still can. Even if they don't keep the Word of Wisdom, you still can. If you will stand on your own two feet and be good, you will bring great honor to your parents' name. ●

**With his mission president, President Harold I. Bowman**

