

You Must Choose for Yourself

BY SUSAN B. MITCHELL

(A true story taken from historical sources)

He that hath eternal life is rich (D&C 6:7).

Prisilla's grandparents lived in a beautiful home in Liverpool, England. Though Priscilla was the fourth of nine children and had many cousins, Grandfather and Grandmother Mitchell made her feel like their favorite person in the entire world. She loved to be in their home, and they were always buying gifts for her.

Then, one day, everything changed. Missionaries from America taught her family the gospel, and her parents were baptized. Priscilla and her brothers and sisters planned to be baptized, too. When Grandfather found out, he was angry.

Priscilla had never known Grandfather to be angry before. It frightened her. He shouted unforgettable, sickening words to Priscilla's father: "Hezekiah, take your family and leave. Don't ever come back!"

At home, the stunned family gathered around the fireplace. Father had never looked so sad. Mother hadn't stopped crying since they had left their grandparents' home.

Priscilla was confused and heartbroken. "Why don't Grandmother and Grandfather love us anymore?" she cried.

Father tried to explain. "Grandfather is opposed to our new church. He wants no part of it, and he wants no part of us if we continue with it." Father stood tall. "But I know that Jesus Christ lives. This is His true

Church. He will help us find the way, as long as we do everything we can to be like Him."

Priscilla's family tried to be happy, but everything seemed to get worse. Father lost his job as a minister in their former church, so money was scarce even though he taught school. Mother mended clothes instead of replacing them. Priscilla tried not to complain, but life seemed to get harder every day. She longed to visit her grandparents. If she could only talk to them . . .

A knock sounded at the door. Priscilla's heart leaped with hope, but it wasn't her grandparents. Uncle George and Aunt Hannah stood on the porch with gifts and a basket of food. Priscilla was happy to see them, but all too soon she was sent outside so they could talk to her parents. It sounded serious.

"Priscilla," Aunt Hannah finally called. "How would you like to come live with us?" They had no children and wanted to adopt her, Uncle George explained. There would be plenty of room for her in their mansion, and she could receive better schooling.

"It will leave more of the basics for your brothers and sisters, too," Aunt Hannah added. Priscilla knew that it was a struggle for her parents to feed and clothe all nine of their children. If she went, it would make things easier for her family.

Father gazed sadly at the floor. Mother sobbed into





her handkerchief. The offer was kind, but accepting it would not be easy. Priscilla packed her bags and bid her family farewell.

“This will be your bedroom,” Aunt Hannah said. Priscilla had always shared a room with her four sisters. Now she had a room of her own and a maid to clean it.

Aunt Hannah took her shopping to buy pretty dresses. In no time, the closet was full of them. Her aunt and uncle planned parties so Priscilla could meet new friends. Priscilla had many advantages, but she missed being with her family and listening to Father teach as they sat around the fireplace.

On the morning of her 10th birthday, Priscilla was making dancing dolls out of hollyhock blooms in the garden. She was excited for the party to be held

that afternoon, but she wished her sisters could come.

Suddenly, she spotted a tall, thin man coming up the road with a walking stick. Priscilla ran to meet him.

“Happy birthday, Princess Priscilla,” Father said. He swept her into his arms and swung her around.

“Oh, Father, you remembered!” she exclaimed.

Together they walked inside. Father pulled a letter from his pocket. “Priscilla, Uncle George and Aunt Hannah have requested to officially adopt you.” Priscilla knew what that meant—she would inherit great wealth and a respected name. She would never need to worry about money again.

“I have more news,” Father said. “Soon your mother, brothers, sisters, and I are going to America.”

“Will you ever come back?” Priscilla asked.

Father shook his head. “George and Hannah love you. They will take care of you and give you more wealth and opportunities than I can ever offer. On the other hand, life in America with the new church will be difficult and require many sacrifices.” Father looked into his daughter’s eyes. “You must choose for yourself, Priscilla.”

Priscilla didn’t hesitate. She ran to Aunt Hannah and hugged and kissed her. “I love you, Aunt Hannah, and I will always remember you,” she said. “But I know that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. I must go to America with my family and be baptized.”

And that is exactly what she did. ●

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“Sacrifice provides an opportunity for us to prove to the Lord that we love Him more than any other thing. As a result, the course sometimes becomes difficult since this is the process of perfection that prepares us for the celestial kingdom.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Law of Sacrifice,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1998, 7.