

Gracie's Goal

By Lucy Stevenson
Church Magazines
(Based on a true story)

"Press onward, the goal is in sight" (Hymns, no. 237).

Gracie smiled as she closed her science book and slid it into her backpack. Having her homework done meant she could read the next chapter of her Nellie Clue mystery! She grabbed her book and plopped onto her bed. She couldn't wait to read what happened next.

Wait, Gracie thought. *I need to read a few pages of the Book of Mormon first.*

For her baptism, her grandparents had given Gracie her own set of scriptures. Her goal was to read the whole Book of Mormon before her next birthday, and that was only a few months away. Nellie Clue would have to wait.

Gracie said a prayer and opened her scriptures. She liked reading, but the chapters in the Book of Mormon took her a bit longer than the chapters in her Nellie Clue books. Gracie frowned as she flipped through all the pages she hadn't read yet. Would she ever be able to finish?

It was hard to read the scriptures by herself. Mom and Dad helped her sometimes. But Dad worked long hours at the hospital, and Mom was usually busy with the younger kids.

Gracie had only read a few verses when Mom called from the other room. "Gracie! The phone's for you!"

"Coming!" Gracie said as she ran down the hall. Mom was helping her little brother into his pajamas as she passed Gracie the phone. "Hello?"

"Hi, Gracie girl," said a familiar voice.

"Grandma!" Gracie loved it when Grandma called. Even though Grandma lived far away, talking to her always made her feel close.

Gracie told Grandma about her last soccer game and the songs she was learning on the piano. Then she told her how frustrated she felt about her Book of Mormon goal. "I'm trying so hard," Gracie said. "But I don't think I can do it."

Grandma was quiet. Then she said, "I have an idea. What if we read together on the phone?"

"I would love that!" Gracie said.

"Me too," Grandma said. "I'd love to read with you."

Grandma helped Gracie plan out the number of pages they would read each day. Then every night after dinner, Gracie called Grandma and read out loud to her. New words and chapters that were hard for Gracie to understand made more sense when she talked with Grandma. As the weeks passed, their calls got longer as they shared what they were learning and feeling. Sometimes, Grandma and Gracie even ended up reading more pages from the Book of Mormon than they planned to.

A week before Gracie's birthday, they finished the very last chapter. A warm, grateful feeling filled Gracie's heart. "Thanks for reading with me, Grandma," she said.

"Thanks for letting me read along. I've learned so much from you."

On Gracie's birthday, Mom made a special cake. It was covered in candles and had a Book of Mormon made out of frosting! But the best part of the day was opening presents. Gracie reached for the package Grandma sent in the mail, pulled open the box, and ripped off the tissue paper. It was a picture of the temple to hang on her wall. Gracie smiled as she read what Grandma had written on the card: "This is to help remind you of the other important goals in your life. I love you, Gracie girl."

Gracie hugged her picture of the temple close. She knew that setting goals and trying hard was helping her become more like Jesus. And with people like Grandma to help her, there was so much she could do. ●

What do you want to do to grow like Jesus this year? Use your *Children's Guidebook* to help you!

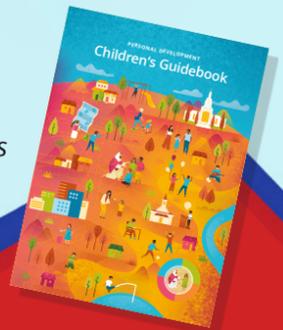


ILLUSTRATION BY C. B. GANGA



Thanks to Gracie R.
for sharing
your story!