

# THE **New Era**

**MARCH 2011**

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*Cover: Two teams learned to be good sports playing Church ball. See "Attitude All-Stars," p. 8.*

*Cover photography: Welden Andersen*

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**REMEMBER TO REMEMBER p. 17**



# What Is

*The Savior taught us that we need not tolerate evil. “Jesus went into the temple of God, . . . and overthrew the tables of the money-changers.”*



# Tolerance?

**T**olerance is a virtue much needed in our turbulent world. But we must recognize that there is a difference between *tolerance* and *tolerate*. Your gracious tolerance for an individual does not grant him or her license to do wrong, nor does your tolerance obligate you to tolerate his or her misdeed. That distinction is fundamental to an understanding of this vital virtue.

## Two Great Commandments

Our highest priorities in life are to love God and to love our neighbors.<sup>1</sup> That broadly includes neighbors in our own family, our community, our nation, and our world. Obedience to the second commandment facilitates obedience to the first commandment. “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17).

## Baptism Transcends Background

On every continent and across isles of the sea, the faithful are being gathered into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Differences in cultural background, language, gender, and facial features fade into insignificance as members lose themselves in service to their beloved Savior.

Only the comprehension of the true fatherhood of God can bring full appreciation of the true brotherhood of man. That understanding inspires desire to build bridges of cooperation instead of walls of segregation.

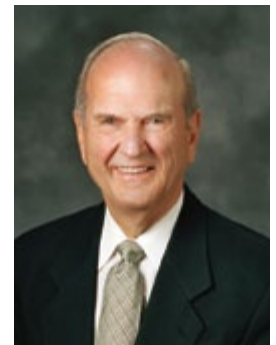
Intolerance seeds contention; tolerance supersedes contention. Tolerance is the key that opens the door to mutual understanding and love.

## Risks of Boundless Tolerance

Now may I offer an important note of caution. An erroneous assumption could be made that if a little of something is good, a lot must be better. Not so! Overdoses of needed medication can be toxic. Boundless mercy could oppose justice. So tolerance, without limit, could lead to spineless permissiveness.

The Lord drew boundary lines to define acceptable limits of tolerance. Danger rises when those divine limits are disobeyed. Just as parents teach little children not to run and play in the street, the Savior taught us that we need not tolerate evil. “Jesus went into the temple of God, . . . and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers” (Matthew 21:12; see also Mark 11:15). Though He loves the sinner, the Lord said that He “cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance” (D&C 1:31).

Real love for the sinner may compel courageous confrontation—not acquiescence! Real



**By Elder Russell M. Nelson**

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

*Our commitment to the Savior causes us to scorn sin yet heed His commandments to love our neighbors.*



### LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

"For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?"

**Matthew 5:43–46.**

love does not support self-destructing behavior.

### Tolerance and Mutual Respect

Our commitment to the Savior causes us to scorn sin yet heed His commandment to love our neighbors. Together we live on this earth, which is to be tended, subdued, and shared with gratitude.<sup>2</sup> Each of us can help to make life in this world a more pleasant experience.

The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles issued a public statement from which I quote:

"It is morally wrong for any person or group to deny anyone his or her inalienable dignity on the tragic and abhorrent theory of racial or cultural superiority.

"We call upon all people everywhere to recommit themselves to the time-honored ideals of tolerance and mutual respect. We sincerely believe that as we acknowledge one another with consideration and compassion we will discover that we can all peacefully coexist despite our deepest differences."<sup>3</sup>

Together we may stand intolerant of transgression but tolerant of neighbors with differences they hold sacred. Our beloved brothers and sisters throughout the world are *all* children of God. He is our Father. His Son, Jesus, is the Christ. His Church has been restored to the earth in these latter days to bless all of God's children. **NE**

*From an April 1994 general conference address.*

### NOTES

1. See Matthew 22:36–40; John 13:34–35; 15:12, 17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11–12; 2 John 1:5.
2. See Genesis 1:28; D&C 59:15–21; Moses 2:28; Abraham 4:28.
3. Statement of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 18, 1992; as quoted in "Church Exhorts Ethnic, Religious Tolerance," *Church News*, Oct. 24, 1992, 4.



# SHOULD I LEAVE OR STAY?



*Days before I was to leave on my mission, my parents were hospitalized. I didn't know if I could leave them.*

**By Rodolfo Giannini**

I had the good fortune to be introduced to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints through a friend. I was taught by missionaries who were called by God to bring the light of the gospel to the world. Two years after my baptism I was called to serve in the Italy Milan Mission. Before I left, I had a profound spiritual experience.

My parents, who were not members of the Church, didn't share my joy in this missionary opportunity. We had terrible arguments that caused me much suffering.

Two days before I left on my mission, both my parents suddenly became seriously ill. My mother had a health crisis for which she was hospitalized. Nothing the doctors tried

seemed to help. My father had cirrhosis of the liver, from which the doctors said it would be difficult to recover.

That evening I knelt and prayed to my Heavenly Father, saying, "Father, help me. My family is sick, and I can't leave them in these circumstances. I pray, Father, help me know whether it's right to leave or stay."

I meditated on my situation for a few minutes. Then I felt a subtle but penetrating voice that said, "Have faith, and everything will work out for the best."

Notwithstanding the sorrow I felt in seeing my family in poor health, I decided to get on the airplane that would take me to Rome and then to the United States, where I attended the missionary training center. My

nights at the MTC were not happy. I thought over and over again about my parents. Finally, with the approval of the MTC president, I was able to call them to see how they were doing.

On the phone, my mother told me with great joy that she and my father had had a miracle from the Lord—words I never would have expected to hear from a woman without a lot of faith. She told me that after I left, their health had improved, and the doctors couldn't explain it. My parents were healthy and happy. My joy was full.

Through this experience, my testimony of the power of faith, prayer, and obedience grew. I am grateful that the Lord took care of my family during my mission. **NE**



FROM THE MISSION FIELD

# A POWERFUL





# Scripture

*The Lord promises that each of us can have the power to do God's will.*

**By Tom Ballard**

It was my first transfer as a senior companion in the Argentina Buenos Aires South Mission, and I felt like I was quite on top of my game. My companion and I had achieved what every missionary dreams of: we had found an entire family that was willing to have us teach them. The father, Hugo, was especially willing to listen to the gospel.

Hugo loved everything about the Church. He loved listening to our message, the Church members, and the scriptures. He and his whole family wanted to join the Church so badly, but he had to quit smoking first. My companion and I planned and prayed, trying to come up with a solution to help Hugo with his addiction.

One night, we were creating a plan with Hugo to quit smoking. He was discouraged and doubted whether it would be possible. I felt inspired to share with him a scripture that would later become one of my favorites: “And Christ hath said: If ye will have faith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me” (Moroni 7:33). I asked Hugo, “Do you think that your baptism is ‘expedient’ to Jesus Christ?”

“Absolutely, Elder Ballard,” Hugo replied. “But I don’t think I can quit smoking.”

“The Lord promises you in this scripture that if you will have faith in Christ, it will be possible,” I assured him. We finished making our plan with him, which was a quick process that would eventually require him to stop completely, and he resolved to follow it.

Hugo quit smoking within the week and his whole family was baptized into the Church the following Sunday.

I know that Hugo had found power in the scripture I shared with him.

Several months later, however, I found myself feeling not quite so on top of my game. I was training a new missionary, and we didn’t have many investigators. Finding people to teach was a challenge. One afternoon I became so discouraged that I began to wonder whether we could find any success in our work. As we went from house to house, trying to find a door that would open to us, I felt as though it were impossible to find anyone who would accept the gospel, despite the success I’d experienced earlier in my mission.

Suddenly, I felt a great reassurance come over me. I received a strong impression reminding me that this work is not mine—it is the Lord’s. And if I would but have faith in Christ, we would find success.

The next Sunday at church the ward mission leader approached us. “Elders,” he said, “I have a referral from the Church offices in Buenos Aires.” We were amazed. I had never received a referral in this way before, and it had been a while since we had found someone interested in the gospel.

We went that afternoon to contact the referral and found Grisell, a woman who had already read up to Alma in the Book of Mormon, which a co-worker had given her. She believed every word about Joseph Smith and the Restoration. We committed her to baptism on the spot.

Grisell was very excited to join the Church and loved learning about the gospel, but as we continued teaching Grisell, many challenges came up, as they usually do when someone commits to baptism. Her family opposed her attending church, and she was becoming distressed. I decided to share the same scripture with her that I had shared with Hugo many months prior. Grisell’s downcast face changed to the expression of joy and excitement she had shown when we first met as I read her the promise that she would be able to do anything that was the Lord’s will.

Suddenly I realized that this scripture was not only true for Hugo and Grisell. Just weeks before I had doubted my own ability to do what God had commanded me. As I reflected back on my recent discouragement and my mission up to that point, I knew that the Lord’s promise was true for me as well. **NE**



# ATTITUDE

*These Utah volleyball teams bumped sportsmanship up to a new level.*

**By Charlotte Wood Wilson**

It's game point, and the pressure is on. The volleyball soars over the net in a perfect serve, beginning what could be the final play of the regional championship game. Each team hustles for every return, prolonging the play and anticipation. Athletic battle rages on the court, every team member playing her heart out, desperate to end the game and win the championship.

One player places herself in position to hit a tricky shot—and misses. Game over. One team celebrates; the other is angry at their teammate who missed. They shoot nasty words to her and yell disparaging comments across the court to the other team. The victorious team retaliates, gloating and returning harsh comments.

As horrible as it sounds, some volleyball teams unfortunately play that way. But the Western Hills Eighth Ward (Kearns Utah Western Hills Stake) and Jordan First Ward (Salt Lake Jordan Stake) know better. They realize that having a good attitude, both on and off the court, is what sports—and sportsmanship—are really about.

## **No Longer Opponents**

For the second year running, the Western Hills and Jordan teams were about to face each other in the finals of a multistake volleyball tournament. Despite negative feelings that had developed between the two teams during the previous year's tournament, the Western Hills team invited the Jordan girls to a joint practice to take place before the final match. Jordan's coach, Kathy Holmes,

said that at first she didn't want her girls to lose their competitive edge, but after praying about it, she realized, "Heavenly Father would want us to get to know each other as friends and not as enemies. He wants us to have fun."

The Jordan team responded enthusiastically to the invitation. "We were excited!" says Jordan First Ward's Kim Lolani about the joint practice. "We wanted to get rid of any negativity."

Her teammate Marie Aini explains, "When we practiced together we bonded and got to know each other. Last year we didn't hit it off because we judged too quickly."

The Western Hills young women said they enjoyed playing with the Jordan girls because their attitudes were positive. "I really liked playing with the Jordan team because they wouldn't get mad at each other," says Western Hills' Jessica Ramirez. "Regardless of who won or lost, it wasn't a big deal, because we had fun."

Another Western Hills young woman, Martha Rojas, noticed the Jordan girls' example of good sportsmanship. "Even though they lost sometimes, they were still really happy. They had fun the whole time. When we lost a game, we didn't look as happy as the Jordan girls. I learned from them."

## **Sportsmanship Strategy**

The positive example the teams set for each other resonated with everyone. Jessica says, "A lot of the time there



# ALL-STAR



The Western Hills Ward team (below) invited the Jordan First Ward team to a joint practice. Getting to know each other as friends made a huge difference. Esther Pena (above) shows her technique.



## WE'RE ON THE SAME TEAM

"We must realize that all of God's children wear the same jersey. Our team is the brotherhood of man. This mortal life is our playing field. Our goal is to learn to love God and to extend that same love toward our fellowman. We are here to live according to His law and establish the kingdom of God. We are here to build, uplift, treat fairly, and encourage all of Heavenly Father's children."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Pride and the Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 56.





## SPORTSMANSHIP TIPS

The Jordan and Western Hills teams gave the *New Era* some tips for developing winning sportsmanship.

- Have a good attitude with all the players, coaches, and referees on and off the court.
- Don't take the game too seriously.
- Don't get upset when others make mistakes.
- Communicate with your teammates.
- Teach others how to play.
- Try your hardest.
- Say "good game" and mean it.
- Have fun!



*Being positive was the attitude the Jordan First Ward team (right) took out onto the floor. Marie Aini (above) gets ready to serve.*





have been problems with other teams we've played, and people get angry with each other. Attitudes aren't always great." But when these two teams got together, they focused on the positive and fostered an environment of healthy and encouraging competition.

The girls learned that competition doesn't have to be negative and that with good sportsmanship, competition can motivate them to play better. Sara Pena, the Western Hills coach, has noticed that healthy competition can bring out the best in the players. "Playing your best can help athletes grow in their own talent and achieve something," she says. "Competition isn't about seeing if you're better than someone else. It's about seeing where your diligence and strength will take you."

The Jordan team agrees that attitude makes the difference between healthy and negative competitiveness. Marie says, "Together as a group, we decided that being too competitive isn't fun."

Kim agrees. "We shouldn't take the game too seriously. We like to make each other laugh instead."

The girls helped each other improve by teaching each other new skills. When Jael Blanco first started playing with the Western Hills team, she didn't know how to play volleyball very well, but Coach Pena taught her the rules and encouraged her to keep trying. "Sometimes when I play a new sport, I feel like people care only about winning," says Jael. "It's not as much fun, because really I just want to learn. Sara taught me how to play volleyball, but she also taught me how to have fun with it."

After the joint practice, the two teams faced each other in the championship match. Kathy says, "The Western Hills girls weren't the enemy anymore. They were just people—friends—and it wasn't intimidating. It

was a completely different feeling playing that last game."

The girls were cheering for their own teams, but the game wasn't laced with tension like the previous year's had been. The Jordan team won in a reversal from last year's championship, but a more significant reversal took place. More than caring about which team won, this year the girls celebrated athletic skill and a good game.

### **A Cultural Exchange**

After Jordan's win, the Western Hills ward approached the Jordan ward and suggested a joint Mutual activity. The Western Hills ward is a Spanish-speaking ward, and many of the young women from Jordan have Polynesian heritage, so they decided to organize a cultural exchange night, where they could share aspects of their different cultures.

The Jordan First Ward hosted the activity, and each ward brought food from their cultures. Once the activity started, it was hard to tell which girl was in which ward. "We didn't sit with our own wards. We all spread out and were meeting new people. I ended up hanging out with the Jordan girls at the cultural exchange night more than the girls from my own ward," Martha says.

Jessica adds, "We mingled with everyone and also got along with all the leaders. Everyone was laughing and busy making new friends."

### **Attitude Is Integral**

These volleyball players know that attitude is integral in sportsmanship. Marie says, "Whatever attitude you choose to have before a game you take out with you onto the court." She also says that it's important to have a positive attitude not only with your own teammates but also with your opponents.

For these two volleyball teams, winning doesn't depend on the score. These girls know that they score the most points when they step outside of themselves, make friends, and radiate a positive attitude. **NE**

# Be Not Deceived



Joseph Fielding Smith, 10th President of the Church, was born on July 19, 1876. He was ordained an Apostle on April 7, 1910, and was sustained as President of the Church on January 23, 1970. In this address, given in 1953, President Smith taught youth how to not be deceived by the world's false theories.

By President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)

*As some are modifying their standards to conform to worldly trends, we must stand firm in the scriptures and revealed truths of the gospel.*

**W**e are living in a very troubled world, and I am going to talk plainly: we are living in a world that has discarded God or is rapidly doing so. We are living in a world where the Christian ministers of various denominations have been frightened by the philosophies of men and, therefore, because they lack the Spirit of the Lord, have tried to modify the scriptures, or the meaning of the scriptures, so that they can make them harmonize with the false theories so prevalent in the world today, theories which are in absolute conflict with divine revelation; and yet these people, afraid, dominated by the influence of

false philosophy, are modifying the doctrines to make them conform to these theories and ideas which are godless in their foundation. We cannot afford to do that. . . .

“The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; nevertheless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him.

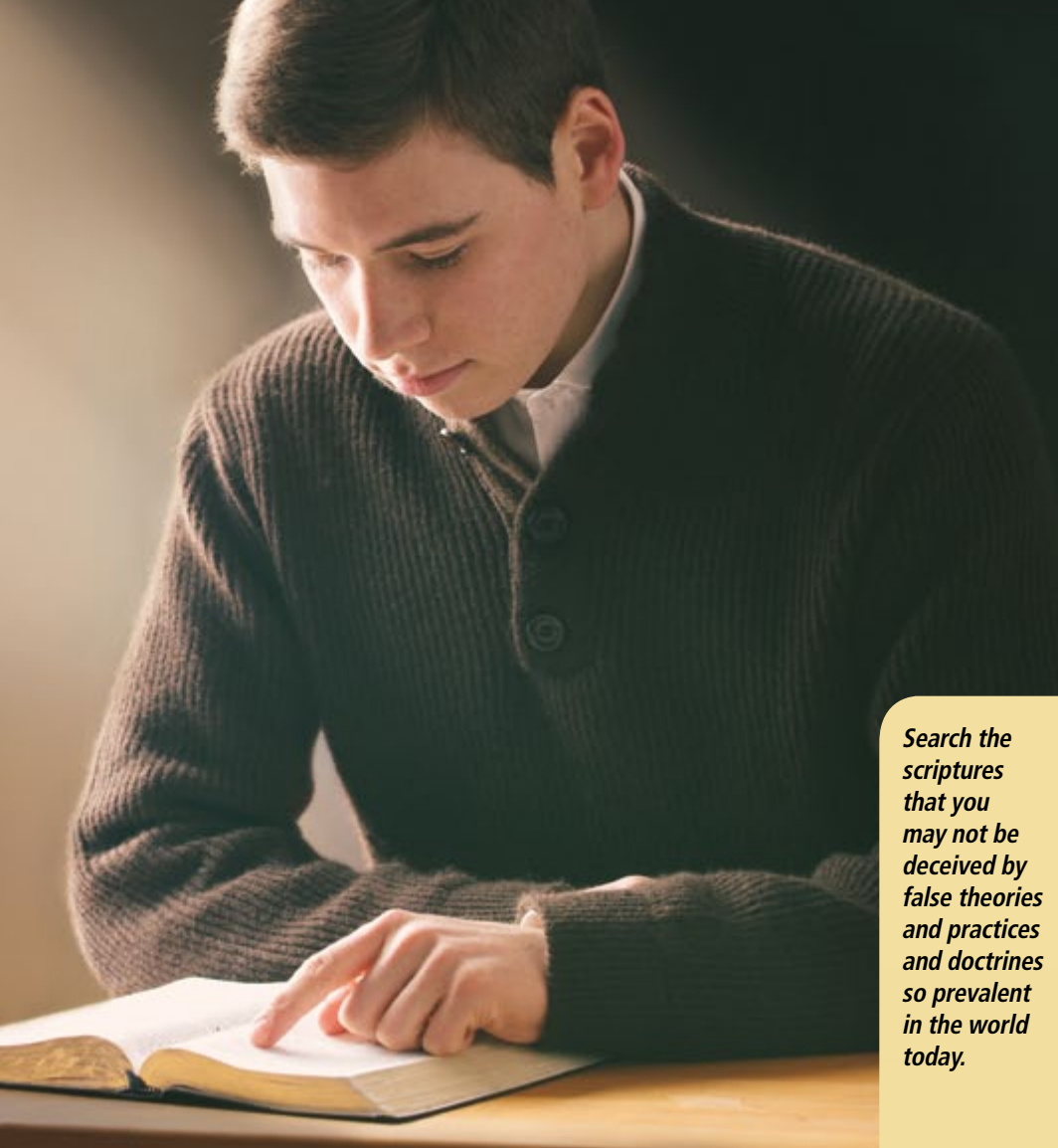
“Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me; otherwise ye could not abound” (D&C 88:49–50).

This is a wonderful revelation. It covers so many things

of vital importance to every member of the Church. I wonder how many of us have read section 88? Do not stop by just reading this one section. Take it as your theme—there is none better—but read the whole revelation. No! Read the whole book. The Lord commanded in the very first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, which is the preface of this book, the Lord's preface:

“Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in





*Search the scriptures that you may not be deceived by false theories and practices and doctrines so prevalent in the world today.*

them shall all be fulfilled” (D&C 1:37). “Search these commandments.” How much do we love the Lord? What is the greatest of all the commandments? The Lord has told us here, in section 59 of the Doctrine and Covenants, what it is, as He applies it to the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in this dispensation of the fulness of times:

“Wherefore, I give unto them [the members of the Church] a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy

might, mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him” (D&C 59:5). . . .

So the first of all the commandments is to love God with all our soul and, in the name of Jesus Christ, serve Him, and He has commanded us to make ourselves familiar with these truths which have been revealed to us in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

How many of us have done it? So I say to you, and all the members of the Church for that matter, do not let your understanding rest upon one verse

[D&C 88:86, that year’s Mutual theme], which is a very excellent theme, but search the scriptures that you may not be deceived by false theories and practices and doctrines so prevalent in the world today. If you will do this, if you will have in your hearts the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord which every member of the Church has a right to have, the companionship of the Holy Ghost, you will not be led astray by the theories of men because the Spirit of the Lord will tell you they are false, and you will have the spirit of discernment that you may understand. . . .

Now, if you understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, it will make you free. If your softball, your volleyball, your basketball, your foot racing, your dancing, your other entertainments are devoid of the Spirit of the Lord, they will be of no value to you. Let everything be done in the spirit of prayer and in faith. I think that is the case—maybe it is unnecessary for me to say it—but so let it be. Do everything with an eye single unto the glory of God, and let us teach to build up and strengthen ourselves and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. **NE**

*From “Entangle Not Yourselves in Sin,” Improvement Era, Sept. 1953, 646–47, 671–72, 674, 676–78; capitalization and punctuation standardized.*

**“Whenever I invite  
my friend  
to come to church  
and activities, she  
wants to  
come,  
but her parents  
won’t let her.  
Is there anything  
I can do?”**

**T**he Church teaches that children should respect and obey their parents. So, as a member of the Church, it follows that you should not turn against that advice and encourage your friend to go against her parents’ wishes in attending Church activities and meetings.

You need to continue being a good example in all things, and you should encourage your friend to be patient. Her parents may come to realize that the influence of the Church is a desirable thing in their daughter’s life. As for participation in the Church, she may have to wait until she comes of age and is able to make decisions for herself.

However, you can continue to be a good, supportive friend. In many ways, she will learn the principles of the Church by the things you do. The best thing you can do is make sure you are an active example of what Christ wants you to be and do.

Make sure she knows she is always welcome at meetings and activities and that you will remain her friend. **NE**

## Be an Example



Your example is your strongest testimony. Be the very best you can be, and she and her parents will see that light shining through you. Eventually, they will trust you enough to let her go. And if not, then at the very least, she will remember your example.

*McLane S., 17, Missouri, USA*

## Ask Parents to Talk



A good thing to do would be to ask your parents to talk to your friend’s parents if your friend’s parents want to know more about the gospel and what their son or daughter would be doing at church. Pray that the Lord will soften their hearts. Fasting would also help.

*Drew A., 13, Minnesota, USA*

## Respect Their Privacy



I have a simliar situation. I tried to invite one of my friends to church and to Mutual. His parents haven’t been interested. After a few more tries, I’ve realized I need to respect their privacy. Pray to our Heavenly Father to help soften their hearts about the Church if it is His will. And if it is, then they may change their minds about letting your friend come to Church activities.

*Audrie F., 14, Utah, USA*

## Discuss the Gospel



Whenever my friends and I see our friend at either school or in activities outside of classes, we usually find opportunities to share our thoughts on the gospel. She respects the gospel, and I have seen her turn away from temptation.

*Zachary K., 15, Arizona, USA*



## Have Faith



Have faith in the Lord's love that a way will be prepared for her to come unto Him. At the same time, remind your friend

to also have faith that eventually she can come to church as she wants.

*Joseph S., 15, North Carolina, USA*

## Put Your Trust in Him



Remember to be respectful and understanding towards her. Keep showing a Christlike example and being a good friend.

If the Lord wants something to happen, it will. Put your trust in Him and try your hardest.

*Rachel S., 14, Missouri, USA*

## Stay Friends



Just keep being her friend. Your example will shine through. Once her parents see the way you live, they just might

change their minds.

*Lisa H., 17, Louisiana, USA*

## Invite the Family



I would definitely pray that they will allow her to attend activities and meetings. Maybe you could invite the entire

family to go to church one Sunday, or invite them to go to a ward activity.

*Bret G., 16, Oregon, USA*

## Keep Asking



Being an example of Christ will show a lot to the parents. Remain strong and courageous and keep asking.

*Gregory F., 15, Pennsylvania, USA*

## Be a Friend, and Pray



A good way to handle a tough situation like this is to continue to be a good friend. People notice when someone is nice to them.

You can also pray to the Lord. Pray that He will soften her parents' hearts.

*Alexa B., 14, Arizona, USA*

## Gain Trust



I would just continue to be the best friend that you can be. Also be a good example of a member of the Church, so her parents can see that it can't be a bad thing for their child to hang out with and go to some activities with you.

*Timothy S., 14, California, USA*

## Do Something Together



Suggest having a combined family night. This will allow your friend's parent to get to know your

family better. Hopefully this will gain their trust.

*Sidney H., 15, Texas, USA*

*Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.*



## HONORING PARENTS

**T**o young people, honoring parents is appropriately understood to focus on obedience, respect,

and emulation of righteous parents. The Apostle Paul illuminated that focus when he taught, 'Children, obey your parents in all things [I believe he meant all righteous things]: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.' (Col. 3:20.)"

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Honour Thy Father and Thy Mother," Ensign, May 1991, 15.**

## NEXT QUESTION

"I've never been really close to my dad. Whenever I am around him, I tend to get grumpy and short-tempered. What can I do to be closer to him?"

Send your answer and photo by April 15, 2011.

Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org), click "Submit Your Material," and then select "Questions and Answers."

You can also write to us at [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org)

or  
New Era, Q&A, Dad  
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

# Remember to Remember

By Julia Woodbury

*There are many ways to keep track of how the Lord has blessed you.*

One of my most valuable possessions is a dog-eared bundle of letters that I've written to myself. I wrote the first letter on my 16th birthday. I sealed it up, tucked it in my drawer, and didn't read it until a year later on the night of my 17th birthday. So much had changed in just a year! I had written about my life, describing things I wouldn't have remembered on my own. I had joked with myself, saying that the things I was worrying about then probably wouldn't matter much in a year. I was right.

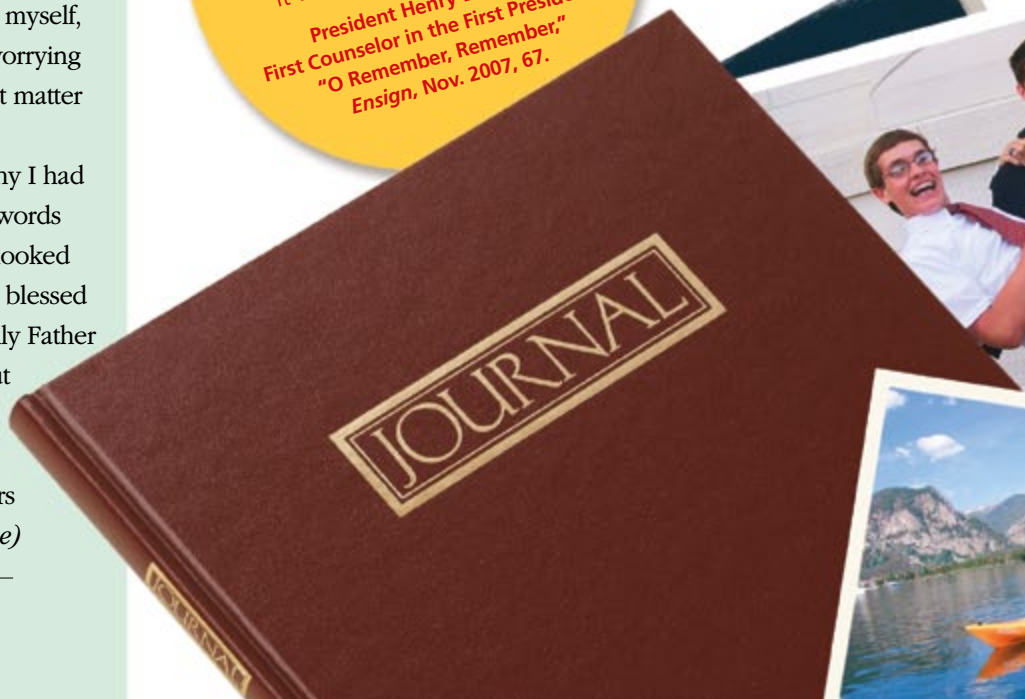
Best of all, I told myself why I had a testimony. A year later, my words were a timely reminder. As I looked back, I could clearly see how blessed I was and how much Heavenly Father loves me. Excited, I pulled out another piece of paper, and wrote my next letter. With each year, the bundle of letters continues to grow. *(Next page)*



## REMEMBER GOD'S KINDNESS

*"My point is to urge you to find ways to recognize and remember God's kindness. It will build our testimonies."*

*President Henry B. Eyring,  
First Counselor in the First Presidency,  
"O Remember, Remember,"  
Ensign, Nov. 2007, 67.*





# JUMP-START YOUR Journal

**T**here is more to a journal than just events and dates.

Journals record who we are and how we are blessed. Try some of these fun ideas for keeping track of your daily blessings.

- Type your journal, print it out, and keep it in a binder instead of writing in a book. You can also add handwritten notes about something you learned in church, or other items such as programs or magazine articles.
- Use newspaper clippings to show what's happening in your world, and then write how the events have affected you.
- Record your feelings through art, poetry, or music.
- Print off and save emails you've sent that talk about your life.
- Keep a joint journal with a brother or sister. Take turns writing in it each night.
- Keep a travel journal of places you go or of places you would like to go. Include your tickets, brochures, and photos.
- Write about what you read in the scriptures each day. Record favorite verses and how they make you feel or promptings you receive while reading.
- Write entries from other people's perspectives, such as how your sibling view you after you've had a misunderstanding or how the day might look from your parents' point of view. You might talk to the people involved to see if your perspective of them is correct.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Every day write down those things for which you are thankful.
- Keep a journal jar (see Journal Jar sidebar to find out how). By Shanna Butler

## GET THE PICTURE

**W**ho was in your Beehive class? What did that house you painted look like before and after your quorum service project? How did your family look ten years ago? You might not remember these details on your own, but with a picture, you'll never forget.

Here are some fun ideas for using photos to help you remember your life and the blessings that you've received.

**Include Church activities.** Take pictures after seminary or at young women's camp. Take a photo of your priesthood quorum or Young Women class once a year and give everyone a copy. Years from now you'll be able to see who your leaders were and what your friends looked like way back when.

**Go on a hunt.** Go on a picture scavenger hunt. See if you can photograph your family's favorite spots around your home and neighborhood.

**Capture the norm.** Want to liven up a regular day? Take a camera along and get shots of some of these things: Your bedroom, your car, your school, your favorite pair of shoes, your pet, the view out your window, your classroom, who you eat lunch with, afterschool activities, your church class, and anything else you encounter in a normal day.

**Say cheese.** Ask your parents if you can try to take family pictures every year. This is a great opportunity to get the whole family together and look back and see what everyone looked like growing up.

**Take a vacation from vacation.** Pictures aren't just for trips. Take pictures of your family at home. Maybe you love seeing your family sitting together around the kitchen table, or you like to see your siblings playing outside. Take a picture of these things so you'll always remember them.

**Remember that time.** Try recreating some of your favorite pictures. Go on that hike again, or revisit that same spot downtown and take the picture again. You will make new memories while remembering old ones.

*Be sure to print out and keep all your picture memories in a safe place like a box or an album, and label them with the place, the date, and the names of the people in the picture.*

## PRINT IT!

**J**ust a tip: Many digital media have a shorter life than we might expect. CDs, DVDs, USB drives, and hard drives won't last forever. Programs change and become outdated so that, before you know it, you can't access your files. Be sure to print out your pictures and documents on archive paper so you will always be able to have them.

## Remember, Remember

You might not think of my experience in writing these letters as exactly the same thing as keeping a journal in the classical sense. But it is a way of keeping a record that is my own. It is a way for me to remember spiritual things, as President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has suggested. He described how, after keeping a daily journal of how the Lord was blessing him and his family, that “trying to remember had allowed God to show me what He had done” (“O Remember, Remember,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 67).

I’ve learned that when you try to remember your blessings, you let your Father in Heaven show you how He has blessed you. You also show gratitude for your blessings when you take the time to remember and record them—whether it’s in a journal or in letters, whether it’s handwritten or keyboarded into a computer—and that it’s important to preserve your records for yourself and for those who may benefit from your experience later on (such as, someday, your children).

## Help Him Show You

There can be many ways to help Heavenly Father show you how He has blessed you. You can keep a journal or make a personal history. You can take pictures or make recordings. You can save papers and documents or sentimental items. The idea is just to preserve memories of your life so you will always be able to look back and remember your blessings. That is the importance of your record. And who knows? Maybe someday down the road you and many others will find strength in your record of Heavenly Father’s love and the blessings He has given to you. **NE**



## A RECORDABLE RECORD

**V**ideo or audio recordings can be a great way to help you remember great things in your life. Here are some ideas for things you might want to record:

- Make a recording of your own **testimony**.
- Next time you give a **talk in church**, give it again later at home, and make a recording of it.
- Ask your parents or older siblings to talk about **experiences** they had when they were your age. You might learn a lot of new things **about the people you love most**.
- Make a recording of your family’s **favorite memories**. Have siblings tell their favorite stories and ask your parents to share their feelings about raising your family.
- Revisit a **home or neighborhood** that you used to live in. Take a walk through it and record the thoughts and memories that you had there.



## STEPS TO SAVING

**F**inding materials for a fun and interesting journal or personal history is easier than you may think! Just set aside a box and start saving. Here’s a list of the things you might want to keep:

- Priesthood ordination certificates and Duty to God booklets, or Young Women certificates and Personal Progress booklets
- Ticket stubs or programs from movies, concerts, and shows
- A copy of your report card
- Your class schedules
- Newspaper clippings of important events
- School photos of yourself and your friends
- Calendars, daily planners, and to do lists
- Your best school papers, especially if they’re personal essays
- Copies of speeches or church talks that you give
- Maps from amusement parks or historical sites you’ve visited
- Funny sayings from people you know, like a college quote wall
- Letters and cards that you receive
- Little mementos from you life, like swatches of cloth or other items that store well and are small or that can lay flat
- Printouts of blog posts, good IM conversations, and e-mails





## JOURNAL JAR

Out of ideas? Start a journal jar! Cut the prompts below into strips and put them in a jar. Add additional strips with ideas of your own. Then, when you need something to write about, just reach for your jar.

If I could invent something, it would be . . .

One thing I have learned from the scriptures is . . .

I love my mom because . . .

When I look up from the page, the first thing I see is . . .

Five things I ought to throw away are . . .

I want to be better at . . .

From general conference, I learned that . . .

My favorite song is . . .

My best friend is great because . . .

Tomorrow, I am going to . . .

One thing I could do better to get along with my family would be . . .

If I could meet anyone in the world it would be . . .

Last Sunday at church, I learned . . .

When I turn 16 (or any other age) . . .

My favorite memory is . . .

These are the good things people say about me . . .

I believe in Jesus Christ because . . .

If I had three wishes, they would be . . .

When I grow up I want to be . . .

My favorite subject at school is . . .

The best place I've ever been is . . .

I keep the Word of Wisdom because . . .

The last book I read was . . .

My dad is great because . . .

My favorite sport is . . .

Our bishop sets a great example by . . .

One thing I have learned from the prophet is . . .

I am happy when . . .

I first realized I had a testimony when . . .

I am preparing to marry in the temple by . . .

My favorite foods are . . .

The things I learn in my daily routines are . . .

If I cleaned out my backpack I would find . . .

Today I ate . . .

Today while I was studying the scriptures I realized . . .

My favorite book is . . .

I know Heavenly Father answers prayer because . . .

### ALWAYS RELEVANT

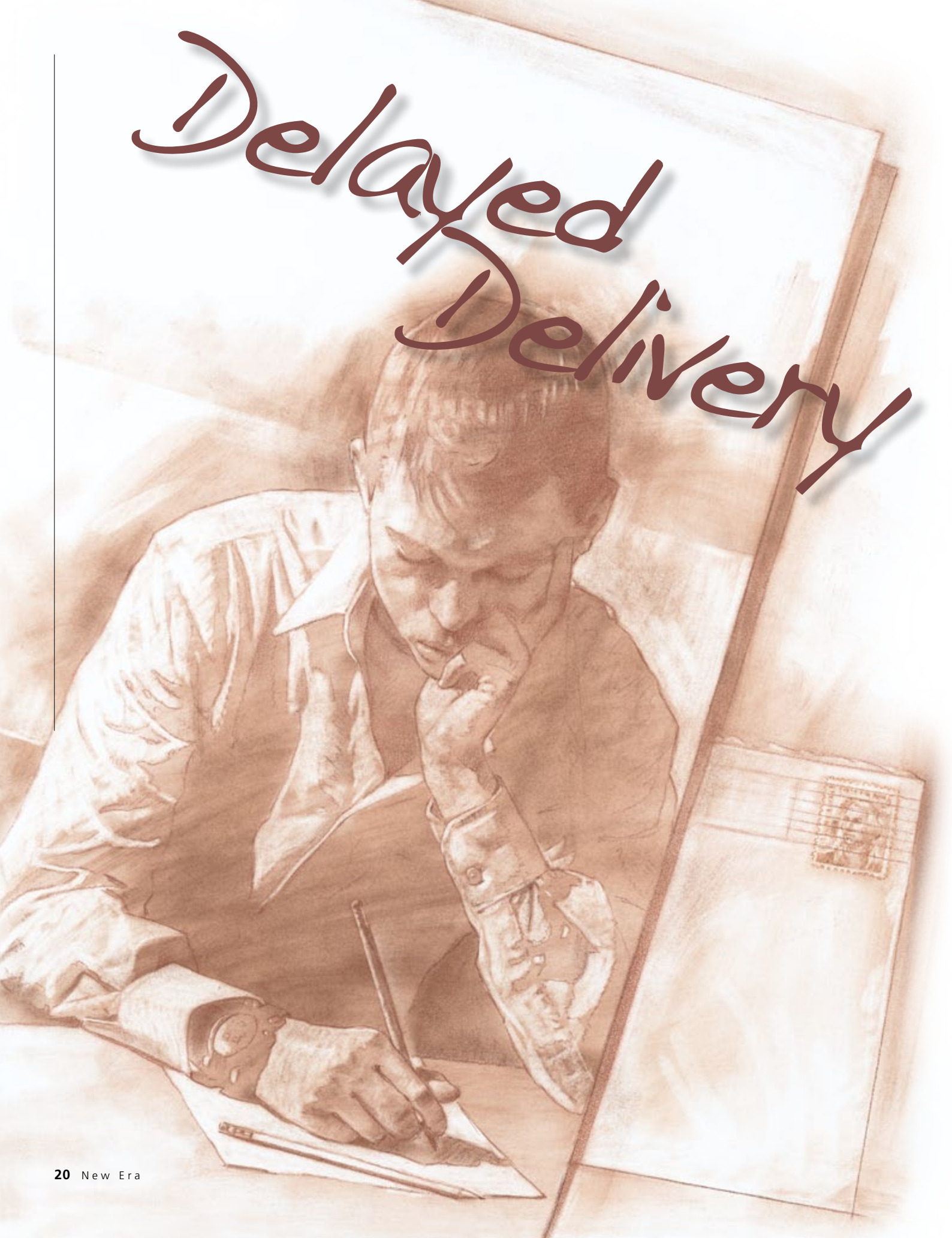
"We urge our young people to begin today to write and keep records of all the important things in their own lives. . . . Your own private journal should record the way you face up to challenges that beset you. Do not suppose life changes so much that your experiences will not be interesting to your posterity. Experiences of work, relations with people, and an awareness of the rightness and wrongness of actions will always be relevant."

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895-1985),  
"The Angels May Quote from It,"  
New Era, Oct. 1975, 4-5.





# Delayed Delivery







By Jacob Fullmer

In 1979, Art Hansen was wrestling with the decision to give up his personal pursuits in competitive skiing to go on a full-time mission. Back then he went to a sacrament meeting that helped him make up his mind.

Art listened to a talk given by a friend who had accepted a mission call. “I thought, hey, I’m going to go too,” he remembers. Guided by his initial excitement, he penned a letter to another friend, Elder Matthew Balkman, who at the time was serving in the Philippines. He told his missionary friend about his decision to serve. Only one problem—Elder Balkman never received that letter or the two that followed. “We didn’t communicate regularly back then,” Art says. “I didn’t know he never received my letters.”

Almost 30 years later, Elder Balkman’s son Blake was called to serve in the same location in the Philippines where his father had served. When Elder Balkman junior arrived at the mission home, he was presented with three faded letters from “Elder Hansen” addressed to an Elder Balkman. He noticed the postmarks were dated 30 years ago and sent the letters home to his father, assuming they had something to do with him. Elder Balkman senior then forwarded them on to his old friend Art Hansen, not knowing that this time the letter would arrive just at the right moment—for someone else.

### An Answer to Prayer

Art’s son, Brody, loved the Church, but he was concerned about serving a full-time mission. He was nervous about his natural

shyness. “I wasn’t a big talker,” he explains. And up to that time, he “wasn’t super motivated to study the gospel.” He prayed every day, but his worries persisted.

His family was supportive. His father recalls: “We reminded him how important his mission would be, not only for his own growth but also for those he would meet and teach.” Just the same, Brody remained nervous. That’s when the letters arrived.

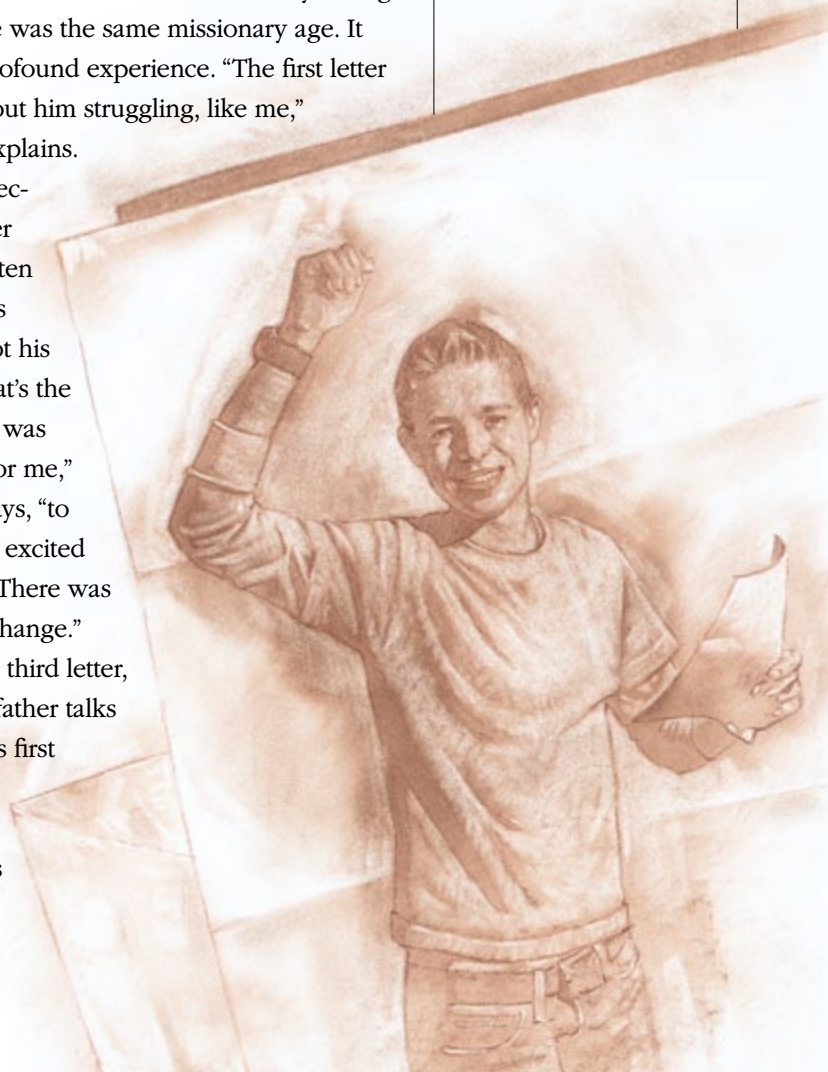
They were an answer to Brody’s prayer. Reading them was like being able to sit down and visit with his own father years ago when he was the same missionary age. It was a profound experience. “The first letter talks about him struggling, like me,”

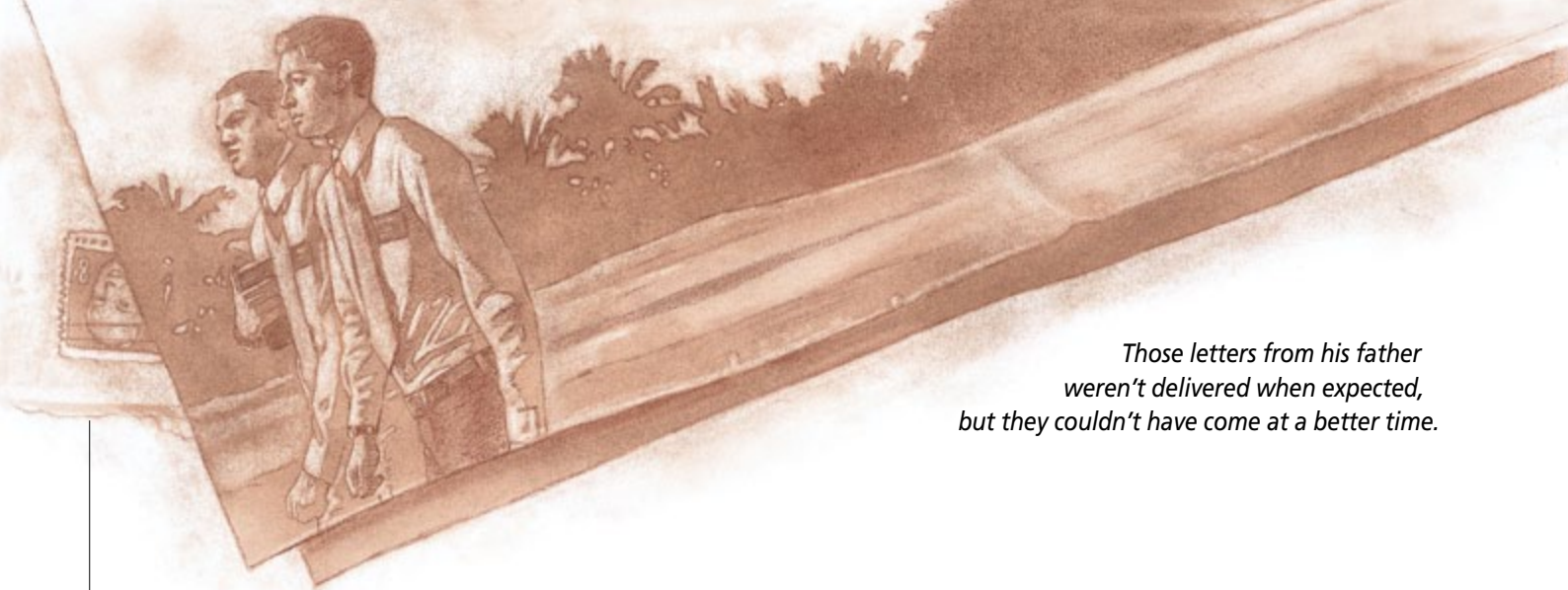
Brody explains.

The second letter was written when his father got his call. “That’s the one that was crucial for me,” Brody says, “to see how excited he was. There was a great change.”

In the third letter, Brody’s father talks about his first area and his struggles learning

*Thirty years ago three letters were lost. But they were eventually found—at just the right time.*





*Those letters from his father weren't delivered when expected, but they couldn't have come at a better time.*

how to teach the gospel. Brody learned another lesson: “The harder you work for something, the more rewarding it's going to be. His decision was hard for him. The letter shows he's glad he went.”

Brody's parents saw how amazing the letters were. Brother Hansen realized that at the time he wrote them, he thought he was writing to his friend. But, as it turns out, he was really writing to his own son who would experience similar feelings and doubts 30 years down the road. “As an adult, I hadn't been able to share those feelings in the same way,” his father says. “Brody needed to read about those feelings in writing from a 19-year-old's perspective.”

What about Brody's concern about his shyness and his gospel knowledge? The Lord helped him with those too. “At the Missionary Training Center, my teachers and my branch president reassured me that overcoming shyness and gaining gospel knowledge were things I could work on,” he recalls.

When Brody spoke in sacrament meeting before leaving on his mission, he says it was the first time he teared up at church. “My parents were pretty excited to hear me talk that much.”

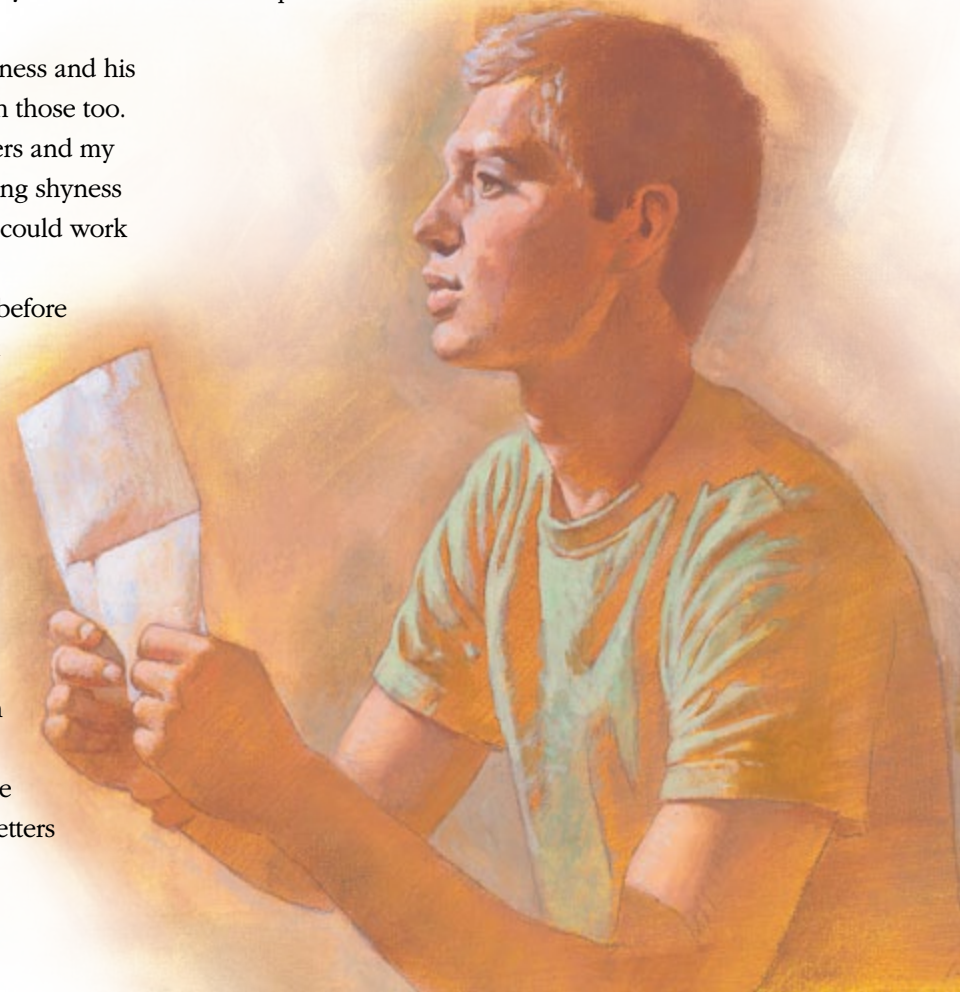
### **The Call Accepted**

Elder Hansen was called to the Switzerland Geneva Mission. He knows Heavenly Father answered his prayers. Those letters from his father weren't delivered when expected, but they couldn't have come at a better time. “The coolest part is the timing,” he says. “What can't be explained is why those letters

sat untouched in the mission home for all those years. I already know that God loves me, but this strengthened my testimony that He wants me to know I'm doing the right thing,” Brody says.

To others who may be struggling with the decision to serve a mission, Brody says, “Really pray about it. Be specific with the Lord. I hadn't really done that before, and when I did, I got a specific answer.”

The answer may not come in the form of 30-year-old letters. “But the Lord will help you,” Elder Hansen explains. And he knows from experience. **NE**





# SUPER!

**CHOOSE  
TO BE A  
HERO.**

**Follow the prophet.  
Prepare to serve  
a mission.**

(See D&C 15:6.)







# DEFENDER OF THE FAITH

*Kubangila Kasanza Celva of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, is a great player on many teams.*

**By Richard M. Romney**  
Church Magazines

The attacker from the other team is dribbling toward the goal, fast. He seems certain to score. But then Celva catches up to him, matches him stride for stride, kicks the ball away, and races in the opposite direction.

“I’m a defender,” 12-year-old Celva explains. “It’s my job to stop the other team from scoring.”

Celva’s the kind of player you love to have on your side. He’s quiet but assertive, he’s ready to work hard, and he loves to see everyone on the team succeed. These are qualities that also make him a great part of some other teams—his church and his family. And so does his willingness to defend the truth.

## **Celva and Nephi**

Celva’s favorite scripture is 1 Nephi 3:7: “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded.” As Nephi

did, Celva trusts in the Lord. “He will not ask me to do something without preparing a way for me to do it. He will strengthen me and send others to help me.”

## **Go and Do**

“Listening to what we are taught about the gospel is important,” Celva says. “But it’s also important to do what we are taught.” He remembers his baptism and tries each day to use the gift of the Holy Ghost to make wise choices. He has just received the Aaronic Priesthood, looks forward to going to the temple someday to make additional covenants with the Lord, and plans to serve a full-time mission. He wants to set a good example for his brothers and be of service to his mother and father.

“I honor my mother and father by doing what they ask me to do and by keeping the commandments of our Heavenly Father,” he says. “As the

oldest child, I know it is important that I set a good example for my brothers, because what I do they are also likely to do.”

## **Staying Strong**

Celva knows it’s important to work hard, both in sports and in the gospel. Family and personal prayer, family



## **WHAT’S IN A NAME?**

*Celva* is a name with significance. It combines the names of Celva’s father, Celestin, and his

mother, Valerie. “It reminds me of how much they wanted to be together, to create a happy family,” Celva says.

His brothers names are also significant. Nathan, age 7, is named for a wise man in the Bible. Beni, age 4, means “blessed.” And although the two-year-old’s name is Celestin Jr., after his father, for now everyone calls him Le Petit (“the little one”).





and personal scripture study, family home evening—all are part of his regular routine. He has a testimony of the Word of Wisdom and knows that some things are good to eat while others are bad. “Athletes shouldn’t drink beer,” he says emphatically.

**A True Defender**

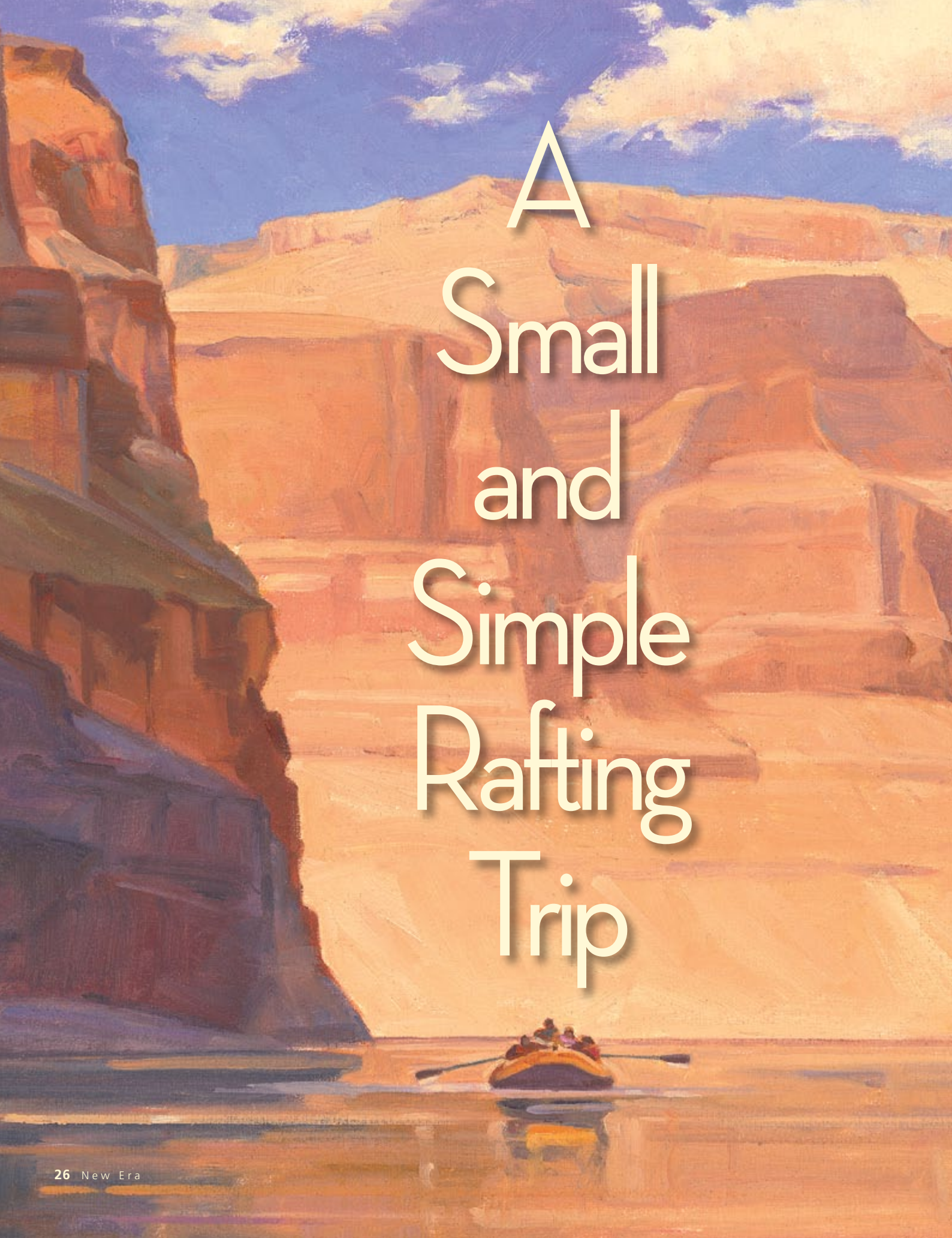
As the Church moves into the future, it is good to know there are strong young men like Celva who are eager to do what is right. “I know my Heavenly Father lives, that Jesus Christ is real, and that Joseph Smith was the prophet who restored the gospel to the earth,” Celva says. “I have that testimony and will always defend the Church in every way.” **NE**

**NEmore**

To see a map of Kinshasa and to watch a video of Celva singing a hymn and bearing his testimony, go to [www.newera.lds.org](http://www.newera.lds.org).





A painting of a river canyon. The scene is dominated by warm, golden-brown and orange tones. In the foreground, a small raft with several people is on the water, moving towards the viewer. The canyon walls are steep and layered, showing signs of erosion. The sky is a deep blue with scattered white clouds. The overall style is impressionistic, with visible brushstrokes and a focus on light and color.

# A Small and Simple Rafting Trip



By Gary Leikness

*An invitation from the bishop turned out to be a life preserver for my family.*

“What?” I said incredulously. “I’m doing what? Dad, how could you?”

My dad just shook his head and waved me off, “Well, I thought you’d like to go on a rafting trip. You weren’t here to say, so I said yes.”

I stomped off angrily. My dad had accepted an invitation from the bishop for me to go on a weeklong rafting trip down the Colorado River with a bunch of kids from church. I had just spent over two weeks waterskiing with some of my real friends. I never expected to come home to the news that I was leaving the very next day to go rafting with the “church people.”

We had gone to church when I was younger, and I was baptized when I was eight. But shortly after that we moved from our old neighborhood to a new development. We slipped into inactivity, and no one seemed to notice. Now I was 16 and thought I was happy with my life. Even though my parents still raised me with high moral expectations like other Mormon kids, I still avoided people from church.

The next morning my parents dropped me at the Scoutmaster’s house. I recognized a few of the faces. I had gone to church with some of these guys when I was



a kid. Some of them even went to my school.

As we started the long drive to the starting point of the trip, I was nervous about how things would be with the other boys. But everyone was cool.

No one treated me like the “less-active kid.” It didn’t take long to feel like I was just part of the group.

I ended up having a great time. I liked these people. I listened to these boys and their leaders pray, and I felt something. Another boy, Todd, and I had become good friends. One day as we were waiting for dinner, we went for a walk. We found a set of train tracks and started walking along them.

We were goofing off and tossing rocks around when Todd suddenly said, “You know, you should come to church.”

I picked up another rock. “Yeah, maybe.” He didn’t say anything else about church then, but I remembered his invitation.

The whole experience was so different from the two weeks I had spent waterskiing. The adults on the skiing trip were always drunk, swearing at each other, and saying inappropriate things. The adults on the rafting trip were respectful toward us and one another. I was





*Answering my parents' call, my sister and I ran down the stairs to see our parents all dressed up and ready to go with us to church.*

impressed, and I respected them for it.

After I returned home, the next Sunday I got up and got dressed for church. I knew enough to know that I should wear my best. As I came downstairs my mom and sisters were doing the dishes. "Hey, Gary, where are you going?" Mom asked.

"Uh," I paused. "Church." My mother seemed surprised (as did my sisters), but she just nodded. I went to church and sat in the back. For several weeks I went by myself.

Then one Saturday night my sister Patti said that she would go to church with me. Even though we liked the kids at church, we realized that going to church wasn't about fitting in or having friends—church was about how we felt when we were there.

One day Patti and I were getting ready for church when we heard a call from downstairs, "Patti! Gary! We're going to be late." I went jogging down the stairs and saw my parents dressed and standing by the door. Our family was beginning to change.

I believe my bishop was inspired to invite me on that trip, and I believe my father was inspired to accept for me. The scriptures say, "Now ye may suppose that this is foolishness in me; but behold I say unto you, that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass" (Alma 37:6).

One small invitation led a family back to church. I earned my Eagle Scout Award and went on a mission. Patti and I each got married in the temple to returned missionaries. We're now raising our own families in the gospel.

If you invite a less-active person to an activity, it may or may not impact their lives. But if you *don't* invite them, it definitely won't. **NE**



# The Girl with the Beautiful Smile

*I was scared, but I found a secret weapon to overcome my fear.*

By Michelle Glauser

For months I had prepared with my piano teacher for this day. I was participating in Achievement in Music, an annual competition that rates music students on all sorts of things—from knowledge of theory to the dynamics in a memorized piece. Finally the day had come and along with it my nervousness.

The scariest part of the competition involved performing pieces for judges. I knew my pieces, but my hands shook as I played.

The dreaded performance was over. I could relax because I just had to give my report on a composer. I found the correct area and waited in a line before two doors. Curiously, I looked in the door on the left. A friendly teacher encouraged students as they nervously entered and

became acquainted. She obviously wanted to put them at ease.

Then I looked in the room on the right. There was another piano teacher, an older one, but she had a stern look that made my hands turn cold. The more I saw her interact with the students, the more scared I felt. All I could think was, “I hope I get the first judge.”

I read my report over and over. When I got to the front of the line, I hoped the person on the left would finish first. To my dismay, the student on the right started walking to the door. There was no way I could go in there. Then the thought came to me, “Just put on your biggest smile.”

I walked in with a bounce in my step and the biggest smile I’d ever shown. Like they say, by acting happy, you feel happy. I beamed as I shook the judge’s hand. Then I read

my report in a clear voice, pausing now and then to smile at her. At the end of my report, I thanked her for her time. She did not seem scary anymore. As I walked out of the room, I felt relieved and happy.

A few months later I listened as my piano teacher read the comments from the judges. On the last comment she said, “Wow, you really impressed this judge. She wrote, ‘Michelle, the girl with the beautiful smile.’” I didn’t have to ask her who wrote that.

Changing my attitude helped me do my best. Whenever I have something difficult to do, instead of showing myself to be unwilling, I decide to make it fulfilling and enjoyable. I know that my attitude affects my experiences. By persevering with a good attitude, I have learned to enjoy my challenges. **NE**



**By Janet Thomas**

Church Magazines

*Gaining a testimony is a big part of being an LDS teen in Jacksonville, Florida.*

Corey remembers being 11 or so when his cousin died of cancer. He was at his funeral and struggling with questions. Why did this have to happen? He was a good kid who was strong in the gospel. Why did he have to die? His family knew they would be together again, but the loss made them so sad.

“I didn’t understand why he was taken from us. Then I heard a small voice that said, ‘I need him here.’ It was still a hard thing, but I felt better. After that experience **I know that the Lord answers my prayers.** That was the beginning of my testimony.”

Corey Clarkston is just one of a group of teens from the Mandarin First and Second wards from Jacksonville, Florida, who got together to discuss a big question, perhaps the biggest question that faces LDS teens. How do you gain a testimony?

These teens are at the age where they want to find out for themselves that the things they have been taught by their parents and at church are right. They are quick to remember that a boy of 14, right around their age, had the same dilemma. The Prophet Joseph wanted to find out the truth, and the





answer he received has affected millions of people, including this modern group of teens in Florida. Now these youth want to know more for themselves and receive the assurance of their own testimonies.

### The Way You Live

On this Saturday morning, these teens are willing to come to their meetinghouse and have a serious discussion about testimonies. Just about everyone has something to say. Jacob Warner had been listening to the others when it was his turn to speak. “For me, a testimony is a lifestyle. To have a testimony, it can’t just be in your head. It’s got to be in the way you act and the way

you live.” Jacob has this well thought out. “Everything has an impact on your testimony, whether it’s good or bad. If you do something bad, it will be negative to your testimony. If you do something good, it will strengthen it.”

Matthew Zipron knows what it means to have your family’s life changed by the missionaries. He joined the Church at age 13. Now his friends ask him why he is Mormon. They ask him what is so different about his Church. Matthew admits that they may not completely understand his answer. “I tell them,” says Matthew, “when I come to my Church **I feel the Spirit really strong.**” He says he has learned to rely on the Spirit.

Matthew is not the only one who has to explain his religion to friends. Nate Livsey has started carrying a Book of Mormon

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JANET THOMAS



# Talking about Testimonies





and pass-along cards in his backpack. He has had a lot of experiences lately talking to friends about the scriptures and giving them



pass-along cards. "I used to be scared. But that's not what it's all about. Even if they go home and laugh at my cards or scriptures, **I still have to share it with them.**"

### Share It

Several people mention one excellent way to help their testimonies grow. They share it. "I've had so many experiences with my friends



and family members," says Sierra Thomas, "teaching the gospel to help them feel what I feel. **When you teach other people, you realize that you actually know this and why you believe in it.**"

Chelsea Aniel was listening. "I was just thinking about my testimony," she says, with



tears suddenly coming to her eyes. "**When I share my testimony, it grows.** I heard a good quote that says, 'What you share grows; what you withhold diminishes.'"

As they grow through their teen years, this group finds they have more and more opportunities to talk to their friends about the Church. Brandon Hudgins just received



the Aaronic Priesthood. He says, "**Friends at school ask me about the Church. It's fun teaching them what I know.**"

### Doing as You Are Taught

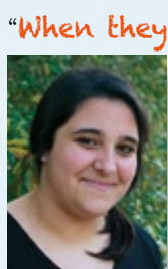
As we talk, Tyson Warner tells of when things changed in his life. He had just been ordained to the priesthood and felt it was

time, as he put it, to step up. "When I was about 12, I had a hard time reading the scriptures regularly. I made a goal that I would give up sleeping in, and I would wake up 30 minutes earlier every morning and spend the time reading my scriptures. It was difficult. I thought, 'What's the point in doing this?' After a month I started to feel changes in my life. I was more in tune with the Spirit. I started noticing things in the scriptures better than I could before. That's how I knew the Church is true."



Now, four years later, Tyson says, "I like **the book of Alma** because that was what I was reading when I really started to feel the Spirit. That book is special to me. It **was a turning point in my life.** I gained a strong testimony."

For Kayla Zipron, her testimony started when the missionaries were teaching her family about the plan of salvation. That has become her favorite discussion.



**"When they taught us the plan of salvation,** I felt that something was right. **I could feel the Spirit in the room.** And, at Church, whenever we talk about the plan of salvation, the same feeling comes back. I feel the Spirit over again."

### This Is True

Testimonies grow step by step. One of those steps happened when Megan Fowler came to understand the significance of the temple.



Megan said, "Even though I have been a member all my life, **it finally dawned on me that I'm going to be with my family forever.**"

For Adrian Adams, his testimony is tied to

**T**eens from the Mandarin First and Second Wards (previous page) pose for a group photo near the water. (This page) These teens were interviewed about gaining their testimonies and talked about the great feelings they have had as they stayed close to the gospel and used prayer as the means to grow closer to the Savior.



events where he could see the Lord's protection. "Growing up, your parents tell you about the gospel, and you gain the beginnings of your testimony from them. Once you become a teen, you start questioning everything."

Then Adrian pauses, remembering a traumatic accident his family had on a car trip. "You don't have control over everything.



*But no matter what the situation, we can rely on the Lord."*

For Adrian, this experience helped his testimony more than anything else.

For Dayna Miller, she feels her testimony growing every time she goes to church and takes the sacrament. She remembers



*the day of her baptism. "I came out of the water, and I had such a great feeling. I knew I had done the right thing. This*

*is true. This is real."*

As each person speaks, we come around the circle to Trevor, a young man with special challenges. He sits quietly, reluctant



to participate in the discussion about testimonies.

Spontaneously, one by one, his friends in the circle start telling good things about

Trevor: how he is a good

example, how he brings friends to church, how it is nice to know him and have him as a friend. It is a great moment. The kindness toward their friend is authentic. These teens have learned something special about treating someone with Christlike kindness. It is part of their testimonies. For them, having a testimony isn't just something you talk about, it really is something you do. It is the way you live. It is the decisions you make. And these teens have found what it really means to have a testimony of Christ. **NE**



## WHERE DO YOU START?

What if you don't have a testimony? Where do you even start?

"Simple desire for a testimony is a pretty strong thing," Jacob Warner answers.

Devin Reading suggests going to Alma 22:18. This is the part in the Book of Mormon where Aaron is teaching King Lamoni's father. The king wants to know what he should do to receive eternal life. He is willing to give up everything including his kingdom. Aaron encourages him to pray. The king kneels and in his prayer he says, "O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and if there is a God, and if thou art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto me."

"That's how you can do it," says Devin. He said prayer is a good pattern for anyone who wants to know more. Pray each night and, Devin says, you "will feel peaceful and sure."



# TO THE POINT

## How can I choose a modest swimming suit?



**T**he Church encourages modesty in dress for all occasions, including swimming. The dilemma comes when people want pictures or measurements or definitions of exactly what is OK to wear. Since fashions change from place to place and time to time, this is not possible.

For example, several years ago Church guidelines said not to wear two-piece swimsuits. At that time, “two-piece swimsuits” meant bikinis, which are very revealing. Now fashion has changed, and some two-piece swimsuits are actually among the most modest swimsuits you can buy. They are better fitting and have longer tops that cover the torso. The bottoms come in more modest styles too. So the guideline not to wear a

two-piece swimsuit is not as helpful as it once was, but the goal to dress modestly remains.

In sports, recreation, and all aspects of our lives, we need to practice the principle of modesty.

“Modesty is a gospel principle that applies to people of all cultures and ages. In fact, modesty is fundamental to being worthy of the Spirit. . . .

“ . . . When we recognize our bodies as the gifts they are and when we understand the missions they help us fulfill, we protect and honor them by how we act and dress.

“In everyday living, immodest clothing such as short shorts, mini-skirts, tight clothing, shirts that do not cover the stomach, and other revealing attire are not appropriate” (Robert D. Hales, “Modesty: Reverence for the Lord,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2008, 34–35).

Concerning modesty, it is best when we no longer ask, “How far can I go?” but rather, “How well can I follow gospel standards?” **NE**



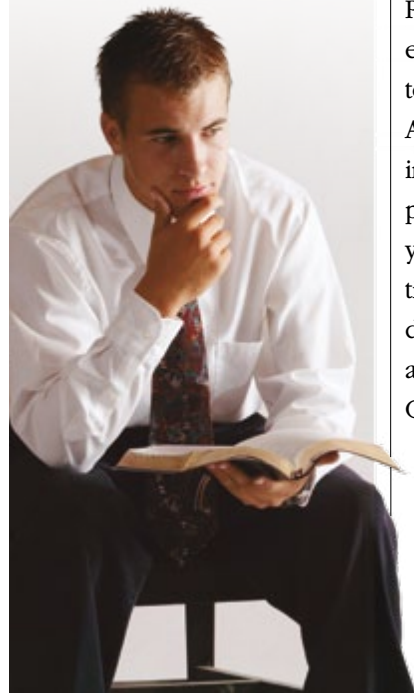


Is it all right to  
**call Church  
 leaders  
 by their first  
 names?**

**S**ometimes we get so close to our leaders that we are tempted to become casual in our relationships with them. While it is good to be friendly, it is also important to show proper respect for them and their callings. In the Church it is customary to refer to adults as “Brother” or “Sister,” a greeting that both shows respect and reminds us that we are children of Heavenly Father. Other more formal titles, such as *elder*, *bishop*, or *president*, are also used as signs of respect. Full-time missionaries set a good example of this by referring to each other as “Elder” or “Sister.”

It is important to be respectful to our Church leaders and remember that although they are our friends, in a Church setting we should honor their callings and show respect by referring to them as “Brother” or “Sister.” **NE**

**President Monson  
 said that serving  
 a full-time  
 mission  
 is a  
 priesthood  
 responsibility.  
 What does  
 that mean?**



**L**ast general conference President Thomas S. Monson said: “To young men of the Aaronic Priesthood and to you young men who are becoming elders: I repeat what prophets have long taught—that every worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. *Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much*” (“As We Meet Together Again,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 5–6; emphasis added).

Part of receiving the priesthood is agreeing to take upon yourself the responsibilities and duties that come with it. As with any gift that Heavenly Father gives, He expects you to use the priesthood to bless others. “For of him unto whom much is given much is required” (D&C 82:3).

Holders of the Aaronic Priesthood are “to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59). As President Monson stated, serving a full-time mission is a duty of priesthood holders. On a mission you will devote all of your energy, time, and focus to fulfilling that duty: serving, preaching the gospel, and inviting all to come unto Christ. Of course, fulfilling your duty always comes with blessings. Your mission will be a time of great joy and spiritual growth. **NE**



**By Elder  
Koichi Aoyagi**  
Of the Seventy

**A**s a teenager in Matsumoto, Japan, I was very interested in learning English. At age 17 I joined the English club at my high school. At the start of the school year, the club decided to find a native English speaker to teach us English conversation. We searched and searched, but the English instructors we spoke to charged a fee, and the club couldn't afford to pay. Discouraged, we almost gave up.

Then one day, as I rode my bicycle to school, I saw some young American men in suits handing out flyers. I took one and put it in my pocket. After school I examined the paper and found that it was an invitation to attend a free English conversation class. On the flyer was the name "The Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints." I had never heard of such a church, but I was excited; I had solved the English club's problem!

On the day of the next class, about 30 club members attended with me. The missionaries taught the class, which we all enjoyed very much. From the very first day of class, I noticed that there was something different about the missionaries. Their warmth, love, positive attitudes, and cheerfulness deeply impressed me. There seemed to be a light around them—I had never before met anyone quite like them.

After several weeks I began asking the missionaries about their church, and they invited me to learn more. I accepted, and they taught me the missionary lessons. At the time I did not fully understand or appreciate the importance of what I was learning, but I felt the Spirit, and I understood that the principles the missionaries were teaching me were good. When they invited me to be baptized, I accepted.

Before I could join the Church, however, I had to receive my parents' consent. At first they were very much against it—the teachings of Christianity were foreign and strange to them. But I was not yet ready to give up. I asked the missionaries to come to my home

# THE PATH OF

and explain to my parents about the Church, what they had been teaching me, and what would be expected of me. The Spirit softened my parents' hearts, and this time they gave me permission to be baptized.

## **Drifting Away**

After I was baptized and confirmed, I attended the little Matsumoto Branch of 12 to 15 active members. I made friends, and it was fun to attend every week. About a year later I graduated from high school and moved to Yokohama to attend the university. The nearest branch was the Tokyo Central Branch, which had more than 150 active members.



When I attended this new branch, I felt like a country boy in the big city. I had a hard time making friends. One Sunday I stayed home from church. Soon I stopped attending altogether. I began making friends with my non-member classmates, and the Church drifted further and further from my mind.

This continued for several months. Then one day I received a letter from a sister in the Matsumoto Branch. “I heard you have stopped attending church,” she said. I was surprised. Apparently someone from my new branch had told her I was not attending church anymore! The sister continued her letter by quoting Doctrine and Covenants 121:34: “Behold, there are many called, but

myself. I decided that I must pray. If I felt nothing, I could completely forget about the Church and the commandments, and I would never go again. However, if I did receive an answer, as Moroni promised, I would have to repent, embrace the gospel with all my heart, go back to church, and do all I could to follow the commandments.

# THE CHOSEN

few are chosen.” Then she wrote, “Koichi, you have been baptized a member of the Church. You have been called, but you are no longer among the chosen.”

As I read these words, I was filled with regret. I knew I needed to change somehow. I realized that I did not have a strong testimony. I wasn’t sure if God lived, and I didn’t know if Jesus Christ was my Savior. For several days I grew anxious as I thought about the message in the letter. I didn’t know what to do. Then one morning I remembered something the missionaries had taught me. They had asked me to read Moroni 10:3–5, promising that I could know the truth for

As I knelt and prayed that morning, I pleaded with Heavenly Father to answer me. “If Thou live—if Thou are real,” I prayed, “please let me know.” I prayed to know if Jesus Christ was my Savior and if the Church was true. As I finished, I suddenly felt something. I was surrounded by a warm feeling, and my heart was filled with joy. I understood the truth: God *does* live, and Jesus *is* my Savior. The Lord’s Church was truly restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon is the word of God.

Needless to say, I prayed for forgiveness that very day and resolved to follow the commandments. I returned to church and promised the Lord that I would do whatever it took to remain faithful.

***It’s one thing to be baptized. It’s another to endure to the end.***



#### FOUR GOALS

1. *Receive as much higher education as possible.*
2. *Serve a full-time mission.*
3. *Marry in the temple.*
4. *Gain skills to support a family.*

A short time later the Church began making plans to build a chapel in Yokohama. At that time members of the branch were expected to contribute money and provide labor for the building's construction. When the mission president challenged the branch members to contribute all they could, I remembered my commitment to do whatever the Lord asked of me. So every day for nearly a year, I helped with the construction after my university classes were over.

#### Achieving Four Goals

About this same time, Elder Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, visited Japan and encouraged the youth of the Church to achieve four goals: (1) receive as much higher education as possible, (2) serve a full-time mission, especially the young men, (3) marry in the temple, and (4) gain skills to support a family. Until that point I had never planned to accomplish these four things. But I later knelt and prayed: “Heavenly Father, I want to accomplish those four goals. Please help me.”

I knew that in order to stay on the path of the chosen, I needed to follow the counsel of the Lord's servants. I committed to do all I could to follow Elder Kimball's advice and to work hard to build up the Church.

For the next several years I continued to work toward my four goals. I served as a construction missionary for two years, helping build two chapels in my home country. Then I was called to serve a full-time proselytizing mission. Soon after returning home, I married in the temple the woman from the Matsumoto Branch who wrote me the letter. Later I landed my dream job in a foreign trading company.





As I followed the word of the Lord and the counsel of the prophets, I felt that again I was on the path of the chosen. And I am striving to stay on that path today.

### Hearing His Voice

My young brothers and sisters, the Savior calls continually to all of us, bidding us to follow Him. The Lord taught, “My sheep hear my voice, . . . and they follow me” (John 10:27). You have heard the Lord’s voice; you have followed Him by being baptized into His Church. Indeed, you have been called. However, to be chosen is a very different matter.

Decide now that you will do whatever it takes to remain faithful. Decide to endure to the end by following all of God’s commandments. Set righteous and worthy goals for yourself. Gain an education, serve a mission, marry in the temple, and support your family both spiritually and temporally. If you have not yet gained a testimony, please get on your knees and ask Heavenly Father to help you gain a knowledge of the truth. Then, when the answer comes, commit yourself wholeheartedly to the work of the Lord. Do whatever it takes to get on the path of the chosen. **NE**

"WHETHER FULL-TIME MISSIONARIES OR MEMBERS, WE SHOULD ALL BE GOOD EXAMPLES OF THE BELIEVERS IN JESUS CHRIST."

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Be Thou an Example of the Believers," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 47.



**ANTI-DANCE, ANYONE?**

For the youth in the La Verne California Stake, the dancing at their high school events has gotten so inappropriate that it's hard to even be there. "You can go to school dances and have the option to not inappropriately dance, but just being there, it has a bad atmosphere. You can't have the Spirit with you there," says Cameron Bodhaine, 17, of La Verne, California.

As a solution, Cameron planned an "Anti-Prom" event last spring. This past fall, he also planned an Anti-Homecoming, that took place on the same day as the school's dance. He invited friends and their dates to join, and they had fun go-carting, eating dinner, and later watching a movie. They had a blast.

The idea has caught on, and there have been many other "Anti-" activities as alternatives to the school-sponsored dances. Laurel Quinn Alkonis, with some other girls, planned a similar activity for Sadies.

"Make a plan and let people know in advance,"

Cameron advises youth who want to plan similar activities. "It's a great way to get to know each other while upholding your standards, being respectful, and feeling comfortable."

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CARRIE SHARP



**GENERAL YOUNG WOMEN BROADCAST**

The Young Women General Presidency, under the direction of the First Presidency, invites all young women ages 12 to 18, their mothers, and Young Women leaders to attend the General Young Women meeting on Saturday, March 26, 2011.

The theme for the broadcast is the 13th article of faith. "We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things."

The meeting will originate from the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. The live meeting will be broadcast by satellite to meetinghouses worldwide and on the Internet at [broadcast.lds.org](http://broadcast.lds.org).

LIVE BROADCAST	REBROADCAST
8 p.m. Eastern time	10 p.m. Eastern time
7 p.m. Central time	9 p.m. Central time
6 p.m. Mountain time	8 p.m. Mountain time
5 p.m. Pacific time	7 p.m. Pacific time



## THE CHURCH IN USA—LOUISIANA

In 1841 Joseph Smith received a letter from Church members in New Orleans who needed leadership. "Send us Peter, or an Apostle to preach unto us Jesus," they wrote and enclosed \$10 to help defray expenses. Harrison Sagers was sent. Although he faced opposition from the community, those who called for him offered defense, including a group of courageous women who once circled him as protection from mobs.

In November 1841, New Orleans became the main port of arrival for nearly 17,500 Latter-day Saints from Europe. They traveled up the Mississippi River to Nauvoo, St. Louis, or other river ports to begin their trek westward.



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD KEISLER, © IRI

Twenty-four Church missionaries labored in Louisiana in 1898. One hundred and ten converts were baptized in one year. The missionaries were challenged by mobs

who threatened them and occasionally held hostages. A midwife once confronted a mob when they threatened a missionary in her care. She held a shotgun and said, "I brought a good many of you into the world and I can take you out again just as easily." The mob left. Missionaries labored in New Orleans for 20 years before an official congregation was organized in 1924.

Here are a few facts about the Church today in Louisiana:

<b>Membership</b>	<b>27,977</b>
<b>Missions</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Temples</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Wards &amp; Branches</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Family History Centers</b>	<b>13</b>

### MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

**Alma 38:5** This is my favorite scripture because right when I needed it, I found it. Keeping this scripture in my mind helps strengthen my testimony and my trust in God.

**Jonathan C., 16, California, USA**

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JONATHAN C.  
Tell us about your favorite scripture in one or two sentences. Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SANDY KIRKLAND

## CAMPING AND CARING

The young women of the Stevensville Montana Stake wanted to do more than just camp at their last girls' camp; they also wanted to do some good. Reaching out to needy children around the world, the young women put together 72 hygiene kits and gathered around 250 toys and stuffed animals to be distributed by LDS Humanitarian Services.

This project helped the girls realize how blessed they are to have what they have. Many talked of wanting to do more and said they were grateful that the Church has the ability to send these items to people who are truly in need.



Number of full-time missionaries serving worldwide.

PHOTOGRAPH © ISTOCK AND GETTY IMAGES



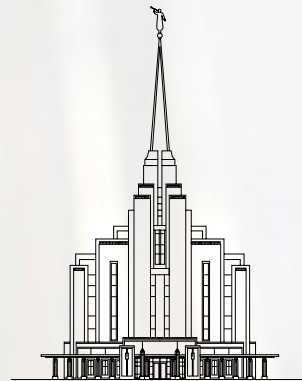
# BREAKING NEW

*At the groundbreaking of a new temple, I resolved to start building a better life.*



By Breanna Bennett Olaveson

# GROUND



I stood at the top of the hill and waited eagerly for the service to begin. It seemed my entire hometown was here, gathered on a few acres of land that would soon be home to a temple of the Lord.

After a few men spoke to the crowd, I watched them and others near the front use shovels to turn over some dirt. It seemed like such a simple thing. But as I watched the groundbreaking for the Rexburg Idaho Temple, I realized they were doing more than moving dirt around. The hardened ground needed to be softened before there could be room for the temple, and I knew I could learn from that.

I was a good kid, but I realized that if there had been a temple on that spot at that moment, I wouldn't be ready to go inside. I evaluated my life, relationships, and habits and found myself lacking. As members of the community continued to turn over dirt, I resolved to break new ground in my life. I was 17, just a few classes away from high school graduation and the technical "adulthood" that came with it. A small swelling of urgency started in my stomach and spread.

In the weeks following the groundbreaking, I made some changes. I had friends who didn't help me to be my best, so I decided to stop spending time with them. I didn't like breaking those ties, but I knew it was necessary. That same week, the temple's solid foundation appeared on the recently broken ground.

Over time, I made new friends. I kept busy with school activities. I read my scriptures more. I was making progress. And the temple construction was progressing, too. As I drove past the temple before going to a basketball game with my new friends, I noticed part of its framework had appeared.

But making changes wasn't always easy. Some days I didn't want to read my scriptures. But when I got

discouraged, I looked at the temple going up piece by piece. Every day it got a little closer to perfection. And with hard work, so did I.

Months went by, and I started college at BYU-Idaho. I felt more grown-up, more prepared to go to the temple, which was progressing in its construction. During my first week of class, the figure of the angel Moroni was placed atop its spire. With that piece in place, it was impossible to tell from the outside whether the interior of the temple was prepared for the ordinances that would be performed there.

That, too, reminded me of myself. I was 18. I was happy and pursuing my college education. But even though I was worthy of a temple recommend, I knew there were more preparations to make before I was ready to receive all the blessings of the temple.

I no longer had friends I needed to stop spending time with. I didn't need to break any particularly bad habits. But I did need to learn more about my Savior, and while the interior of the temple was being completed, I was also changing inside. I took religion classes and served in my Church callings. I reached out to others. And through the experiences of young adulthood, I became more committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

On February 10, 2008, I returned as a college sophomore to the same hill I had visited as a high school senior. Many of the same people were there, but I didn't feel like the same person. As I sat beside my parents in the newly completed Rexburg Idaho Temple, I reflected on how far I'd come in the years since the groundbreaking. I sang the hymn "The Spirit of God" (*Hymns*, no. 2), and I knew that unimaginable blessings still awaited me in that holy house.

The temple was ready and dedicated to the Lord. And so was I. **NE**



# SERVICE THROUGH COOKIES

One Saturday afternoon my little sister, my mom, and I decided to make cookies. My mom suggested we make a double batch and give them away.





While the cookies were baking, we talked about listening to the Spirit and serving others. My mom told us how grateful she was for inspired sisters around her that had recently brightened her day with a phone call or nice card. She then suggested that we give the cookies to someone Heavenly Father would like us to serve. We all went into different rooms and said our own personal prayer about who should receive the cookies. My mom and I had two of the same names, and my mom and little sister had also agreed on a family. The names we came up with were not even people that we typically interacted with.

From this experience, my testimony of prayer has been strengthened so much! Heavenly Father heard and answered our prayers and guided us to the people we should serve.

I will always remember that special day when we delivered the cookies to those who the Lord wanted us to. I am so grateful to have Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ in my life. I am glad that I can pray for direction and help. I love the Church and my family. I am so blessed to have Young Women leaders to teach me about our gospel.  
*Brooke R., Utah, USA*

## POWERFUL PRAYER

**P**rayer is one of the greatest and most important ways to connect to, talk with, and be comforted by our Heavenly Father.

While I was saying my prayers one night, I thought about what my family was in need of, what I was

grateful for, and also what I needed to repent of. Right after closing my prayer, I looked around my room and saw many worldly things that could easily distract me from my goals on this earth.

But during my prayers, I feel that if I pray sincerely and humbly, my burdens are lightened, my sins are washed away, and my problems have answers. I realize how close to God I feel while I say my prayers. It shows me how important we all are in God's eyes. I testify that prayer is one of the most powerful and important things that we can do on this earth.

*Austin C., Tennessee, USA*

## A MOVIE DECISION

**I** spent 10 minutes squirming, looking around at my friends, trying to make eye contact with one of them. But they were all watching the movie. Before we put the DVD in, I checked the rating and read the movie summary to make sure it would be OK. But even after taking precautions, I still felt uncomfortable.

I rationalized with myself that since my friends thought it was OK, it should be OK. Plus the rating was technically appropriate. But I didn't want them to think I was lame. So I stayed.

After 10 more agonizing minutes I couldn't ignore it any longer. I had to leave. As I left the room, I could hear my friends laughing at me. I felt

**T**he Instant Messages section of the *New Era* features short, easy-to-read stories and messages from youth directly to you. It first appeared in the December 2003 issue. Previously, we often received personal stories or thoughts from youth but couldn't use them because they were too short to stand on their own. This section allows those great experiences to be shared.

The Instant Messages section isn't just for stories. You can submit short articles about your favorite hymns and scriptures, your testimony, and how you understand and apply a certain aspect of the gospel. Keep your submissions to between 300 and 400 words. Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and click on Submit Your Material.



my cheeks burning with embarrassment, but I kept on walking.

On my way home, I stopped at my best friend's house. I told her what happened, and she told me she was glad that I had left. Sitting with her, I realized I wasn't embarrassed anymore. I knew that walking away from the movie was the right thing for me. And that was even more important to me than my friends' approval.

*Name Withheld*



# DON'T BE ASHAMED

I have a necklace that has a small rod on it. It was given to me as a Christmas present and reminds me to hold to the rod.

One Sunday I put it on for church but forgot to take it off, so I wore it to school the next day. Someone asked me, "What is that? A dog whistle?"

"Oh, it's a reminder to hold to the iron rod," I said. "It's something in

the Book of Mormon." That led to questions: "What is the Book of Mormon about?" "What sets Mormons apart from other Christians?" They asked about the temple and all kinds of other things. What was amazing was that as I was talking, I felt the Spirit guiding me about what to say next.

I'm sure I was afraid at first, but taking those kinds of opportunities—even small ones like that experience—is so important. A

few months previously, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles visited our stake. The Friday before the meeting, friends asked me about my plans for the weekend. I was *really* excited about his visit, but I stopped myself from telling friends about it. How easy would it have been to say, "I'm going to see an Apostle"? But I worried that they wouldn't know what I was talking about or that they would think it was strange, so I just talked about my plans for Saturday and didn't mention Sunday at all. That could have been a really great opportunity to share a little bit about my faith with my friends, but I pushed it away. I regretted it afterwards.

I've learned since then to never be afraid. A lot of times friends will be interested and ask to find out more, but even if they don't, my friends generally respect what I do and say when it comes to the Church.

Missionary work can be scary, because the gospel is close to your heart and you don't want people to ridicule what you say. A scripture mastery verse, Romans 1:16, really gets to me: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." This helps me to speak up before the feelings of fear hit me too hard. And I know that Heavenly Father blesses us as we do.

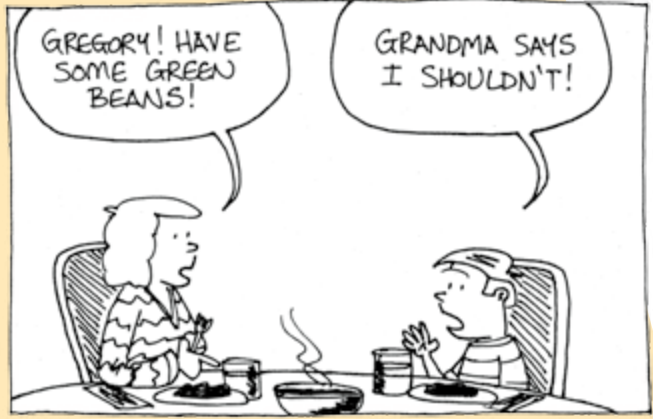
*Kate N., 17, Kansas*







RYAN STOKER



KEVIN BECKSTROM



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

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**HE IS MY SAVIOR, TOO**

Thank you for the amazing articles in the Nov. 2010 issue. The one that I liked most was "He Is My Savior Too." I liked the fact that the author had enough courage to speak up for what's right, and I almost cried when I read her friend's reply. I want to keep this magazine to read this and other stories through when I need help.

April B., Arizona

**THE ONLY MAGAZINE I READ FREQUENTLY**

The *New Era* is the only magazine I read frequently and really enjoy its messages. The first thing I look for when a new issue arrives is the Mormonad. They are a fascinating way for me and other youth to look at topics using pictures to describe the message. They make us think in a different way. I really like all the Mormonads, but my favorites are the one about standing out (Nov. 2003), and "Get a Grip" (Sept. 2010). They both helped me reflect on my own life and how to make it better.

B. N., Oregon

*Editor's note: To see past Mormonads, go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).*

**WALKING INTO THE PAST**

I think the article "Walking into the Past" in the August 2010 issue was ultra-cool. It reminded me of our stake's trek. I can't help but think of how brave those teenagers were every time I read the story.

Kaylei L., Utah

The article "Walking into the Past" helped me understand better about how the Mormons in Kirtland felt and the hardships they went through. Also what they did for fun and how they worked. The games they played looked



*The Mormonads  
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really fun. It reminded me of my own trip to Kirtland. I felt my testimony grow when I toured the Whitney home and store and the room that the School of the Prophets met in.

Curtis H., Texas

**LISTEN TO THE HOLY GHOST**

I read the article "Don't Get Caught" (Aug. 2010) and really enjoyed it. It helped strengthen my testimony about resisting temptation and the importance of listening to warnings from the Holy Ghost.

Christian M., Oklahoma

**INSPIRED**

The story "The Truth Will Prevail" (Sep. 2010) was really inspiring. It made me want to go on a mission when I'm older. It also inspired me to serve the Lord now in whatever way I can.

Spencer D., Utah

**WHAT I NEED**

The stories in the *New Era* are what I need to hear. I wasn't very good at reading these when I started, but now it is a way I can reach out to my Heavenly Father in my heart.

Jack H., Utah

I really enjoy reading the *New Era*. It makes me feel happy to be a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It also helps me become a better example to my sisters and my brother.

Ariana O., Australia

I can hardly wait until the *New Era* comes every month. The stories are always good and inspire me to be a better person. I like it when I can relate to the stories because of my experiences. The Extra Smile always puts a smile on my face.

Jaden E.







## Maturity?

By Melissa Mecham

You know,  
when I see that smile  
of yours,  
I think of  
the times we  
dressed the puppy  
in baby clothes,  
or the time we  
splashed through  
the sprinklers  
on hot summer days,  
or ate all the  
chocolate frosting  
off Mom's birthday cake.  
I think of the time  
we slept outside  
watching the stars  
all night and waking  
up the neighbors with  
our giggles,  
or the time we put  
on Mom's high heels  
and tried  
to walk down the stairs.  
You know,  
I haven't seen that smile  
lately, and  
I know  
you haven't forgotten it.

## WHAT'S ONLINE



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**lds.org**, including the best of EFY songs, music from seminary videos, and selections from the *New Era* and other sources. Keep checking because more music will be available in the future.

***Looking for some worthwhile videos?*** Have a look at the videos at Mormon Messages. The easiest way to find them is by going to LDS.org and then clicking on Mormon Messages under Quick Links.

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When you ask to join up, we send you questions to answer and surveys to take. We also ask your opinion about types of things we should print and how you like one Mormonad over another. One of the most important assignments we'll ask you to do is send us a comment on what impressed you most about general conference. We may even pick your comment to be included in the magazine. Ask to join by sending us a note to **[newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org)**.



***Don't forget the New Era online.*** **NewEra.lds.org** can take you for a little trip into the past. Browse through some older issues of the *New Era*. There are great treasures that are just as good today as when they were printed. Choose past issues and then open a magazine at random and see what you find.

