



INVITATION

BY MARIANNE SORENSEN LEMON
(Based on a true story)



TO A BAPTISM

To be baptized as Jesus was . . . Is just the thing I want to do (Children's Songbook, 104).

That was excellent! You are certainly ready for the recital, Gideon," said Mrs. Allen, Gideon's violin teacher.

Gideon smiled. He enjoyed playing his violin. After he put away his instrument, he looked through Mrs. Allen's collection of stickers.

"I think I'll take this shiny one," he said, holding up a "Happy Birthday" sticker for Mrs. Allen to see.

"That's right! It's almost your birthday, isn't it?" Mrs. Allen asked.

"Yes, and not just *any* birthday. This one is extra special," Gideon said. He stuck his new sticker on the cover of his music book. "I'm going to be eight years old, and you know what *that* means?"

"No, I don't know what it means," Mrs. Allen looked confused.

"It means that I can be baptized," Gideon said.

"Oh, you weren't baptized as a baby?" Mrs. Allen asked.

"No. In our church we are baptized when we turn eight. That's when we know right and wrong and can choose between them," Gideon explained.

"I guess that makes sense," Mrs. Allen said. "I never thought of it that way."

"I have an idea!" Gideon said. "Why don't you come to my baptism and then you can see what I mean?"

Mrs. Allen was interested, so Gideon told her when and where he would be baptized.

On the day of his baptism, Gideon and Dad dressed in white pants and shirts. Gideon smiled as his mom took pictures. Then he saw Mrs. Allen and went to greet her. "I'm glad you could come," he said.

"I'm happy to be here," she said. She shook hands with Mom and Dad. They sat together while Brother Roberts conducted the meeting.

As Gideon sang and listened to the talk on baptism, he paid close attention to the words. He hoped Mrs. Allen would understand why he was being baptized at age eight.

Then it was time to be baptized. He went down into the font with Dad, listened carefully to the words of the baptismal prayer, and bent his knees to go under the water. When he came up, he wiped water from his eyes and smiled at Mom and Mrs. Allen.

He and Dad changed their clothes and slipped quietly into the row beside Mom and Mrs. Allen. They were watching "The Touch of the Master's Hand" from the *Family Home Evening* video. It was about a violin that gets damaged, but then is

**Happy
Birthday!**



repaired by the man who made it. Gideon noticed Mrs. Allen wiping her eyes as she listened to the poem and watched the master play the old violin.

After the video someone spoke on the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then Dad confirmed Gideon.

“Did you like my baptism?” Gideon asked Mrs. Allen following the closing prayer.

“It was wonderful!” Mrs. Allen said. “Now I understand why your church waits until age eight to baptize

“We are to go out to them, and to invite them to join us. We are to be missionaries.”

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Feed My Sheep,” *New Era*, Oct. 1987, 6.



children.” She smiled. “I liked the video too, but it was awful watching that beautiful violin get damaged!”

“I know,” Gideon said. “But I’m glad it was fixed in the end. It’s kind of like repentance. I’m clean now, but when I make mistakes I can be fixed, just like that violin.”

Mrs. Allen laughed. “What a good way to think of it. I’ll remember that every time I play my violin.” ●

