

# A Work for Me to Do

Julie B. Beck

First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency



The Lord sent an angel to Joseph Smith to tell him that he had a work to do. That work continues today in us.

I remember a family home evening lesson when I was a girl where my father taught us of the visit of the angel Moroni to the Prophet Joseph Smith. He said that after a sincere prayer, an angel appeared at Joseph's bedside. The angel was a messenger sent from God, his name was Moroni, and he told Joseph that God had a work for him to do (see JS—H 1:33). I remember my father teaching that “Joseph did not say, ‘Oh no, Angel, I just wanted to know which church was true. I did not know I needed to *do* something!’” But of course Joseph needed to do something. He had a special calling from the Lord.

What Joseph did was remarkable. He began life as a simple farm boy, but through him the Book of Mormon was brought forth and translated, the priesthood and its keys were restored to earth, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, and holy temples began to be built. Through Joseph Smith all the ordinances the children of our Heavenly Father need for their salvation are now upon the earth. *This* was the day of miracles spoken of in Moroni (see Moro. 7:35–37) and the marvelous work and wonder foretold to Nephi centuries ago (see 1 Ne. 14:7).

The work Joseph started was carried on by early members of the Church who had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His restored gospel. Through their efforts the gospel of Jesus Christ began to spread over all the earth. *They* truly did a marvelous work.

But the day of miracles is not over, and the marvelous work is still going on. When we were baptized, each of us became part of that work.

This past year as I have visited with members of the Church, I have seen that through the faith and work of simple people, the Lord's covenant is being established on the earth (see D&C 1:17–23).

There is a young woman in Korea who is the first member of the Church in her family. She held her well-worn Personal Progress book and said she dreamed of having a gospel-centered family. A Young Women president in Armenia is carrying out the Young Women program faithfully although she does not have a *Church Handbook of Instructions* written in her language.

Members in Russia go to the temple regularly. They save their rubles and travel for days by bus, train, and boat to get to the nearest temple in Sweden.

My nine-year-old niece, Kimberly, talked so enthusiastically about the Church to her friend that her friend said,

“I want to sign up for your church. Where do I sign up?”

The young men and young women in my own ward are developing leadership skills and talents. They are willing to sing, play musical instruments, give talks, participate in service projects, and do any number of other things so that they can be part of this marvelous work.

And then there was the young man in Bogotá who said, “I speak on behalf of the young men of Colombia. We are worthy and we are preparing to serve!”

I have been where the Church is small and where it is large in numbers, where it is new and where it is well established, but the responsibility of each one of us is the same: we are part of the true, restored gospel of Jesus Christ. We have a work to do. We serve in simple ways, our testimonies grow, and we are part of this day of miracles.

In my own lifetime I have been a witness to the miracle of the restored gospel. When I was a young girl my family moved to São Paulo, Brazil, where my father had been called to preside over the Brazilian Mission. It was an exciting time for me and a great place to grow up. A favorite game for my brothers and me was to dress up and pretend to be missionaries. We spent hours scribbling our own missionary pamphlets and “preaching” and “transferring” all over the yard. For five years the nightly conversations around our dinner table centered on missionary work, and I listened intently to stories of faith told by missionaries. Even at that age I knew I was part of a great work.

There were only about 3,000 members of the Church in Brazil when we arrived there. I remember being in a very small Primary with a few other children, singing the same five songs every week, as those were the only ones translated into Portuguese. Two of my favorite songs were “A Luz Divina,” or “The Light Divine” (*Hymns*, no. 305), and something about a bunny in the middle of the woods (see “The Little Rabbit,” *Children’s Friend*, June 1955, 257).

In many ways our experience was similar to the early pioneers. We had no hymnbooks or pictures or lesson manuals sent from the headquarters of the Church. Everything that was needed to teach the gospel in Portuguese was written and printed in our mission home. All of us, even the children, were pressed into service to help assemble mission newsletters and lessons. No one shipped the Church to us. The prophet did not send us stake presidents or bishops. He did not send Relief Society presidents or youth programs. The Church in Brazil was made from the same material that the pioneers started with. The material to build the Church was in the people.

During our years in Brazil, we saw great growth come to the Church. Thousands became Latter-day Saints. Soon the mission was divided, districts and branches were organized, and new chapels were built. The new members were enthusiastic, and they grew in faith and became more experienced in the manner of the gospel.

A lot of years passed, and then last year I returned to Brazil to attend the rededication of the São Paulo temple. At that time I learned that there were 187 stakes in Brazil. There are now 26 missions, 4 temples, and almost 1 million members. Imagine my surprise when I walked into a stadium filled with over 60,000 members who had gathered to hear President Gordon B. Hinckley and celebrate the temple dedication. To me it was a miracle to see thousands of youth dancing and singing together. As I watched that joyful celebration, I kept saying to myself, “This is amazing! This is a miracle! How did this miracle happen?”

I marveled all that night at what I had seen. Then, the next morning at the temple dedication, I had a reunion with my Primary teacher, Sister Gloria Silveira. That was when I knew how the miracle had come about. As a new convert with no prior Church experience, Sister Silveira had come to Primary prepared to share her simple testimony and teach me the Articles of Faith in Portuguese. She and her husband, Humberto, are still faithful. They have served in many Church callings over the years, and they are still serving. When I saw Sister Silveira, I realized that the Church in Brazil had grown because of her and thousands like her. She and Brother Silveira represent people everywhere who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel. They have grown in knowledge and skill, and they have served in the Church (see D&C 88:80). They have shared the gospel with friends (see D&C 30:5). They work in the temple (see D&C 138:48). They taught their five children correct principles (see D&C 68:28). Of their 43 descendants, 15 have served full-time missions. Their grandchildren are now marrying in the temple, and their great-grandchildren are the fourth generation of Silveiras who are part of the marvelous work that was started by Joseph Smith. Because of them, faith has increased in the earth. They are an example of the miracle the Lord spoke about when He said that His gospel would be proclaimed by the weak and the simple (see D&C 1:23) and that by small and simple means great things are brought to pass (see 1 Ne. 16:29).

The Lord sent an angel to Joseph Smith to tell him that he had a work to do. That work continues today in us and is directed by President Gordon B. Hinckley, a living prophet, who said: “Glorious is this work. It will bless the life of every man, woman, boy, and girl who embraces it” (“Missionary Service,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 11, 2003, 21). “God be thanked for His marvelous bestowal of testimony, authority, and doctrine associated with this, the restored Church of Jesus Christ” (“The Marvelous Foundation of Our Faith,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 81). In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.