

If singleness is an affliction, I can only conclude that I'm not a good example. I love living alone. I love travelling alone. I love people but not necessarily to live with. I enjoy company and contact and conversation, but I enjoy being a free soul who can come and go and do what I feel like at the moment.

Although I have been married and have a son, I have been alone for the last twenty-eight years, for all of my nineteen years in the church. A month or two before my baptism, I took a western trip. On a Greyhound platform I met a lovely elderly lady awaiting the same bus I was to take. We chatted and I asked her if she was a Mormon. She said, "Yes, why do you ask?" I replied, "Because you look like one and I am going to be one shortly." She exclaimed, "My dear sister, when you are ready to go to the Temple you must come to St. George and I will go with you." Two years later I did go and stay with her and she went with me every day. She said then she did not know what single women would do in eternity, but she would be willing to share her husband, dead for several years, with women like me. I don't know what to think about that! Still, where would one find that kind of friend except in the Church?

I have been asked how I feel about my status in a Church which emphasizes family life so strongly. Do I feel left out? I can only say what an awful thing it would be to be single and *not* be in the Church. I have shared so many families, their company, their children, their hospitality. Where else could one meet so many wonderful people of all ages, interests, talents and tastes, but all with the same spiritual ideals and working for the same eternal goals? Wherever I go I find brothers and sisters; I have visited Mormon churches in Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, England, Virginia, Florida, California, Utah, Mexico, and all over New England.

In Juneau the mother of an M.I.T. student took me to church; I was invited to dinner by the cousin of our Boston Stake Relief Society President. In Anchorage a former member from Cape Cod Branch took me sightseeing at nine p.m. in the bright-as-day light. In San Juan the member of the Church whom I phoned to find where services were held invited me to go with her family, calling for me at my hotel. In Hawaii, I was given a wonderful day of sightseeing by the widow of Matthew Cowley. Why shouldn't I feel I am a member of a very large family?

My son married about twenty-two years ago and so far I have not had time to be lonely. I think he expressed it rather well when his future mother-in-law asked him, "What will your mother do if you get married?" and he, who had been in the Navy for three years and in school for two years, replied, "Why, I guess she will just go on doing what she always does." I was working then and loved it. I am still working and still love it.

I may be single, but I never feel alone. The Church is a wonderful, warm, loving comforter, always within reach if the need should arise. It would take an hour for my son to reach me in an emergency, but I know I could get help in ten minutes from the Church if it were necessary. I know the home teachers would do anything for me — except my housecleaning! I mentioned that one time when they said, "Can we do anything for you,

Sister Baker." I was deep in sewing as usual and anyone could see I *needed* some cleaning done. They just smiled and said, "Well, good night." They are dears and so are the visiting teachers. When I really need them, they'll be there.

I do have many friends outside the Church and they are dear to me too, but it is the Church which is the structure of my life. As for the hereafter, perhaps I can best approach it this way. I have always known my Heavenly Father fairly well and had great confidence in *Him*. Before I was a Mormon I looked into a lot of things and annexed a lot of ideas and, perhaps, experiences of how He operates. In the years since I have been in this Church I have learned much, much more. I think that whatever his plans are for me will be O.K.

 I say Ladies,
if WE ask YOU to
make your dresses
a little shorter,
do NOT be extra-
vagant & CUT
Them so short
that WE can see
The TOPS OF YOUR
STOCKINGS. BRIGHAM YOUNG