



# Ties that Bind

*Be a bishop unto my people, saith the Lord, not in name but in deed (D&C 117:11).*

BY KRISTEN CHANDLER

(Based on a true story)

Urgggg . . . this can't be happening!" Ryan said to himself in the mirror. He looked at the floppy ends of his tie. He had half an hour to figure this out. How hard could it be? Mom knocked on the bathroom door. "Ryan?" she said softly. "Come in," he moaned. Mom smiled at him as she opened the door. "How's it coming?" "Not so good," he said. "I wish I could get it to look like Dad's." A small frown passed quickly over Mom's face and disappeared. Ryan wished he hadn't said anything about Dad, but he couldn't help it. Mom flipped the ends of the tie around. "Do you think we could figure it out from the Scouting handbook?" She went to find it. It seemed ridiculous to Ryan that he had lived to be 12 without learning how to tie a tie. Dad used to tie it for him. But now Mom and Dad were divorced, and Dad lived across town. Mom reappeared with the book opened to a page. "Can I try?" she asked. "Sure," Ryan said, trying to be nice. Mom was smart, but she wasn't exactly known for her knot-tying expertise. Mom tied something that looked like an origami project and then undid the silky fabric and started over. After another failed attempt, she sighed heavily. Suddenly, Ryan's older sister Katie rushed

into the bathroom. "Ryan! What's wrong with your tie?" she asked, as if his tie were a mutant life-form.

"Nothing!" Mom said, pushing the fabric into shape. "Everything."

"I'm going to be late," Ryan said, trying not to sound upset. But he was upset. This was his first day to pass the sacrament since he had been ordained a deacon, and his tie looked awful.

"Well, you can't pass the sacrament looking like that," Katie said.

Mom gently pushed Katie out of the bathroom and then came back in. "I have an idea," she said.

Ryan looked at her doubtfully.

"What if you run over to the church early and ask the bishop to do it?"

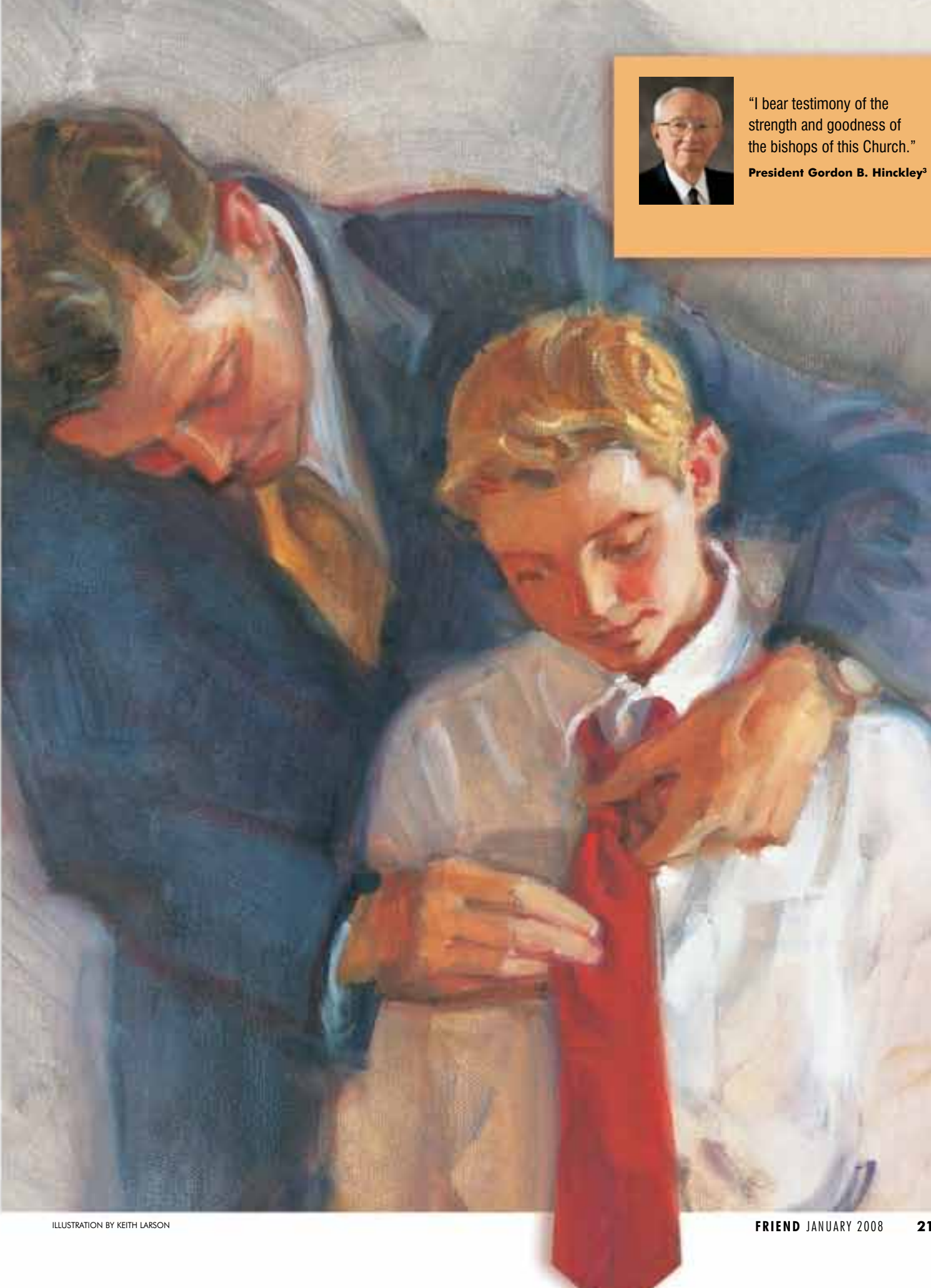
The bishop? How embarrassing! Ryan thought he would rather stay home than walk into the chapel with his tie in his hand and walk up to the bishop in front of everybody.

"I bet he helps Peter do his tie all the time," Mom said.

Peter was the bishop's son. "I doubt it," Ryan said. He frowned into the mirror and pulled at the tie.

When Ryan got to the doors of the chapel, he felt a red-hot humiliation fill his face. What would the other boys think if they saw him ask the bishop?

Why couldn't his mom do it for him? He thought about turning around. Then something



“I bear testimony of the strength and goodness of the bishops of this Church.”

**President Gordon B. Hinckley<sup>3</sup>**

quiet but strong told him to go into the chapel and it would be OK.

He took a deep breath and walked through the doors. He was early, so the chapel was nearly empty except for the organist and a few people sitting at the front. And there was Bishop Anderson with his head down, quietly reading his scriptures. Just then the bishop looked up at Ryan. He put his scriptures down and walked down the aisle. He held out his hand.

“Welcome, Ryan. Are you excited to pass the sacrament today?” he asked.

“Well, I have a little problem,” Ryan said.

“Don’t worry. Everyone’s nervous the first time. I stepped on a lady’s foot when I was your age. It all turned out all right.”

“No,” Ryan said, holding out his tie.

“Oh. Come with me,” the bishop said.

The two of them stepped into the foyer. The bishop showed Ryan how to loop the fabric, and before Ryan had time to think about it, he had a normal-looking tie. Bishop Anderson didn’t make fun of him or act like he should know how to do this already. He didn’t act like he felt sorry for Ryan either.

“I appreciate your asking me to help you with that,” Bishop Anderson said as they walked back into the chapel.

Ryan nodded. He was still embarrassed but not nearly as much now that his tie was on.

The bishop put his hand on Ryan’s shoulder. “This ward is like a big family, and I always feel better when the people in my family are taken care of.” Then he walked up to the front of the chapel.

As Ryan passed the sacrament, he saw familiar, smiling faces. He thought about what the bishop had said. This ward was like a big family, and it was a family he liked being a part of. ●

## HOW TO TIE A TIE

There are several ways to tie a tie. Here’s a simple one. (These steps show your reflection as seen in a mirror.)



**1.** Start with the wide end of the tie on your right side, hanging about 12 inches (30 cm) below the narrow end.



**2.** Cross the wide end over the narrow and back underneath.



**3.** Continue around, passing the wide end in front of the narrow end once more.



**4.** Pass the wide end up through the space between your neck and the tie.



**5.** Holding the front of the knot loose with your finger, pass the wide end down through the loop in front.



**6.** Remove your finger, and tighten the knot carefully. Hold the narrow end, and slide the knot up so it is snug around your neck.