

PURE RELIGION

Strengthen the Feeble Knees

The bishop didn't know what to do. The Burns family had \$40,000 in credit card debt. The father, recuperating from an accident at work, had just had back surgery. He walked with a cane and couldn't work. He didn't attend church. The oldest son was mentally handicapped. At 19, he wanted to join the Coast Guard but couldn't pass the entry test, so he worked full time at Burger King doing the best he could to help the family out of their financial dilemma. The mother, Susan, was self-conscious about her obesity and hadn't worked in years. When she was younger, she had worked as a beautician, but that really wasn't an option for her now because she couldn't stand for long periods of time. She had also developed a reaction to the chemicals in the beauty shop.

When a Deseret Industries store opened in his area, the bishop felt that perhaps a partial solution to this family's challenges had been provided. He suggested that Susan work there. She at first refused. She was embarrassed by her weight and was sure she didn't have the skills or the stamina to endure working a 40-hour week. She had become something of a recluse and did not want to leave the safety and comfort of her home.

The bishop persisted, however, and Susan accepted a position as a pricer, which allowed her to sit as she worked. Soon, Susan realized

she could put in an eight-hour day without too much trouble. She took to her job immediately, and it wasn't long before the quality and quantity of her work were so good that she was asked to help train other pricers.



After awhile, her supervisor began suggesting the possibility of Susan looking for a job outside of Deseret Industries. Susan refused. Despite being employed nearly a year and a half at Deseret Industries, she still felt she was too heavy, too slow, and too inflexible to be able to keep a job anywhere else.

Members of the Deseret Industries management team visited a local employer and explained Susan's situation. Based on their recommendation, the employer decided to give Susan a chance.

Last November, Susan accepted the job. Since then she has received a pay raise and now is earning far more than she had ever hoped she could make. For the first time in a long while, the family has much-needed medical benefits. Susan feels more confident about her abilities and better about herself.

Today, the entire family attends church regularly and, with the help of a wise bishop and some basic financial counseling, they are slowly making their way toward being financially independent.