

STANDING

By Catherine Hall

Being a youth in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today means we will hear that we must be different from our peers. We are reminded that we must stand out for choosing the right. We are also reminded that we are different from our peers in the media and at school. At school we hear people talk casually about the things we hold dear to us.

I often heard about how youth in the Church must stand up for what is right and be different, but I never really gave it a second thought. I just agreed and went on with life, hoping I wouldn't have to be *too* different from my peers. I nervously anticipated moments when my classmates or friends would stare at me in disbelief because they simply didn't understand why I wouldn't do certain things.

It wasn't until the end of my eighth grade year that I realized I was very different from my classmates and even my best friends, who were nonmembers. I was faced with a situation that really bothered me. In class we were debating some controversial topics, including abortion. When I shared my thoughts, I was surprised to see my moral values ripped to pieces. Something I feel is so precious—physical intimacy, something that

ILLUSTRATION BY BRYAN BEACH

OUT

should be reserved for marriage—was simply a fun pas-time to other people. I walked out of the classroom that day knowing that things were going to be very different.

In the same class, I was faced with another moment that would force me to act on all of the things I had been taught since Primary. My teacher was in the front of the class, talking about a snippet of a movie we were about to watch. Some of my classmates suggested that we watch the whole movie. My teacher shook her head and nonchalantly explained that she couldn't because the movie had a mature rating. I was stunned when I first heard this. I never thought this would happen.

I sat in my chair, thinking about what I should do. A thought kept coming into my head: We have been asked not to watch offensive movies. I tried to rationalize that because I was in school, the part of the movie we were going to watch would be appropriate. But the thought of not watching offensive movies trumped my rationalizations.

I calmly raised my hand, and in front of my whole class, I asked to sit outside of class while the movie played. I felt everyone's eyes on me as I pushed in my chair and grabbed my book. I saw the looks on their faces; they simply didn't understand.

While sitting in the hallway, I felt very happy. I knew I had done the right thing, no matter what my peers or teacher said. I felt stronger too. I knew I didn't have to watch an inappropriate movie clip just because my teacher had presented it to us.

My classmates didn't understand my standards, but that didn't lessen the importance of those standards to me.

Since then, I have often thought about the Mormonad hanging up in my room. It reads, "Adversity Can Make You Strong." I believe that when we are faced with moments of adversity and we stand up to them, we are made stronger than if we had sat down and let them happen.

This is an inner strength that is found through our Savior. If we look to Him in our times of difficulty, we will be made strong. Our faith in Him can help us face adversity unashamed. We must "be strong and of a good courage" (Joshua 1:9) and look to our Heavenly Father and our Savior for everything; with all that, our adversities will make us stronger. **NE**

See the Mormonad
Find the "Adversity
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Mormonad online by
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