





POSITIVE USES OF THE INTERNET

By Elizabeth Stitt

The Internet allows instant access to many resources that can strengthen and enrich our lives. Many spiritually uplifting Web sites give direction and inspiration. The following ideas can help you stay connected to reality without completely disconnecting from the good things the Internet has to offer.

Limit Your Time

Rebecca Renfroe, from Idaho, USA, used to blog and read others' blogs almost daily. Her mind was always in "compose" mode—mentally writing a blog about what she did with her children instead of just doing things with them. She realized there had to be a balance.

She says, "The Spirit helped me to recognize that having a blog was not the problem—devoting too much of my time and energy to it was. I had literally been giving portions of my life away: trading away quality time with my children and my husband, trading away time for serious, in-depth study of the

scriptures, and even trading away hours of sleep that affected my ability to serve others, to be sensitive to the Spirit, and to maintain a healthy lifestyle."

Sister Renfroe learned not to let good things get in the way of better things, as Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles counseled: "Just because something is *good* is not a sufficient reason for doing it. . . . Of course it is good to view wholesome entertainment or to obtain interesting information. But not everything of that sort is worth the portion of our life we give to obtain it. Some things are better, and others are best."¹

Choose Uplifting Media

Amy Paulsen of Washington, USA, appreciates Web sites that other mothers have created that provide lesson ideas and activities for teaching children gospel principles. When she needs visual aids, she finds art online to print out. When she needs ideas, she finds links to Church magazine articles, conference talks, and online manuals.



THE BEST CHOICE

Make sure that the choices you make in the use of new media are choices that expand your mind, increase your opportunities, and feed your soul.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Sharing the Gospel Using the Internet,” *Liahona*, June 2008, N2; *Ensign*, July 2008, 60.



CHURCH WEB SITES

Church Web sites provide excellent resources for learning and teaching the gospel. From conference talks to Church history to help with your calling, the Church sites are designed to help members easily access gospel material. The following is a sampling of official Church Web sites available in different languages:

“The Internet has helped my husband and me prepare meaningful family home evenings for our children,” Sister Paulsen says. “It’s also comforting to know that there are so many other mothers out there who also ‘teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord’” (D&C 68:28).

Use the Internet to Share the Gospel

One member, Lin Floyd of Utah, USA, created a family history Web site with ancestors’ photos and histories. His Web site and others like it have helped people learn more about the Church and its doctrine. Some have desired to be baptized or have returned to Church activity. Others have found helps for doing family history, fulfilling callings, and strengthening marriages.

There are many positive things we can do with the Internet. As you establish guidelines for Internet use—making sure that the sites you visit expand your mind, increase your opportunities, and feed your soul—the Internet can be a great resource for enriching your personal life and strengthening your family. ■

NOTE

- 1. Dallin H. Oaks, “Good, Better, Best,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 104, 105.



Using Church Web sites, you can share the gospel, prepare lessons, and engage in family history work.





- **LDS.org:** Research conference talks, read the latest news of the Church, and connect to many other Church resources, such as Church manuals and magazines. To find materials in your language, go to languages.lds.org.
- **Mormon.org:** Refer your neighbors, family, and friends to this site designed for those who want to learn more about the Church. The site explains our basic gospel beliefs, including the nature of God, eternal families, and the plan of salvation. Available in many languages.
- **JesusChrist.lds.org:** Read testimonies of the apostles and prophets about the Savior Jesus Christ. Available in English and Spanish.
- **Ensign.lds.org:** Find your favorite articles from the *Ensign* as well as Web extras such as photo galleries and activities for children.
- **Youth.lds.org:** Watch, read, and share inspiring messages and stories for youth from Church leaders and others.
- **ProvidentLiving.org:** Learn about self-reliance topics such as food storage, employment, and Church humanitarian efforts.
- **LDSjobs.org:** Search for jobs, find information about schools, connect with job seekers, and learn how to help those in your ward or branch who are looking for employment. Available in English, Portuguese, and Spanish.
- **YouTube.com/MormonMessages:** Watch short audiovisual presentations about gospel principles. Available in English and Spanish.
- **Temples.lds.org:** View information about and pictures of temples around the world. Available in English, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.
- **New.FamilySearch.org:** Research your family line, and submit information about your ancestors. Prepare names for temple work. Available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.
- **FamilySearchIndexing.org:** Volunteer to help digitize and index Church family history resource records. Available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.
- **Countries.lds.org:** Many countries have their own Church Web site. For example, on Denmark's site you can watch videos showing the Copenhagen Denmark Temple. On the Argentina/Uruguay/Paraguay site, members can sign up to receive inspirational quotes from Church leaders through e-mail. On Korea's site you can watch several Church films. Other countries' sites have similar features.
- **Languages.lds.org:** Each language has a list of the translated material available on LDS.org. Most sites offer general conference talks and manuals online. Some offer additional resources.
- **Images.lds.org:** Download gospel art images, Church history pictures, photos of temples, and more.
- **Braille.lds.org:** Find Braille texts in English and Spanish; they are downloadable and printable.
- **Music.lds.org:** Listen to and print hymns and other music. Available in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. (At music.lds.org, click on **Music**, then **Hymns**, and then choose a language.)



**By Elder
David A. Bednar**
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

*I raise an apostolic voice
of warning about the potentially
stifling, suffocating, suppressing,
and constraining impact of
some kinds of cyberspace
interactions and experiences
upon our souls.*

THINGS AS

As I have looked forward to and prepared for this opportunity to learn with you, I have come to better understand the strong feelings of Jacob, the brother of Nephi. He said, “I this day am weighed down with much . . . desire and anxiety for the welfare of your souls” (Jacob 2:3). The message I want to share with you today has over time distilled upon my “soul as the dew from heaven” (D&C 121:45). I invite your earnest attention to a serious subject that has both immediate and eternal implications. I pray for the Holy Ghost to be with and teach each

of us during our time together.

I long have been impressed with the simple and clear definition of truth set forth in the Book of Mormon: “The Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls” (Jacob 4:13; see also D&C 93:24).

We will focus upon the first major element of truth identified in this verse: “things as they really are.” We first will review several

key elements of our Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness as the doctrinal foundation for knowing and understanding things as they really are. We then will consider methods of attack used by the adversary to distract us from or inhibit our capacity to discern



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