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The Balancing Act of Endurance

I testify that we can “enjoy to the end” as we follow promptings from the Holy Ghost, choose good over evil, and balance our responsibilities.

I recently spoke to my children, nieces, and a young friend to gain a sense of the questions, challenges, frustrations, and triumphs young adults face today. I have pondered and prayed about what was shared with me and have summarized it into points that I now share in hopes that they may help answer some of those questions and challenges.

Listen to the Holy Ghost

Contrary to how some of you may feel at times, I declare that our Heavenly Father does answer our prayers in His way. Consider the following scriptures:

“For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth;

and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened” (3 Nephi 14:8).

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

“Behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart” (D&C 8:2).

How then do we receive answers and revelation? How do we know it’s the Holy Ghost and not just our own thinking? I share two experiences in my life that have become patterns.

After Sister Teh and I dated for a little while, it became obvious that I wanted to spend eternity with her. Naturally, I made it a subject



of earnest prayer and fasting. No particular change in my feeling followed. I did not feel a burning in my bosom. I did, however, continue to feel good about my decision, so I persevered. Sister Teh got the same answer, so here we are. Since that experience, I have arrived at many of my decisions in a similar fashion (see D&C 6:22–23).

Contrast that with experiences I now have concerning specific assignments from the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to call a new stake president. As I approach this assignment in the spirit of prayer and fasting, I have been blessed with distinct impressions that help me know who should be called. The impressions come sometimes before, sometimes during, or sometimes even after the interview process. I always feel a burning in my bosom. I have since recognized that as the way the Holy Ghost guides me in such assignments.

Why the difference in the way the Holy Ghost communicates with me? I do not know. The important thing is that I have learned to recognize these patterns as ways I receive personal revelation. I take comfort and confidence in the following admonition: “Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers” (D&C 112:10).

Choose Good over Evil

Some people think that it is becoming harder and harder to distinguish right from wrong. There appear to be more and more gray areas. Many of the incorrect but popular opinions of the day appear to make sense when viewed solely through a narrow lens. But old garbage covered with new packaging and backed by creative advertising is still garbage.

Discerning between right and wrong need not be complicated. Even before we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, we are blessed with the Light of Christ:

“For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

“But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good” (Moroni 7:16–17).

One of the greatest tests of our day is sustaining the living prophet. Most of us will say, “Oh, that’s easy. I already got that. Check.”

But it is amazing to see how some people who supposedly sustain the living prophet react to some of the popular opinions of the day. When faced with peer pressure, some of us act as if or form opinions that suggest that we don’t know there is a living prophet.

Find the Right Balance

Do you have so much to do that you feel you are being pulled in different directions? Guess what. It will only get worse. So the question is: How do you find the right balance?

Establish as your beacon the eternal nature of our spirits and your identity as a son or daughter of God. Focus your energy on that truth and what it means. Everything else will either drop out of your life or fall into its proper place.¹ Two scriptures can serve as guiding principles:

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you” (3 Nephi 13:33).



"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:20–21).

Believe it or not, I was once in your shoes. There was a point in my life when I had a full-time job, went to school at night, and had a second part-time job after school until the wee hours of the morning—while Sister Teh and I were raising our young family. I got only a couple of hours of sleep a few days a week for two months. On top of all that, I was serving in a ward bishopric.

That was one of the most productive times in my life. I don't think I have ever utilized 24 hours a day as efficiently as I did during that period.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) reminded us that we have a responsibility to our family, to our employer, to the Lord, and to ourselves.

How do we balance those responsibilities? President Hinckley said: "I don't think that is difficult. I served in many capacities in this Church. I am the father of five children, who were young and growing up when I was serving in those various capacities. . . . We enjoyed life. We had family home evenings. We just did what the Church expected us to do."²

Enjoy to the End

Enduring to the end is not about completing a gospel checklist and then saying: "I'm good. All I have to do now is coast along and maintain it." Rather, it is about continually learning and growing. The gospel of Jesus Christ is about constant repentance and change—it is an uphill climb rather than a stroll in the park.

King Benjamin said, "See that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a



man should run faster than he has strength" (Mosiah 4:27).

Some Latter-day Saints embrace this passage as a justification for their unwillingness to try harder or do their best. The problem is they focus only on the first half of the passage.

Here is the second half: "It is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order." The two halves together clarify what

it really means to do things in wisdom and order.

A young athlete friend introduced me to the phenomenon called *second wind*, which is a feeling of renewed energy that gives you strength to carry on even when you're tired.

As for finding a second wind in other aspects of his life, my friend says: "As a college student, it can be really easy to come home from a late night and make an excuse to be too tired to say prayers or read scriptures or even make regular temple visits. There can be many excuses for not doing these things,

especially for college students. But in the end, we need to find our second wind and do those little things."

Maybe instead of *endure* to the end, we can find our second wind—our spiritual wind—and *enjoy* to the end. I testify that we can do so as we follow promptings from the Holy Ghost, choose good over evil, and balance our responsibilities. ■

From a devotional address, "These Are Your Days," delivered at Brigham Young University–Idaho on June 9, 2015. For the full address, go to web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches.

NOTES

1. See Ezra Taft Benson, "The Great Commandment—Love the Lord," *Ensign*, May 1988, 4.
2. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 33.