

Jason's Escape

Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation (Mark 14:38).

BY CAROLYN LEDUC

(Based on a true story)

ZZZZZ . . ." Eight-year-old Jason faked a snore, then burst into giggles. Lying in his bed, he pulled the blanket over his eyes and pretended to sleep. Across the dark room, his six-year-old brother snuggled into his pillow, then let out a long, dreamy sigh before he started to laugh as well. "Shh!" Jason whispered, pulling the blanket off his head. "We're supposed to be sleeping!"

"I'm sleeping. I'm sleeping!" his brother whispered back. Both boys giggled again, then pulled the sheets up under their chins, squeezed their eyes shut, and lay as stiff as possible while they waited.

In the next room, their sister also waited, pretending to sleep. Down the hall, their brother waited, pretending to sleep. Even their mom, they knew, was lying in her dark bedroom, curled up under her covers, pretending to sleep.

A floorboard creaked in the shadowy hallway. Dad was somewhere nearby. Any moment now they would hear the signal. Jason listened intently, hardly breathing as he tried to guess where Dad might be standing at that moment. He was definitely coming closer. Any second now . . .

"BEEEEP!" A screech blared throughout the house. Jason dropped to the floor and crawled toward the door on his hands and knees.

"Go, go, go!" his brother yelled, bumping into Jason's side. "We have to get out!"

"Fire!" Jason shouted, crawling into the hallway.
"Everyone out!"

"Everyone out!" Mom called. "Stay low!"

Dad joined them on the floor as they crawled down the hallway, into the kitchen, and out the back door. Once outside, they stood up and ran to the maple tree.

"Are we safe?" Dad asked. "Is everyone here?"



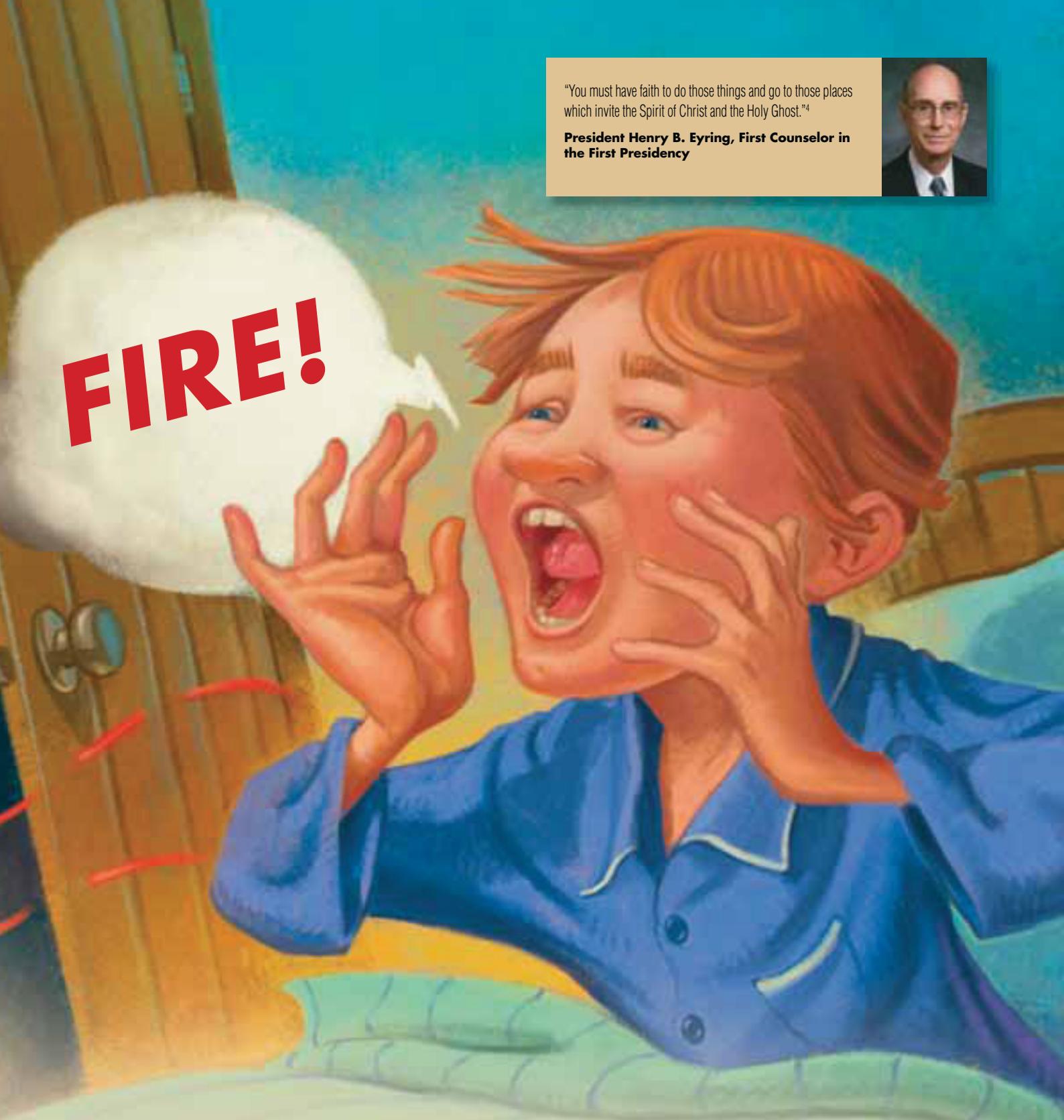
"We all made it," Mom said, counting heads.

Dad looked at his stopwatch. "That was our best time yet," he said. "Now everyone back to bed—for real this time."

The next morning, as the family gathered for breakfast, Jason thought about the fire drill. "I'm glad we have an escape plan," he said. "I feel safer with a fire alarm in our house."

"Me too," Mom agreed. "Having an alarm helps keep us safe—as long as we respond quickly when we hear it go off."

Jason finished his breakfast. "Can I go over to Brett's house now?" he asked. Brett was Jason's next-door neighbor and one of his best friends.



"You must have faith to do those things and go to those places which invite the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Ghost."⁴

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency



"Yes," Mom said. "Be safe and have a good time." Next door, the boys played with Brett's dog, ran through the sprinklers, and built stick forts in the mud. Then Brett suggested they go inside. "I'm hot," he said. "Let's play video games."

"OK," Jason agreed. "Maybe I can beat you this time."

"We can try a new game," Brett said as the boys went inside. "Have you ever played this one before?" He held up the case for a game Jason didn't recognize.

"I don't think so. What's it like?"



"You'll see," Brett said, sliding the disc into the game console.

Brett handed Jason a controller and sat down in front of the TV. Jason sat down beside him. As the game started, a screeching alarm went off in Jason's conscience. The characters in this game looked like real people, and

the clothes they were wearing—particularly the women's clothes—didn't cover very much of their skin. Jason felt uncomfortable. He knew he needed to escape.

"We need to play a different video game, or I need to go home," Jason said. "I'm not comfortable with how those people are dressed." Jason knew his friend might think he was weird for saying that, but he also knew he needed to pay attention to his feelings.

"No big deal," Brett said. "We can play a different game." Brett got out a car racing game. The alarm in Jason's mind quieted as he heard the roar of the engines in the game. For Jason, nothing could have sounded better. ●

ARE YOU MEDIA SMART?

Computers, TV, and movies can help you learn and have fun. But there are also bad things about them that can hurt you. Here are 10 ways to stay safe when you use the computer or watch TV:

1. Always ask a parent for permission before you use the Internet or watch TV, and use computers or televisions only in an open area of your home, within the view of your parents.

2. Go only to Web sites that you and your parents know are good for children. Ask your parents to set your TV and Web browser to block bad content.

3. Don't be afraid to leave the room or ask someone to turn off movies, video games, or music that make you feel uncomfortable.

4. If you have a page on a social-networking Web site, ask your parents to help you make sure that people you don't know can't see your page.
5. When you are on the Internet, don't give someone you don't know personal information like your name, address, or phone number.
6. Don't send someone you don't know a photograph of yourself.
7. Never agree to meet in person someone you "met" on the Internet. If someone asks to meet you, tell your parents.
8. Don't give anyone your passwords.
9. Don't open an e-mail from someone you don't know. If you get an e-mail you're unsure about, check with your parents.
10. Look for fun activities on the *Friend* Web site at www.friend.lds.org!