

Our Family Will Be Strong



And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably (Mosiah 4:13).

BY CHERYL ESPLIN



A rope is made up of many strands that are tightly woven together. If one strand is broken or cut, it weakens the rope. Your family can be compared to a rope. Each member can represent a strand. When you work together for good, the whole family becomes stronger. Every family member has a responsibility to help strengthen one another.

Think about Nephi and how he helped strengthen his family. While they were traveling in the wilderness, Nephi's bow broke. They couldn't get any food, and they were all tired and hungry. Many family members were angry with Nephi, and they murmured against the Lord.

Nephi didn't murmur or get angry. He made another bow out of wood and an arrow out of a straight stick. He asked his father, Lehi, where he should go to hunt

for food. Nephi was then able to get food for his family. They were happy, and they humbled themselves and gave thanks unto the Lord. (See 1 Nephi 16:18–32.)

You and your family members can help each other be strong by praying together, helping each other, showing kindness and love, reading scriptures together, enjoying activities together, and having family home evening. ●

Activity

Remove page 17 from the magazine, and mount it on heavy paper. In family home evening, talk about things that can strengthen your family. Write these ideas on the chart. Two ideas have already been suggested. Hang the chart where your family can see it and refer to it often.



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1. Our family can pray together.

2. Our family can spend time together.

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

SHARING TIME IDEAS

July Theme: *I will strengthen my family.*

(Note: Weekly gospel principles are listed in bold.

All songs are from *Children's Songbook* unless otherwise noted; GAK = Gospel Art Picture Kit, TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call.)

1. ***Family prayer strengthens my family.*** While the oldest class reads 3 Nephi 18:21 out loud, ask the other children to listen for what Jesus Christ commands us to do (pray in our families). Get responses. Ask six children to come to the front of the room. Tape one of the following wordstrips on each child in random order: *family, prayer, will, strengthen, my, family*. Ask the other children to help unscramble the children so the words are in the right order. Recite the sentence together. Show GAK 606 (Family Prayer), and explain that we are encouraged to have family prayer every night and every morning. Let the children suggest things they can do to help with their family prayers. Write their suggestions on the board. (Examples: remind their family to have family prayer, come quickly when called, take turns saying the prayer, pray for members of the family, be reverent during the prayer.) Have the children close their eyes and picture their families kneeling in prayer while you sing the first verse of "Family Prayer" (p. 189). Then invite them to sing that verse with you. Hand out pencils and pieces of paper that say "Family prayer will strengthen my family." Ask the children to draw their families kneeling in prayer. Encourage them to take the picture home and hang it in a place where it will remind their families to have family prayer every morning and every night. Sing all the verses of "Family Prayer."

2. ***Reading the scriptures strengthens my family.*** Display the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. Explain that these books of scripture are called the standard works. To help the children become familiar with each book of scripture, play a guessing game by giving clues to help them guess which of the four books you are referring to (see "Guessing Game," TNGC, 169). For example: "This book tells about Joseph Smith's history and has the Articles of Faith" (Pearl of Great Price). As each book of scripture is identified, have all the children repeat its name together. Teach that the scriptures are the word of God. They teach about Jesus Christ and His gospel. The scriptures can strengthen our families if we will read them regularly. Sing "Search, Ponder, and Pray" (p. 109). Pass out one of the following scripture references to each class: Exodus 20:12 (honor our parents); John 13:34 (love one another); Ephesians 4:32 (be kind and forgiving); 1 Nephi 3:7 (obey commandments); 3 Nephi 18:21 (pray in our families); Doctrine and Covenants 59:7 (gratitude). Give each child a blank wordstrip and a pencil. Tell the children to follow along while their teacher reads the scripture. Then each child should find one thing the scripture says to do that would help his or her family be strong and happy. Have the children write it down on a wordstrip and then share with class members. Invite each class to read their wordstrips to the rest of the Primary. Tell an experience when the scriptures have strengthened your family. Encourage the children to read the scriptures individually and as a family.

3. ***Family home evening strengthens my family.*** Hold a bundle of sticks in your hand. Break one of the sticks in half. Tie all the sticks together with string. Show how difficult it is to break the sticks when they are tied together. Tell the children that the sticks represent members of a family. Emphasize that when we are alone we are not as strong as when we are with our family. Explain that family home evening can be like the string that unites and strengthens the family. Teach the children that they can help their family home evenings be successful by helping plan them and willingly participating. Tell the children you are going to help them prepare a story about Joseph Smith's First Vision that they could share during a family home evening. Help them make a simple visual aid they could use to tell the story of the First Vision. (For example: drawings, cutouts, or finger puppets. See resources below.) Using the same visual aid the children have prepared, briefly tell the story of the First Vision (see Joseph Smith—History 1:5–20). Then invite one or two children to tell the story using their visual aids. Explain that music is an important part of family home evening and that you are going to teach a song they can use during their home evenings. Teach the third verse of "On a Golden Springtime" (p. 88). Bear testimony of the importance of family home evening in strengthening our families. Encourage the children to tell the story and teach the song in an upcoming family home evening (with their parents' permission).

For older children: See the second activity under "Learning and Living the Gospel" in the *Faith in God* booklet, page 6.

Resources for visuals of Joseph Smith's First Vision: *Behold Your Little Ones* (nursery manual), lesson 21; "Joseph Smith's First Vision," *Friend*, Mar. 2008, 48; "Joseph Smith's First Vision," *Friend*, Oct. 1991, 16–17.

4. ***Reverence and keeping the Sabbath day holy strengthen my family.*** Beforehand, write on small pieces of paper different activities we could do to keep the Sabbath day holy. Put the papers in a container. Cut out paper circles to represent "spots" and attach them to the board. To begin sharing time, have the children read out loud Exodus 20:8. Explain that the Lord has promised great blessings when we keep the Sabbath day holy. Have the children listen for one of those blessings while you read Doctrine and Covenants 59:9. Ask: "What does the Lord promise if we keep the Sabbath day holy?" (We will be able to keep ourselves "unspotted from the world.") Emphasize that if we keep the Sabbath day holy, we are promised the strength to keep ourselves clean and unspotted from the world. Show the container with the pieces of paper, and explain that on each paper is an activity we could do on the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Have the children count off by saying the days of the week. When a child says, "Sunday," have him or her choose a paper from the container and act out the activity for the others to guess. When the correct answer is given, have that child remove a spot from the board. Continue as time allows. Sing a Primary song about the Sabbath day. Bear testimony that by keeping the Sabbath day holy, we will draw closer to the Lord and to our family.

5. *Friend* references: "The Lifeline of Prayer," July 2003, 2–3; "Nets Full of Fish," Feb. 2006, 18–21; "Press Forward, Saints," Jan. 2000, 28–30; "Kirsten's Assignment," Apr. 2005, 46–48; "Ready to Go!" July 2007, 8–11; "Family Home Evening with a Friend," Oct. 2006, 42–44; "Cannon's Commitment," Mar. 2007, 10–12; "Remember the Sabbath Day," Nov. 2004, 38–39; "Doing Good on the Sabbath Day," Sept. 2007, 24–25.