

Questions & Answers

“How should I react when I’m ridiculed for being a member of the Church and for trying to maintain my standards?”

Because of the Light of Christ, God’s children know what is right and wrong, but unfortunately some choose to ignore that knowledge and ridicule those who are trying to choose the right. Whenever you can, try to share your testimony with people like that and explain the blessings you have received from living gospel standards.

How you react to ridicule will affect how others view you and the Church. Never argue or react with anger or unkindness. Sometimes you just need to ignore what others say and follow the Savior’s counsel to love and pray for them (see 3 Nephi 12:44). Remember that you are to be “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith” (1 Timothy 4:12).

Finally, don’t be ashamed of your testimony of the gospel (see Romans 1:16). Your steadfast example will be a powerful witness to those around you of the truth of the gospel. Standing up for your beliefs in a charitable and confident way can also strengthen those who lack the courage to do what is right.

Explain Your Beliefs



Some time ago I was participating on a basketball team that usually played games on Saturdays. When we played on Sunday, however, I would not attend, and my teammates would make fun of this. When they asked me why I didn’t play on Sundays, I responded, “I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I am taught to make the Sabbath sacred and not play sports. I follow the principles of the gospel because I know that God wants the best for us.” After that, my teammates respected my beliefs and stopped making fun of me.

Nicolás B., age 19, Córdoba, Argentina

Pray for Them

It can be discouraging when others ridicule your beliefs. However, I try to remember that those who make fun are missing out on the blessings of the gospel. So I pray that Heavenly Father will change their hearts and help them

understand the importance of the gospel. I know that if I live a good, exemplary life, my example can help them change.

Itaobong O., age 20, Rivers, Nigeria

Don’t Be Ashamed

If someone ridicules you because you are a member of the Church, just tell them that you have a testimony of the Church and that you like going to church. Tell them that you feel that your Heavenly Father is close by. Don’t be embarrassed or afraid of saying the right thing!

Laura A., age 12, Hesse, Germany

Speak Lovingly



I read Elder Robert D. Hales’s article about Christian courage and how we should not respond angrily but lovingly to those who are against the Church.¹ If we show we care, then most people will stop acting so badly towards us. You should always treat people with respect and love because it will actually come back to you. If people tell you to do something against your standards, just calmly decline and say, “I am a member of the LDS Church and do not believe that it is OK to do that.” You might even suggest a new activity that isn’t against your standards.

Lucas H., age 15, Arizona, USA

Be a Good Friend

First of all, I would think of the Lord’s example. When He gave His life for me, He had no flaws or any reason to deserve what He suffered. Second, I would think of the example of Joseph Smith, who

knew how to be strong and courageous so that today I am proud to belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Third, I would continue to maintain my principles by being kind and by serving. I would show my love for them by being the best friend and example they could have. I would show them the blessings that obedience to gospel principles can bring them. After all, we're all children of one loving and merciful Father.

Auguste R., age 15, Tahiti, French Polynesia

Let Your Light Shine



We should remember why and for whom we live our standards. If we always keep in mind the example of our Savior, we will be prepared to endure such situations with meekness, without a spirit of discord, and without feeling shame for the standards we have chosen to live. As we act this way, we let our light shine before men, and they will see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven (see Matthew 5:16).

Lara M., age 21, Paraíba, Brazil

Bear Your Testimony



At the university where I used to study, there was a young man who persecuted me because I am a member of the Church. He always wanted to contend, so I just tried to avoid him. Then one day I bore my testimony to him, and he quit persecuting me. We should always stay firm and remember how our testimonies were

gained. We should react with self-control so the Holy Spirit may always be with us and strengthen us, no matter what others may say or think. We should pray for those people so that someday they may receive Jesus Christ.

Brezka E., age 21, Valparaíso, Chile

Talk with Church Friends



I have found that reading my patriarchal blessing really helps. It gives me a better understanding of who I am, my weaknesses, and my strengths so that I can better deal with trials such as these. I have only two close LDS friends, but I talk to them frequently about ways to handle trials. I think that would definitely help you. Another good way to deal with this problem is just to show kindness and be an example in everything you do. You definitely cannot force people to change their minds, but being kind and slow to anger is probably the best way to show them how important the Church is to you.

William L., age 17, Nevada, USA

NOTE

1. See Robert D. Hales, "Christian Courage: The Price of Discipleship," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 72; "That Is Christian Courage," *New Era*, July 2009, 2.



DO NOT RETALIATE

One of mortality's great tests comes when our beliefs are questioned or criticized. In such moments, we may want to respond aggressively—to 'put up our dukes.' But these are important opportunities to step back, pray, and follow the Savior's example. . . . When we do not retaliate—when we turn the other cheek and resist feelings of anger—we too stand with the Savior. We show forth His love, which is the only power that can subdue the adversary and answer our accusers without accusing them in return. That is not weakness. That is Christian courage."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Christian Courage: The Price of Discipleship," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 72.

NEXT QUESTION

"How should I respond when my friends say that no man can see God?"

Send your answer by September 15, 2010, to:
Liahona, Questions & Answers 9/10
 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
 Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA
 Or e-mail: liahona@ldschurch.org

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter: (1) full name, (2) birth date, (3) ward or branch, (4) stake or district, (5) your written permission, and, if you are under age 18, your parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to publish your response and photograph.