

RESPECTING WOMEN—NO MATTER WHAT AGE

I was called to teach the Aaronic Priesthood in my branch, and one Sunday the topic was respect for womanhood. During the lesson we discussed that respect should be shown to every female, from infant to adulthood, as stated in the Aaronic Priesthood manual.

Gabriel (name has been changed), one of the young men in the class, said that to him a woman is a female who is old enough to be his mother and any female younger than that should respect him because he is a man. No one else in the class agreed with him, which was hard for him to believe.

We continued to discuss ways to show respect to women, and I told them that one thing I do is give up my seat on the large public transportation van when a woman boards, even if it means standing for 30–40 minutes before arriving at my destination. I told

them that men ought to stand and let women have the seats. Gabriel was still uncomfortable with the lesson.

Two days later, I boarded a van and sat down in the front. All of the seats were full when a man and his young daughter boarded and walked to the rear. Soon after, an elderly woman entered the van, and I stood up and offered her my seat.

A man behind me tapped my shoulder, pointed to the back of the van, and told me a young man had asked him to get my attention. I walked back to see who this young man was. Everyone nearby was smiling because the young man had just given his seat to the man and his four-year-old daughter who had boarded earlier. It was Gabriel, the young man in my priesthood class, who had been uncomfortable with the topic of respect for womanhood.

He said to me, “I was watching to see if you would stand for the woman who entered the van. I was moved when I saw that you did, and I remembered our lesson on Sunday and had to stand up for the little girl and her father.”

How happy I was to see that our young men live what they are taught in the Church. He used to think that respect was reserved only for older women, but after our Sunday lesson, he chose to show respect for a four-year-old girl.

I was also happy that I chose to live what I taught, helping him learn to show respect for women of all ages. I wondered what his feelings would have been if I had not stood up for the woman in the van. A scripture came to my mind: “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them” (John 13:17). ■

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