

By Kuinini Manumua

When I was a freshman in high school, the weightlifting coach asked me to join weightlifting.

"Mmm . . . no thanks," I said. "Not my thing."

But he kept at it. For weeks.

Finally, I tried it out. He was right: I really liked weightlifting. It was definitely weird at first; my body had never done anything like it before. But I grew to love the feeling of working out. I also loved my teammates and the competitions. And I started doing really well!

Now weightlifting is a huge part of my life. I practice every day for at least two or three hours, doing back squats, clean and jerks, and snatches. (And if you don't know what any of those things are, don't worry—neither did I!)

Like many things, weightlifting takes time and patience, and sometimes that can be difficult. Luckily, my family is always right there encouraging me, even when I complain about how sore I am (which is often). My dad always has



A WEIGHTLIFTER'S GUIDE TO STANDING

One scripture can make a big difference—even in weightlifting competitions.

ice packs and pep talks ready for me when I get home from practice. And my mom always sacrifices so I can go to competitions.

A few years ago, I went to one of those competitions in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. I was excited to compete against weightlifters from all over the country, but I was a little worried about being so far away from my family. To make it easier, my mom promised to text me scriptures and thoughtful messages every day.

The night before the competition, some kids threw a party. I thought it would be cool to go, so my roommate and I went to check it out. But right away I knew it wasn't my kind of party. There were teenagers drinking, smoking, saying bad words, and dancing inappropriately. I knew I shouldn't be there, but I was worried what my roommate might think. Or what the other competitors might think.

But then something popped into my head:

"Stand ye in holy places."

It was from my favorite scripture, and one my mom had sent me that morning: Doctrine and Covenants 87:8: "Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen."

I don't know why my mom sent me that scripture that day, but it's one I've loved my entire life. I've had it memorized since I was eight, and again and again it has reminded me to have courage, be obedient, and stand for what I believe in.

"Stand ye in holy places."

"I'm gonna go," I said to my roommate. I explained about the scripture my mom had sent me that morning. "This is not a place I should be standing."

My roommate told me she didn't want to be there, either. She was uncomfortable too but hadn't wanted to leave by herself and be seen as a loser. She thanked me for saying something, and we left.

The next morning, we found out that soon after we left, the kids who were at the party were caught and eliminated from the competition for drinking and doing drugs.

If I hadn't been prompted to remember my mom's verse, I might've been disqualified from the competition too. I ended up winning first place, so I'm really grateful I got to compete. (I think I thank my mom every single day for texting me.)

Winning a weightlifting competition is a pretty obvious and immediate blessing from keeping the commandments. But Doctrine and Covenants 87:8 doesn't say, "Stand ye in holy places so you can win weightlifting competitions." And John 14:15 doesn't say, "If you want immediate blessings, keep my commandments." The Lord blesses us because He loves us. And we try to be holy and obedient because we trust and love the Lord. ■

The author lives in California, USA.

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