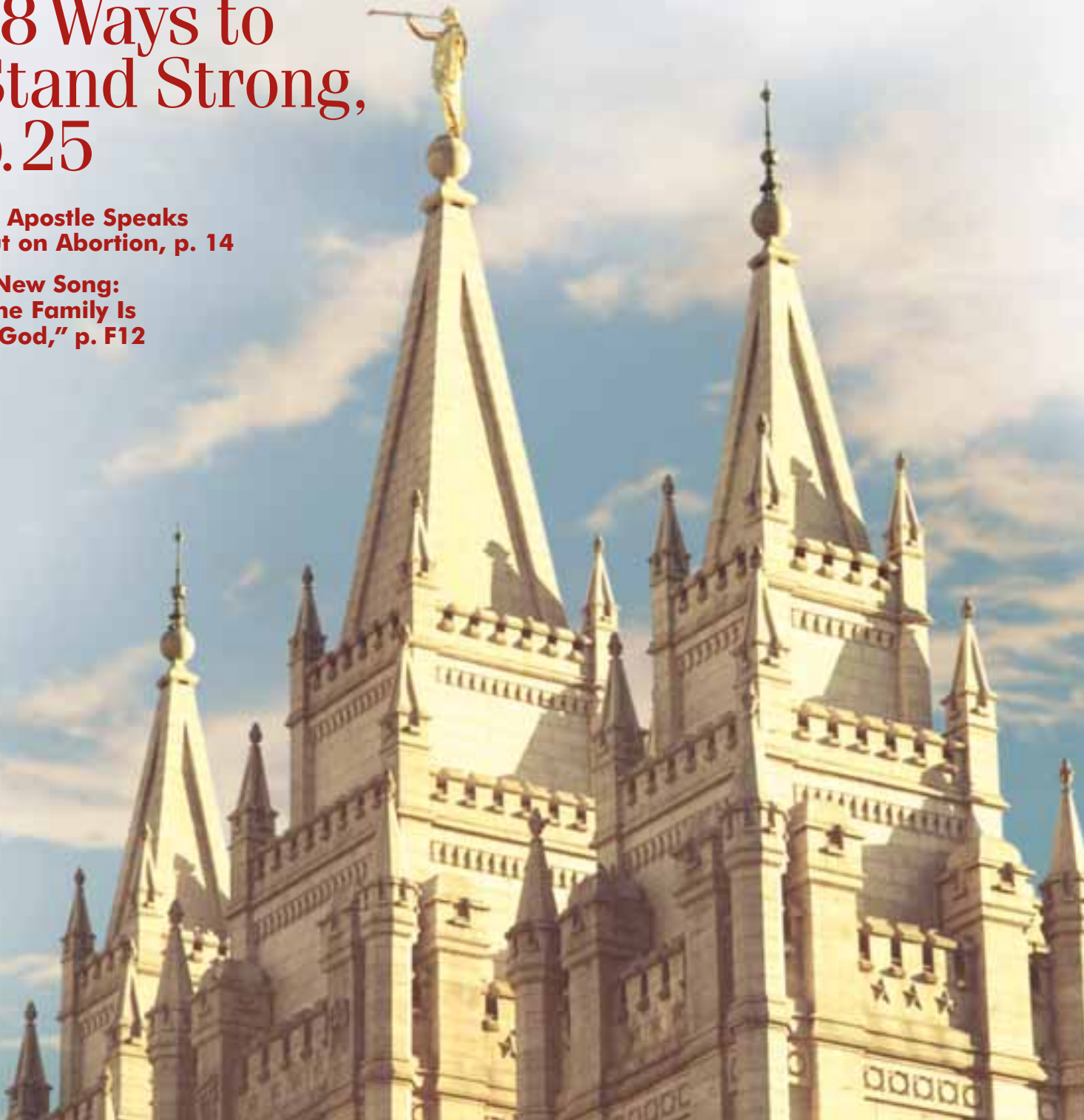


# Liahona

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Front: Photograph by Craig Dimond.  
Back: Photo illustration by Christina Smith.

#### THE FRIEND COVER

Photo illustration by David Stoker.

### FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

*These teaching suggestions can  
be used in the classroom as  
well as in the home. You  
may tailor these ideas to  
your family or class.*

**"Finding My Faith,"** p. 8:

Discuss what a testi-  
mony is. Tell Joshua's  
story. Read Ether 12:6, and ask what  
this scripture meant to him. How is  
our faith tested in order for our tes-  
timonies to grow? How did Joshua  
increase his faith after he was bap-  
tized? Invite family members to  
share their testimonies.

### 2 Developing Christlike Attributes



**"18 Ways to Stand Strong,"** p. 25:

This article could be used for sev-  
eral family home evenings. Write  
the 18 standards on strips of  
paper. Draw a slip, and read  
that section of the article.

Discuss how the stan-  
dard applies to your  
family. Then draw another, contin-  
uing the process as long as desired.  
Emphasize how important these  
guidelines are for life. Make a goal  
to follow the counsel given for each.  
End by reading the section "Go  
Forward with Faith."



### 13 Visiting Teaching Message

As you look for the Estonian CTR ring hidden in this issue, think of how you can choose the right by serving someone in need.



## FOR YOUTH

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- 38 Be Wary of Wooden Horses *Elder Kenneth Johnson*
- 42 Questions and Answers: My Friends and I Have a Problem with Gossiping. What Can I Do to Stop and Help Them Stop?
- 44 The Man with Answers *Don L. Searle*
- 47 Poster: Standards

## INSERT: FOR YOUTH

Question cards and *For the Strength of Youth* cards



25 18 Ways to Stand Strong



F10 Help and Be Happy

**“Be Wary of Wooden Horses,”** p. 38: Satan has disguised many wooden horses in our day. Read the story of the Trojan horse from the article, and consider going through the books, music, and movies in your home. Make it a game titled “Can This Be Saved?” Keep only the media that is virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy (see Articles of Faith 1:13). Conclude by reading Mosiah 5:15 and Doctrine and Covenants 45:32.

**“Help and Be Happy,”** p. F10: Take this opportunity to introduce

or continue a chore chart for your family. List several chores (appropriate to the ages of the children), and ask each person to choose one to do. Read the story, and discuss why it is important for each person to help. Make a goal to serve others during the coming week.

**“Preparing for a Mission,”** p. F14: Ask your family to listen for ways Elder Ulisses Soares prepared for his mission. Read the counsel he was given by his bishop. Discuss how each family member can prepare to be a missionary.

## THE FRIEND: FOR CHILDREN

- F2 Come Listen to a Prophet’s Voice: How to Give *President Henry B. Eyring*
- F4 Sharing Time: I Will Be His Servant *Linda Christensen*
- F6 From the Life of the Prophet Joseph Smith: Joseph’s Experiences in Jail
- F8 Testimony Glove
- F10 Help and Be Happy *Jeannie Lancaster*
- F12 Music: The Family Is of God *Matthew Neeley*
- F14 Friend to Friend: Preparing for a Mission *Elder Ulisses Soares*
- F16 Coloring Page

## F8 Testimony Glove



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# Developing Christlike Attributes

BY PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

**D**uring my professional life as an airline pilot, passengers sometimes visited the cockpit of my aircraft. They asked about the many switches, instruments, systems, and procedures and how all this technical equipment would help such a huge and beautiful airplane fly.

I would explain that it takes a great aerodynamic design, many auxiliary systems and programs, and powerful engines to make such a flying machine equal to the task of bringing comfort and safety to those joining the flight.

To simplify my explanation by focusing on the basics, I would add that all you really need is a strong forward thrust, a powerful upward lift, and the right aircraft attitude, and the laws of nature will carry the airliner and its passengers safely across continents and oceans, over high mountains and dangerous thunderstorms to its destination.

Reflecting on my experiences with those visitors, I have often contemplated that being a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints invites us to ask similar questions. What are the basics, the fundamental principles of our membership in the kingdom

of God on earth? After all is said and done, what will really carry us at times of greatest need to our desired eternal destination?

## The Gospel's Unchanging Core

The Church, with all its organizational structure and programs, offers many important activities for its members aimed at helping families and individuals to serve God and each other. Sometimes, however, it can appear that these programs and activities are closer to the center of our heart and soul than the core doctrines and principles of the gospel. Procedures, programs, policies, and patterns of organization are helpful for our spiritual progress here on earth, but let's not forget that they are subject to change.

In contrast, the core of the gospel—the doctrine and the principles—will never change. Living according to the basic gospel principles will bring power, strength, and spiritual self-reliance into the lives of all Latter-day Saints.

Faith is such a principle of power. We need this source of power in our lives. God works by power, but this power is usually exercised in response to our faith. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:20). God works according to the faith of His children.

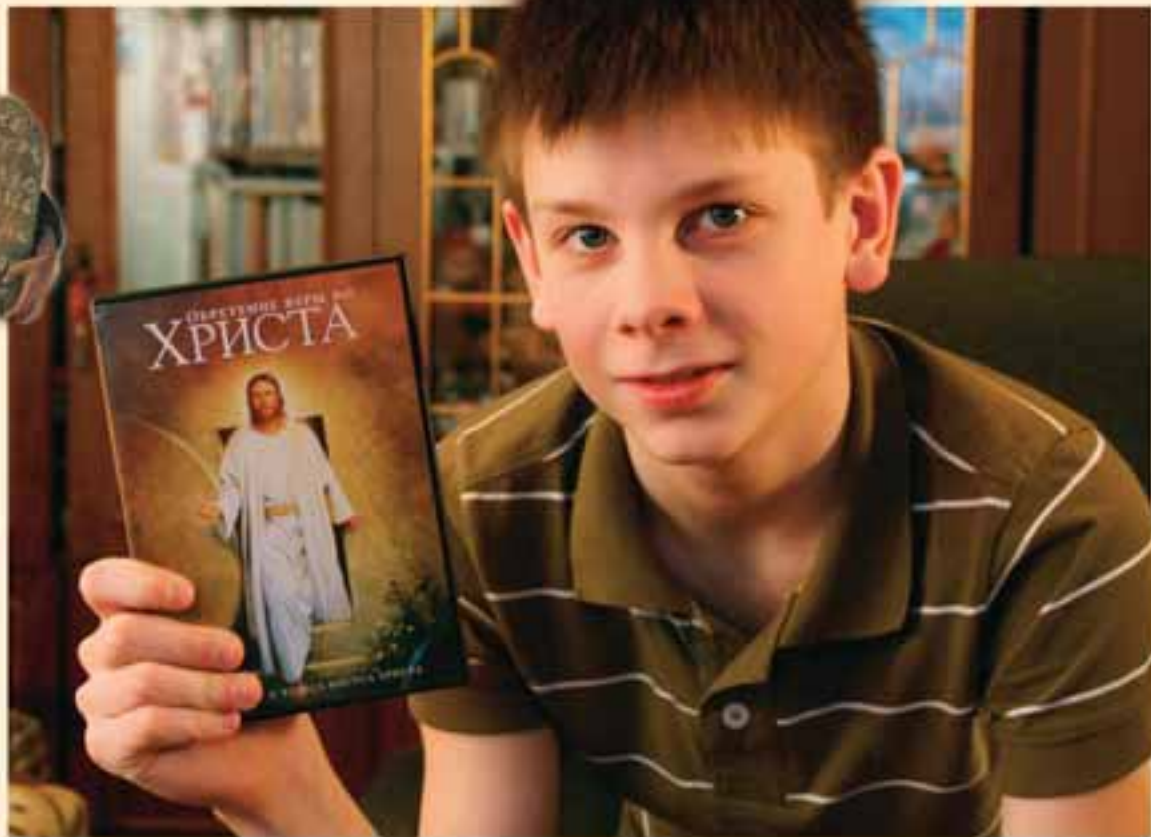


*Living according to the basic gospel principles will bring power, strength, and spiritual self-reliance into the lives of all Latter-day Saints.*





**F**aith in Jesus Christ leads to action. When we have faith in Christ, we trust the Lord enough to follow His commandments.



The Prophet Joseph Smith explained, “I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.”<sup>1</sup> To me, this teaching is beautifully straightforward. As we strive to understand, internalize, and live correct gospel principles, we will become more spiritually self-reliant. The principle of spiritual self-reliance grows out of a fundamental doctrine of the Church: God has granted us agency. I believe that moral agency is one of the greatest gifts of God unto His children, next to life itself.

When I study and ponder moral agency and its eternal consequences, I realize that we are truly spirit children of God and therefore should act accordingly. This understanding also reminds me that as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we are part of a great worldwide family of Saints.

The organizational structure of the Church allows great flexibility according to the size, growth pattern, and needs of our congregations. There is the basic unit program with a very simple organizational structure and

fewer meetings. We also have large wards with great organizational resources to serve one another. All are established within the inspired programs of the Church to help members “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32).

All these varied options are equal in divine value because the doctrine of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is the same in each unit. I testify as an ordained witness of the Lord Jesus Christ that He lives, that the gospel is true, and that it offers the answers to all personal and collective challenges the children of God have on this earth today.

#### **Strength of the Faithful**

In 2005 my wife and I visited with members of the Church in many countries throughout Europe. In some parts of Europe, the Church has been present for many years, even since 1837. There is a great heritage of faithful members in Europe. Currently, we have more than 400,000 members on that continent. As



we look at all the generations who have emigrated from Europe to America during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that total number could easily be multiplied a few times.

Why did so many faithful members leave their home countries in those early days of the Church? Many reasons can be named: to escape persecution, to help build the Church in America, to improve their economic circumstances, to be close to a temple, and many more.

Europe still feels the consequence of this exodus. But the strength that comes from several faithful generations of Church members is now becoming more apparent. We see more young men and women and more senior couples serving missions for the Lord; we see more temple marriages; we see more confidence and courage by the members to share the restored gospel. Among the peoples of Europe and many other parts of the world, there is a spiritual vacuum of Christ's true teachings. This vacuum must, can, and will be filled with the message of the restored gospel as our wonderful members live and proclaim this gospel with greater courage and faith.

With the expansion of the Church in Europe, there are countries where the Church has been for no more than 15 years. During our visit in 2005, I spoke with a mission president serving in his homeland of Russia who had been a member for only seven years. He told me, "The same month I was baptized I was called as a branch president." Did he feel overwhelmed at times? Absolutely! Did he try to implement the full range of Church programs? Fortunately not! How did he grow so strong in such a small congregation in such a short time? He explained, "I knew with all my soul the Church was true. The doctrine of the gospel filled my mind and my heart. As we joined the Church, we felt part of a family. We felt warmth, trust, and love. We were only few, but we all tried to follow the Savior."

The members supported each other, they did the best

they could, and they knew the Church was true. It was not the organization that had attracted him but the light of the gospel, and this light strengthened those good members.

In many countries the Church is still in its beginnings, and the organizational circumstances are sometimes far from perfect. However, the members may have a perfect testimony of the truth in their hearts. As the members stay in their countries and build the Church, despite economic challenges and hardships, future generations will be grateful to those courageous modern-day pioneers. They abide by the loving invitation of the First Presidency given in 1999:

"In our day, the Lord has seen fit to provide the blessings of the gospel, including an increased number of temples, in many parts of the world. Therefore, we wish to reiterate the long-standing counsel to members of the Church to remain in their homelands rather than immigrate to the United States. . . .

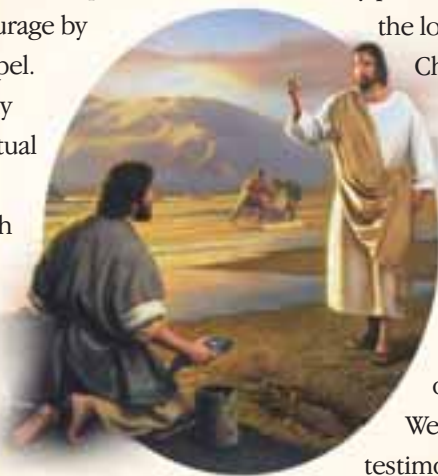
"As members throughout the world remain in their homelands, working to build the Church in their native countries, great blessings will come to them personally and to the Church collectively."<sup>2</sup>

May I add a word of caution to those of us who live in large wards and stakes. We have to be careful that the center of our testimony is not located in the social dimension

of the Church community or the wonderful activities, programs, and organizations of our wards and stakes. All of these things are important and valuable to have—but they are not enough. Even friendship is not enough.

### **Safety in Obedience**

We recognize that we are living in a time of turmoil, disaster, and war. We and many others feel strongly the great need for a "defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth" (D&C 115:6). How do we find such a place of safety? President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught: "Our safety lies in the virtue of our lives. Our strength lies in our righteousness."<sup>3</sup>



Recall with me how Jesus Christ instructed His Apostles, clearly and directly, at the beginning of His mortal ministry: “[Come,] follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). This was also the beginning of the ministry of the Twelve Apostles, and I suspect that they had a feeling of inadequacy. May I suggest that the Savior Himself teaches us here a lesson about core doctrine and priorities in life. Individually, we need to first “follow Him,” and as we do this, the Savior will bless us beyond our own capacity to become what He wants us to be.

To follow Christ is to become more like Him. It is to learn from His character. As spirit children of our Heavenly Father, we do have the potential to incorporate Christlike attributes into our life and character. The Savior invites us to learn His gospel by living His teachings. To follow Him is to apply correct principles and then witness for ourselves the blessings that follow. This process is very complex and very simple at the same time. Ancient and modern prophets described it with three words: “Keep the commandments”—nothing more, nothing less.

Developing Christlike attributes in our lives is not an easy task, especially when we move away from generalities and abstractions and begin to deal with real life. The test comes in practicing what we proclaim. The reality check comes when Christlike attributes need to become visible in our lives—as husband or wife, as father or mother, as son or daughter, in our friendships, in our employment, in our business, and in our recreation. We can recognize our growth, as can those around us, as we gradually increase our capacity to “act in all holiness before [Him]” (D&C 43:9).

The scriptures describe a number of Christlike attributes we need to develop during the course of our lives. They include knowledge and humility, charity and love, obedience and diligence, faith and hope (see D&C 4:5–6). These personal character qualities stand independent of the organizational status of our Church unit, our economic circumstances, our family situation, culture, race, or language. Christlike attributes are gifts from God. They cannot be developed without His help.

### **Trusting in His Power**

The one help we all need is given to us freely through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Having faith in Jesus Christ and in His Atonement means relying completely on Him—trusting in His infinite power, intelligence, and love. Christlike attributes come into our lives as we exercise our agency righteously. Faith in Jesus Christ leads to action. When we have faith in Christ, we trust the Lord enough to follow His commandments—even when we

## **IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS**

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. Hold up a piece of paper, and let it fall to the floor. Then fold it into a paper airplane, and throw it softly so it flies. Compare the change in the sheet of paper to our acquiring Christlike attributes that will “create the wind beneath our wings” for the journey back to our heavenly home.
2. Show pictures of or tell about the first members of your family who joined the Church. They were pioneers, whether they crossed the plains or simply led the way in joining the Church and living faithfully the doctrines of Jesus Christ. Discuss how that same faith can motivate us to follow Him today.







**T**he one help we all need is given to us freely through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Having faith in Jesus Christ and in His Atonement means relying completely on Him—trusting in His infinite power, intelligence, and love.

do not completely understand the reasons for them. In seeking to become more like the Savior, we need to reevaluate our lives regularly and rely, through the path of true repentance, upon the merits of Jesus Christ and the blessings of His Atonement.

Developing Christlike attributes can be a painful process. We need to be ready to accept direction and correction from the Lord and His servants. Through the Church's regular worldwide conferences, for example, with their music and spoken word, we feel and receive spiritual power, direction, and blessings "from on high" (D&C 43:16). It is a time when the voice of personal inspiration and revelation will bring peace to our souls and will teach us how to become more Christlike. This voice will be as sweet as the voice of a dear friend, and it will fill our souls when our hearts are sufficiently contrite.

By becoming more like the Savior, we will grow in our ability to "abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost"

(Romans 15:13). We will "lay aside the things of this

world, and seek for the things of a better" (D&C 25:10).

This leads me back to my aerodynamic analogy. I spoke of focusing on the basics. Christlike attributes are the basics. They are the fundamental principles that will create the wind beneath our wings. As we develop Christlike attributes in our own lives, step-by-step, they will "bear [us] up as on eagles' wings" (D&C 124:18). Our faith in Jesus Christ will provide power and a strong forward thrust; our unwavering and active hope will provide a powerful upward lift. Both faith and hope will carry us across oceans of temptations, over mountains of afflictions, and bring us safely back to our eternal home and destination. ■

**NOTES**

1. Quoted by John Taylor, in "The Organization of the Church," *Millennial Star*, Nov. 15, 1851, 339.
2. First Presidency letter, Dec. 1, 1999.
3. "Till We Meet Again," *Liabona*, Jan. 2002, 105; *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 90.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT CASEY; DETAIL FROM CHRIST IN GETTISEMANE, BY HEINRICH HOFMANN, COURTESY OF C. HARRISON CONROY CO.

# Finding My Faith

*Over the course of several months, the missionaries invited me to be baptized a number of times, but I always said no.*

BY JOSHUA J. PERKEY  
Church Magazines

One night during my freshman year of college in 1989–90, a good friend of mine and I stayed up late studying for exams.

Suddenly, Matt asked me a question that would become one of the defining moments of my life. “What does your church think God is like? I mean, what do you think He looks like?”

I didn’t have an answer for him. Being sensitive to my circumstance, he gently let the matter drop. But I couldn’t forget it. I was in an extraordinary position: I was a Protestant attending Brigham Young University, and though I had doubts about my own faith and religion in general, I had no intention of changing religions. Instead, for the entire year I had carefully barricaded myself spiritually by deflecting religious conversation. With this simple question, my friend had at last succeeded in opening a tiny breach into my heart.

## Searching for Faith

Over the next several months, I asked myself repeatedly, “What do I believe? More important, do I believe? Is there really a God, and, if so, what is He like? Could I come to know Him? Would He answer my prayers? Could I have faith like my Latter-day Saint friends do?”

It was not that I hadn’t had opportunities to consider such probing questions before; for years some of my best

friends were LDS. These friendships had led me to attend BYU. But almost always I had pushed away their gospel overtures. The few times I had met with the missionaries, I didn’t listen with an open mind.

I was too afraid of the changes that would be required, changes that might socially and emotionally isolate me from my family. I was unwilling to believe that I had been wrong or that my traditions were incorrect. I did not believe that I could receive revelation from God or even that others could receive it. It seemed preposterous, illogical, and even strange that God would appear to the boy Joseph Smith, that He would reveal new scripture, and that only one religion had received the divine guidance for its establishment as the true Church.

Ironically, I doubted the authenticity of all religions, including my own. While I had a heart filled with love for family and friends, a heart that longed for answers, when it came to the whisperings of the Spirit, I had a heart of stone.

After my freshman year I returned home to Kentucky to continue my education. My Latter-day Saint friends soon left to serve missions, and I felt a profound loneliness at their absence. I wanted to have some of the conviction that had inspired them to offer two years of their lives. At the same time, I was continually bothered that I still had no answer to Matt’s question. I wanted to know truths for myself. At last, after many letters from my

friends encouraging me to meet with the missionaries, I overcame my trepidation and accepted.

### **Considering Conversion**

Nevertheless, I had reservations regarding the idea that the various principles of the gospel were interconnected into one unified whole. The missionaries believed that since their message, in its entirety, was either all true or all false, once I gained a testimony of one principle, I could naturally accept all their teachings.

I did not believe them. I thought it was acceptable to pick and choose what I wanted to believe from a sort of spiritual and doctrinal smorgasbord.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, my logic demanded empirical evidence as proof, not faith-based conversion.

Unfortunately, my logic also left me unhappy and dissatisfied. All philosophical arguments I considered were competing postulates of pessimism that provided no real answers. I desired something more, something that would commune with my heart the way my friends and the missionaries described communing with the Holy Ghost. I participated in

the missionary discussions in hopes that I might come to know what they said was true or, at the very least, gain some satisfaction in learning it was false.

**I** asked myself repeatedly, “What do I believe? More important, do I believe? Is there really a God, and, if so, what is He like? Could I come to know Him? Would He answer my prayers?”



**W**hat I needed to do was to take a leap of faith into the darkness before the light would shine.

The missionaries were patient yet bold. Over the course of several months, they taught me many discussions and invited me to be baptized a number of times, but I always said no. I was waiting for some obvious and miraculous event that would provide me with a witness before I was willing to accept their invitation. I didn't receive that kind of witness, so I kept stonewalling their invitations.

One day the elders read a passage from the Book of Mormon: "Dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith" (Ether 12:6). Then they

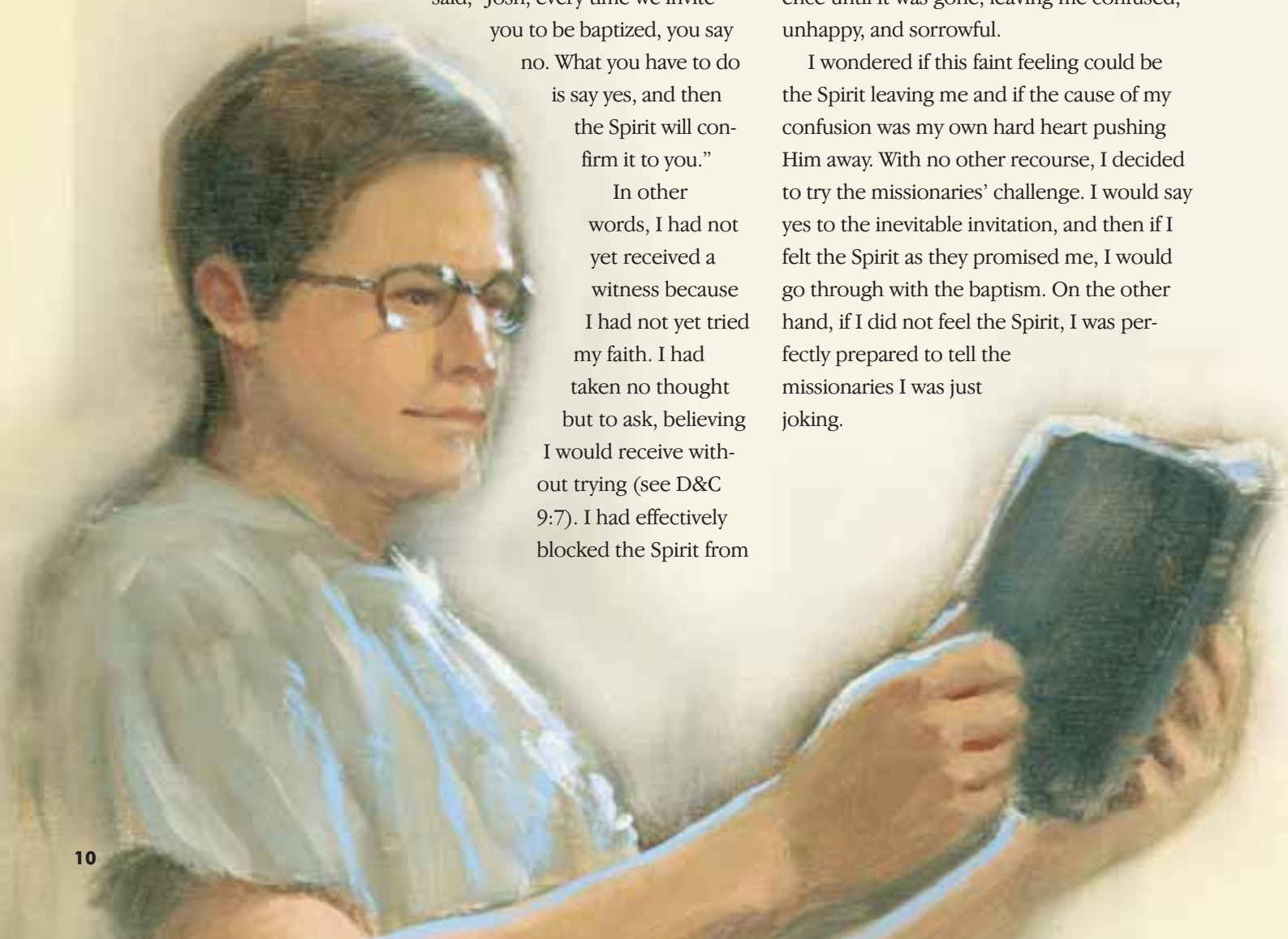
said, "Josh, every time we invite you to be baptized, you say no. What you have to do is say yes, and then the Spirit will confirm it to you."

In other words, I had not yet received a witness because I had not yet tried my faith. I had taken no thought but to ask, believing I would receive without trying (see D&C 9:7). I had effectively blocked the Spirit from

being able to witness to me because I was unwilling to take the next step. What I needed to do was to take a leap of faith into the darkness before the light would shine. The confirming witness would come after I tried my faith, not before.<sup>2</sup>

My first thought was that the missionaries were manipulating me to get me baptized. Then it occurred to me that at the precise moment when I answered no to the baptismal invitation, something faint left my heart. It was a still, soft, and subtle feeling of peace urging me to follow the missionaries' counsel, but I had not recognized its presence until it was gone, leaving me confused, unhappy, and sorrowful.

I wondered if this faint feeling could be the Spirit leaving me and if the cause of my confusion was my own hard heart pushing Him away. With no other recourse, I decided to try the missionaries' challenge. I would say yes to the inevitable invitation, and then if I felt the Spirit as they promised me, I would go through with the baptism. On the other hand, if I did not feel the Spirit, I was perfectly prepared to tell the missionaries I was just joking.



### Testing the Seed

The evening of our next appointment we watched a new Church video, *The Prodigal Son*. There was a special feeling in the room; the missionaries were visibly touched, tears welling in their eyes.

After the movie ended, we read several passages in the scriptures. At last Elder Critchfield turned to me and asked, “Josh, will you be baptized on Saturday, November 10, at 4:00 in the afternoon?”

I hesitated and then answered, “Yes.”

The Spirit hit me with such an electrifying presence that the hairs on my arms rose, and I nearly cried. There could be no doubt that light had shone into the darkness. I had tested my faith, and I knew unequivocally that I had to be baptized.

I had gained a testimony of the goodness of one seed of faith, but I had yet to see it grow to fruition (see Alma 32:35–36), and I had not yet received a confirming witness of other gospel principles. My trial of faith was not yet over.

Not long after I was baptized and confirmed, doubts crept into my mind. I felt conflicted between the very personal experience I had had when deciding to get baptized and my old logic, which did not accept faith-based knowledge.

Soon I again felt the haunting feelings of confusion and sorrow, and I did not know what to believe. Nevertheless, I had made a commitment, and I determined to remain active in the Church and apply the principles I had been taught until the trial of my faith resolved my conflict one way or another.

### Finding My Faith

The Lord did not leave me to wander alone. I was given a calling to serve with the missionaries, and as we went proselytizing each week, the missionaries continued to shepherd me. My home teachers were faithful. My home teaching companion was prompt and consistent. Many ward members developed friendships with me by involving me in their lives, inviting me into their homes for dinners and for family home evenings. They prayed with and



### AFTER OBEDIENCE COMES THE LIGHT

“It sounds so simple to build upon a foundation of truth that you may wonder why everyone doesn’t succeed. For one thing, it takes great humility. It’s hard to repent, to admit you are wrong on faith alone, before the evidence of a feeling of being forgiven and light comes. But that is the way it has to be. First comes obedience and then come the confirming assurances, the revelation of truth, and the blessing of light.”

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “A Life Founded in Light and Truth,” *Ensign*, July 2001, 9.**

for me. The bishop and his family cared for and encouraged me. I could sense the honest intentions of their hearts, and that strengthened my resolve.

One day, some months later, it dawned on me that every time I read the Book of Mormon, I felt a subtle, familiar feeling of peace, much as I had felt during the discussions and baptismal invitations. I had a sudden moment of clarity: this was the Spirit. As I thought the words—“If this is the Spirit, then this book must be true”—that subtle feeling swelled in my heart, and my faith turned to spiritual knowledge of that principle.

As my heart continued to become more “broken” and my spirit more “contrite” (see Ether 4:15), other confirming experiences followed. In time my doubts were replaced by convictions. I knew that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God, not by my own intellect or by the persuasions of others, but by the undeniable presence of the Spirit speaking to my spirit. Precept upon precept opened to my mind (see 2 Nephi 28:30). As these confirming experiences built upon each other, my perceptions of the gospel expanded, and spiritual understanding came more quickly. Each experience required diligence, a willingness to listen and to follow, and a desire to yield to

**T**he light did  
shine, and it  
continues to  
illuminate my way.  
I can say today that  
the gospel is true,  
for I have learned  
this for myself.

the enticings of the Spirit (see Mosiah 3:19).

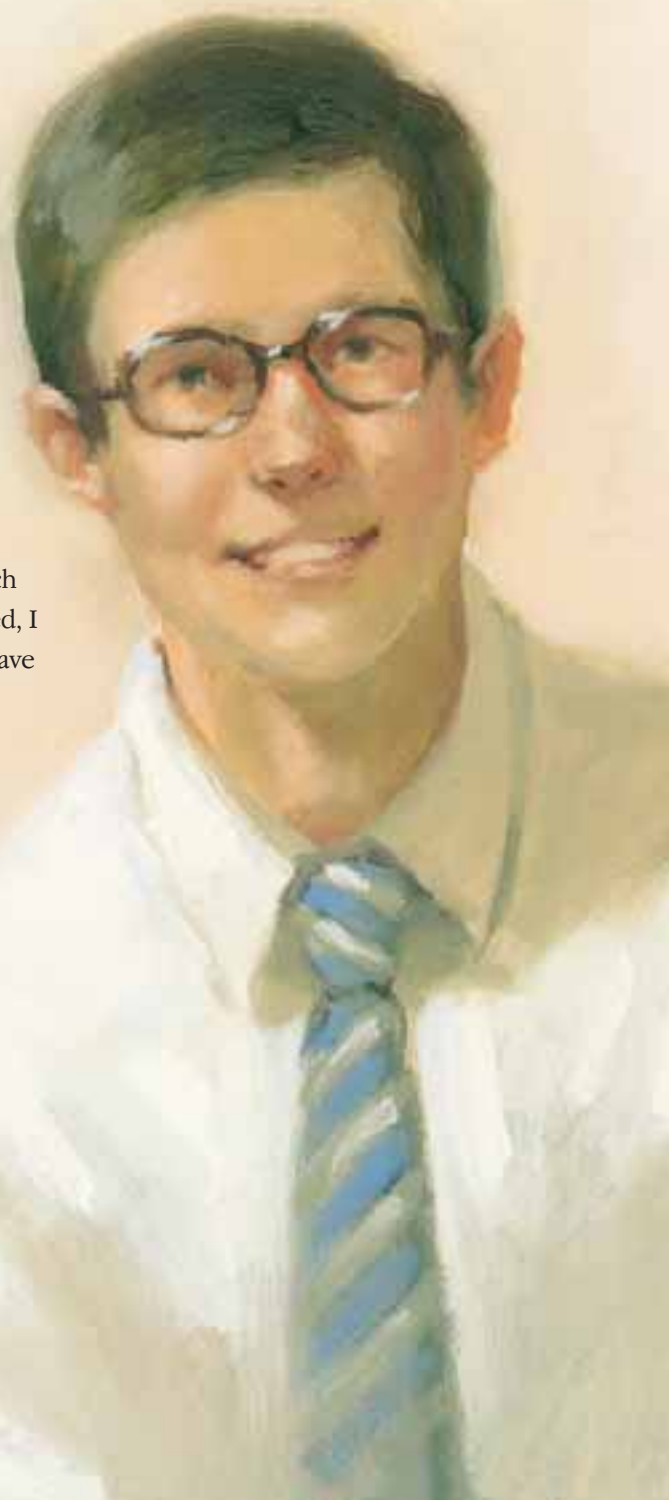
I can say today that the gospel is true, for I have learned this for myself. Once the gospel seemed strange and illogical; now it is familiar and wonderful to me. The gospel principles are indeed all interconnected in one great whole. Even with relatively limited doctrinal knowledge, as a missionary I could testify of these truths. As my doctrinal knowledge expands, so does my testimony.

My collective testimony works as a carefully forged and constantly nourished bulwark against adversity. It sustains me through the challenges I face, most particularly the efforts of the evil one to sow seeds of doubt regarding things I have already received answers about (see D&C 6:22–23). When I feel weak, when doubts come, when pain lingers, I apply the same pattern that has yielded fruit from the first day I received a testimony: I reflect upon each testimony-building experience I have received, I reinvigorate my practice of the principles I have been taught, and I pay attention as the Spirit reaffirms my faith.

The gospel is true, all of it, and it is open to all who will, in the humility of their hearts, try their faith by taking a step of faith into the darkness. The Savior's light is there, hidden only by our unwillingness to find it. There may be many dark times in our lives or times when our testimonies are challenged. I discovered that the Savior's illumination awaits us when we willingly seek Him, and that illumination, if we seek it continually, leads us unto conversion. ■

#### NOTES

1. See Glenn L. Pace, "Follow the Prophet," *Ensign*, May 1989, 26.
2. See Boyd K. Packer, "The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ—Plain and Precious Things," *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2005, 8.



# Gender Is an Essential Characteristic of Eternal Identity and Purpose



*Teach the scriptures and statements that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you teach to share what they have felt and learned.*

**The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** “All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

## Why Is Gender Essential?

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** “[Gender] in large measure defines who we are, why we are here upon the earth, and what we are to do and become. For divine purposes, male and female spirits are different, distinctive, and complementary. . . . The unique combination of spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional capacities of both males and females were needed to implement the plan of

happiness” (“Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan,” *Liabona*, June 2006, 51; *Ensign*, June 2006, 83).



**Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president:** “As spirit daughters of God, women ‘received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth’ (D&C 138:56) on the earth. They were among the ‘noble and great ones’ (D&C 138:55) who ‘shouted for joy’ (Job 38:7) at the creation of the earth because they would be given a physical body with the opportunity to be proven in a mortal sphere (see Abraham 3:25). They wished to work side by side with righteous men to accomplish eternal goals that neither can attain independently. Female roles did not begin on earth, and they do not end here. A woman who treasures motherhood on earth will treasure motherhood

in the world to come” (“A ‘Mother Heart,’” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2004, 76).

## What Can I Do Because of My Role in Heavenly Father’s Plan?

**Margaret D. Nadauld, former Young Women general president:** “Women of God can never be like women of the world. The world has enough women who are tough; we need women who are tender. There are enough women who are coarse; we need women who are kind. . . . We have enough women of fame and fortune; we need more women of faith” (“The Joy of Womanhood,” *Liabona*, Jan. 2001, 18; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 15).

**Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** “The premortal and mortal natures of men and women were specified by God Himself. . . . [Sometimes women] ask: ‘Is a woman’s value dependent exclusively upon her role as a wife and mother?’ The answer is simple and obvious: No. . . . Every righteous man and woman has a significant role to play in the onward march of the kingdom of God. . . .

“. . . My dear sisters, we believe in you. We believe in and are counting on your goodness and your strength, . . . And we believe that God’s plan is for you to become queens and to receive the highest blessings any woman can receive in time or eternity” (“Women of Righteousness,” *Liabona*, Dec. 2002, 36–37; *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 66–69). ■



*Life is precious! No one can cuddle an innocent infant, look into those beautiful eyes, feel the little fingers, and kiss that baby's cheek without a deepening reverence for life and for our Creator.*

# Abortion: An Assault on the Defenseless

BY ELDER RUSSELL M. NELSON  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**A**s I begin, let me apologize to readers for the use of terms that are not pleasant. The nature of the war to which I'm referring requires such clarity of communication.

As sons and daughters of God, we cherish life as a gift from Him. His eternal plan provides opportunities for His children to obtain physical bodies, to gain earthly experiences, and to realize their divine destinies as heirs of eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

## Death Rates from Wars

With that understanding and reverence for life, we deplore the loss of life associated with warfare. The data are appalling. In World War I, more than 8 million military fatalities occurred. In World War II, more than 22 million servicemen and women died.<sup>2</sup> Together, these two wars, covering portions of 14 years, cost the lives of at least 30 million soldiers worldwide. That figure does not include the millions of civilian casualties.

These data, however, are dwarfed by the toll of another war that claims more casualties annually than did World War I

and World War II combined. Worldwide reports indicate that more than 40 million abortions are performed per year.<sup>3</sup>

This war called abortion is a war on the defenseless and the voiceless. It is a war on the unborn. This war is being waged globally. Ironically, civilized societies that have generally placed safeguards on human life have now passed laws that sanction this practice.

## Divine Doctrine

This matters greatly to us because the Lord has repeatedly declared this divine imperative: "Thou shalt not kill."<sup>4</sup> Then He added, "Nor do anything





like unto it.”<sup>5</sup> Even before the fulness of the gospel was restored, enlightened individuals understood the sanctity of human life. John Calvin, a sixteenth-century reformer, wrote, “If it seems more horrible to kill a man in his own house than in a field, . . . it ought surely to be deemed more atrocious to destroy a foetus in the womb before it has come to light.”<sup>6</sup>

Man-made rules have now legalized that which has been forbidden by God from the dawn of time! Human reasoning has twisted and transformed absolute truth into sound-bite slogans that promote a practice that is consummately wrong.

### Special Concerns

Concern for the health of the mother is a vital one. But circumstances in which the termination of pregnancy is necessary to save the life of the mother are very rare, particularly where modern medical care is available. Another concern applies to pregnancies resulting from rape or incest. This tragedy is compounded because an innocent woman’s freedom of choice was denied. In these circumstances, abortion is sometimes considered advisable to preserve the physical and mental health of the mother. Abortions for these reasons are also rare.

Some argue for abortion because of fear that a child may have a congenital malformation. Surely the harmful effects of certain infectious or toxic agents in the first trimester of pregnancy are real, but caution is needed in considering the termination of a pregnancy. Life has great value for all, including those born with disabilities. Furthermore, the outcome may not be as serious as postulated.

I remember well a couple who endured such an experience. The woman was only 21 years old at the time—a beautiful and devoted wife. In her first trimester, she contracted German measles. Abortion was advised because the developing baby would almost surely be damaged. Some members of her family, out of loving concern, applied

additional pressure for an abortion. Devotedly, the couple consulted their bishop. He referred them to their stake president, who, after listening to their concern, counseled them not to terminate the life of this baby, even though the child would likely have a problem. He quoted this scripture:

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”<sup>7</sup>

They chose to follow that counsel and allowed their child to be born—a beautiful little girl, normal in every respect, except for total hearing loss.

After their daughter’s evaluation at a school for the deaf, the parents were advised that this child had the intellect of a genius. She attended a major university on a scholarship. Now some 40 years later, she enjoys a wonderful life.

To deny life to an individual because of a possible handicap is a very serious matter. Policy consistent with that logic would dictate that those already living with such deficiencies should likewise be terminated. One more step in that tragic train of thought would lead to the conclusion that those who are either infirm or inconvenient should also be eliminated. Such irreverence for life would be totally unthinkable!

### Abortion on Demand

Relatively few abortions are performed for the special circumstances to which I have referred.<sup>8</sup> Most abortions are performed on demand to deal with unwanted pregnancies. These abortions are simply a form of birth control.

Elective abortion has been legalized in many countries on the premise that a woman is free to choose what she does with her own body. To an extent this is true for each of us, male or female. We are free to think. We are free to plan. And we are free to do. But once an action has been taken, we are never free from its consequences.

To understand this concept more clearly, we can learn from the astronaut. Anytime during selection or



preparation, he or she is free to withdraw from the program. But once the spacecraft has lifted off, the astronaut is bound to the consequences of the previous choice to make the journey.

So it is with people who choose to embark on a journey that leads to parenthood. They have freedom of choice—to begin or not to begin that course. When conception does occur, that choice has already been made.

Yes, a woman is free to choose what she will do with her body. Whether her choice leads to an astronaut's mission or to a baby, her choice to begin the journey binds her to the consequences of that choice. She cannot "unchoose."

When the controversies about abortion are debated, "individual right of choice" is invoked as though it were the one supreme virtue. That could only be true if but one person were involved. The rights of any one individual do not allow the rights of another individual to be abused. In or out of marriage, abortion is not solely an individual matter. Terminating the life of a developing baby involves two individuals with separate bodies, brains, and hearts. A woman's choice for her own body does not include the right to deprive her baby of life—and a lifetime of choices that her child would make.

As Latter-day Saints, we should stand up for choice—the right choice—not simply for choice as a method.<sup>9</sup>

Nearly all legislation pertaining to abortion considers the duration of gestation. The human mind has presumed to determine when "meaningful life" begins. In the course of my studies as a medical doctor, I learned that a

**A**nytime during selection or preparation, an astronaut is free to withdraw from the space program. But once the spacecraft has lifted off, the astronaut is bound to the consequences of the previous choice to make the journey. So it is with people who choose to embark on a journey that leads to parenthood.



**T**erminating the life of a developing baby involves two individuals with separate bodies, brains, and hearts. A woman's choice for her own body does not include the right to deprive her baby of life—and a lifetime of choices that her child would make.



new life begins when two special cells unite to become one cell, bringing together 23 chromosomes from the father and 23 from the mother. These chromosomes contain thousands of genes. In a marvelous process involving a combination of genetic coding by which all the basic human characteristics of the unborn person are established, a new DNA complex is formed. A continuum of growth results in a new human being. Approximately 22 days after the two cells have united, a little heart begins to beat. At 26 days the circulation of blood begins.<sup>10</sup> To legislate when a developing life is considered “meaningful” is presumptive and quite arbitrary, in my opinion.

Abortion has been legalized by governing entities without regard for God and His commandments. Scriptures state repeatedly that people will prosper only if they obey the

commandments of God.<sup>11</sup> Individuals will prosper only when they walk in faith and obedience to God, who said:

“I, the Lord, . . . built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine.

“And it is my purpose to provide. . . .

“But it must needs be done in mine own way. . . .

“For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare.”<sup>12</sup>

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has consistently opposed the practice of abortion. More than a century ago, the First Presidency wrote, “We again take this opportunity of warning the Latter-day Saints against those . . . practices of foeticide and infanticide.”<sup>13</sup>

Early in his presidency President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said: “We have repeatedly affirmed the position of the Church in unalterably opposing all abortions, except in two rare instances: When conception is the result of forcible rape and when competent medical counsel indicates that a mother’s health would otherwise be seriously jeopardized.”<sup>14</sup> Current policy now includes two other exceptions—incest and if the baby cannot survive beyond

birth, as determined by competent medical counsel. Even these exceptions do not justify abortion automatically. It “should be considered only after the persons responsible have consulted with their bishops and received divine confirmation through prayer.”<sup>15</sup>

### Adoption

Why destroy a life that could bring great joy to others? There are better ways of dealing with an unwanted pregnancy. When a life is created by sinful behavior, the best way to begin personal repentance is to preserve the life of that child. To add another serious sin to a serious sin already committed only compounds the grief. Adoption is a wonderful alternative to abortion. Both the baby and the adoptive parents can be greatly blessed by the adoption of that baby into a home where the child will be lovingly nurtured and where the blessings of the gospel will be available.

### Repentance Is Possible

Is there any hope for the person who has participated in the act of abortion? Is there any hope for those who have so sinned and who now suffer heartbreak? The answer is yes! “As far as has been revealed, a person may repent and be forgiven for the sin of abortion.”<sup>16</sup> We know the Lord will help all who are truly repentant.<sup>17</sup>

Life is precious! No one can cuddle an innocent infant, look into those beautiful eyes, feel the little fingers, and kiss that baby’s cheek without a deepening reverence for life and for our Creator. Life comes from life. It is no accident. It



## ADOPTION—A LOVING DECISION THAT BLESSES THE CHILD

“We . . . express our support of unwed parents who place their children for adoption in stable homes with a mother and a father. We also express our support of the married mothers and fathers who adopt these children.

“Children are entitled to the blessing of being reared in a stable family environment where father and mother honor marital vows. Having a secure, nurturing, and consistent relationship with both a father and a mother is essential to a child’s well-being. When choosing adoption, unwed parents grant their children this most important blessing. Adoption is an unselfish, loving decision that blesses the child, birth parents, and adoptive parents in this life and throughout the eternities. We commend all those who strengthen children and families by promoting adoption.”

**First Presidency statement, Oct. 4, 2006.**

is a gift from God. Innocent life is not sent by Him to be destroyed. It is given by Him and is naturally to be taken by Him alone.<sup>18</sup> I testify that life is eternal as He is eternal. ■

### NOTES

1. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. See *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed. (1998), “World Wars, The.”
3. See Maria Cheng, “Abortion Just as Common in Nations Where It’s Illegal,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 12, 2007, p. A7. In the United States the number of live births per year is in the range of three to four million. The number of abortions during that same period of time exceeds one million. Thus, in that country, one of every three to four pregnancies ends in abortion.
4. See Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17; Matthew 5:21; Romans 13:9; Mosiah 13:21; 3 Nephi 12:21; D&C 42:18–19.
5. D&C 59:6.
6. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses Arranged in the Form of a Harmony*, trans. Charles William Bingham, 22 vols. (1979), 3:42.
7. Proverbs 3:5–6.
8. See statement of Dr. Irvin M. Cushner, speaking to the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *Constitutional Amendments Relating to Abortion*, S.J. 17–19, 110, 97th Cong., 1st sess., 1981, 158.
9. See Dallin H. Oaks, “Weightier Matters,” *Liabona*, Mar. 2000, 17–19; *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 13–15.
10. See J. Willis Hurst and others, eds., *The Heart*, 4th ed. (1978), 7.
11. See Leviticus 26:3–13; Joshua 1:7–8; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 18:5–7; 2 Chronicles 24:20; 26:5; 31:21; Job 36:11–12; 1 Nephi 2:20–21; 4:14; 2 Nephi 1:9, 20, 31; 4:4; 5:10–11; Jarom 1:9; Omni 1:6; Mosiah 1:7; 2:22, 31; Alma 9:13; 36:1, 30; 37:13; 38:1; 45:6–8; 48:15, 25; 50:20; Helaman 3:20; 3 Nephi 5:22; D&C 9:13.
12. D&C 104:14–17.
13. John Taylor and George Q. Cannon, “Epistle of the First Presidency,” Apr. 4, 1885; in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1965–75), 3:11.
14. Spencer W. Kimball, “A Report and a Challenge,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1976, 6; see also “The Time to Labor Is Now,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 6.
15. *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1: Stake Presidencies and Bishoprics* (2006), 185.
16. *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1*, 185.
17. See Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17; D&C 58:42.
18. See Deuteronomy 30:20; Acts 17:28; D&C 88:13; Moses 6:32.



**I** couldn't believe my eyes. The check had been issued for exactly the amount I needed.

## *I Had Faith but No Money*

By Teódulo Troconiz

**A**t the end of 1988 I was enjoying my calling as second counselor in the bishopric in Ciudad Ojeda, Venezuela, but I had a pressing concern. I had been a member of the Church for over a year, but I had not yet received my temple blessings.

One day a friend from the nearby city of Maracaibo came to visit. Before long we had struck up a conversation about spiritual matters.

Suddenly my friend was prompted to say, "Brother Troconiz, I believe that Heavenly Father wants you to go to the temple and receive the eternal blessings He has promised His children."

"I cannot go," I replied. "There is no temple here in Venezuela, and a trip out of the country is very expensive. I don't have the money."

He thought this over for a moment and then said, "If you really want to go to the temple, Heavenly Father will provide a way for you to go."

I replied, "If Heavenly Father will provide that kind of help, I will go!"

From that moment on I was filled with faith and hope that I would be able to go to the temple. The next day I called the stake leaders and was told that a trip had been scheduled to the Lima Peru Temple, the closest temple at the time, in January. The trip would cost 16,500 bolivares and

would cover the plane ticket, food, and lodging.

The days went by, and the deadline for turning in the money was fast approaching. I tried to earn the money, but I was no closer to having what I needed. My faith never faltered, however. I was sure that Heavenly Father would provide a way.

Not long before the deadline, I received a telephone call from a former employer. The person calling addressed me by name and said, "You were employed by this petroleum company five years ago. When you left, your benefits were not calculated correctly. Please come in and pick up the check we have issued in your name."

I went to get the check the next day. When I looked at the amount, I couldn't believe my eyes. The check had been issued for exactly 16,500 bolivares!

On January 17, 1989, I entered the Lima Peru Temple and received my temple endowment. My friend was right. Heavenly Father had provided a way for me to go to the temple. As Nephi declared, "The Lord is able to do all things . . . for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him" (1 Nephi 7:12). ■

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## *Everything Will Be Fine*

By Kandyce Coston

**M**y eyes filled with tears as I drove to the hospital for more testing. I had been diagnosed with cancer after the birth of my daughter two years earlier. I

had undergone surgery and received treatment, and I was about to find out if the treatments had worked. “Heavenly Father, I have learned a lot from this experience. Please

take this trial from me. I want to raise my daughter and one day serve a mission with my husband. Please heal me.”

The tears rolled down my face. Suddenly my prayer changed to the words of the song “A Child’s Prayer.”<sup>1</sup> Something compelled me to speak out loud.

**A**s I drove to the hospital, I told Heavenly Father that I wanted to raise my daughter and serve a mission with my husband. I prayed that He would heal me.



*Pray, he is there;  
Speak, he is list'ning.  
You are his child;  
His love now surrounds you.  
He bears your prayer.*

An overwhelming feeling of love came over me. I felt that Heavenly Father knew me and was concerned about me and was listening to me. I felt that everything would be OK.

I received the results the next day. The tests showed no signs of cancer. I felt a huge burden lifted from me. The following day, however, my doctor called and explained that although the earlier results were clean, the blood test showed I still had significant cancer activity. "How could that be?" I questioned. If this was really what was going on, why had I felt that Heavenly Father had answered my prayer?

I tried to put my doubts aside as I returned for more testing. These results showed not only that I still had cancer but also that the cancer had spread. I couldn't help but wonder about my experience in the car. I couldn't deny what I had felt, yet I started to doubt my interpretation.

The new information was overwhelming and caused serious reflection. I felt that I still needed to learn something from this trial. As I pondered, I realized that I had been going through all the motions of an active Latter-day Saint, yet I often did things out of habit rather than sincerity. I was not at the spiritual level where I wanted to be. I needed to return to

the basics, so I began focusing on areas that would bring me closer to Jesus Christ. I needed His strength to make it through my trials.

As I put more effort into spiritual matters, my faith in Jesus Christ and His plan for me increased. I realized that my experience while driving to the hospital really was an answer to prayer. As I acknowledge and accept that answer (that everything will be fine), I recognize that Heavenly Father does not always specify when everything will be taken care of. I may never be completely healed

physically, but I am learning to accept His will. My life is truly in His hands.

Seven years have passed since I was diagnosed with cancer. I have had numerous surgeries and treatments, yet I still have cancer. Life, however, goes on, and I'm grateful for that. With my trials have come blessings, including a second daughter. Most important, the Lord's answer that "everything will be fine" still comforts me. ■

*Update: Sister Coston's latest checkup, at eight years since diagnosis, showed no signs of cancer.*

**NOTE**

1. *Children's Songbook*, 12–13.

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## *My Remarkable Dream*

By Jeffery S. Rowe

**I**n a highway accident many years ago, I sustained multiple injuries, the worst of which left me in a coma for three months. Priesthood blessings, along with the support of my family, enabled me to have what one of my doctors called "a remarkable recovery."

But my head injuries weakened my short-term memory, and I can no longer remember my dreams. Often I awake and think, "Oh, I was dreaming," but at that moment, the dream slips from my mind forever.

Seventeen years after that accident, I was called to be the bishop of my ward. During a subsequent ward council meeting, the Primary president proposed calling a particular

couple to teach the CTR class. My counselors and I quickly traded surprised glances.

The sister attended church, though inconsistently, but her husband hadn't attended for years. Nevertheless, we all felt they should have the opportunity to consider the calling.

The night before I spoke with the couple, I had a vivid dream. I awoke the next morning and remembered it completely. It was all about what to say at the interview so they would accept the call to serve. I felt shocked at remembering my first dream in 17 years, but more than that, the dream's content thrilled and energized me.

That evening my counselor picked me up. As we drove to the

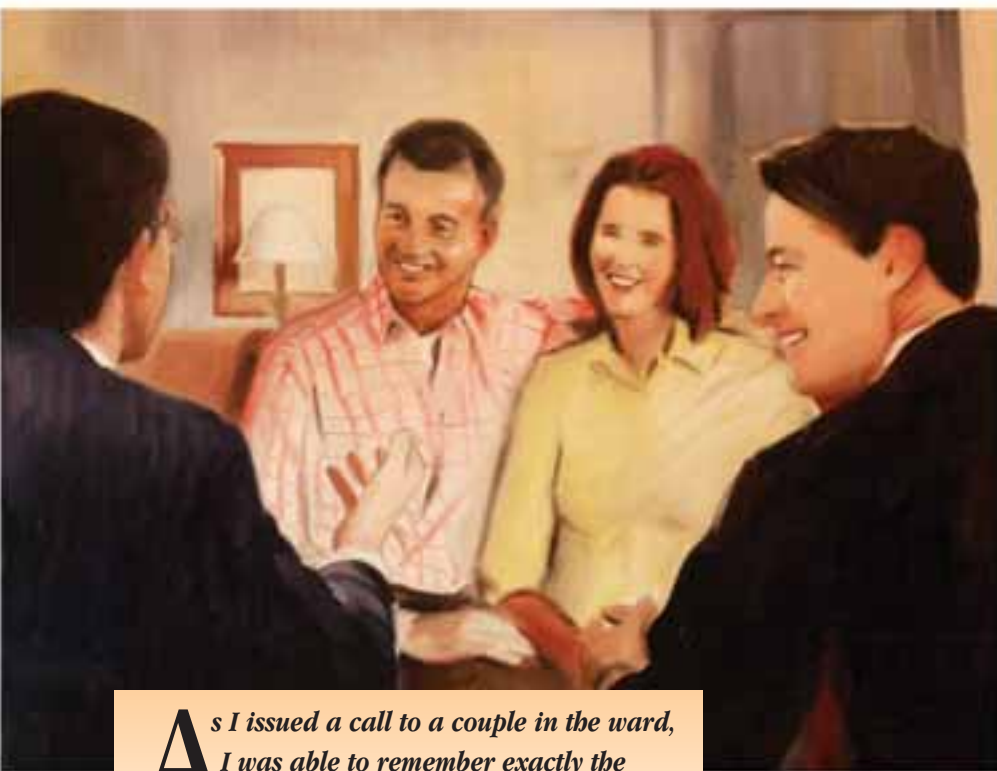


appointment, he said, “Bishop, I’m going to let you do all the talking.” I remember smiling confidently because I felt the Lord had outlined my presentation for me.

During the interview I repeated

dedication, and they both became active in the ward. A couple of years later they were sealed in the temple.

To this day, that particular dream is the only one I have remembered



**A**s I issued a call to a couple in the ward, I was able to remember exactly the words of my dream the night before.

the dream exactly, and the couple accepted the call. As we headed home for the night, my counselor said, “I feel like I’ve just been schooled by the master.” I smiled again because I knew it was true—both of us had been schooled by the Master.

The husband and wife carried out their Primary duties with

for the past 28 years.

I feel certain that

Heavenly Father knew

the time was perfect for this couple. Consequently, He inspired the Primary president and, for one night, blessed my partly out-of-order memory to function perfectly. Once again, I realize that the Lord stands at the head of this Church and that “the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled” (Mormon 8:22). ■

## *Faith to Stop a Flood*

By Pirkko Kassinen

**I**t was a spring day in Helsinki, Finland. The sun was shining brightly, and the snow was melting fast. For hours I had been working with my boys, Juha, eight, and Hannu, six, to keep melting snow from flooding our cellar. The nearby drain that should have handled the pooling water was still frozen solid.

As my husband left for work that morning, he told us to make sure we kept the water out of the cellar. We worked hard until the afternoon, when it was time to leave for Primary. (At that time Primary was held on a weekday.) I told my boys, however, that they would have to miss Primary in order to help stop the water from getting into the cellar. Besides, my husband wasn’t a member of the Church, and he would not understand how important Primary was to our sons.

In unison, Juha and Hannu assured me that if we went to Primary, Heavenly Father would see to it that the water wouldn’t reach the cellar. I looked back and forth from the pooling water to the faith-filled faces of my sons. Part of me said, “You cannot go because no power can stop the water from flooding the cellar.” I appealed to Heavenly Father with a prayer in



my heart. Then I made a difficult decision.

“We are going to Primary now!” I declared as I threw down the buckets. No matter what happened, I was not going to injure my children’s faith.

The boys had a wonderful time at Primary. But as we drove home afterward, the closer we got to our house, the more my fears grew. Reaching the yard, the boys ran quickly to the cellar door. Looking down, they cried out, “Mother, what did we tell you?” I hurried over. I will never forget the sight that greeted my eyes. The area was completely dry, as if it had been mopped. There were no signs of water anywhere. Even now, 40 years later, it is hard for me to believe what I saw.

The glow in my boys’ eyes reflected joy and trust in Heavenly Father. Joy—and gratitude—filled my heart too!

No power in the world can beat childlike faith. The scriptures say that if we believe and doubt not, we can move a mountain (see Matthew 17:20). That day the power of my children’s faith stopped a flood. ■

**I** thought to myself that no power could keep the water out of our cellar. The faith of my sons told them otherwise.

# 18 WAYS TO **STAND STRONG**

The First Presidency introduces the counsel in *For the Strength of Youth* with the following words: “Because the Lord loves you, He has given you commandments and the words of prophets to guide you on your journey.

Some of the most important guidelines for your life are found in this pamphlet” ([2001], 2).

The teachings on the next several pages will

help you apply the standards and principles found in the pamphlet. By holding fast to these standards, you will have greater happiness in your life and be a positive example to those around you.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DILLEN MARSH,  
EXCEPT AS NOTED

## For the Strength of Youth

Fulfilling Our Duty to God



# AGENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Choose righteousness and happiness, no matter what your circumstances. Take responsibility for the choices you make. Develop your abilities and talents, and use them for good. Avoid idleness and be willing to work hard.

## Above the Clouds

BY CHARLES W. DAHLQUIST II  
Young Men General President

Not long ago I had the opportunity to fly in a small plane. As we were preparing to board, one of the passengers asked the pilot at what altitude we would be flying. He indicated that we would be flying at 9,500 feet (2,900 m). He said, "That will get us just above the clouds." Then he explained, "If we fly below the clouds, the ride will be fairly rocky. However, if we can get through the clouds and up on top, we will have a much smoother ride."

It was a concept that proved prophetic. For us in that airplane, it took a little bit more effort, a little bit more fuel, and a little turbulence to get through the clouds. However, once we were above the turbulence, the ride was, for the most part, smooth sailing.

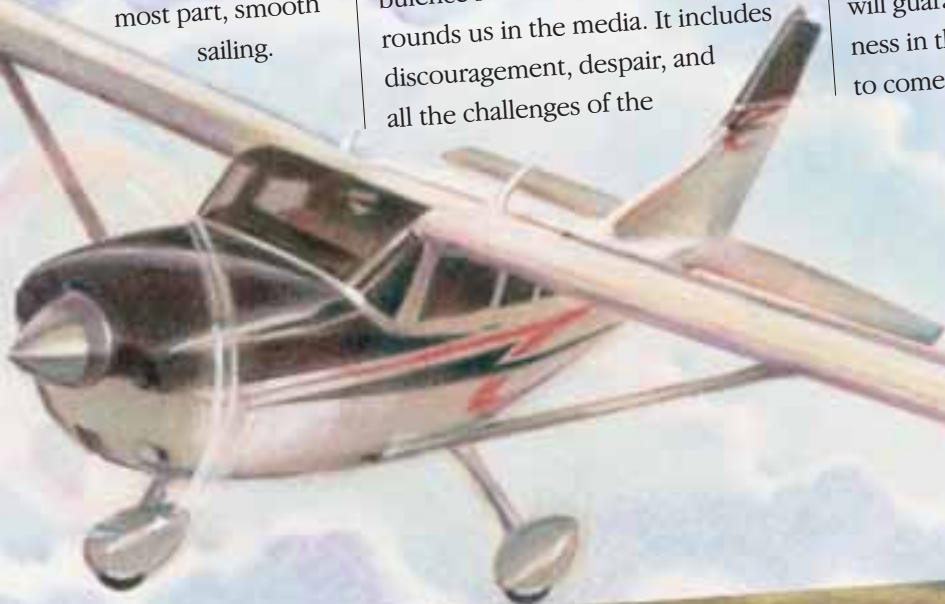
Although there was some brief turbulence and the need for the pilot to always be mindful of the flight conditions, the flight was much more comfortable.

Later I thought about the pilot's words: "If we can get through the clouds and up on top, we will have a much smoother ride." I thought about how much that applies to life itself. As we live in a mortal existence, there is much of the ugly and the base and the evil that we have to move above if we are to live the life of a Latter-day Saint. Then we can have the Spirit with us and feel the peace that is there for us to enjoy. It takes effort, it takes willpower, it takes courage, and it takes making correct choices for us to get above the turbulence around us. That turbulence includes the filth that surrounds us in the media. It includes discouragement, despair, and all the challenges of the

"natural man" (Mosiah 3:19).

However, if we exercise our agency appropriately, if we live the standards given to us by the First Presidency in *For the Strength of Youth*, and if we make conscious efforts day by day to rise above the things of the world, our ride in this life will be much more pleasant. We will be able to feel peace along the way, and we will be able to arrive safely at our journey's end.

It is not that the ride will be uneventful and completely peaceful. That was never promised, for there will be challenges along the way, and there will be a need for continued vigilance and alertness all along the way. However, by choosing to be on the Lord's side, we can rise above the temptations of our mortal existence, and that will guarantee us peace and happiness in this life as well as in the life to come.



# GRATITUDE

**Have a spirit of gratitude in all you do and say. Thank God for your blessings, and express appreciation to others who help you.**

**T**his is a wonderful time to be living here on earth. Our opportunities are limitless. While there are some things wrong in the world today, there are

many things right, such as teachers who teach, ministers who minister, marriages that make it, parents who sacrifice, and friends who help.

“We can lift ourselves, and others as well, when we refuse to remain in the realm of negative thought and cultivate within our hearts an attitude

of gratitude. If ingratitude be numbered among the serious sins, then gratitude takes its place among the noblest of virtues. . . .



“ . . . Let us reflect gratitude for our *Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ*. His glorious gospel provides answers to life’s greatest questions: Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where does my spirit go when I die?”

**President Thomas S. Monson, “An Attitude of Gratitude,” *Liahona*, May 2000, 4, 8; *Ensign*, May 1992, 54, 60.**

# EDUCATION

**Prepare to be an influence for good in the world. Obtain an education, and be enthusiastic about learning. Attend seminary.**

## Plans for the Future

BY MÔNICA SANTOS DE OLIVEIRA

**I** returned from the mission field with many hopes regarding employment. Even though I had worked before, I had no qualifications, so I did what I could to find work, but I was never satisfied and could not see any progress in my future.

I always wanted to study, but I could not pay for schooling, and my family was not in a position to help me.

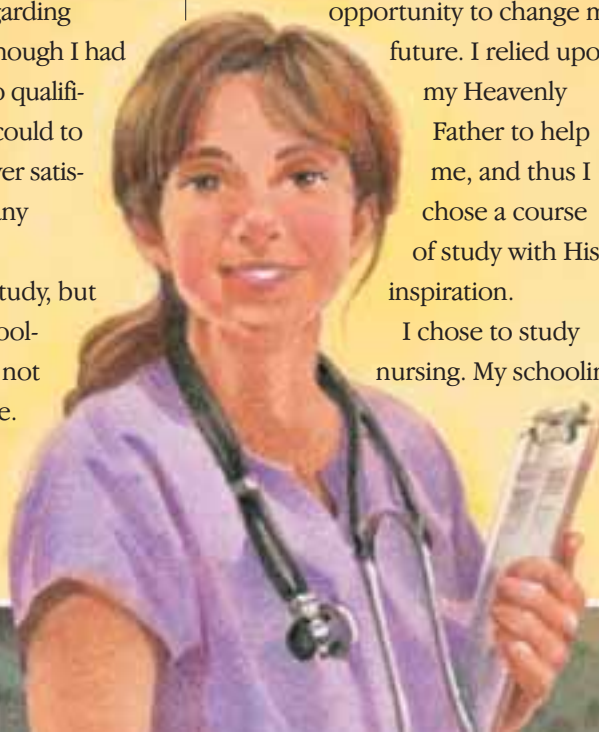
When the Perpetual

Education Fund was started, I saw an opportunity to change my future. I relied upon my Heavenly Father to help me, and thus I chose a course of study with His inspiration.

I chose to study nursing. My schooling

required a lot of study and dedication. But I became impassioned with nursing. Three months after graduating, I was able to find employment at one of the best hospitals in Alagoas, Brazil.

I have many plans for the future. I plan to take advanced studies in nursing, and I have started to pay back my loan so others can partake of the opportunity of receiving an education and the blessings that come with it.



# FAMILY

**Do your part to build a happy home. Honor your parents, and strengthen your relationships with your brothers and sisters.**

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have declared: “Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly, these simple truths, founded on our Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness, are sometimes surprising to the world. But a recent study found that teens outside the Church are also finding happiness in spirituality and in their family relationships. In 2007 two large U.S. media organizations surveyed young people ages 12 to 24 to find what makes them happy.

The study presented these findings, among others:



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CRAIG DIMOND

■ Youth “depend on parents as a vital source of security and happiness.”

■ “Youth will increasingly seek happiness via spirituality and faith.”

■ “A resurgence of interest among youth in traditional family structures will gain momentum.”

One of the summary statements from the study said, “While our initial research did find that today’s youth are more traditional than previous generations, we were surprised to find the extent to which youth anticipate their own marriages and families with great joy.”<sup>2</sup>

#### NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. See Associated Press/MTV Research and Strategic Insights, *Happiness*, Aug. 20, 2007.

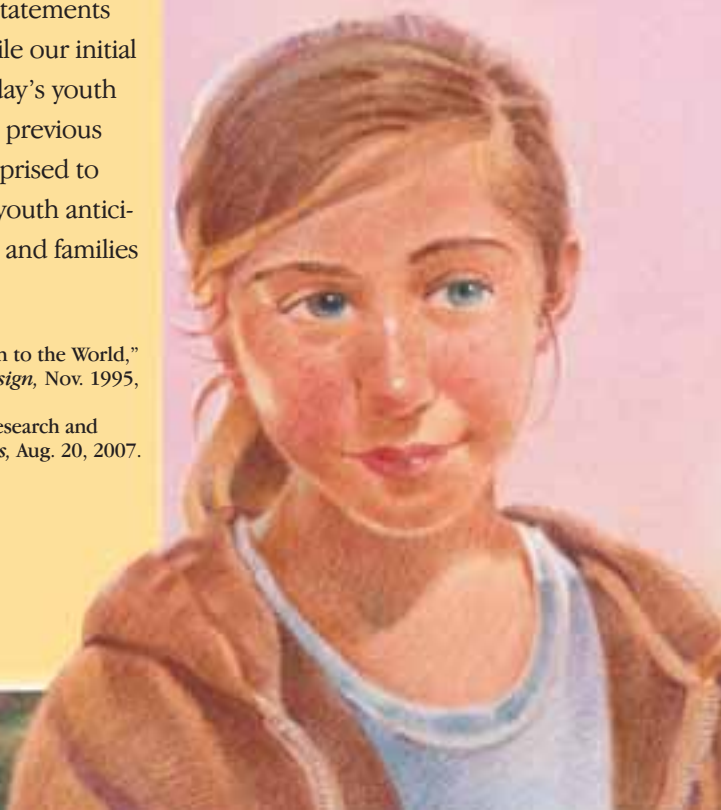
# FRIENDS

**Choose friends who share your high standards. Treat everyone with kindness and respect. Invite friends of other faiths to Church activities. Reach out to new converts and those who are less active.**

## It Could Have Been Me NAME WITHHELD

When I was seven, a girl moved into my neighborhood, and we became friends. We both liked the same things, and we were a good influence on each other. We made good choices because our parents had taught us to choose wisely.

Once we got into sixth grade though, we made wrong choices in order to fit in with our friends who had lower standards. The next year, I decided that I needed to change friends so I could start making right choices again by living higher standards. The only problem was that my friend and I were still friends, and I didn’t want to stop hanging out with her.



Doing what I needed to do was hard. I had been told all my life to pick good friends and keep my standards high. But I did not have a testimony of why this was important, so I had to trust that it was correct. Over the summer and during eighth grade, we stopped hanging out as much and chose separate directions.

I saw the blessings of this decision later that year. My former friends decided to bring alcohol to school. They convinced some other girls to drink it, and they all got in trouble. I realized that one of those girls could have been me. If I had been with them, I don't know if I would have had the strength to stand up for my beliefs.

When I think of the consequences I would have had to face, I feel overwhelmed. I could have struggled with addiction, been in trouble with the law, lost my parents' trust, but most of all, I could have betrayed the trust Heavenly Father has in me.

I know that what the prophet says about living high standards is for our protection. Even though we may see it as inconvenient, it helps us spiritually, physically, mentally, and in other ways we don't even realize.



## DRESS AND APPEARANCE

***Dress modestly to show respect for God and yourself. Never lower your dress standards for any occasion. Do not disfigure your body with tattoos and body piercings.***

### The Shopping Trip

BY REBECCA RICHTER

**M**y mom and I were shopping when I found a black skirt I just had to have. I tried on the skirt and came out to show my mom. She hesitated before saying, "Becky, I think it's a little on the short side." I replied that I didn't think so and reassured her that all the girls at school were wearing similar styles—some a lot shorter. I tried for several minutes to persuade her to like the skirt.

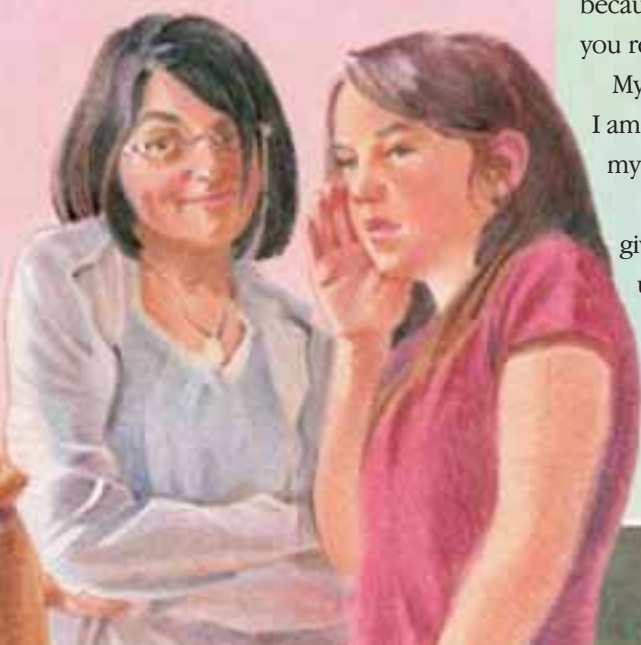
My mom finally said firmly, "It's too short. We're not getting it. Go change."

I didn't understand why she was being so strict with me, especially when I felt like I was old enough to decide for myself what I could wear. Our shopping trip was ruined, and we drove home in silence.

Finally, my mom spoke: "Becky, the reason I didn't let you get the skirt is because it didn't look like you. That skirt was too short and didn't reflect who you really are. You're a daughter of God."

My mom's explanation taught me a principle that I will always remember. I am a daughter of God, and everything I do and wear reflects what I think of myself and how I feel about my Heavenly Father and my Savior.

Dressing modestly is a constant struggle, but I'm grateful that I didn't give in and compromise my standards. I know that if we can come to truly understand that we are children of God, we will overcome our desires to dress like the world.





# ENTERTAINMENT AND THE MEDIA

**Choose uplifting entertainment. Avoid anything that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way. Commit to keeping God's standards.**

With so many types of entertainment all around us, the choices can be overwhelming. Here are some guidelines to help us choose uplifting entertainment:

1. Before playing a video game or seeing a movie, research its rating and content.
2. Ask yourself if there is unsuitable material in the game or movie, regardless of the rating. Avoid

anything that drives away the Spirit.

3. If the material is inappropriate, it's perfectly OK to walk out, turn it off, or put it down.
4. Look for edifying games, movies, and music that are also mentally stimulating.
5. Discover the world away from television, cell phones, and computers, such as hiking, biking, learning a new skill, or learning about other cultures.

6. Enjoy activities that keep your mind active and your body physically fit.

What are God's standards that can guide in choosing media? "If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things" (Articles of Faith 1:13).

# MUSIC AND DANCING

**Listen to music that helps you draw closer to Heavenly Father. Do not listen to music that encourages immorality, glorifies violence, or uses offensive language. When dancing, avoid full body contact or suggestive movements.**

Young people, you cannot afford to fill your minds with the unworthy music of our day. It is not harmless. It can welcome onto the stage of your mind unworthy thoughts and set a tempo to which they dance and to which you may act. You degrade yourself when you identify with those things that at times surround extremes in

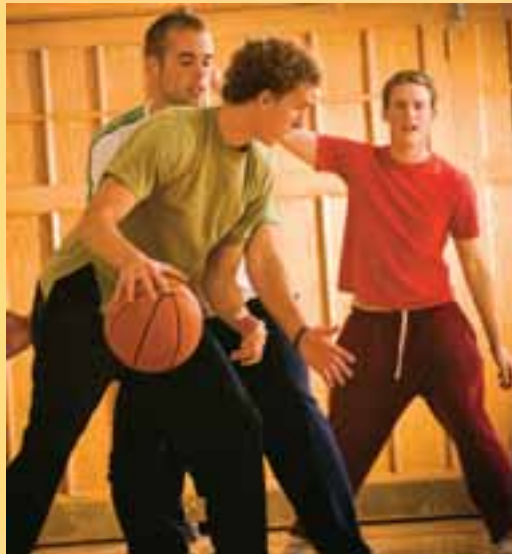
music—the shabbiness, the irreverence, the immorality, the addictions. Such music is not worthy of you.”

**President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Worthy Music, Worthy Thoughts,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2008, 33; *New Era*, Apr. 2008, 9.**

Visit [www.lds.org/churchmusic](http://www.lds.org/churchmusic) to listen to hymns, download songs, or learn more about music.







## LANGUAGE

**Use language that uplifts, encourages, and compliments others. Use the names of God and Jesus Christ with reverence and respect. Do not use profane, vulgar, or crude language or gestures.**

“Conversation is the substance of friendly social activity. It can be happy. It can be light. It can be earnest. It can be funny. But it must not be salty, or uncouth, or foul if one is in sincerity a believer in Christ. . . .

“[Anyone] who must resort to such language immediately says that he is poverty-ridden in his vocabulary. He does not enjoy sufficient richness of expression to be able to speak effectively without swearing or using foul words. . . .

“Don’t swear. Don’t profane. Avoid so-called dirty jokes. Stay away from conversation that is sprinkled with foul and filthy words. You will be happier if you do so, and your example will give strength to others.”

**President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “Take Not the Name of God in Vain,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 48.**

TOP LEFT: ILLUSTRATION BY CARY HENRIE; LEFT: ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT GREER; ABOVE: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MATTHEW REIER; TOP RIGHT: ILLUSTRATION BY RYAN STOKER

## DATING

**Do not date until you are at least 16 years old. Date only those who have high standards. When you begin dating, go in groups or on double dates. Plan activities that help you remain close to the Spirit of the Lord.**



“Let me guess. First date?”

The best group dates are planned yet casual, inexpensive yet fun. Be creative; people enjoy something that offers variety and allows them to get to know others while having a good time. Ask your parents, friends, or youth leaders for ideas for group dates. Here are just a few to get you started:

- Take a tour of a local candy factory, cheese factory, or other local spot of interest.
- Organize a potluck dinner, and assign people to bring certain dishes or ingredients.
- Visit a local park, where you can feed the birds, take a walk, throw a Frisbee, ride bikes, or have a picnic.
- Visit a museum, aquarium, or zoo. Check the newspaper or Internet for free or discounted tickets.
- Have a service date. Rake a neighbor’s leaves, wash windows, or help with something that needs to be done.
- If you’re in the mood for a quieter evening, visit a local library or bookstore and browse through books together.
- If you live in a region with a lot of snow, build an elaborate snowman together. If you live near a beach, build a sandcastle. Or build separate ones, and have a competition judged by strangers who pass by.



# SEXUAL PURITY

**Keep yourself sexually pure. Do not have any sexual relations before marriage.**

**Do not participate in talk or activities that arouse sexual feelings. Do not participate in homosexual activities.**

**Seek help if you become a victim of rape, incest, or other sexual abuse.**

**I**n matters of human intimacy, you must wait! You must wait until you can give everything, and you cannot give everything until you are legally and lawfully married. If you persist in pursuing physical satisfaction without the sanction of heaven, you run the terrible risk of

such spiritual, psychic damage that you may undermine *both* your longing for physical intimacy *and* your ability to give wholehearted devotion to a later, truer love. You may discover to your horror that what you should have saved you have spent and that only God's grace can

recover the virtue you so casually gave away. On your wedding day the very best gift you can give your eternal companion is your very best self—clean and pure and worthy of such purity in return.”

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Personal Purity,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2000, 42; *New Era*, Feb. 2000, 6.**



REPENTANCE IS  
**STRONG  
SOAP**



BUT IT FEELS SO GOOD TO BE CLEAN (see Isaiah 1:18).

## REPENTANCE

*Through the Savior's Atonement, you can receive forgiveness and be cleansed from your sins when you repent. Confess your sins to the Lord and to those you have wronged. If the sins are serious, you also need to confess them to your bishop.*

**O**ur sincere desire should be to have both clean hands *and* a pure heart—both a remission of sins from day to day *and* to walk guiltless before God. Clean hands alone will not be enough when we stand before Him who is pure and who, as ‘a lamb without blemish and without spot’ (1 Peter 1:19), freely spilled His precious blood for us.”

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 82.**

## HONESTY

*Be honest with yourself, others, and the Lord. Do not rationalize that dishonesty is right.*

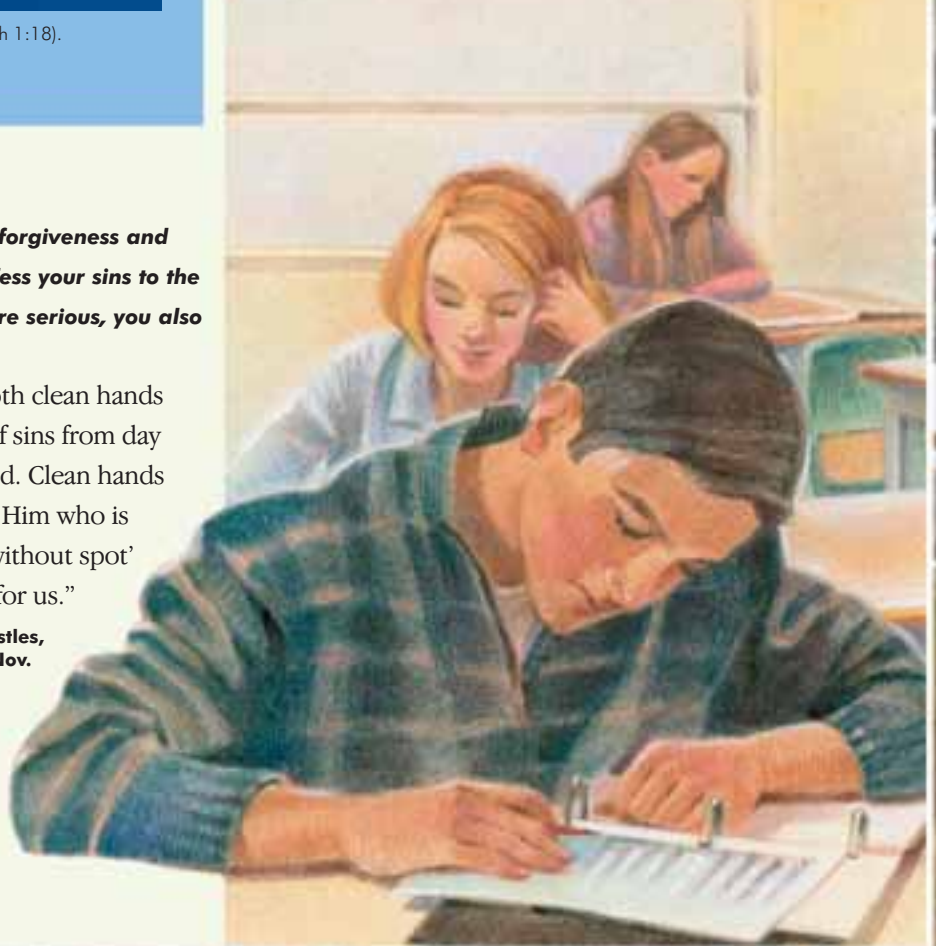
**H**onesty is more than not lying. It is truth telling, truth speaking, truth living, and truth loving. . . .

“Cheating in school is a form of self-deception. We go to school to learn. We cheat ourselves when we coast on the efforts and scholarship of someone else. . . .

“Stealing is all too common throughout the world. . . . Stealing takes many forms, including shoplifting; taking cars, stereos, CD players, video games, and other items that belong to someone else; stealing time, money, and merchandise from employers; . . . or borrowing without any intention of repayment. No one has ever gained anything of value by theft. . . .

“The stealing of anything is unworthy of a priesthood holder.”

**President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Honesty—a Moral Compass,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 41–42, 43.**



# SABBATH DAY OBSERVANCE

*Use the Sabbath to worship the Lord, attend church, draw closer to your family, and help others. Do not seek entertainment or spend money on the Sabbath. When possible, avoid working on Sunday.*

## Where Should I Be?

BY EMMA WITHERS

**D**o you ever have those Sundays where you just don't feel like going to church? Well I have, especially recently. I've just moved into a new ward in Cape Town, South Africa. It's not that the people in the ward aren't nice or friendly. They just aren't my friends from home.

After my first week in the ward I had made up my mind—from now on I was only going to sacrament meeting. The following week I went late. As I walked through the chapel doors, I was greeted by few people and took my seat. As I sat there, I felt so homesick. All I wanted was my old ward, the friendly faces that knew me.

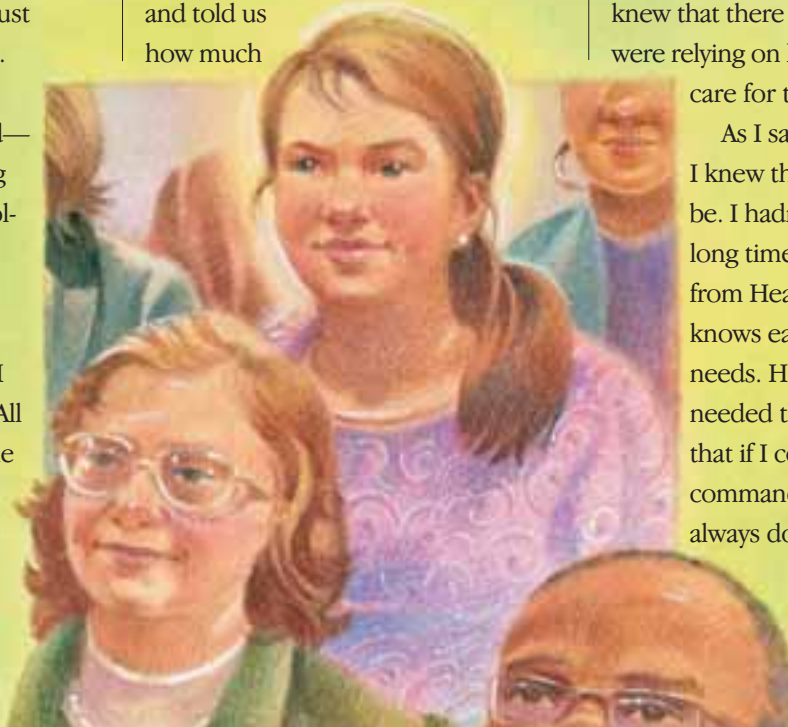
Then the first speaker got up and began her talk. It was

like she was speaking to me. She spoke of feeling alone in a new city, and I realized I was not the only one. Then the second speaker shared another message which held personal significance to me. Just before the meeting ended, the bishop stood up and told us how much

**C**ommitting to attend your Church meetings is a most significant decision in your efforts to keep the Sabbath day holy.

he loved each one of us. He said he knew that there were people who were relying on him to look after and care for them.

As I sang the closing hymn, I knew this was where I should be. I hadn't felt such peace in a long time, and I knew it came from Heavenly Father. He knows each of us and our needs. He gave me what I needed that day, and I know that if I continue to live His commandments, He will always do so.



## A SIGN OF COMMITMENT TO THE LORD



Ezekiel 20:12, 19–20]. . . .

“When I was [young], I wondered just what activities were appropriate for the Sabbath. I read lists of do’s and don’ts, all compiled by others. But now I have a much better understanding, which I gained from two Old Testament scriptures [see Exodus 31:12–13;

“Pondering these scriptures has helped me to understand. My behavior on the Sabbath constitutes my sign to the Lord of my regard for him and for my covenants with him. . . . I have concluded that our activities on the Sabbath will be appropriate when we honestly consider them to be our personal sign of our commitment to the Lord.”

**Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Reflection and Resolution,” in Brigham Young University 1989–90 Speeches (1990), 6.**

# TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*Willingly pay a full tithe. Attend tithing settlement. Obey the law of the fast.*

## I'd Rather Be Blessed!

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY  
Church Magazines

In Guyana, a country located in the northern part of South America, Latter-day Saint teens are talking about tithes and offerings.

"I'd rather be blessed!" says Simeon Lovell, 14, during a seminary lesson at the Prashad Nagar meetinghouse in Georgetown. The class has just read Malachi 3:8–12, which warns that those who rob God by not paying tithing will be cursed but promises that those who do pay tithing will have blessings so great they can't be measured.

"Look at all that is promised," says classmate Xiann Kippins, 16. "You will be protected. You will prosper. The windows of heaven will be opened to you."

Clint Callender, 17, of the



supplies provided by the Church—it makes me happy to think I can be part of that by being generous with my offerings."

Elsewhere in the West Indies Mission, 17-year-old Curfew Ali of the Arima Branch in Port of Spain, Trinidad,

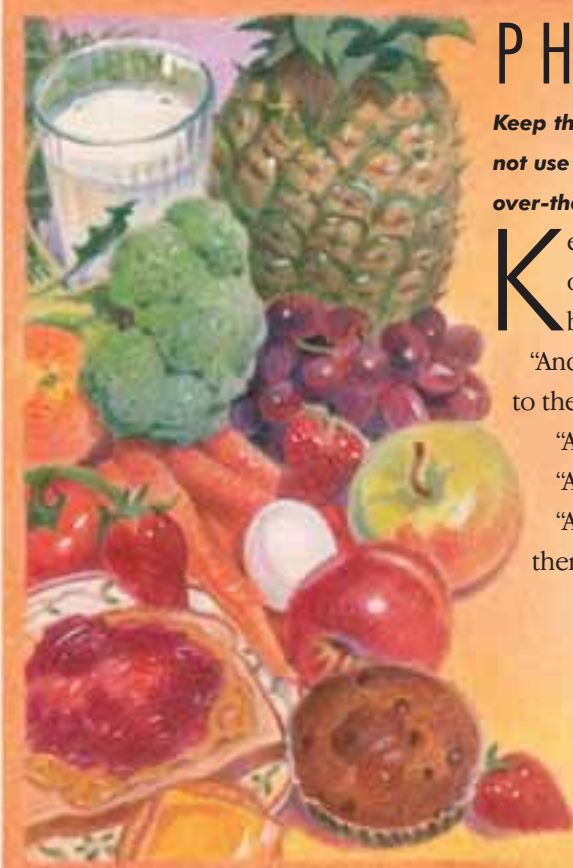
Garden Park Second Branch (also in Georgetown), says, "Everything on earth is from Heavenly Father. He asks for only a little portion of it back, to help us show our gratitude. So I am happy to pay tithing. I am happy to fast once a month and donate to provide for the poor.

And when I see all the Church does when there is a tsunami, hurricane, or other disaster—all the clothing and food

explains to Mark Mangray, also 17, that even though she earns only a little money, she pays 10 percent of her increase as tithing and contributes to fast offerings too. "That way, I know the Lord is free to bless me," she says. She talks to Mark about tithing settlement and how great it feels to be able to declare that she has paid a full tithing.

Mark looks at a blank donation slip, reads it, and says, "You're right, Curfew. I'm bringing my tithing to church tomorrow."





# PHYSICAL HEALTH

**Keep the Word of Wisdom. Eat nutritious food, exercise regularly, and get enough sleep. Do not use hard drugs, alcohol, coffee, tea, or tobacco products. Do not abuse prescription or over-the-counter medications.**

**K**eeping your body healthy will help you handle the stresses of life. When we obey the Word of Wisdom, Heavenly Father has promised us wonderful blessings:

“And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

“And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

“And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

“And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them” (D&C 89:18–21).

**Y**ou know the don'ts of the Word of Wisdom, but do you know the do's? Read Doctrine and Covenants 89:10–17 to find out.

# SERVICE TO OTHERS

**Serve others in your Church assignments and in your home, school, and community. Seek daily the guidance of the Holy Ghost to know whom to serve and how to help meet their needs.**

**K**ing Benjamin taught, “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17). There are many ways to serve others, but sincerity and love are the key. Here are some other tips and suggestions on how to serve:

1. Don't forget that service to your family comes first.
2. Make your service fit individual

needs. Think about what someone might like, want, or need.

3. Keep service activities simple, and include others in planning and carrying them out.

4. A smile, a cheerful attitude, a listening ear, sincere praise, and quiet acts of kindness are important forms of service.

5. Remember and apply the counsel given in Mosiah 4:21. Share generously with others.



# GO FORWARD WITH FAITH

*Be true to the Lord and to His Church. Regularly pray in private and read the scriptures. Keep your covenants and listen to the whisperings of the Spirit. The Lord will help you meet your trials and challenges.*

## The World Is Looking to You

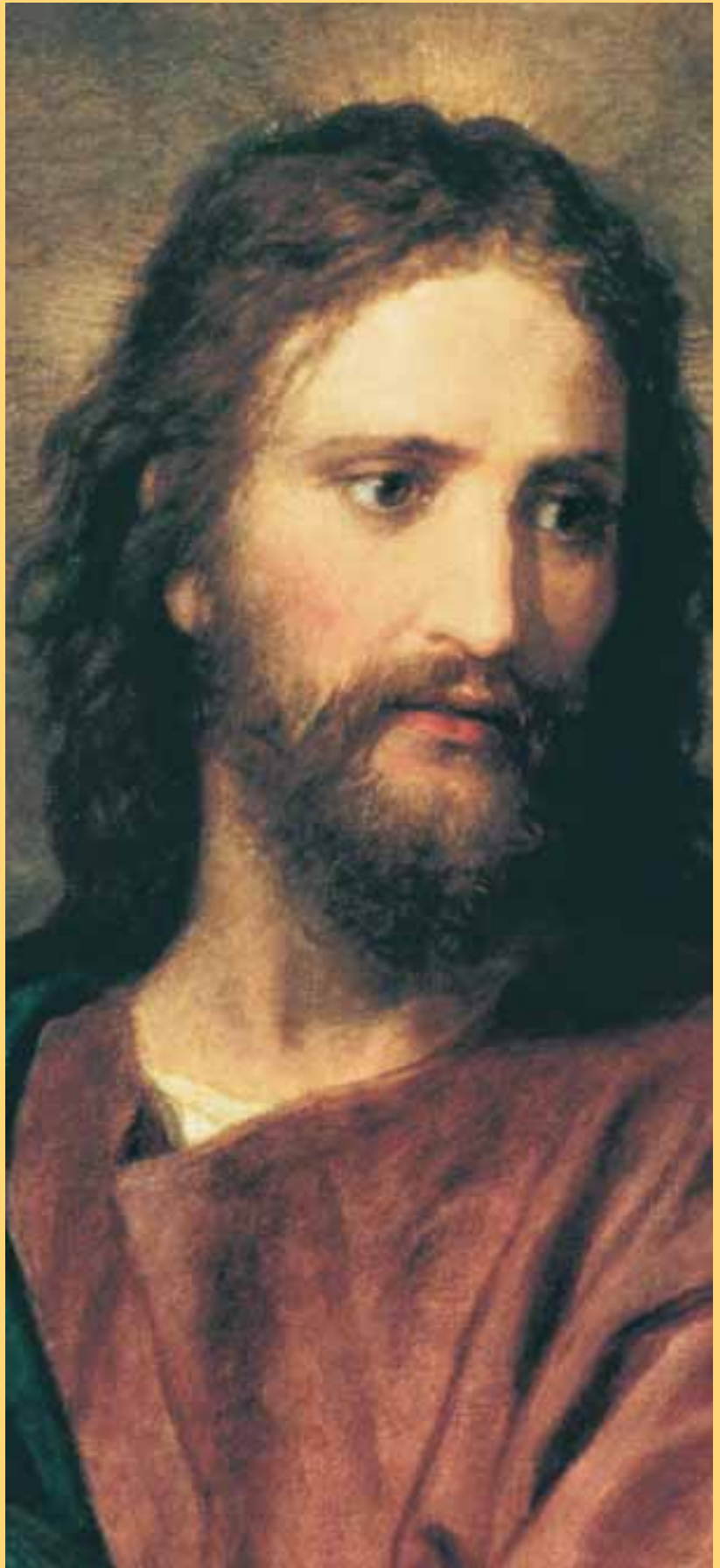
BY THE YOUNG WOMEN GENERAL PRESIDENCY

**N**ow is the time to go forward with faith. It is the time to be found keeping the commandments of God. It is the time to exercise your faith by being prayerful and obedient. As you exercise your faith by following these standards with exactness, you will find that you will be happy and have more opportunities to share the gospel and your beliefs with others. Living these standards will give you freedom, not restrict you.

As you go forward with faith, you will reap the promised blessings and the Lord will pour out His Spirit upon you. With His Spirit to guide you, you will know what to do and how to respond in every circumstance, and you will be keeping your baptismal covenant to always remember Him.

Youthful leaders in all ages have been asked to exercise their faith and to obey with exactness. Nephi, Joseph Smith, Ruth, and many others have acted with faith as they have been obedient to the Lord and His prophets.

You are the youth of the noble birthright, a royal generation, and a generation of destiny. Your faith will make all the difference in a world that is looking for goodness and light. The world is looking to you for example and leadership. Therefore, “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). ■



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# BE WARY OF WOODEN HORSES



*Why do we have high standards for Church activities? So that inappropriate influences do not injure us from within.*

BY ELDER KENNETH JOHNSON  
Of the Seventy

**H**ave you noticed how our surroundings can influence our actions and affect our behavior? I recall, as a young college student, participating in a discussion with an instructor who made reference to research concerning the effects of environment on productivity in the workplace. He reported that some environments encouraged employees to work with greater energy and industry while other environments had an adverse effect. The thought that these seemingly simple things could have such an influence was of great interest to me.

He also spoke of an experiment conducted with a group of people sitting at a table ready to enjoy the meal that had been placed before them. Though each of the participants was hungry and expressed a desire to eat the food, their appetites were affected dramatically by changing the lighting in the room. Following a change in the lighting, many did not eat at all, others ate very little, and, surprisingly, none of the participants enjoyed the meal.

To think that appetizing food would lose its appeal simply because the room lighting

had changed indicates the possible impact and influence of the environment on our behavior.

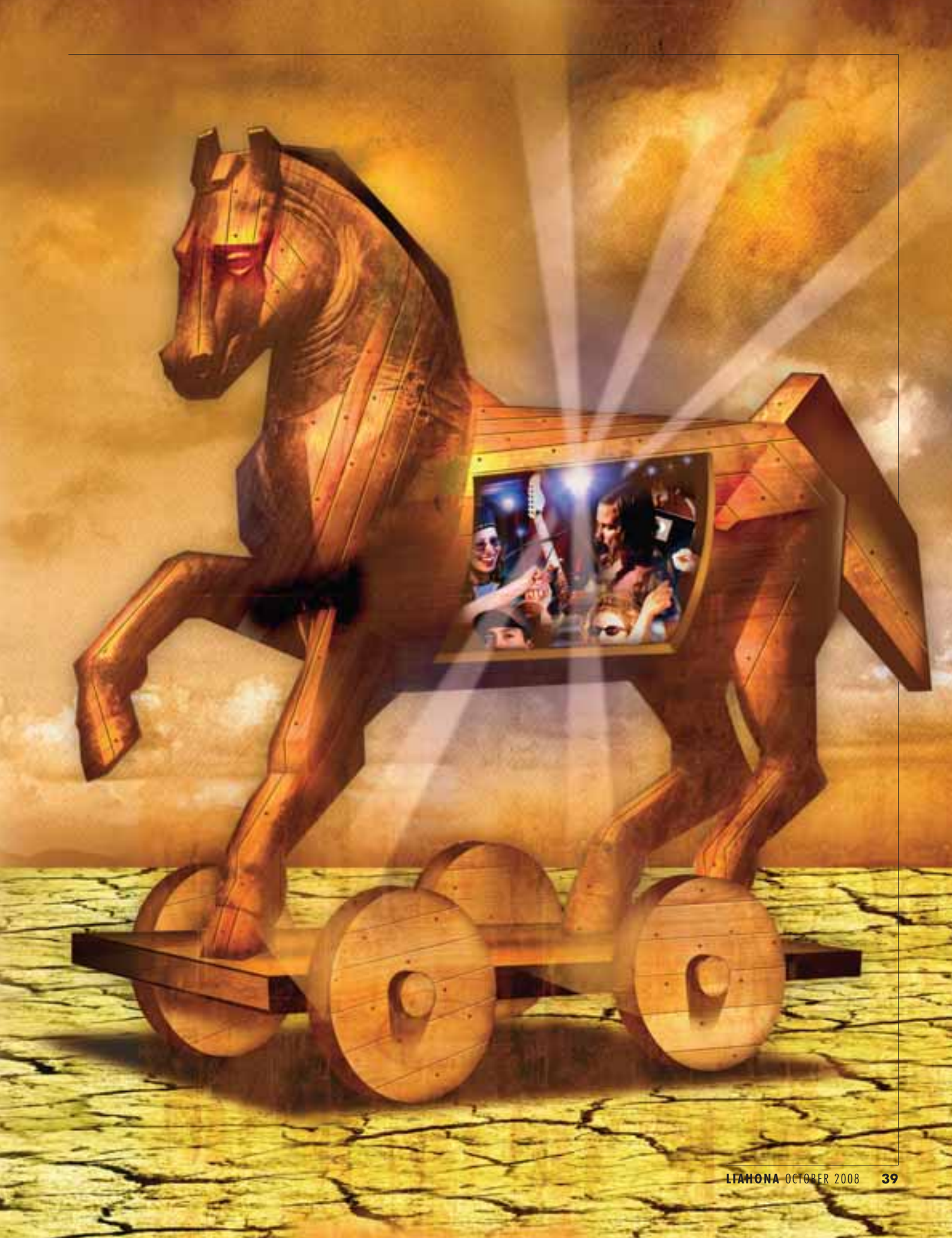
Many years later, in pursuit of my business career, I was invited by a client to provide insurance coverage for a new venture he was launching. When I arrived at the location, I learned that it was to be a nightclub.

As we passed through reception, entering the main area, I was impressed by the decor. The furnishings and fittings, curtains and carpeting were well coordinated, providing a most pleasing setting. This was not what I had expected to find after having been told the purpose for which the venue was to be used. As I sat with the proprietor, noting the necessary information, an employee approached and asked if he could test the systems.

My client gave his approval. Suddenly the serene setting was transformed as the room lighting faded to be replaced by flashing lights of multiple colors and excessively loud music. The scene of tranquility was immediately shattered.

It was impossible to communicate under such circumstances, so we walked back to the reception area. Following further





**L**et us plan and participate in wholesome activities by raising the bar and pushing back the world. Through raising the standard we will enjoy lasting memories, consistent with the promise of the great plan of happiness.

discussion and because of what I had experienced, I did not feel comfortable to proceed, so I referred my client to a specialist in this field of insurance. To this day I vividly recall the dramatic transformation that occurred with shafts of light and the pulsating beat of loud music penetrating the darkened room.

I learned a lasting lesson from these experiences. Our surroundings can have a significant impact on how we feel and the way we behave.

This is one reason our leaders have counseled that every Church-sponsored activity should be held in an environment where the Spirit of the Lord can be present. Think about this counsel. Now think about our Church activities. What can we do to fulfill the Lord's purpose with regard to wholesome and uplifting Church activities?

#### **The Trojan Horse**

Since my youth I have been intrigued with the Greek legend of the Trojan horse. You will probably recall that the Grecian army had besieged the city of Troy for 10 years without being able to breach the impenetrable fortifications.

Eventually the Greeks pretended to withdraw, leaving behind them a large wooden horse with a raiding party concealed inside. The Trojans believed the horse to be a good omen and, against the advice of

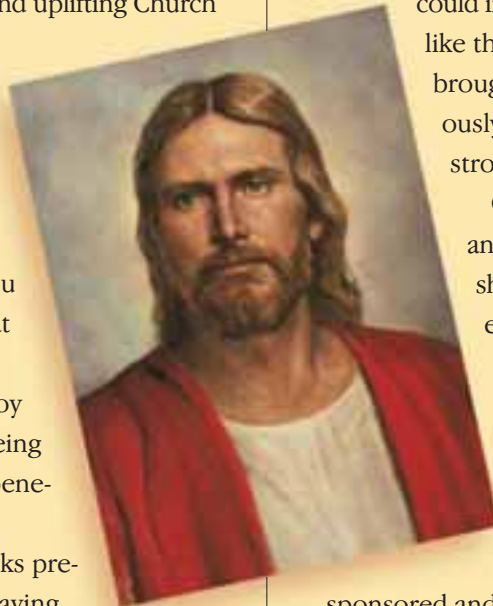
some, brought it within the city walls. During the night the Grecian warriors emerged from their hiding place and opened the city gates, allowing the Grecian army to enter and conquer Troy.

We also must be on guard against forces that are conspiring to breach our defenses with the intent to destroy our shield of faith! Our homes and places of worship can provide a refuge from the storm caused by elements of inappropriate worldliness, enabling us to "be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works" (Mosiah 5:15) and to always "stand in holy places" (D&C 45:32).

Failing to be on guard may cause some to lose spiritual sensitivity as they tolerate unwholesome music and inappropriate activities. Allowing such things could injure us from within, like the wooden horse being brought into what had previously been an invincible stronghold.

Our objective in planning and preparing activities should not be to imitate or emulate the fashions of the world but to provide an environment where the Spirit of the Lord can abide. This applies whenever or wherever an activity is Church

sponsored and should be our guide when choosing what movies to watch, computer programs to browse, or other leisure pursuits to engage in. We should give particular consideration to events involving





the use of Church buildings, as they are dedicated and set apart for activities that are “virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy” (Articles of Faith 1:13).

If the Savior were to attend an activity at a Church meetinghouse, would His response be comparable to when He cast the money changers out of the temple at Jerusalem (see Matthew 21:12–13)? Or would He, like Peter at the Mount of Transfiguration, express the sentiment: “It is good for us to be here” (Matthew 17:4)?

President Gordon B. Hinckley’s (1910–2008) counsel concerning qualifications for full-time missionary service applies to this topic: “I am confident that raising the bar on eligibility will cause our young people, particularly our young men, to practice self-discipline, to live above the

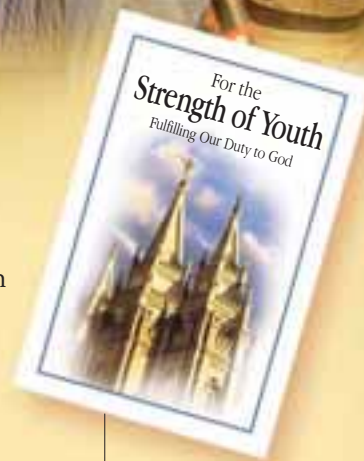
low standards of the world, to avoid transgression and take the high road in all their activities.”<sup>1</sup>

With these words in mind, let each of us determine to plan and participate in wholesome activities by raising the bar and pushing back the world.

Will this approach restrict the enjoyment in and eliminate expressions of happiness from our social gatherings? Not at all! In fact, the opposite will be true. Through raising the standard we will enjoy experiences that cultivate lasting memories, consistent with the promise of the great plan of happiness. ■

**NOTE**

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Missionary Service,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 2003, 17.



# “My friends and I have a problem with gossiping. What can I do to stop and help them stop?”

**Y**ou can overcome gossiping by following the advice in *For the Strength of Youth* on overcoming swearing: “Help others around you use clean language by your example and by good-naturedly encouraging them to choose other words. Politely walk away or change the subject when others around you use bad language.

“If you have developed the habit of swearing [or gossiping], you can break it. Begin by making a decision to change. Pray for help. If you start to use words you know are wrong, keep quiet or say what you have to say in a different way.”

The pamphlet also explains why it’s important to speak well of others: “Speak kindly and positively about others so you can fulfill the Lord’s commandment to love one another. When you use good language, you invite the Spirit to be with you” (“Language” [2001], 22–23).

Being kind in your communication is Christlike and will help you have better relationships and feel better about yourself.



## The Golden Rule

Gossiping happens all around us every day, and it is extremely hurtful. It may seem cool to spread “the latest news” to your friends, but think about the person you are talking about. Would you say what you are saying if he or she was there? Did the person say you could tell people? Think about how you would feel if someone was gossiping about you. “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them” (3 Nephi 14:12). If your friends are gossiping, nicely change the subject.

**Jessica J., 16, Arizona, USA**



## Medicine to Cure Gossip

There are three groups involved in gossip: ourselves, those who listen, and the people we talk about. Make a commitment to stop gossiping, and then do it. Here is some medicine to cure the gossip disease: (1) Change the topic when your friends start gossiping. (2) Keep quiet so they don’t have people to talk to. (3) Tell them frankly to “speak not evil one of another” (James 4:11).

**But A., 22, Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

*Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.*



### **Avoid Negative Comments**

Gossip has destructive power and can wound people's feelings. When we gossip, we open the door for the adversary to destroy someone's reputation. To overcome this bad habit, any negative comments about someone's life should be avoided. When we hear such things, whether they are true or not, we should try to stop them. If they continue anyway, we should leave (see Matthew 12:36).

We can help our friends by counseling them never to participate in such conversations and exhort them, as members of the Church and faithful followers of Christ, always to seek to defend truth and righteousness, always to be an example and praise others (see Articles of Faith 1:13).

**Ismael S., 18, São Paulo, Brazil**

### **Think on These Things**

To avoid gossiping, we can memorize a scripture like Leviticus 19:18 that teaches us to love our neighbors as ourselves and recite it in our minds every time we're about to start gossiping. We can also memorize a song like "I'm Trying to Be like Jesus" (*Children's Songbook*, 78-79) and sing it in our minds. Another idea is to say two good things about the person. In that way you'll forget his or her shortcomings and instead notice the person's goodness.

**Rhodora M., 19, Luzon, Philippines**



### **Look for the Good in Others**

Gossiping can be hard to overcome. But I think if you remember to love your neighbor, you might think twice before saying a regretful comment. We aren't the ones to judge others. I think looking for good things in people can help, rather than watching for the negative.

**Haylee B., 15, Utah, USA**

### **It Takes Courage**

Some say that "with our mouths, we build walls between ourselves and our loved ones." I believe that in order to stop this, we need a great deal of personal and spiritual courage. If we truly understand the gospel, we as members of the Church should not gossip because God has taught us to open our mouths to proclaim the gospel to the entire world, not to criticize or gossip about others.

**Vanessa R., 19, Tahiti, French Polynesia**

### **Pray for Guidance**

Remember that gossiping can have a deep, lasting impact on others. Try and put yourself in their shoes, and think about how you would feel if others were saying unkind things about you. It is a righteous desire for you to change this habit. The Lord will bless you with strength and a change of heart as you sincerely seek His guidance through prayer.

**Brittney H., 12, Utah, USA**

## NEXT QUESTION

*"In my family I am the youngest by many years. I always feel left out of my siblings' activities and conversations. What can I do to improve our relationship?"*

**Send your answer by November 15, 2008, to:**

**Liahona, Questions & Answers 11/08**

**50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420**

**Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA**

**Or e-mail: [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org)**

**The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
FULL NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
BIRTH DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
WARD (or branch)

\_\_\_\_\_  
STAKE (or district)

**I grant permission to print response and photo:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT'S SIGNATURE (if you are under 18)

## POISONS TO THE SOUL



*"Let us avoid evil speaking; let us avoid slander and gossip. These are poisons to the soul to those who*

*indulge. Evil speaking injures the reviler more than the reviled."*

**President David O. McKay (1873-1970), in Conference Report, Apr. 1969, 96.**

# THE MAN WITH ANSWERS

*When Christian Monzón's friends have questions, they know they can turn to him for help.*

BY DON L. SEARLE  
Church Magazines

**What do you do when you run into pornography?** One day Christian Monzón of Asunción, Paraguay, borrowed a cell phone from a friend at school to play games on it. He discovered that the phone had pornography stored in it.

There was no doubt in Christian's mind what his friend should do about that, so Christian helped him see the need to get rid of the offensive pictures. Christian calmly explained how damaging material like that can be. He said, "If you were a father, you wouldn't want your son looking at that."

Part of what Christian told his friend came from *For the Strength of Youth*. Christian says the pamphlet helps him in every phase of his life. "I wouldn't be where I am without it," he says. He has also given copies to a couple of friends at school. They told him it gave them guidance they needed with specific problems.

*Christian's classmates respect him enough that they elected him their student delegate.*



**Where do you find help facing the temptations of life?** Christian knows that *For the Strength of Youth* offers help with many temptations that are common among his friends—drugs and drinking, for example. Few of his friends have the Internet in their homes, but they can easily get access to it—and to pornography—in Internet cafés.

Friends at school often turn to Christian and his older brother, Jimmy, for help with problems because they trust that the two Latter-day Saints will have answers. Both are respected for their beliefs by their schoolmates. Christian's classmates respect him enough that they elected him their student delegate. Among other things, this means he is their representative if they get into trouble at school.

**How do you plan for the future?** Christian says that knowing a full-time mission is in his plans has helped him set priorities. After he finishes his secondary schooling, he'd like to study information technology. But when you know you're preparing to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, go to the temple, go on a mission, and get married, it helps you know how to prepare.

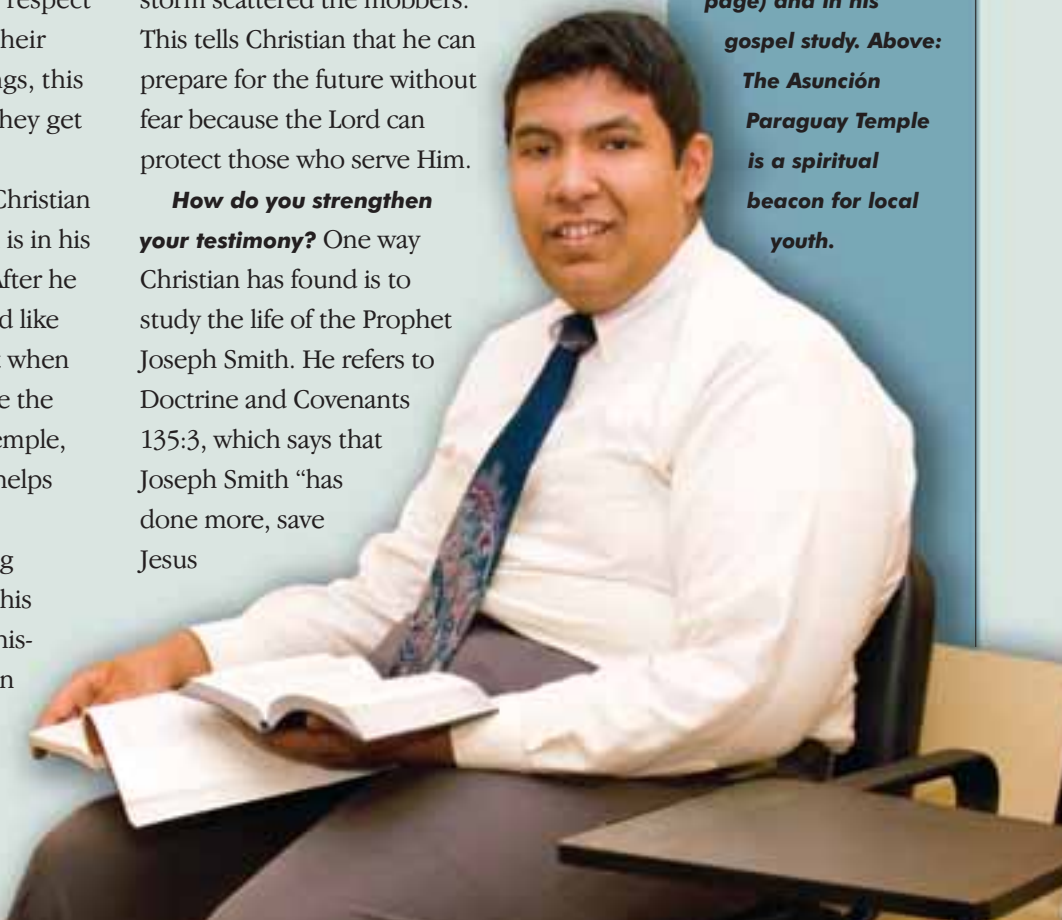
And for Christian, so does studying Church doctrine and history. In fact, his favorite stories come out of Church history. For example, he finds strength in the 1834 experience of Zion's Camp when mobbers threatened to



attack the encampment and the Prophet Joseph Smith prophesied that the Lord would not permit it. That evening, a terrible storm scattered the mobbers.<sup>1</sup> This tells Christian that he can prepare for the future without fear because the Lord can protect those who serve Him.

**How do you strengthen your testimony?** One way Christian has found is to study the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He refers to Doctrine and Covenants 135:3, which says that Joseph Smith “has done more, save Jesus

**Christian Monzón is a leader among his peers at school (opposite page) and in his gospel study. Above: The Asunción Paraguay Temple is a spiritual beacon for local youth.**





**One of Christian's favorite Church history stories is about the young men who helped rescue survivors of the Martin handcart company in 1856 (above right). Below: Christian with his family at their stake center (from left): Jimmy (brother), Marlene (mother), Antero (father), Christian, and Rody (brother).**

only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it.” Christian adds, “Coming to know of Joseph Smith changed my life.”

He says that in studying Church history “you come to understand the part you can play today.” Another of his favorite stories tells of the young men who helped with the rescue of the Martin handcart company in 1856. The young men carried exhausted, starving pioneers through the freezing Sweetwater River.<sup>2</sup> Christian says he hopes he could show that kind of courage if he faced such a test.

**Why is the gospel important in your life?**

Christian has an answer for that question too. A priest in the Aaronic Priesthood, he

attends seminary every morning with other young people from the Cocuere Branch, Capiatá Paraguay Stake. The seminary class is in his home; his mother is the teacher.

What he has learned about our Father’s plan of salvation helped him when his beloved grandfather died suddenly. He was able to receive comfort and peace because of “the hope the gospel gives us.”

He says the gospel helps him in every part of his life. “I know the scriptures are revelation from our Father in Heaven,” he testifies. “I know this is the true Church, and I know that Jesus Christ lives.” ■

**NOTES**

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2004), 137.
2. See *Aaronic Priesthood Manual 3* (1995), 157.

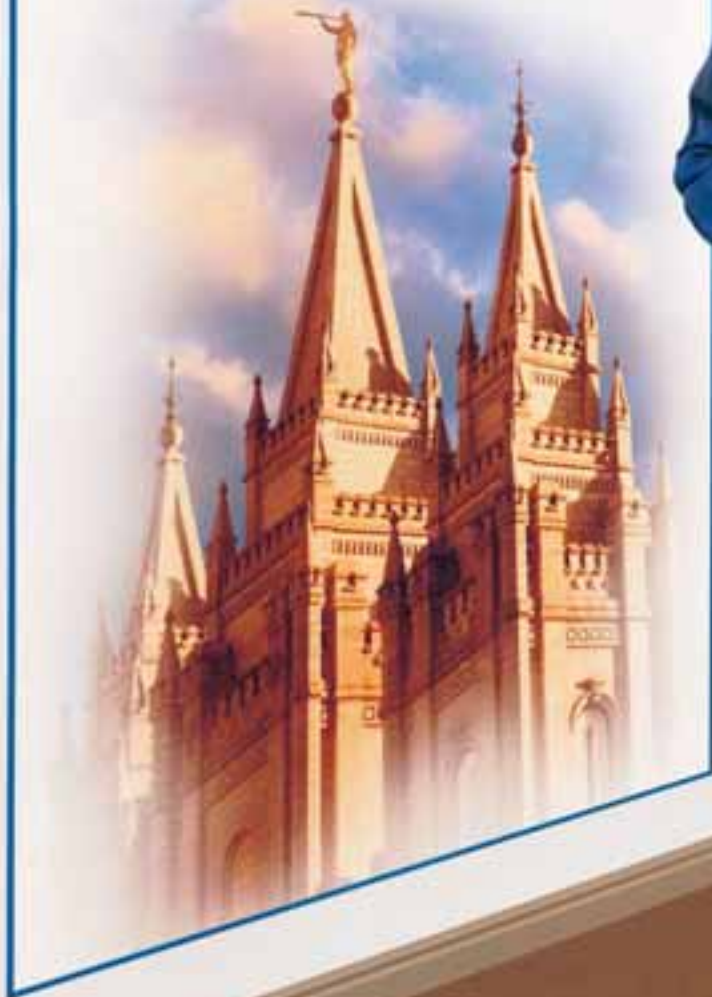


THE MARTIN HANDCART COMPANY RESCUED BY VOLUNTEERS, BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE



# STANDARDS

For the  
**Strength of Youth**  
Fulfilling Our Duty to God



**YOU WILL NEVER OUTGROW THEM. (See John 14:15.)**



### **Liabona Has Blessed Our Lives**

We are so grateful that we can receive the *Liabona* here in Vanuatu. It is wonderful to read about people in different places and how the Church is prospering across the world. We have learned so much from the magazine. It has blessed our lives, and we will never be the same because of it.

*Amos Tarobati Zoro, Vanuatu*

### **A Pipe into a Well of Pure Waters**

As the Gospel Doctrine teacher in my ward, I am deeply grateful for the great work you have done with LDS.org. Permission to own and access Church materials is extremely limited in our area. Having access to the scriptures and Church materials over the Internet is like having our own pipe into a well of pure waters. Please know that your efforts make a very real difference in the daily lives of our members. What a miracle it is for them to have our Heavenly Father's message in their own languages.

*Name withheld*

### **Words That Can Help All People**

How grateful I am to have the *Liabona* in my life! In it I find inspired words that can help all people, whether members of the Church or not. The messages from the First Presidency express their love for us, and the Latter-day Saint Voices section is full of good examples to follow. I read the

magazine from the first page to the last because I know the Spirit will touch me and strengthen me as I do. I know that through this magazine the Light of Christ touches people, and I thank all of you who make it possible.

*Cristophe Jaime, Portugal*

### **Liabona Is a Friend**

When I read the *Liabona*, I know how fortunate I am to be part of this great work of the Lord. The *Liabona* helps me be a good member of the Church. I know the *Liabona* can be a great tool for missionary work. As members we can use it to help others come unto Christ. The *Liabona* is one of my best friends.

*Galsanjamts Dashdavaa, Mongolia*

### **We Have Brothers and Sisters**

I am so grateful that Heavenly Father helped me find His Church and become a member. I have learned great truths, become a better person, and am preparing for eternal life. It makes me so happy that my family is part of The Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints and that we are not alone—that we have brothers and sisters. The Church has been our strength in difficult years. We are grateful to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and also to the prophet and the apostles, who serve us.

*Susanna Martirosova, Armenia*

## **CALL FOR CHILDREN'S STORIES**

**W**e are looking for articles for our young readers—true stories that will strengthen the faith of children around the world. E-mail stories to [liabona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liabona@ldschurch.org), or send them to:

Children's Stories, *Liabona*  
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220,  
USA

Include your full name, home address, and ward and stake (or branch and district).

As you write, please consider the following guidelines: (1) Show, don't tell. As often as possible, show a child discovering truth for himself or herself. (2) Write from a child's perspective. For example, the story may convey what a child is thinking but should not describe a parent's thoughts unless the parent is speaking. (3) Write about real children discovering or applying gospel truths in overcoming temptations and conflicts. See page F10 in this issue for an example.

# the Friend



# How to Give

BY PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING

First Counselor in the First Presidency

**I**t was a summer day. My mother died in the early afternoon. My father, my brother, and I had gone from the hospital to our family home, just the three of us. We fixed ourselves a snack; then we talked with visitors. It grew late, dusk fell, and I remember we still had not turned on the lights.

Dad answered the doorbell. It was Aunt Catherine and Uncle Bill. I could see that Uncle Bill was holding a bottle of cherries. I can still see the deep red, almost purple, cherries and the shiny gold cap on the jar. He said, "You might enjoy these. You probably haven't had dessert."

We hadn't. The three of us sat around the kitchen table, put some cherries in bowls, and ate them as Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine cleared some dishes.

As nearly as I can tell, the giving and receiving of a great gift always has three parts. Here they are, illustrated by that gift of cherries.

First, I knew that Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine had felt what I was feeling. They must have felt we'd be too tired to fix much food. They must have felt that a bowl of home-canned cherries would make us feel, for a moment, like a family again. I can't remember the taste of the cherries, but I remember that someone knew my heart and cared.

Second, I felt that the gift was free. I knew that Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine had chosen freely to bring a gift.



**President Eyring teaches us how to give the most meaningful gifts.**

The gift seemed to provide them joy in the giving.

And third, there was sacrifice. I knew that Aunt Catherine had canned those cherries for her family. They must have liked cherries. But she took that possible pleasure from them and gave it to me. That's sacrifice. But I have realized since then this marvelous fact: it must have seemed to Uncle Bill and Aunt Catherine that they would have more pleasure if I had the cherries than if they did.

Great gift giving involves three things: you feel what the other feels, you give

freely, and you count the sacrifice a bargain.

God the Father gave His Son, and Jesus Christ gave us the Atonement—gifts of unfathomable depth and value for us. Jesus gave His gift freely, willingly to us all. One of the sure signs of a person who has accepted the gift of the Savior's Atonement is a willingness to give. ●

*From "Giving with Joy," Liahona, Dec. 1996, 11–14; Ensign, Dec. 1982, 9–11.*

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

**1. President Eyring liked the gift of cherries because it comforted him. What are some ways you can comfort others?**

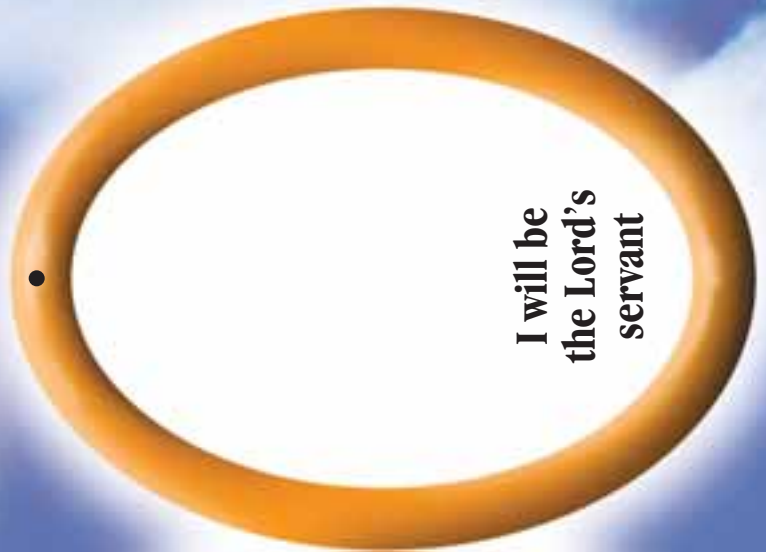
**2. Have you ever received a special gift? What made it special?**

**3. You may not always know by your own experience how someone else feels. Can you still give good gifts to others? How?**

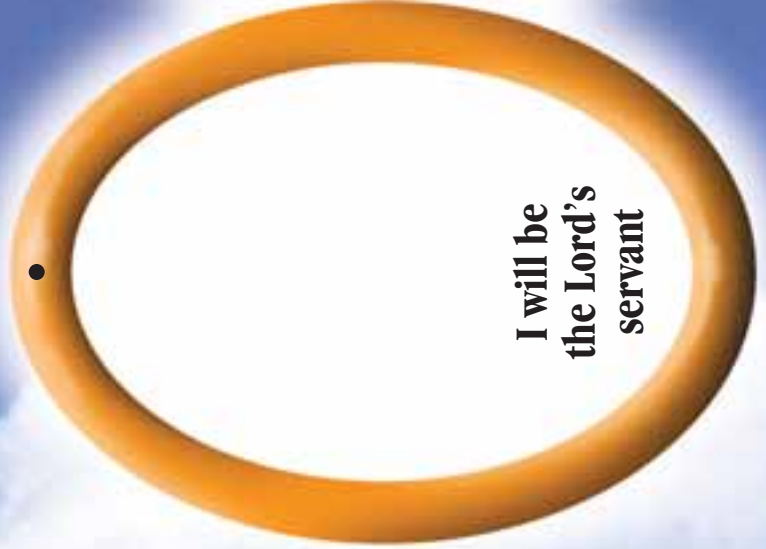




*Note: This activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org). For English, click on **Gospel Library**. For other languages, click on **Languages**.*



I will be  
the Lord's  
servant



I will be  
the Lord's  
servant

Heart

Might

Mind

Strength

Strength

Mind

Might

Heart

# I Will Be His Servant

**“Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day” (D&C 4:2).**

BY LINDA CHRISTENSEN



Ammon, a great Nephite missionary, went to the land of the Lamanites to “declare unto them the word of God” (Alma 17:12). When Ammon entered the land, the Lamanites bound him and took him to the king. The king asked Ammon if he wanted to dwell in the land. Ammon asked the king if he could be his servant.

Ammon served the king with all his heart, might, mind, and strength. He showed love to the people. He used his power to protect the king’s sheep and servants. He used his mind to learn the gospel and share it with the king. He used his strength to be firm and steadfast in living the gospel. (See Alma 17–18.)

The words of the Primary song “I Will Be Valiant” (*Children’s Songbook*, 162) remind us to be like Ammon.

*The Lord needs valiant servants,  
To do his work in the latter day,  
Who follow the teachings of Jesus  
And serve his people in a loving way.*

We can learn to serve others as Ammon did. We can show love to those around us, especially our family and friends. We can use our energy to do good things, such as being kind or helping. We can use our minds to learn the gospel by reading the scriptures and listening to our parents and teachers. We can choose to be firm and steadfast in doing what is right.

*I will be his servant  
And keep my cov’nants valiantly.  
I’ll stand for truth. I’ll stand for right.  
The Lord can depend on me.*

## Activity

Cut out the ovals, and glue them together back-to-back. Cut out the four rectangles, fold them in half, and glue the backs together to make squares. Cut out the circle for the top of the mobile, and punch holes where indicated. Attach a photo or draw a picture of yourself in the oval frame. Punch a hole at the top of the oval picture frame and in each of the four squares. Use string or yarn to complete the mobile. Hang the mobile where it will remind you to serve the Lord and others.

## Sharing Time Ideas

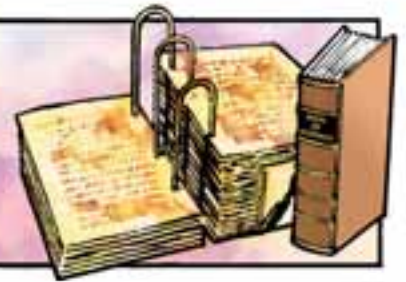
1. Prepare a list of Sabbath-day activities for children to role-play (see Primary 6, lesson 20, enrichment activity 3, p. 87). Read Doctrine and Covenants 4:2, and remind the children that we serve with our heart, might, mind, and strength. One way we can serve is by keeping the Sabbath day holy. Give each class an activity to role-play for the other children. Following each role play, ask the children to identify how the activity helps them serve with their heart, might, mind, and strength. Repeat as time allows. Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil or crayon. Ask the children to draw a way they can serve God by doing things on the Sabbath that will help them feel close to Heavenly Father. Bear testimony of how keeping the Sabbath day holy is a way to serve Heavenly Father.

2. Show Gospel Art Picture Kit 307 (*King Benjamin Addresses His People*), and share the story of King Benjamin. Invite the children to look up Mosiah 2:17. Remind the children that this scripture is one that King Benjamin taught his people. Read the scripture together. Discuss how we serve Heavenly Father when we serve others. Refer to Doctrine and Covenants 4:2, and remind the children that we should serve with our heart, might, mind, and strength. Have the pianist play a song or hymn. Give each class a small ball or soft object to hand to one another as the music plays. When the music stops, ask the children with the objects to share a way they could serve someone. Continue to allow all children a chance to share ideas. Bear testimony that when we serve others we are serving Heavenly Father. ●



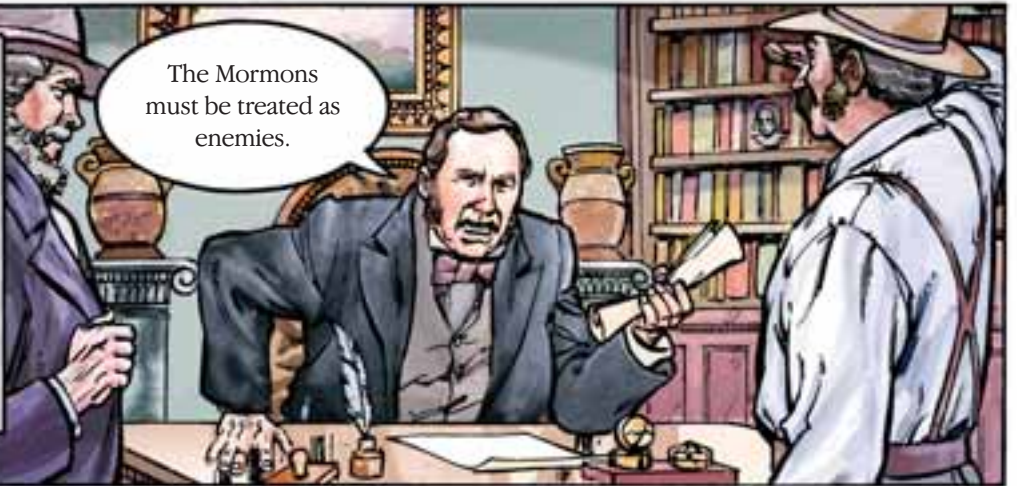
FROM THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

# Joseph's Experiences in Jail



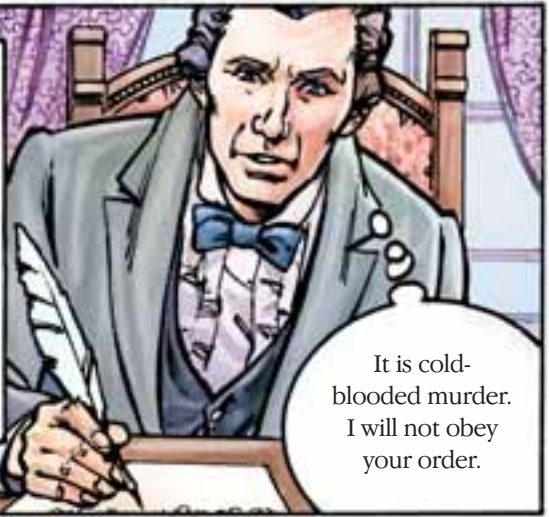
The Latter-day Saints had many problems in Missouri. In the autumn of 1838, Governor Boggs told leaders of the state militia (army) to force the Saints to leave the state.

The Mormons must be treated as enemies.



Joseph and other Church leaders were arrested for crimes they did not commit. The militiamen mocked the prisoners and kept them out in the rain without any shelter.

The commander of the militia told General Alexander W. Doniphan to shoot Joseph and the other prisoners. The prisoners prayed that they would not be killed. Their prayers were answered.



It is cold-blooded murder. I will not obey your order.



The next day the guards watched closely as the prisoners said good-bye to their families in Far West. Joseph's wife and children were grateful to see him alive but very sad to see him go away. Joseph worried about them.



God alone can protect them and deliver me from the hands of my enemies and restore me to my family.



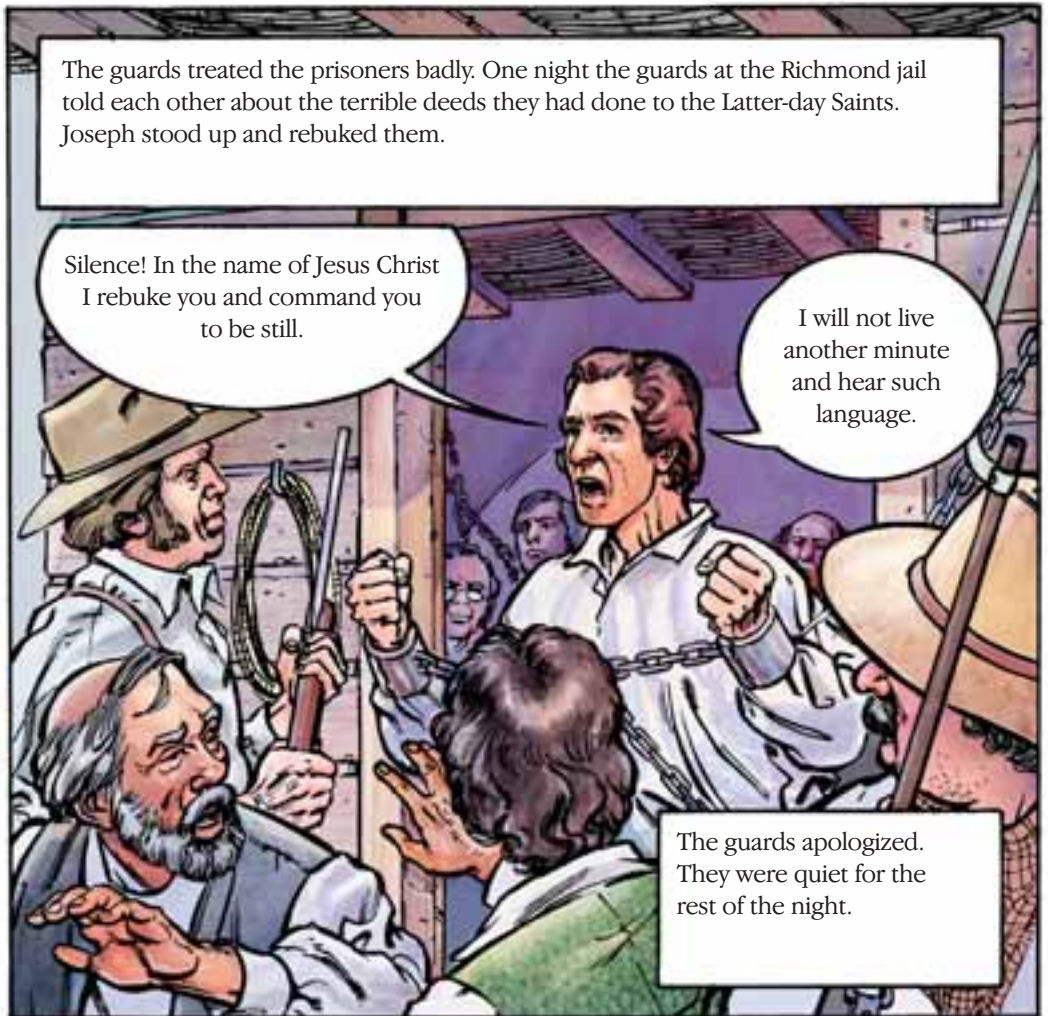
The militia took many Latter-day Saint prisoners to Independence, then to a jail in Richmond. Later, Joseph and a few other men were moved to a jail in Liberty.

The guards treated the prisoners badly. One night the guards at the Richmond jail told each other about the terrible deeds they had done to the Latter-day Saints. Joseph stood up and rebuked them.

Silence! In the name of Jesus Christ I rebuke you and command you to be still.

I will not live another minute and hear such language.

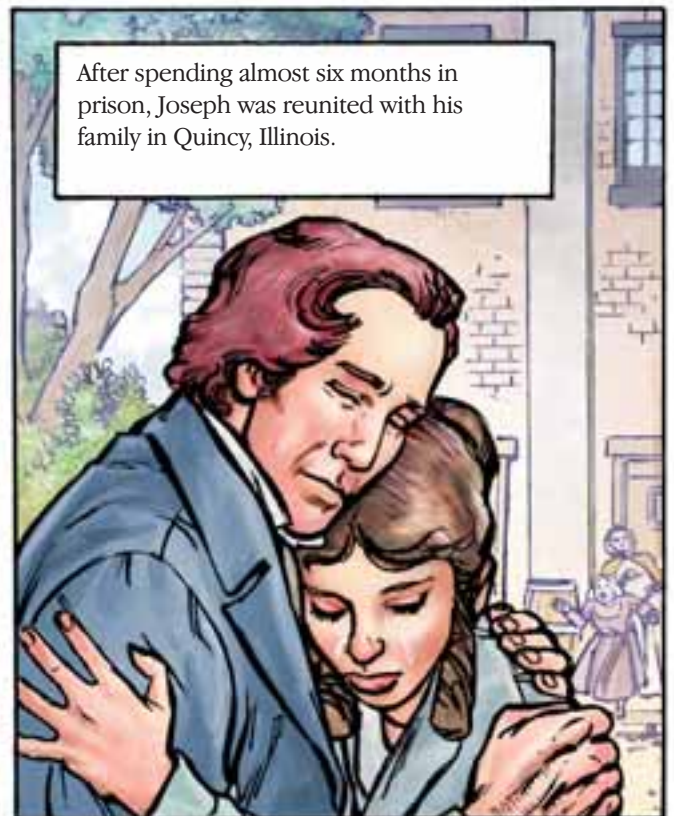
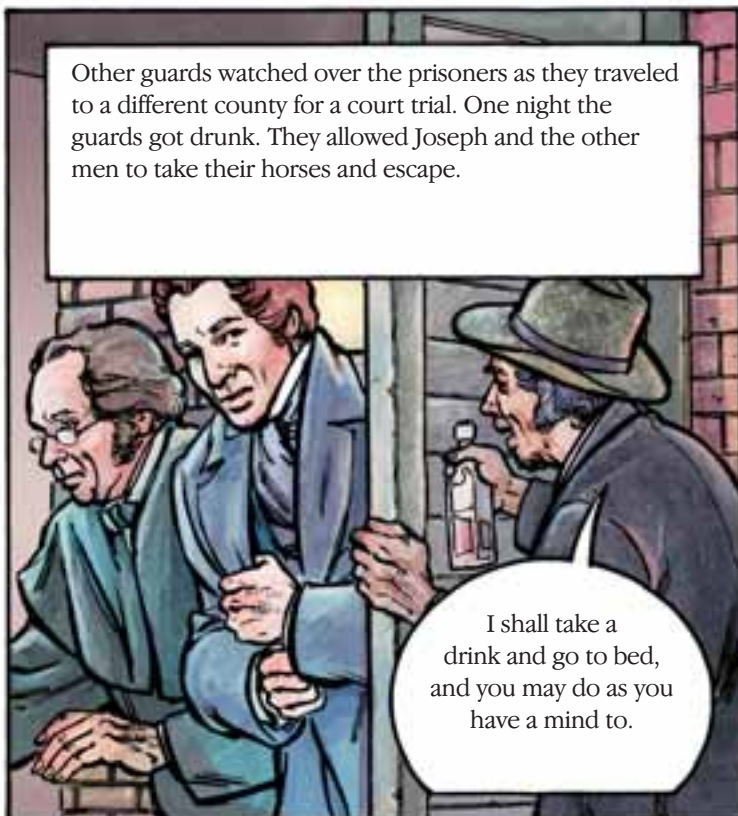
The guards apologized. They were quiet for the rest of the night.



Other guards watched over the prisoners as they traveled to a different county for a court trial. One night the guards got drunk. They allowed Joseph and the other men to take their horses and escape.

After spending almost six months in prison, Joseph was reunited with his family in Quincy, Illinois.

I shall take a drink and go to bed, and you may do as you have a mind to.



# Testimony Glove

**H**ave you ever worn gloves? Some gloves protect your hands when you work. Other gloves keep your hands warm. Another kind is worn when playing a sport. In this activity you can make your own “testimony glove” to help you remember five parts of your testimony.

A testimony is a spiritual witness of the gospel’s truthfulness given to us by the Holy Ghost. There are essential parts to a testimony. If you have a desire to believe those things, your belief can grow into a knowledge that they are true.



# THE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF A TESTIMONY



## MY TESTIMONY

1. I know that God is our Heavenly Father and He loves us.
2. I know that His Son, Jesus Christ, is our Savior and Redeemer.
3. I know that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God. He restored the gospel of Jesus Christ to the earth and translated the Book of Mormon by the power of God.
4. I know that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord's Church on the earth today.
5. I know that this Church is led by a living prophet who receives revelation.

**Instructions:** Find a white glove.\* Cut out the pictures on this page, and mount them on heavy paper. Put the glove on. As you say the five parts of a testimony, one by one, attach a picture to a glove finger, starting with the thumb. You can attach the pictures to the glove using Velcro, tape, glue, safety pins, snaps, or string.

As you develop your testimony, don't be afraid to share it! As you bear your testimony, you can use phrases like "I testify that . . ." or "I know that . . ." Your testimony will grow stronger when you share it with others. ●

*\*This activity can be adapted to your circumstances. The glove does not have to be white. If gloves are not available, you could make paper gloves or even attach the pictures to your fingers with tape.*

# HELP AND BE HAPPY



*“Thou shalt devote all thy service in Zion” (D&C 24:7).*

**BY JEANNIE LANCASTER**

Based on a true story

**J**onathon grumbled as he climbed into the car next to his brother, Mike. He wanted to stay home and play the new game he had been given for his birthday last week. But his mother had insisted that they all go to the meetinghouse and help with the ward’s cleanup day.

“Why do we have to go?” Jonathon had asked his mother as he helped her load their vacuum into the car.

“It will be fun,” she said, smiling. “Besides, all of us use the meetinghouse. It’s only right that we help clean it from time to time.”

Jonathon stared out the window and watched the houses and trees pass by as they drove to the church. As his mother pulled the car into the church’s parking lot, Jonathon was surprised to

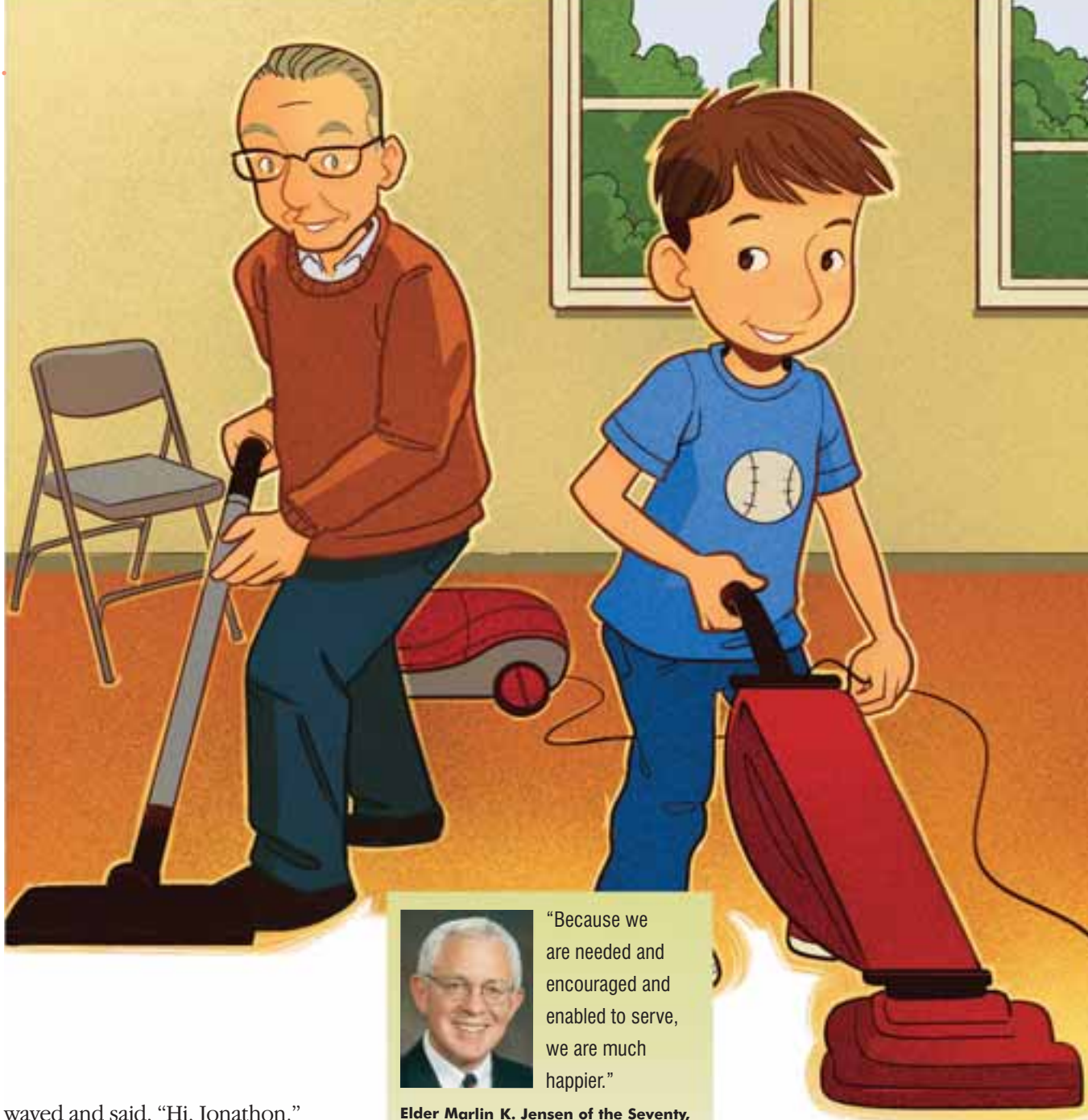
see Brother Lawson park his car next to theirs.

“What is Brother Lawson doing here?” Jonathon wondered.

Brother Lawson had been very sick lately with a type of cancer called leukemia. He had been in the hospital for a long time. Jonathon remembered his parents encouraging Mike and him to pray for Brother Lawson during their personal and family prayers. Brother Lawson hadn’t been home from the hospital for very long.

Jonathon had always liked Brother Lawson. He was older than Jonathon’s grandfathers, but he went out of his way to talk to Jonathon and ask him about school and his sports team. One time he even came to one of Jonathon’s games.

As Jonathon climbed out of the car, Brother Lawson



“Because we are needed and encouraged and enabled to serve, we are much happier.”

**Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy, “How to Be Happy,” *Liahona*, Aug. 2000, 23; *New Era*, Aug. 1999, 6.**

waved and said, “Hi, Jonathon.” Brother Lawson walked around to the back of his car and took a vacuum out of the trunk. Walking slowly, he pushed the vacuum into the church.

“Jonathon,” his mother called, “can you give me a hand with this?” She was struggling to pull their vacuum from the back of the car.

“Sure, Mom,” Jonathon said. He helped her pull the vacuum out and quickly pushed it across the parking lot.

All that evening Jonathon and Mike worked beside Brother Lawson. Several times Jonathon became tired and stopped to rest, but he noticed that Brother Lawson

continued to work. And he was smiling! “It’s nice to be able to help, isn’t it,” Brother Lawson said.

Jonathon felt something change inside him. “If Brother Lawson can

be happy while he’s helping, so can I,” he thought. He started working even harder.

“Thank you for coming with me,” his mother said later as they were heading home.

“You’re welcome,” Jonathon said. “I’m sorry I complained about coming. I didn’t know you could learn so much from vacuuming.” ●

# The Family Is of God

With joy ♩ = 76-88

Words and music:  
Matthew Neeley

Musical notation for the first system, including treble and bass staves with chords F, B<sup>b</sup>, F, B<sup>b</sup>, F, C<sup>7</sup>.

Musical notation for the second system, including treble and bass staves with chords F, C<sup>7</sup>, F, D<sup>m</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, F.

1. Our Fa - ther has a fam - i - ly. It's me! It's you, all oth - ers too: we are His  
 2. A fa - ther's place is to pre - side, pro - vide, To love and teach the gos - pel to his  
 3. A moth - er's pur - pose is to care, pre - pare, To nur - ture and to streng - then all her  
 4. I'll love and serve my fam - i - ly and be A good ex - am - ple to each fam - 'ly

Musical notation for the third system, including treble and bass staves with chords C<sup>7</sup>, F, C, D<sup>m</sup>, F.

chil - dren. He sent each one of us to earth, through birth, To  
 chil - dren. A fa - ther leads in fam - 'ly prayer to share Their  
 chil - dren. She teach - es chil - dren to o - bey, to pray, To  
 mem - ber. And when I am a mom or dad, so glad, I'll

Musical notation for the fourth system, including treble and bass staves with chords B<sup>b</sup>, F, C<sup>7</sup>, F, B<sup>b</sup>.

live and learn here in fam - 'lies.  
 love for Fa - ther in Heav - en. God gave us  
 love, and serve in the fam - 'ly.  
 help my fam - 'ly re - mem - ber:

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C<sup>7</sup> F B<sup>o</sup> F G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup>

fam - i - lies to help us be - come what He wants us to be—

F B<sup>o</sup> C<sup>7</sup> Dm B<sup>o</sup> Gm

This is how He shares His love, for the fam - 'ly

F C<sup>7</sup> 1. 2. 3. F B<sup>o</sup> F C<sup>7</sup>

is of God.

4. F B<sup>o</sup> F B<sup>o</sup> F

God.

ILLUSTRATION BY PHYLIS LUCH; BACKGROUND © ARTBEATS

# Preparing for a Mission


**"Prepare your hearts unto the Lord" (1 Samuel 7:3).**



*From an interview with Elder Ulisses Soares of the Seventy, currently serving as First Counselor in the Brazil Area Presidency; by Jennifer Maddy, Church Magazines*







**F**or several years after my family was baptized, the missionaries had lunch in our home every day. I learned to love the missionaries, and I wanted to be like them.

When I was 11 years old, my bishop called me in for an interview in his office. He said, “Ulisses, it’s time to start your preparation to go on a mission.” I was astonished because I was only 11 years old! But he said, “We have to start that process now.”

My bishop said, “I’ll interview you once in a while to see how your progress is.” Then he gave me some direction. He taught me about the commandments, the priesthood, worthiness, and honesty. I was so impressed because he looked in my eyes and said, “You will serve a mission if you follow the directions I am giving you.”

I always remembered his words, especially when I faced a challenge. For example, one time my mother gave me money to go to a store to buy some fruit. For some reason the cashier gave me back more money than I gave her to pay for the fruit. I started walking home, and when I opened my hand, I saw that I had more money than I had started with.

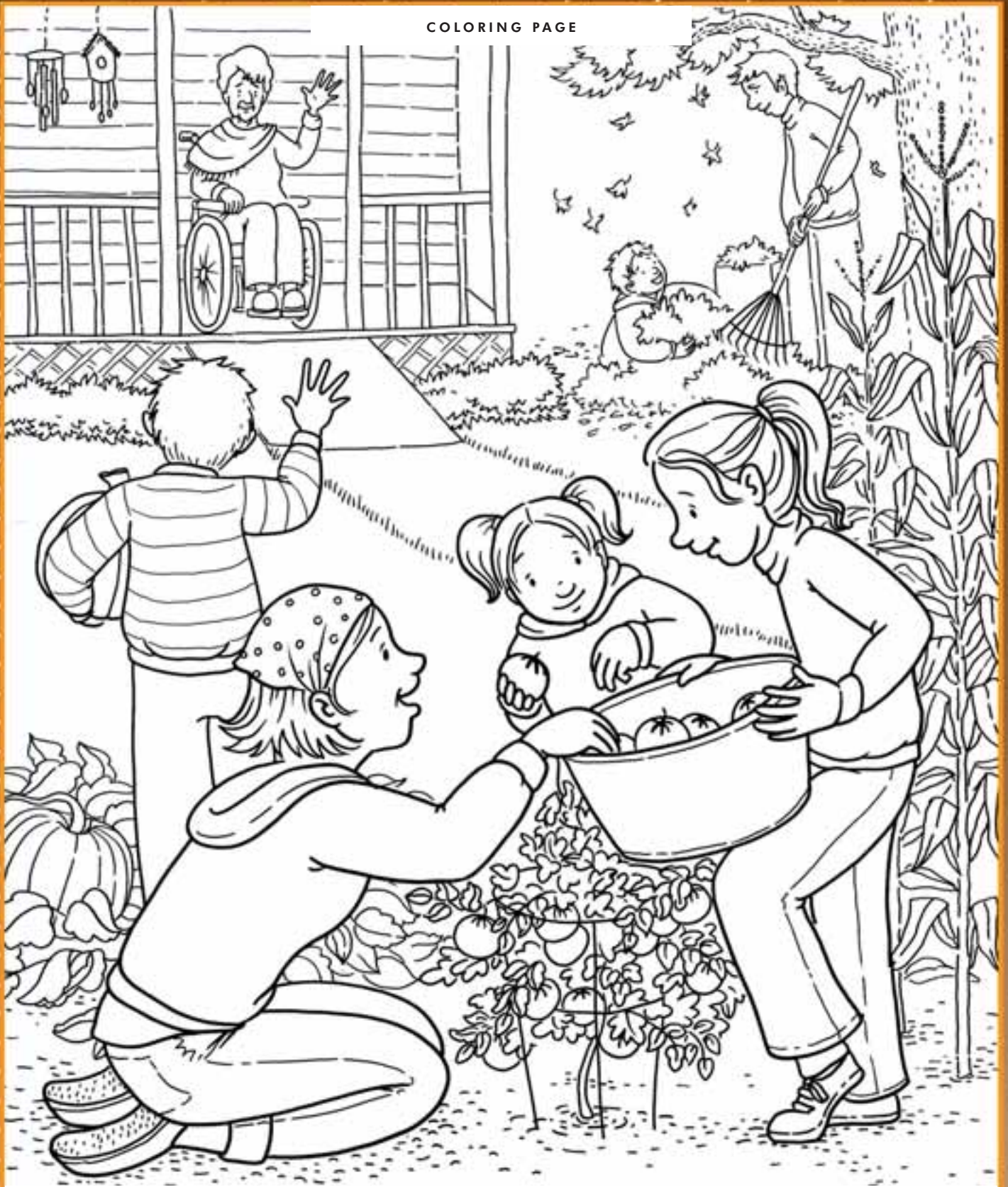
Satan tried to convince me that I could keep the money for myself. I thought, “I have some money to do whatever I want, and then I will give back the correct change to my mother.” But then I thought, “No, that’s not what the bishop told me. To be a missionary I have to be honest.” I felt the Spirit at that time and went back to the store to give back the money. I felt good in my heart. I thought, “I was honest, I obeyed the commandments, and I am preparing for my mission. I will be a missionary, and I need to be honest.”

When I was going to high school, I worked to save money for my mission. My parents were poor and couldn’t afford to pay for everything. I didn’t earn a lot of money, but after paying tithing, I decided to buy one piece of clothing per month for my mission. One month I bought a shirt, another month a tie, another month another shirt. During those three years, I saved enough to buy everything I needed. I saved enough to pay for my mission. I learned the principle of saving. I learned the principle of being obedient to the law of tithing and how many blessings we receive when we pay tithing.

My mission was a great experience because it helped me understand the principles of life and how to apply the gospel in my daily activities.

Boys and girls, prepare for a good mission and a good life. The Lord is waiting to give us all the blessings we need. ●





**BECAUSE I AM HIS CHILD, I WILL SERVE GOD WITH ALL MY HEART, MIGHT, MIND, AND STRENGTH**

“Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day” (D&C 4:2).



**Dedication of Russia, painting by Emin Zulfugarov**

*Latter-day Saint artist Emin Zulfugarov of St. Petersburg, Russia, has honored the events of August 1903, when Elder Francis M. Lyman (1840–1916), an Apostle and president of the European Mission, gathered with other Church leaders at the historic Summer Garden in St. Petersburg to dedicate Russia for the preaching of the gospel. Three days later Elder Lyman offered a similar dedicatory prayer in Moscow.*



***Y**ou will have the help of the Holy Ghost. You will feel good about yourself and will be a positive influence in the lives of others,” promises the First Presidency in For the Strength of Youth. “You will be worthy to go to the temple to receive holy ordinances.” How do you claim these promised blessings in your life? See “18 Ways to Stand Strong,” p. 25.*

# WHY DON'T WE DATE BEFORE 16?



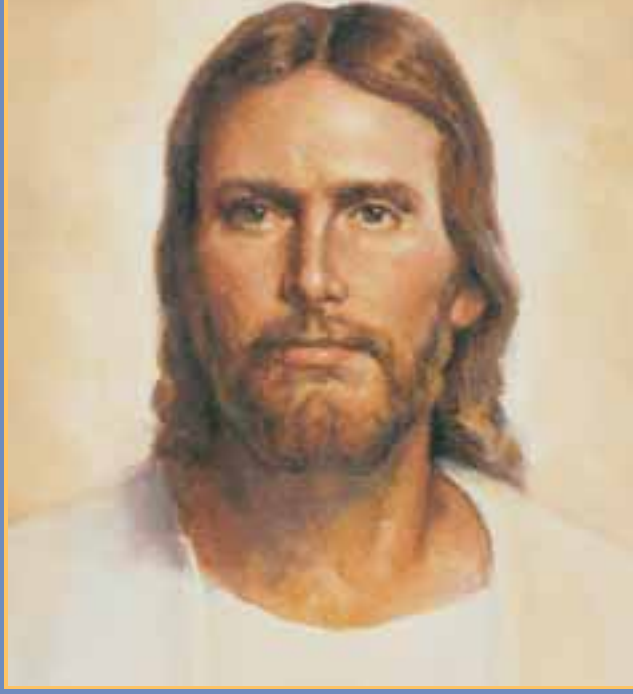
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA SMITH © 2008 INTELLECTUAL RESERVE, INC.

# WHY DON'T WE DRINK OR SMOKE?



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN © 2008 INTELLECTUAL RESERVE, INC.

# ARE MORMONS CHRISTIAN?



DETAIL FROM HE IS RISEN, BY DEL PARSON © 2008 INTELLECTUAL RESERVE, INC.

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH SWEARING?

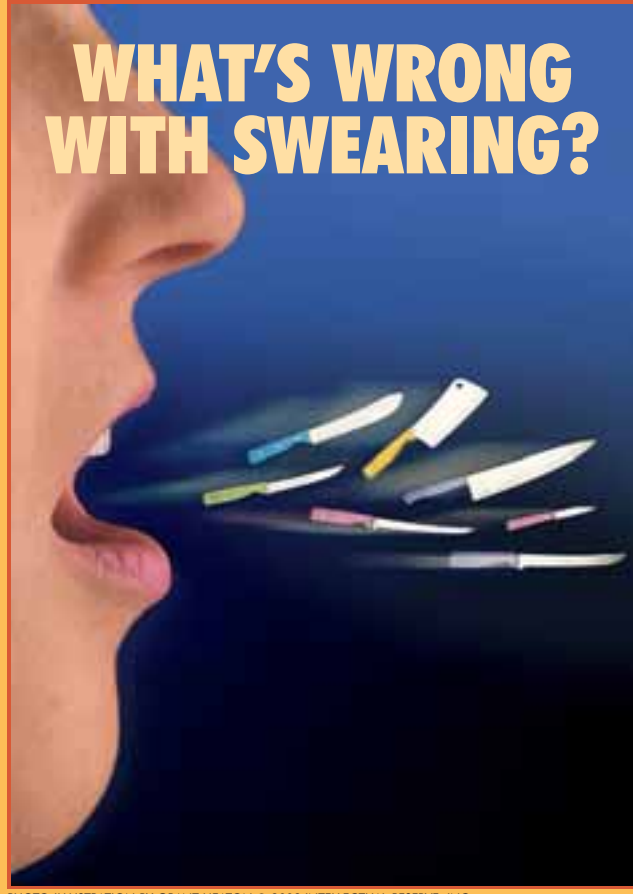


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRANT HEATON © 2008 INTELLECTUAL RESERVE, INC.

## Repentance

Through the Savior's Atonement, you can receive forgiveness and be cleansed from your sins when you repent. Confess your sins to the Lord and to those you have wronged. If the sins are serious, you also need to confess them to your bishop.

## Honesty

Be honest with yourself, others, and the Lord. Do not rationalize that dishonesty is right.

## Sabbath Day Observance

Use the Sabbath to worship the Lord, attend church, draw closer to your family, and help others. Do not seek entertainment or spend money on the Sabbath. When possible, avoid working on Sunday.

## Tithes and Offerings

Willingly pay a full tithe. Attend tithing settlement. Obey the law of the fast.

## Physical Health

Keep the Word of Wisdom. Eat nutritious food, exercise regularly, and get enough sleep. Do not use hard drugs, alcohol, coffee, tea, or tobacco products. Do not abuse prescription or over-the-counter medications.

## Service to Others

Serve others in your Church assignments and in your home, school, and community. Seek daily the guidance of the Holy Ghost to know whom to serve and how to help meet their needs.

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## Go Forward with Faith

Be true to the Lord and to His Church. Regularly pray in private and read the scriptures. Keep your covenants and listen to the whisperings of the Spirit. The Lord will help you meet your trials and challenges.

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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For the  
**Strength of Youth**  
Fulfilling Our Duty to God



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## WHY DON'T WE DATE BEFORE 16?

Friendships are great, but dating too soon can lead to immorality, limit the number of other young people you meet, and deprive you of experiences that will help you to eventually find the person you will marry. Not all teenagers need to date or even want to. However, we can and should develop good friendships at every age.

When we do begin dating, we date in groups or go on double dates and plan activities that are positive, inexpensive, and help us get to know each other better. A young man and a young woman on a date should help each other maintain standards and protect each other's honor and virtue.

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## ARE MORMONS CHRISTIAN?

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Creator. When Jesus lived on the earth, He led a perfect life and taught by word and example how we should live together in love. We believe that through Christ's Atonement, we can be saved from our sins as we follow Him.

Each week at church as we partake of the sacrament, we renew our promise to always remember Him and keep His commandments.

We love Jesus Christ. We worship Jesus Christ. He is our Savior and Redeemer.

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OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

## WHY DON'T WE DRINK OR SMOKE?

Heavenly Father has commanded His children to take good care of their bodies. We should eat nutritious food, exercise regularly, and get enough sleep. When we do these things, we remain free from addictions and have control over our lives. We gain the blessings of a healthy body, an alert mind, and the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

Alcohol and tobacco harm our bodies and our spirits. They are addictive and will damage our bodies, weaken our judgment and self-control, and shorten our lives. Because we want to be physically, mentally, and spiritually strong, we do not drink coffee or tea or abuse any drug or chemical.

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## WHAT'S WRONG WITH SWEARING?

One of the Ten Commandments says the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name, so we always use the names of God and Jesus Christ with reverence and respect. Profane, vulgar, or crude language or gestures, as well as dirty jokes, are offensive to the Lord and to others.

How you speak says a lot about who you are. Clean and intelligent language shows that you have a bright and wholesome mind. We use language that encourages and compliments others so that we can fulfill the commandment to love one another. We encourage others to use clean language too.

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### Agency and Accountability

Choose righteousness and happiness, no matter what your circumstances. Take responsibility for the choices you make. Develop your abilities and talents, and use them for good. Avoid idleness and be willing to work hard.

### Gratitude

Have a spirit of gratitude in all you do and say. Thank God for your blessings, and express appreciation to others who help you.

### Education

Prepare to be an influence for good in the world. Obtain an education, and be enthusiastic about learning. Attend seminary.

### Family

Do your part to build a happy home. Honor your parents, and strengthen your relationships with your brothers and sisters.

### Friends

Choose friends who share your high standards. Treat everyone with kindness and respect. Invite friends of other faiths to Church activities. Reach out to new converts and those who are less active.

### Dress and Appearance

Dress modestly to show respect for God and yourself. Never lower your dress standards for any occasion. Do not disfigure your body with tattoos and body piercings.

### Entertainment and the Media

Choose uplifting entertainment. Avoid anything that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way. Commit to keeping God's standards.

### Music and Dancing

Listen to music that helps you draw closer to Heavenly Father. Do not listen to music that encourages immorality, glorifies violence, or uses offensive language. When dancing, avoid full body contact or suggestive movements.

### Language

Use language that uplifts, encourages, and compliments others. Use the names of God and Jesus Christ with reverence and respect.

Do not use profane, vulgar, or crude language or gestures.

### Dating

Do not date until you are at least 16 years old. Date only those who have high standards. When you begin dating, go in groups or on double dates. Plan activities that help you remain close to the Spirit of the Lord.

### Sexual Purity

Keep yourself sexually pure. Do not have any sexual relations before marriage. Do not participate in talk or activities that arouse sexual feelings. Do not participate in homosexual activities. Seek help if you become a victim of rape, incest, or other sexual abuse.

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ENGLISH