



Hold **FIRM**

By Lindsay Hiller

I grew up with friends who were members of the Church, and I became excited to be baptized and become a member myself. When I moved across the country for college, I began taking lessons from the missionaries. Unfortunately, pressure from my new peers made it difficult to follow the standards of the gospel. My fellow freshmen spent a lot of time at parties drinking alcohol. I had never tried alcohol before, but my new friends were constantly pressuring me to drink it.

I knew the gospel was true, but the temptation from my peers was difficult to resist. I began to pray to Heavenly Father for the strength to make the right decision. I hadn't lowered my standards yet, but I was afraid I wouldn't have the strength to turn down the alcohol the next time it was offered. I missed my friends who shared the same values.

One Saturday night I went to a party with the people in my dorm. Immediately all of my friends were drinking and encouraging me to try my first taste of alcohol.

I was tempted. I took the cup of beer that was handed to me. I pulled it toward my mouth, uncomfortable but pleased to have the attention of my friends. Then Nick, a boy notorious for drinking, walked up to our circle.

"You didn't drink that, did you?" he asked.

"Not yet," I replied.

"If you do," Nick said, "you will regret it every day for the rest of your life."

I was shocked. I knew he was right. I didn't want to drink. I wanted to join the Church. I

handed the cup back and left the party,

grateful that I hadn't made a bad decision.

Friends make a big difference in how easy—or hard—it is to live our standards.

The next morning I went to church, found the missionaries, and set a date for my baptism. From that day on I stayed away from parties with alcohol. I made new friends at church who shared my values and standards. I was still friends with the people in my dorm, but I made my standards clear. When they learned how important my values were to me, they respected them and stopped pressuring me. They noticed and respected it when I left the room when they watched inappropriate movies or listened to inappropriate music.

My testimony was strengthened by this experience, and I will strive to never lower my standards because of peer pressure. I also know that the best way to face difficult decisions is to know your standards and hold firmly to them from the start.

I know that Heavenly Father answered my prayers for strength to resist temptation. I am grateful that the Holy Ghost encouraged me to make the right decision. I know that the standards of the Church are there to protect us, and I am grateful that choosing to follow them helped me choose to join the Church. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



SAYING NO TO TEMPTATION

“Individuals who do wrong want you to join them because they feel more comfortable in what they are doing when others do it also. They may also want to take advantage of you. It is natural to want to be accepted by peers, to be part of a group. . . . One of the hardest things for you to recognize is how truly strong you already are and how others silently respect you. . . . You don’t need to compromise your standards to be accepted by good friends. The more obedient you are, the more you stand for true principles, the more the Lord can help you overcome temptation.”

Elder Richard G. Scott (1928-2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Making the Right Choices,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 37.

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