

FROM GENERAL AUTHORITIES

on Dating

The True Ideal

We all need a standard, something to compare our behavior with, to help us decide what a practical goal of goodness is. And most of us choose people to compare ourselves with. I learned long ago that it matters who you choose for that comparison. Let me tell you how I learned.

Years ago, before adolescence hit me, I read a book called *Gospel Ideals*. It was a collection of excerpts from the talks of President David O. McKay. One chapter described how you would know when you were in love and, therefore, how you should view and treat women. His lofty words more than touched my heart: I felt a confirmation that they were true. Without telling anyone, I took David O. McKay's words as one of my standards of goodness. Five or six years later, I was playing basketball with a very fine team in a league in a city. . . . Up to that point, I had never had a date. And I had no sisters, so what I thought I knew about girls and how to treat them came mostly from the visions I got from *Gospel Ideals*. I remember riding home one night from a game. . . . I sat in the back seat of the car. They talked about girls. . . . I can remember, as I listened to them, the thought coming into my mind: "I have been wrong. Those ideals about girls and how you should feel about them, how you should treat them, they are unrealistic."

Luckily, in a few years I learned that they were wrong and President McKay was right. Or perhaps, in fairness to those young men, I learned that what I thought they had said, what I thought they had felt, what I thought they actually did, were not the true standard of goodness.

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Choose to Be Good," in *Brigham Young University 1991–92 Speeches* (1992), 5.

Learn to Laugh

There is an antidote for times [of testing and trial]: learn to laugh. . . .

. . . I remember when one of our daughters went on a blind date. She was all dressed up and waiting for her date to arrive when the doorbell rang. I walked a man who seemed a little old, but she tried to be polite. She introduced him to me and my wife and the other children; then she put on her coat and went out the door. We watched as she got into the car, but the car didn't move. Eventually our daughter got out of the car and, red faced, ran back into the house. The man that she thought was her blind date had actually come to pick up another of our daughters who had agreed to be a babysitter for him and his wife.

We all had a good laugh over that. In fact, we couldn't stop laughing. Later, when our daughter's real blind date showed up, I couldn't come out to meet him because I was still in the kitchen laughing. Now, I realize that our daughter could have felt humiliated and embarrassed. But she laughed with us, and as a result, we still laugh about it today.

The next time you're tempted to groan, you might try to laugh instead. It will extend your life and make the lives of all those around you more enjoyable.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1917–2009), "Come What May, and Love It," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 26–27.

No Regrets

A few years ago my wife and I and another General Authority and his wife were on a Church assignment. The other man's wife and I had dated when we were both in high school. I was glad, and I am sure she was glad, that we did not have any bad memories of that date. Both of us could speak of it to our spouses and both of us could speak to a Church audience in the presence of the other without embarrassment.

When we are young, we sometimes behave as if there were no tomorrow. When we are young it is easy to forget that we will grow up, marry, raise a family, and—note this significant point—continue to associate with some of the same people who are witnesses to or participants in our teenage pranks or transgressions.

Young men, the girl you are dating may be your wife in a few years, but probably she will not. Possibly she will turn out to be the wife of your bishop or your stake president. Young women, the fellow you are dating may turn out to be your husband, but more likely, he will not. He may turn out to be the husband of your sister or your best friend. He may even be a counselor in your bishopric or an employee you supervise at your place of work. Conduct your life today so your tomorrows are not burdened with bad or embarrassing memories.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Sin and Suffering," in *Brigham Young University 1989–90 Speeches* (1990), 7.