



By Bonnie L.
Oscarson

Young Women
General President

Defy Gravity:

GO FORWARD WITH FAITH

As you keep moving forward, you can stay upright even when outside forces try to pull you down.

I received my first two-wheel bicycle when I was eight years old. With the help of my older brother and father, I began the rather scary process of figuring out how to ride it. The other kids in the neighborhood made it look so easy and natural as they zoomed up and down the street on their bikes. I perched on the bike seat—which seemed to be at least 10 feet (3 m) above the ground—and realized there was absolutely nothing to keep me from falling over and proving that the law of gravity was alive and well.

As I tried riding, I learned quickly that if I wanted to stay balanced, I had to keep pedaling. When I first sat on the seat, speed was the last thing I wanted to add to the already daunting equation. But I very soon understood the wisdom and the physics involved in moving forward. As long as I kept

pedaling, I could stay upright and avoid the rough concrete just waiting to take the skin off my arms and legs. Soon I was zipping around the neighborhood with my friends.

Just as those who keep pedaling a bike can stay upright despite gravity's influence, those who are guided by the Holy Spirit in all they do can withstand the influence of the adversary.

So it is with living the gospel and the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*. It takes faith to believe that if we consistently follow the counsel

of the First Presidency as outlined in that booklet, our lives will be balanced and steady. We will be led where we want to go.

We need to keep moving forward to avoid falling. To do that, we should consistently and faithfully do certain actions:

- Pray morning and night.
- Study the scriptures daily.
- Attend Church meetings and partake of the sacrament worthily.
- Serve those around us.
- Be worthy to attend the temple.

All of these actions keep us moving forward in the right direction.

That's why reading and being familiar with the standards described in *For the Strength of Youth* will help ensure we are making choices consistent with God's standards. Living these principles and keeping the commandments



invite the Holy Ghost to be our constant companion. Just as those who keep pedaling a bike can stay upright despite gravity's influence, those who are guided by the Holy Spirit in all they do can withstand the influence of the adversary.

What are the destinations you have in mind as you pedal forward? For all young men of the Aaronic Priesthood, preparing now for a full-time mission is important in forward growth. For all youth, being prepared to go to the temple and receive the endowment by making and keeping sacred covenants should also be a primary goal.

As the message from the First Presidency at the beginning of *For the Strength of Youth* says: "In all that you do, stay focused on the temple. In the temple you will receive the greatest of all the Lord's blessings, including marriage for time and all eternity."¹

Receiving the covenant of eternal marriage in the house of the Lord and becoming righteous husbands, wives, fathers, and mothers may seem far down the road, but the time to begin preparing is now. All of these things lead to the most glorious and grand destination of all—eternal life with our Heavenly Father.

One of my favorite scriptures sums up what we need to do in order to keep moving toward our goals: "Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life" (2 Nephi 31:20).

Just as I learned as an eight-year-old girl that I needed to keep pedaling

and moving forward in order to defy gravity and keep my balance on my bicycle, it is important for all of us to keep moving forward with faith, trusting in the counsel of living prophets and a loving Heavenly Father to keep us from falling. Some of our destinations are just down the road while others will take a lifetime of faithful living to achieve. The promises of what lies at the end of the road, if we are faithful, are certain and glorious and well worth the ride. **NE**

NOTE

1. *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), ii.



Learn More

See what's next in your covenant path at lds.org/go/covenantNE8.