



DON'T FACE THE WORLD ALONE

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T*rust in the Lord. He knows what He is doing. He already knows of your problems. And He is waiting for you to ask for help.*

For a piece of wood to catch fire, it must first be heated to a temperature at which it ignites, then burns by itself. The initial heating requires energy from outside. When it is ignited, it becomes self-sustaining and gives beneficial light and heat.

For you young people, the early years of life are often spent in absorbing help from parents and others as you prepare for the time you can be more self-sufficient. I want to help you catch fire spiritually, that you may enjoy the marvelous experience of radiating strength to others while you continue to grow and develop yourself.

There is a more intense fire than that of burning wood. It is produced from a mixture of aluminum powder and metal oxide. By itself, it is cold and lifeless, but when heated to the ignition temperature, it becomes a self-sustaining source of brilliant light and intense heat.

Once it ignites it cannot be put out by ordinary means. It will burn under water or in other environments that extinguish an ordinary flame. When it burns, it does not depend on its surroundings for support. It is self-sustaining.

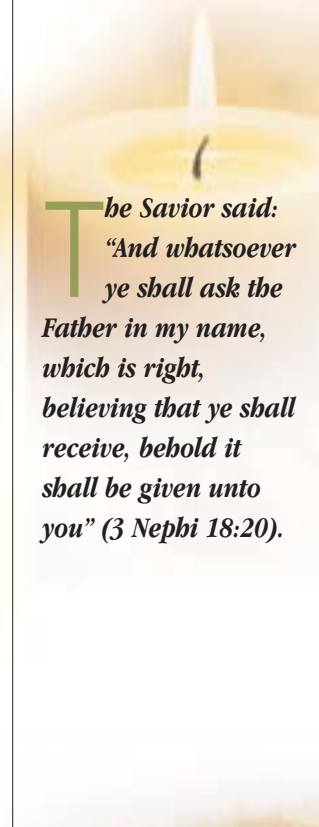
Lighting a Spiritual Flame

The spiritual flame in some is easily quenched by the world around them. Yet others live so as to be strengthened and nurtured by the Lord. They not only overcome the temptations of the world, but their unquenchable spirit also enriches the lives of others around them.

Two missionaries who were aflame spiritually had spent an active day establishing a branch of the Church in a remote village. At 5:30 that morning, they had taught a family before the husband left for the fields. Later they had struggled to plaster their adobe walls to keep out blood-sucking insects. During the week they had laid a small cement floor and had hung a five-gallon can with a shower head to keep clean. They had begun a sanitation facility and put new gravel and sand in their water filter. For part of the day they had worked beside men in the fields to later teach them. They were exhausted and ready for welcome rest.

There came an anxious knock at the crude wooden door. A small girl was crying. She had been running and was gasping for air. They struggled to piece together her





The Savior said:
“And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you” (3 Nephi 18:20).

message, delivered amid sobs in a torrent of words. Her father had suffered a severe head injury while riding his donkey in the darkness. She knew he would die unless the elders saved his life. Men of the village were at that moment carrying him to the missionaries.

The seriousness of their desperate situation began to engulf them. They were in a village with no doctors or medical facilities. There were no telephones. The only means of communication was a rough road up a riverbed, and they had no vehicle.

The people of the valley trusted them. The missionaries were not trained in medicine. They did not know how to care

for a serious head wound, but they knew someone who did. They knelt in prayer and explained their problem to an understanding Father in Heaven. They pled for guidance, realizing that they could not save a life without His help.

They felt impressed that the wound should be cleansed, closed, and the man given a blessing. One companion asked, “How will he stand the pain? How can we cleanse the wound and bless him while he is in such suffering?”

They knelt again and explained to their Father, “We have no medicine. We have no anesthetic. Please help us to know what to do. Please bless him, Father.”

As they arose, friends arrived with the injured man. Even in the subdued candlelight, they could see he had been severely hurt. He was suffering greatly. As they began to cleanse the wound, a very unusual thing occurred. He fell asleep. Carefully, anxiously, they finished the cleansing, closed the wound, and provided a makeshift bandage. As they laid their hands on his head to bless him, he awoke peacefully. Their prayer had been answered, and his life saved. The trust of the people increased, and a branch of the Church flourished.

The missionaries were able to save a life because they trusted the Lord. They knew how to pray with faith for help with a problem they could not resolve themselves. Because they were obedient to the Lord, the Lord trusted them and answered their prayer. They had learned how to recognize the answer when it came as a quiet prompting of the Spirit. You have that same help available to you if you live for it.

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believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you” (3 Nephi 18:20).

I know that each one of you faces overwhelming challenges. Sometimes they are so concentrated, so unrelenting, that you may feel they are beyond your capacity to control.

Don't face the world alone. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5).

Surviving in a Worldly Jungle

In many ways, the world is like a jungle, with dangers that can harm or mutilate your body, enslave or destroy your mind, or decimate your morality. It was intended that life be a challenge, not so that you would fail, but that you might succeed through overcoming. You face on every hand difficult but vitally important decisions. There is an array of temptations, destructive influences, and camouflaged dangers, the like of which no previous generation has faced. I am persuaded that today no one, no matter how gifted, strong, or intelligent, will avoid serious problems without seeking the help of the Lord.

I repeat: Don't face the world alone. Trust in the Lord.

If one of you has seriously sinned, repent—now. It is not good to violate the commandments of the Lord. It is worse to do nothing about it. Sin is like cancer in the body. It will never heal itself. It will become progressively worse unless cured through the medicine of repentance. You can be made completely whole, new, purified, and clean, every whit, through the miracle of repentance.

Trust in the Lord. He knows what He is doing. He already knows of your problems. And He is waiting for you to ask for help.

Developing a Righteous Character

Getting through the hazards of life requires understanding, skill, experience, and self-assurance like that required to sink a difficult basket under pressure. In the game of life, that is called righteous character. Such character is not developed in moments of great challenge or temptation. That is when it is used. Character is woven

quietly from the threads of hundreds of correct decisions (like practice sessions). When strengthened by obedience and worthy acts, correct decisions form a fabric of character that brings victory in time of great need.

Righteous character provides the foundation of spiritual strength that enables you to make difficult, extremely important decisions correctly when they seem overpowering.

Be honest. Righteous character is based on integrity.

Never lie to yourself. A lie can give temporary advantage, but it brings with it long-term difficulties. Make no premeditated plans to do wrong, no lies to gain advantage, no falsehood to cover mistakes. When you are completely honest with yourself and measure your acts against what you know is right, you will not be dishonest with anyone. Moreover, you will make sure the Lord can bless you when you need it.

When you are tempted to break a commandment and hide it from others, don't do it. It will always hurt you. Satan will see to that. He'll make it known because he wants to destroy you.

You have observed how some of your friends try to live a double standard of life. They want to appear to their parents and church leaders as though they are doing the right things, but secretly they do otherwise. They may have moments of excitement they consider pleasure, but they can never be at peace or truly happy. They fight against themselves internally and run the risk of destroying mind and body.

You know what is right and wrong. Be the leader in doing right. At first, you may not be understood. You may not have the friends you want right away, but in time, they will respect you, then admire you. Many will come privately to receive strength from your spiritual flame. You can do it. I know you can do it.

The Lord needs you for His purposes. Live His commandments. Learn to follow the promptings of the Spirit. Keep your spiritual flame burning brightly. I testify that the Lord lives. He loves you and will help you.

From "Trust in the Lord," Ensign, May 1989.