

Q & A

“Why do people who are doing wrong seem to be having so much fun? It doesn’t seem fair.”

NEW ERA

They *seem* to be having fun, but it’s impossible to do wrong and be happy. “Wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10). Those who do wrong might have short-lived fun, but unless they repent, they will never enjoy the true happiness that our Heavenly Father wants each of us to have for eternity.

Unfortunately, what the world thinks is fun often leads to regret. And when people do wrong, even though they seem to be having fun, they are moving away from God, the source of blessings like peace and joy. Joy comes from living the gospel and is deeper and more lasting than brief moments of fun.

Those who are doing wrong miss out on other blessings. If they aren’t virtuous, they won’t have the Holy Ghost with them (see D&C 121:45); if they aren’t obeying the Word of Wisdom, they won’t enjoy the blessings promised to those who follow it (see D&C 89:18–21).

So keep fun in perspective. It’s okay to have good, clean fun, and it can be part of a

■ **Doing wrong might seem fun at the time, but it can only bring unhappiness.**

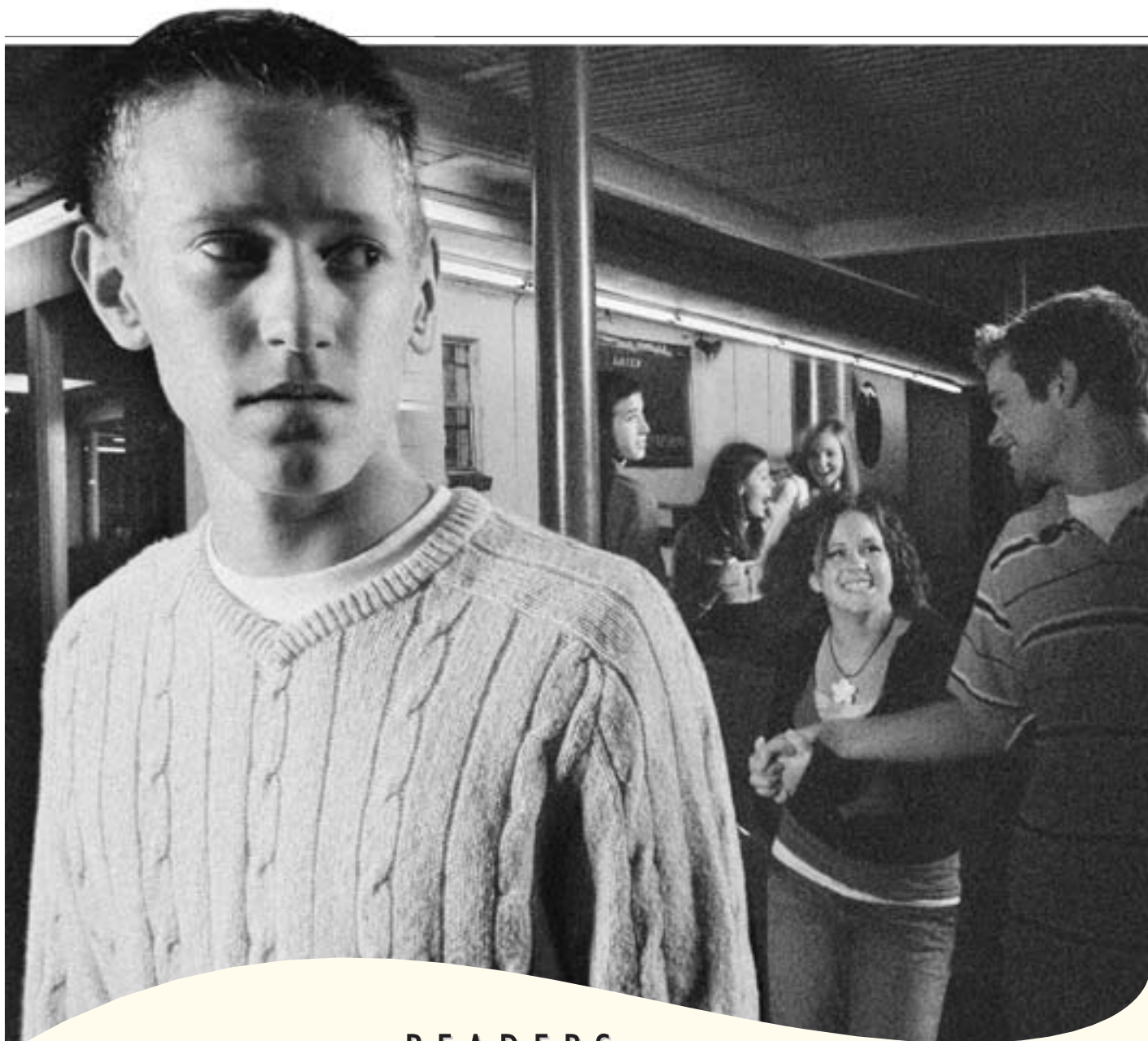
■ **There are lots of fun things you can do and still have the Spirit with you.**

■ **Every choice we make affects us—now and later. Things will turn out to be fair, especially in the next life.**

wholesome, happy life. But it’s not the most important thing in life. This life is “a time to prepare to meet God” (Alma 12:24). Spiritual growth is much more important than having fun.

As a member of the Church, you know that there are many fun things you can do that you won’t regret. Sports, outdoor activities, time with friends and family, and creative activities that use your talents are all good ways to have fun. If your activity stays within the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, then you know it’s the kind of fun that will help you keep the Spirit with you.

You say it doesn’t seem fair that people who do wrong seem to be having fun. Actually, it is more fair than you, or they, may realize. Every choice affects us. Doing wrong always hurts that person and others involved. Doing right always improves that person and brings him or her blessings. In the next life, we will be held accountable for all of our thoughts and actions. Those who repent and are faithful in this life will be blessed



READERS

with the greatest of all the gifts of God.

Your question is actually not a new one. The ancient Israelites said:

"It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance . . . ?

"And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered" (Malachi 3:14–15).

But the Lord taught them that He knows those who live faithfully; He writes their names in a book of remembrance (see v. 16). **NE**



The scripture 3 Nephi 27:11–12 might help us answer this question. It states that "they have joy in their works for a season, and by and by the end cometh"

and "it is because of their works that they are hewn down." We learn that, in fact, they will think they are having fun because the devil tricks them into believing there are no consequences for wrong choices. But in the end the devil will not support those he brings down. The fun is only temporary. We can find hope in the scripture Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.

Jon M., 15, California



Satan will try to entice us to make the wrong choice because he wants us to be miserable like himself. He tries to create the illusion that making

wrong choices leads to more fun. We can see through the illusion by thinking about the consequences that choice will eventually lead to. Remember that those who look like they may be having fun now will eventually have to repent later or suffer. If we look at the big picture, we will realize that it will be fair in the end. We need to remember that when a wrong choice seems appealing. The people

who are doing wrong are also trying to make their wrong choice seem fun to others so that they can temporarily escape their guilt.

Tyler O., 15, Utah

Part of the devil's plan is to make evil things look fun and glamorous. We may not realize it, but those who look like they are having fun making wrong choices suffer consequences. Sin is not worth committing. We have to stop and think about what we're going to do and think about the consequences before we do it.

Alyssa K., 16, Indiana



They seem to be having fun because that is how Satan wants you to see it. He makes doing wrong seem fun so he can capture you in his snare. He will use illusions to tempt you. It may not

seem fair, but what of the consequences from doing wrong? Satan will not help you if you get in trouble. If you stay in good company though, it is easier to walk away from temptation.

Sarah M., 16, Texas



I don't think they are really having fun. I have seen many people abusing their bodies, and it may have been fun for them at the time, but they ended up with a lot of prob-

lems. They lost their parents' trust, they were being kicked out of their houses, they lost money, they had to go to rehabilitation, and many more bad things came because of this abuse. If you respect yourself, you will be happier.

Heather R., 17, Alberta, Canada

Fun is a very temporary thing. If fun is what you seek, you are cutting your potential short. Our true potential is to have the joy and peace given from God. The way to attain this is to keep the laws of the Lord placed before us to ensure our eternal joy. If we are doing what He wants us to do, we will reach our full potential and have joy, which is much better than a temporary rush of "fun."

Andrea M., 17, Arizona



"You are making a serious error if you mistake an emotional thrill that passes with the moment for the upsurge of deep feelings that is the joy of living. If one feels strong surges of happiness and desire from the quiet of a happy home, from the unfolding of a beautiful life, from the revelation of divine wisdom, or from a love for the beautiful, the true and good, he is having a taste of the fulness of the joy that the living of a rich, full life only can bring."

—President Harold B. Lee, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1996), 621.

I have a friend who is living a very poor lifestyle. He always appears to be happy on the surface, and yet I know of the internal pain and suffering his choices have caused him. People may experience temporary relief from this pain through substance abuse, immorality, etc., but that is all it is—temporary. Living unrighteously is never fun.

Jenna M., 18, Utah



I have a few friends who seem to have fun because of wrong choices they make, but in the end the wrong choice is never the right choice. Even though people may appear to be having fun,

they feel empty on the inside. They do wrong things attempting to fill the emotional hole inside of them.

Courtney D., 15, Utah



When we come to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are able to see the reality of true happiness. We come to understand the world and identify its unrighteousness.

If we understand the gospel, we will soon realize that no one is truly happy when doing wrong. Seek to obtain a strong testimony, and wrong acts will not seem fun and unfair to you anymore.

Karina C., 21, Victoria, Australia

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

NEXT QUESTION

"I always feel good at church, but I don't feel the Spirit as much throughout the week. How can I feel closer to God at home, school, and work?"

SEND YOUR ANSWER, along with your full name, birth date, ward and stake, and photograph (including your parent's written permission to print the photo, if you are under 18) to:

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50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA

Or e-mail: newera@ldschurch.org

Please respond by February 15, 2007.