

# THE New Era

MARCH 2013

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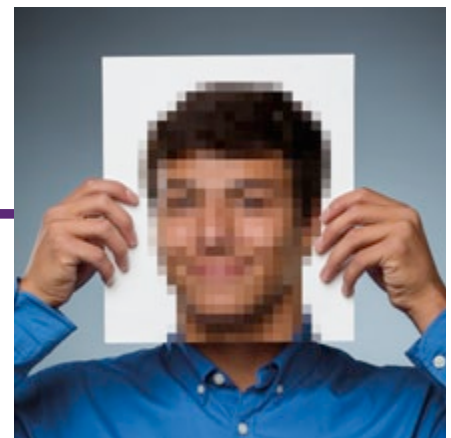
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By Elder Quentin L. Cook

Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

# Don't Wear MASKS

*One of your greatest protections against making bad choices is to not put on any mask of anonymity.*

**A**s I have reflected on who you are, the feeling has come over me that you might not fully appreciate the significance of your generation. I believe you have the background and the foundation to be the best generation ever, particularly in advancing our Father in Heaven's plan.

In view of the enormous potential for good that you possess, what are my concerns for your future? What counsel can I give you? There will be great pressure on each of you to act out of character—even to wear a mask—and become someone who doesn't really reflect who you are or who you want to be.

## **An Example from U.S. History**

In 2011, Elder L. Tom Perry and I met with Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League. Its mission is to stop the defamation of the Jewish people.

In our meeting with Mr. Foxman, I asked him what counsel he would have for us in connection with our responsibilities in public affairs for the Church. He pondered for a moment and then explained the

importance of encouraging people to not wear masks. He described the Ku Klux Klan. It was an organization that was very influential and quite frightening to most Americans in the first part of the 20th century. Wearing identical robes and masks that made it impossible to identify the participants, they burned crosses on the lawns of those they targeted and appointed themselves as so-called moral watchdogs. Among those most targeted were African Americans, but Catholics, Jews, and immigrants were as well. The most militant of the Klan members were involved in whippings, physical abuse, and even murders. Mr. Foxman pointed out that the majority of the Klan, without the masks, were usually normal people, including businessmen and churchgoers. He noted that hiding their identity and wearing a mask enabled them to participate in activities that they would normally have avoided. Their conduct had a terrible impact on American society.

Mr. Foxman's counsel was to stress the importance of people avoiding masks that hide their true identity.<sup>1</sup>

## **Examples from Church History**

In our early Church history, the Prophet Joseph, Emma, and their 11-month-old twins Joseph and Julia were in Hiram, Ohio, at the Johnson farm.

One Saturday night a group of men with black-painted faces burst through the door and dragged the Prophet outside, where they beat him and threw tar on him and Sidney Rigdon.

"Though the Prophet had lost a tooth, received a severe injury in his side, was missing a patch of hair, and had nitric acid burns, he preached a sermon at the usual Sunday worship service. Among the Saints gathered there were at least four members of the mob."<sup>2</sup>

It is also interesting that those who participated in the Martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum painted their faces in an effort to hide their true identities.<sup>3</sup>

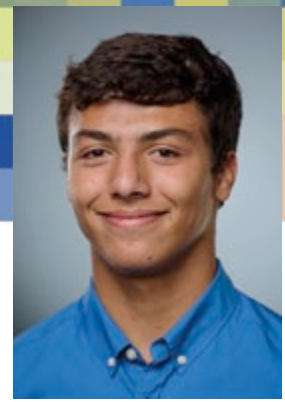
## **Avoid Wearing a Mask and Acting Out of Character**

I am not suggesting that any of you would be involved in the kind of terrible events I have just described.

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*One of your greatest protections against making bad choices is to not put on any mask of anonymity.*

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I do believe, in our day, when being anonymous is easier than ever, that there are important principles involved in not wearing a mask and being “true to the faith . . . for which martyrs have perished.”<sup>4</sup>

One of your greatest protections against making bad choices is to not put on any mask of anonymity. If you ever find yourself wanting to do so, please know it is a serious sign of danger and one of the adversary’s tools to get you to do something you should not do.

It is interesting that people who are involved with pornography often assume a false identity that hides their participation. They mask their conduct, which they know is reprehensible and destructive to everyone they care about. Pornography is a plague that is detrimental not only to a person’s moral standing with God, but it can also destroy marriages and families and has an adverse impact on society.

For those who have fallen into this destructive habit, please be assured that you can repent, and you can be healed. Repentance will need to precede healing. Healing may be a long process. Your bishop or branch president can counsel you as to how you can receive the help you need to be healed.

### **Act in Accordance with Your Beliefs**

It is common today to hide one’s identity when writing hateful, vitriolic, bigoted communications anonymously online. Some refer to it as flaming. Certain institutions try to screen comments. For instance, the *New York Times* won’t tolerate comments where there are “personal attacks, obscenity, vulgarity, profanity, . . . impersonations, incoherence and SHOUTING. . . .

“*The Times* also encourages the use of real names because, ‘We have found that people who use their names carry on more engaging, respectful conversations.’”<sup>5</sup>

The Apostle Paul wrote:

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

“Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God” (1 Corinthians 15:33–34).

It is clear that evil communications are not just a matter of bad manners, but, if practiced by those who are Latter-day Saints, they can adversely affect those who do not have knowledge of God or a testimony of the Savior.

Any use of the Internet to bully, destroy a reputation, or place a person in a bad light is reprehensible. What we are seeing in society is that when people wear the mask of

anonymity, they are more likely to engage in this kind of conduct, which is so destructive of civil discourse. It also violates the basic principles the Savior taught.

The righteous need not wear masks to hide their identity.

### **Act Well Your Part**

We have great confidence in you. The leadership of the Church honestly believes that you can build the kingdom like no previous generation. You have not only our love and confidence but also our prayers and blessings. We know that the success of your generation is essential to the continued establishment of the Church and the growth of the kingdom. We pray that you will act well your part as you avoid wearing a mask. **NE**

*From a Church Educational System fireside for young adults given on March 4, 2012, at Brigham Young University–Idaho.*

### **NOTES**

1. Meeting with Abraham Foxman in his office in New York City, New York, on June 14, 2011.
2. Mark L. Staker, “Remembering Hiram, Ohio,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 35, 37.
3. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 24.
4. “True to the Faith,” *Hymns*, no. 254.
5. Mark Brent, in “The Public Forum,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 27, 2011, A16.



# 100%

## COMMITTED

By Julia A. Oldroyd

*For my brother-in-law, 99% just wasn't good enough.*

**M**y brother-in-law, Taylor, works in Washington, D.C., for the United States Department of Agriculture. As part of his job, he is expected to attend a number of social functions. These functions almost always have alcohol served to the guests. The people who work with Taylor know of his religious beliefs and commitment to abstain from all alcoholic beverages, and they will often thoughtfully provide something else to drink in their place.

At one particular function, someone had brought a few beverages that claimed to be alcohol free. Taylor

was offered one of these drinks, but since the brand and type of drink were unfamiliar to him, he said in a friendly manner, "I'll have to check that label first."

Taylor read the fine print on the bottle, and sure enough, the drink contained a small amount of alcohol. "Look," Taylor said, "it has alcohol in it."

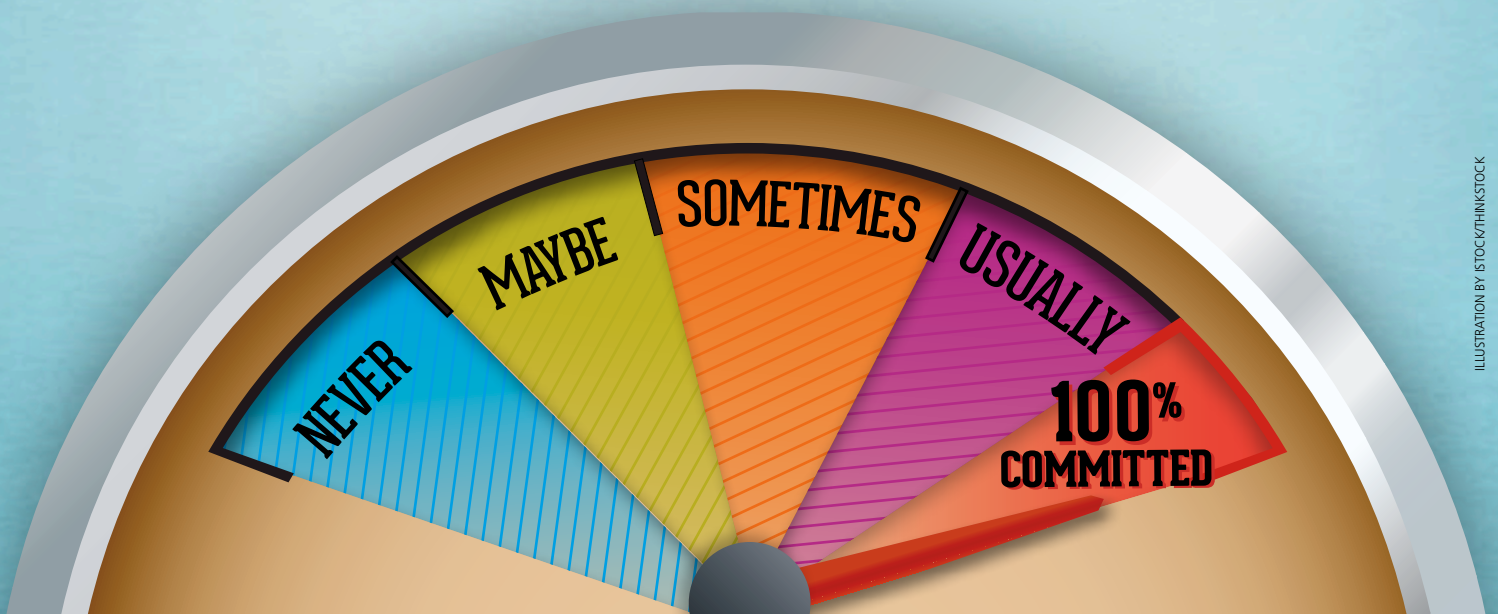
The person who had offered the drink said, "Let me see that!" After looking for a minute, he turned to Taylor and pointed at the label. "Taylor, it has only 1% alcohol. Can't you even drink that?"

Not wanting to offend his friend,

yet not willing to compromise his standards, Taylor replied, "Well, when you're 100% committed, 99% just isn't good enough." He thanked them for trying to accommodate him but turned down the drink.

I have thought of this experience many times and reevaluated my personal commitment to live the gospel. Whenever I am tempted to give a half-hearted effort or anything less than my best, I remember that I am 100% committed and that anything less than that just isn't good enough. **NE**

*Julia A. Oldroyd lives in Utah, USA.*





# PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM PROFANITY



By Riley M. Lorimer-Reznik

*Do you ever feel like you need earplugs to walk through the halls of your school? I did.*

**T**he language used in the school hallways and in class was just awful. I remember entering junior high school and feeling like the increased use of profanity was a slap in the face. It seemed to be everywhere. I felt like I couldn't escape it! You probably feel the same way. So how do you avoid being affected by all the bad language? How do you keep your thoughts pure when your ears are being filled with so much filth? Try considering some of these helpful steps.

## Personal Purity

First of all, choose not to participate in the vulgarity. Pray for help and decide now to keep your mouth clean. Don't talk about or participate in media with subjects that are vulgar or inappropriate. If you do this, the Spirit can be with you at all times. Be especially careful to be reverent and respectful when using the names of God and Jesus Christ. Misuse of Their names is a sin (see Exodus 20:7).

Swearing and crude language offend the Spirit. If you've already developed a habit of swearing, choose today to stop. Use more wholesome words to express yourself, or if you feel you are about to say something you shouldn't, just don't say anything at all (see the quote from Elder L. Tom Perry at right).

## Good Friends

It's important to choose friends who do not speak crudely, because the people you spend time with will have an influence on you (see *For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 16). When looking for friends, surround yourself with





people who share or respect your standards, including standards on language. Steven B. from Australia says, “After personal prayer, I felt inspired to search for friends who have high standards and morals. If you pray and look hard for good friends, the Lord will provide a way to help you stay clean.”

If friends swear, find a good-natured way to let them know their language offends you. A good friend will respect you and keep from using words that make you uncomfortable. But you have to speak up and let them know that the behavior bothers you.

### Escape Routes

Even if you and your friends keep your language clean and uplifting, you will undoubtedly still be exposed to inappropriate words and immoral talk. It happens in society and in your schools. You must be prepared to defend yourself.

When those around you are using profane or vulgar language, you can always try asking people not to swear. Sometimes that will work and sometimes it will backfire. Some people will respect your values and clean up their language, but unfortunately, others may only scoff and swear more.

So what can you do? If the situation permits, leave. Just get out of the area altogether. There may be times, however, when people are speaking crudely during class or other obligations where you can't get away. In situations like that, you must defend yourself

in your mind. Megan O. from Utah says, “The trick is to tune the bad language out—literally, *tune*. Pick your favorite hymn and memorize it. Then whenever a situation becomes vulgar in language, start singing in your head or humming.” This can bring the Spirit back and help you focus on more godly thoughts. You may have heard this suggestion before, but the reason it gets repeated so often is because it actually works! (See President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Worthy Music, Worthy Thoughts,” *New Era*, Apr. 2008, 6–11.)

### Strength through the Spirit

The best way to combat the influence of bad language is to simply carry the Spirit with you. When you are living a righteous life and praying for the aid and influence of the Holy Ghost, you will be able to create a sort of spiritual force field to protect you from the world.

Keep *your* language clean and appropriate, choose good friends, and strive to always have the companionship of the Spirit. The Spirit will help you resist the temptation to use bad language, and He will help you to remain unspotted in a world where contact with filth is nearly unavoidable. **NE**

*Riley M. Lorimer-Reznik lives in Utah, USA.*



### DEVELOP A GOOD SPEECH HABIT

“To anyone who has followed the practice of using profanity or vulgarity and would like to correct the habit, could I offer this suggestion?

“1. Make the commitment to erase such words from your vocabulary.

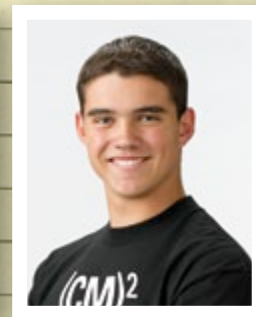
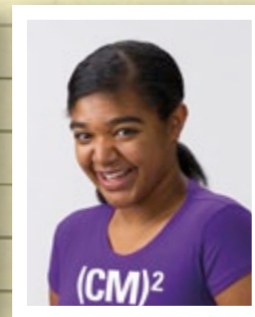
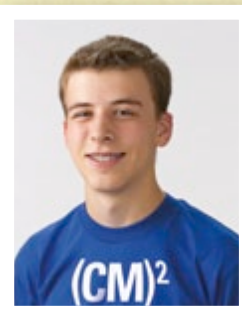
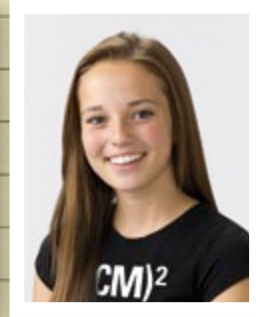
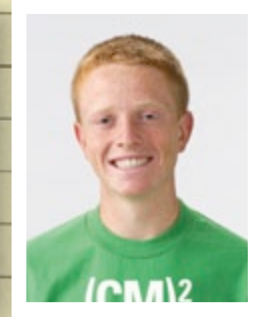
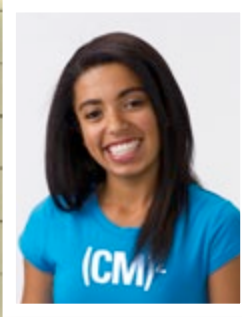
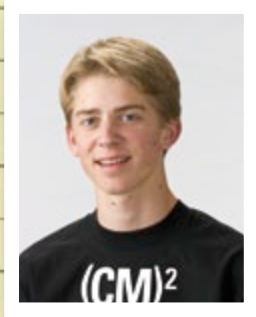
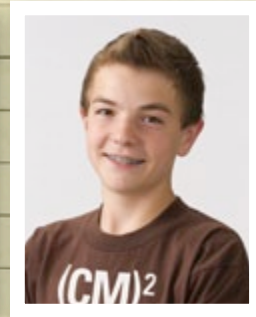
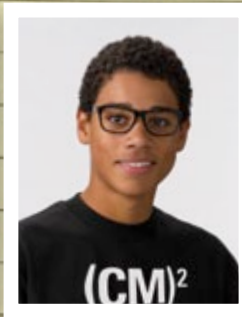
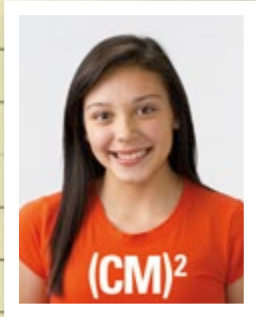
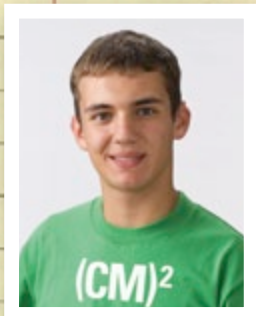
“2. If you slip and say a swear word or a substitute word, mentally reconstruct the sentence without the vulgarity or substitute word.


“3. Repeat the new sentence aloud.

“Eventually you will develop a nonvulgar speech habit.”

**Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Thy Speech Reveals Thee,” *New Era*, July 2007, 5.**





 **The No-Cussing Club**  
 Watch a *Mormon Messages for Youth* video about another young man who motivated people to use clean language at [lds.org/go/33A](https://lds.org/go/33A).



# THE (CM)<sup>2</sup> PROJECT

*When my football team started using foul language, I knew I had to do something about it.*

By Stephen Paul Anderson

I first started playing football in seventh grade and was excited to finally be on a school team. Moving to ninth grade football, I noticed that everyone seemed a little more intense and competitive. I also noticed that the language on and off the field was rougher than it had been before.

In my monthly interview with my dad I brought up my worries about the vulgar, degrading talk that was a part of school and sports. He listened while I described how the players behaved on the field and how people talked at school. Dad listened and said that language shows the true nature of a person. I pointed out that my older brothers, Peter and Christian, had played high school ball a few years before and had not talked or acted inappropriately. It occurred to me that we actually have a choice as to how we behave and express ourselves at school and on the field. In fact, in every aspect of our lives, no matter where we are, we can choose just how we are going to be.

At the end of the interview, my dad and I came up with the idea of “clean mouth/clean mind.” The next night in family home evening, we talked about the importance of having a clean mouth and a clean mind in everything we do, including sports. Mom

abbreviated the “clean mouth/clean mind” phrase to (CM)<sup>2</sup>, and we set a rule to keep a clean mouth and a clean mind at work, school, and play. We even made shirts with (CM)<sup>2</sup> printed on them.

When I started wearing the (CM)<sup>2</sup> shirt at school, my friends and teachers began to ask me what (CM)<sup>2</sup> stands for. After I explained what it was, they wanted to join in. When some parents found out about (CM)<sup>2</sup>, they also asked for shirts as a reminder for themselves. Word spread from my middle school to my high school and then to the high school across town.

Because of the Internet, we’ve had people participate in places as far away as India, Europe, and South Africa. We’ve had a lot of fun getting the word out. My dad refers to the project as “a family home evening out of control.” We really don’t know just how far it will spread. Maybe it will reach clear around the world. It kind of makes you wonder how much better the world would be if more people agreed to have a clean mouth and a clean mind. **NE**

*Stephen Paul Anderson  
lives in Utah, USA.*

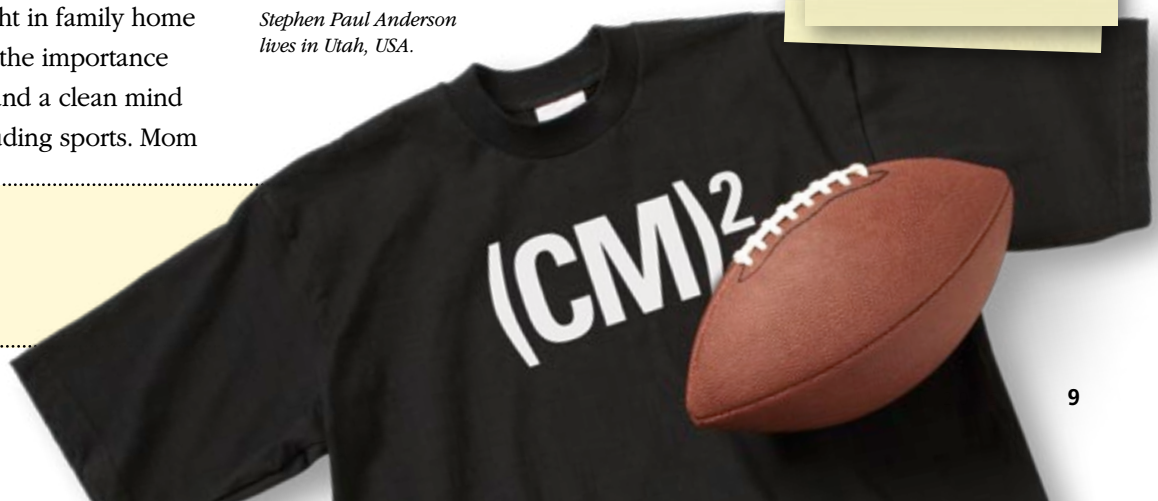
## THE STANDARD

“How you communicate should reflect who you are as a son or daughter of God. Clean and intelligent language is evidence of a bright and wholesome mind. Good language that uplifts, encourages, and compliments others invites the Spirit to be with you. Our words, like our deeds, should be filled with faith, hope, and charity. . . . Help others improve their language by your example.”

*For the Strength of Youth (2011), 20.*

### RELATED SCRIPTURES

- Ephesians 4:29
- Mosiah 4:30
- D&C 121:45





# PERSONAL PROGRESS *Mentors*

By Hillary Holbrook

*Young women are accomplishing great things through Personal Progress, and they're helping one another at the same time.*

Every year in Iowa, the corn plants grow taller than 10 feet high. In the summer, it's not hard to find fields of tall, leafy corn stalks that extend for miles.

But look closer. Something else is standing tall in central Iowa—a group of six young women who are diligently helping one another achieve their Personal Progress. They mentor each other under the direction of their Young Women leaders and with the help and support of their parents and

priesthood leaders. These young women understand what it means to “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9) as they teach by example the true value of Personal Progress.

## Establishing Good Habits

Camilla C., 14, remembers feeling excited when she turned 12 and entered the Young Women program. “Yes, I finally made it!” says Camilla, reflecting on that day. However, she soon became overwhelmed flipping

through the pages of her new, pink *Personal Progress* booklet. “I realized I had an entire book to complete, and I had just completed Faith in God,” says Camilla.

Kalie G., a Mia Maid at the time, had earned her Young Womanhood Recognition and had decided to work on her Honor Bee, which can be earned after the Young Womanhood Recognition and involves mentoring another young woman with her Personal Progress. Kalie learned that Camilla needed





help, and the two young women started meeting together weekly.

Camilla says Kalie “helped me with the scriptures that are listed in the different value experiences. She would assign me one scripture for each day of the week.”

Kalie says, “We would go over the value experience that she completed from the past week. We worked on it for a couple of months.”

Camilla discovered that having Kalie as a mentor was helpful. “I would have waited longer to do my Personal Progress had Kalie not helped,” says Camilla. “She was an inspiration to me. I have grown in my own strength because of her.”

Having these spiritual experiences together has strengthened their friendship. Plus, Camilla is close to earning her Young Womanhood Recognition, and Kalie earned her Honor Bee. But the two agree that something even better came as a result of working on Personal Progress.

“Reading my scriptures morning

and night and praying morning and night” are two major habits that Camilla has continued since working on Personal Progress. The same is true for Kalie.

Kalie says, “One of the [Honor Bee requirements] is to read the Book of Mormon again, and I think that helped me keep the habit of reading it every single day.”

### Strengthening Testimonies

The story is similar with Shannon M., 16, who has earned her Young Womanhood Recognition, and Lucy W., 14. Lucy was halfway through her Personal Progress as a Beehive. She stumbled across the third value experience for Faith and hit a wall.

“I was supposed to look in the Bible Dictionary or *True to the Faith*,” says Lucy. “I didn’t know where to start. I didn’t know exactly what to look for or how I could use it toward my experience.”

Shannon mentored Lucy, and the two went through the reading materials and set goals. Lucy was

able to complete the value experience and carry out a family home evening, completing her goal. This experience strengthened Lucy’s testimony and helped her stick with Personal Progress.

“When you finish something and you have to pray about it and write about it in your journal, it strengthens your relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.”

Shannon says that working on Personal Progress helped confirm the testimony she knew she had. “I was born into the Church, and I never really had that experience where I thought, ‘I know this Church is true’—until Personal Progress,” says Shannon. “It has backed my testimony up. That was the turning point.”

### Fortifying Family Ties

Mentoring a young woman was especially important to Jodi E., 18, who was working on her Honor Bee. She arranged to mentor her niece, Kylie J., 13, who had recently





## BLESSINGS FROM DOING PERSONAL PROGRESS



**Camilla C., 14:** “It builds you up and strengthens you in areas where you may be weak in the gospel. If you are reading your scriptures daily, then that helps strengthen your testimony, and it’s awesome.”



**Shannon M., 16:** “Once I have my mind set on something, I have to achieve it.

Working on Personal Progress was a daily reminder to get up, say my prayers, and read my scriptures. It motivated me. Then when I did those things, I felt like I was putting on the whole armor of God so that I could go to school and be strong.” (See Ephesians 6:10–18.)



**Kalie G., 16:** “It has helped me find other talents I have. One of my projects was learning how to sew pillows. I didn’t think I would be able to do it, but it actually turned out really well.”



**Jodi E., 18:** “It helps us remember who we are, that we are daughters of God. And each of the values focuses on different aspects of qualities we should have or important steps to returning to live with Christ again.”



**Kylie J., 13:** “It has helped me accomplish more things and do service. I made a 100-recipe cookbook, helped at a homeless shelter, and babysat for adults who went to the temple.”



**Lucy W., 14:** “It strengthens my testimony because of the little things like praying morning and night and reading my scriptures every day. When you do those things, you feel like you’re a better person and you’re able to share the gospel with others.”



entered the Young Women program.

Having an aunt in Young Women helped Kylie overcome shyness.

“I would have been more nervous without Jodi’s help,” says Kylie.

Both young women discovered a need within their own Young Women program, and they worked together on a 10-hour value experience for Faith.

They made pocket-size booklets about the Young Women values and theme that could easily be attached to a key ring or carried around in a scripture bag or purse (see top right). The first page of the colorful, nine-page booklets had a copy of the Young Women theme, and each of the other pages focused on a value with its corresponding statement from the *Personal Progress* booklet.

Jodi helped Kylie lay out the template on the computer and laminate each page after they were printed. Kylie cut, glued, hole-punched, and bound 20 booklets and passed them out in class. Working on this project helped Kylie become comfortable around her new peers and “learn about each Young Women value and how they all tie into the gospel.”

Jodi is about to earn her Honor Bee, but receiving a new charm is secondary to what Jodi says is truly accomplished. “Ultimately it’s fun to get the medallion at the end,” says Jodi, “but I like doing Personal



Progress because it strengthens me as a person and keeps me committed and constantly doing something to remind myself of the gospel and the Savior and what I want my life to entail.” That includes making covenants in the temple.

Working on Personal Progress has helped these youth stand tall in their daily lives, overcome trials and temptations, and live worthy of the temple. The young women agree that completing the value experiences within Personal Progress has planted a seed in their hearts, and what grows is a strong testimony of the Savior and His gospel. It may not be physically visible like tall corn stalks, but it is present in the way the young women live their lives and the good choices they have made to continue to progress and become more like the Savior. **NE**

*Hillary Holbrook lives in Iowa, USA.*



### IT HELPS YOU PREPARE

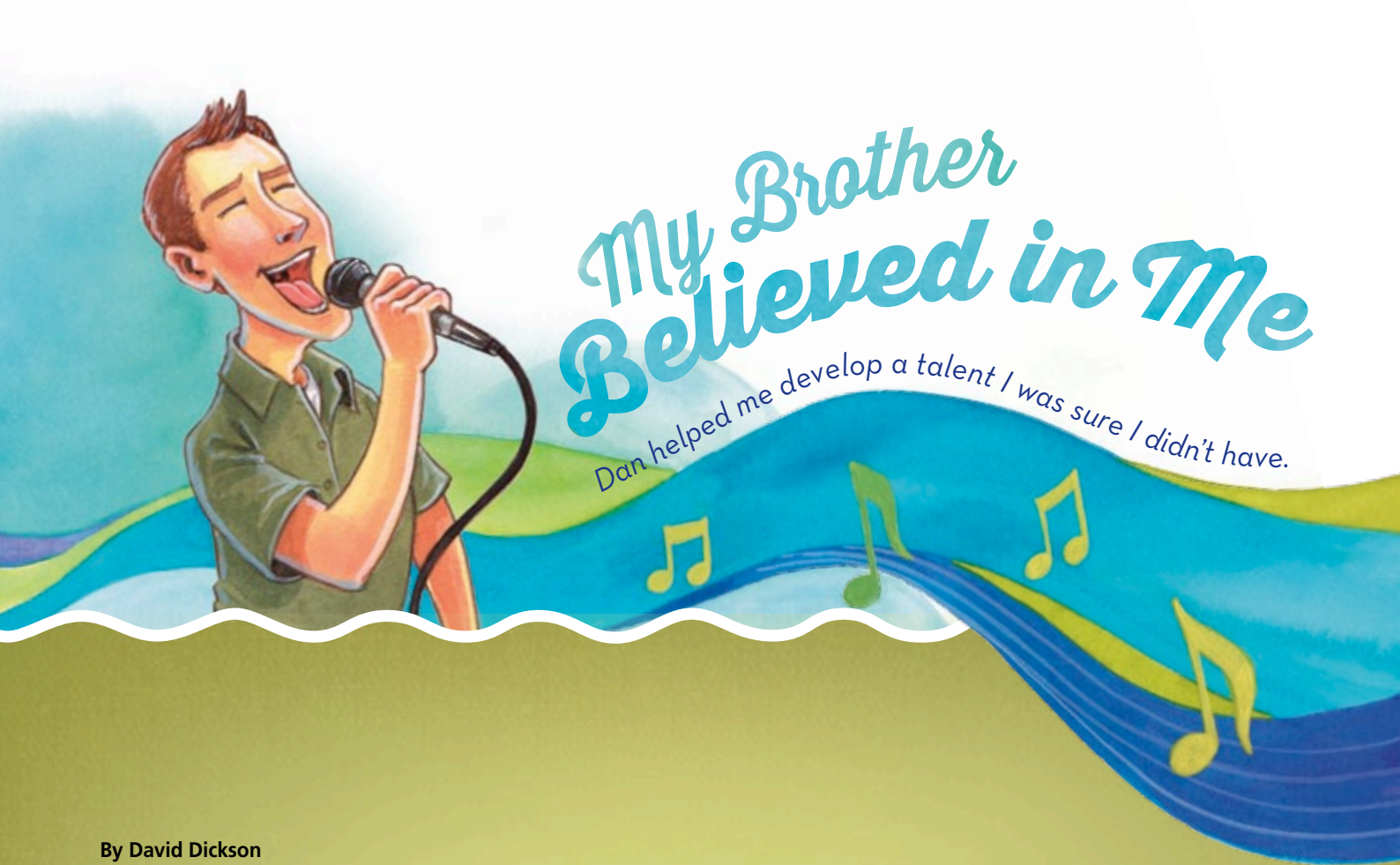
“The Young Women program has in it [a] powerful pattern to develop spiritual

strength in the young women. . . .

Personal Progress helps young women prepare to receive the ordinances of the temple.”

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Help Them on Their Way Home,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 24.**





# My Brother Believed in Me

Dan helped me develop a talent I was sure I didn't have.

By David Dickson  
Church Magazines

I was 15 when I learned a truth about my talents—or more precisely, my lack thereof—in one particular area: I couldn't sing.

I'd tried out for a community play, and my a cappella solo sounded so bad that halfway through an accompanist came up and started playing along out of pity. After that, I vowed nobody would hear me sing again. It was time to move on and find another hobby because one humiliating experience was plenty.

However, my big brother Dan, who was an incredible singer, had other plans. Months after my audition, he asked why I was so terrified of singing lately.

"I'm horrible," I told him. "I can't sing." Dan didn't believe me. Despite my protests, he convinced me to sing something right there. I was nervous.

I can't recall what I sang, but it was short and barely audible, and it seemed proof that I had no discernible singing talent. What Dan said next, I'll remember the rest of my

## STRENGTHEN YOUR SIBLINGS

"Strengthen your relationships with your brothers and sisters. They can become your closest friends. Support them in their interests, and help them with challenges they may be facing."

*For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 15.

life. "There," he told me, "I knew you had a good voice. You just have to practice."

In Doctrine and Covenants 38:25 we are taught to "let every man esteem his brother as himself." If Dan had made fun of me and my singing, as many older siblings might have done, he certainly would have ensured my singing silence, perhaps for a lifetime. Instead, Dan lifted me up. He encouraged me.

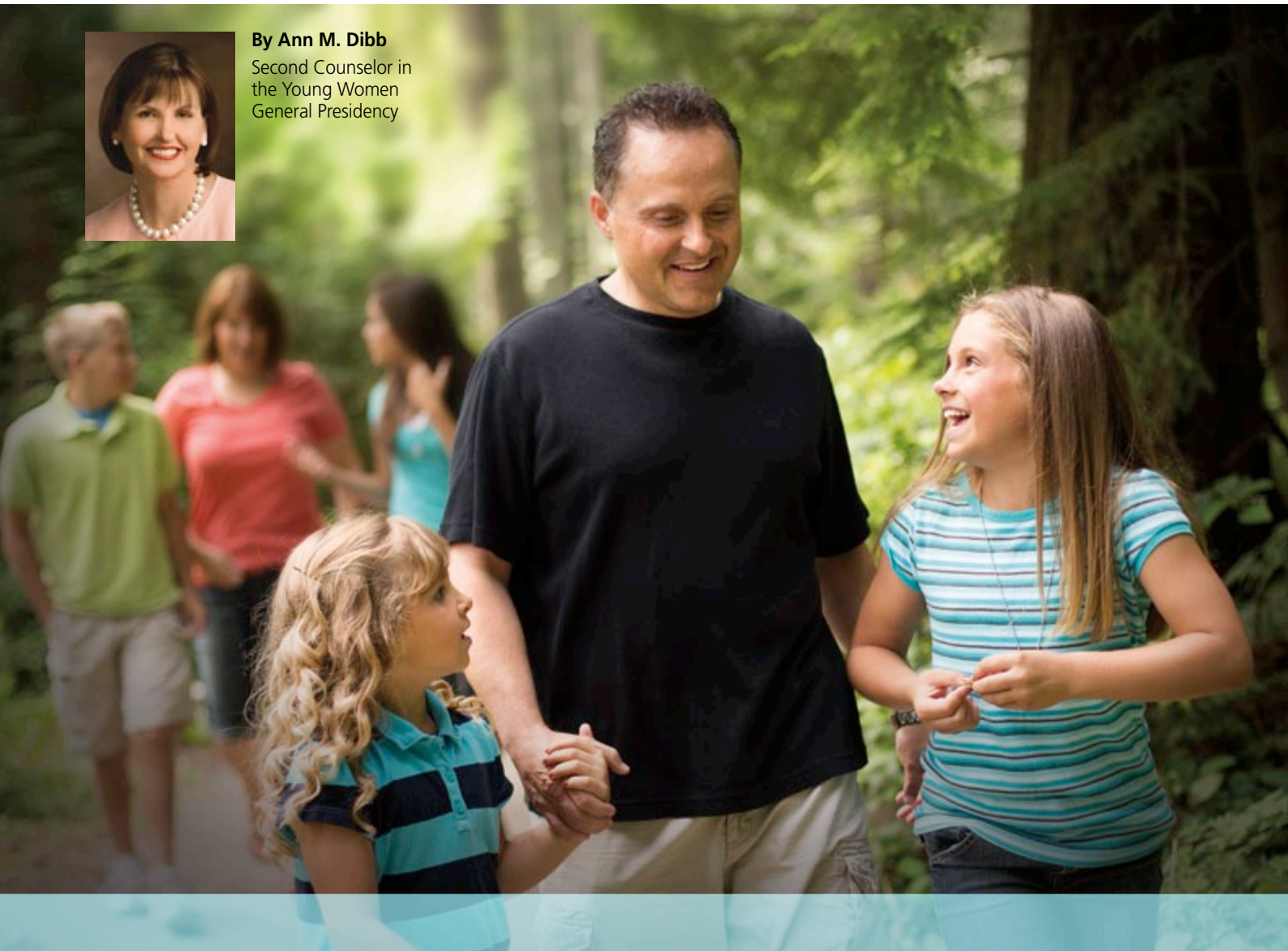
In the end, I followed his advice and practiced. To my surprise, I gradually improved. Singing became a great joy in my life. I sang in many choirs through-

out high school and then in college and beyond. Singing remains one of my deepest joys.

The Savior taught: "Behold, do men light a candle and put it under a bushel? Nay, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house" (3 Nephi 12:15). I've been able to let that light shine, enjoying and sharing music for many years now, but I never could have done it without the encouragement of my brother Dan. **NE**



**By Ann M. Dibb**  
Second Counselor in  
the Young Women  
General Presidency



## I HAVE A TESTIMONY OF THE FAMILY

**Y**ears ago I listened as a sister in my ward bore her testimony. I remember what she shared and how I felt. Sister Reese expressed gratitude for her righteous family and for the joy and comfort the knowledge of eternal families gave her. I felt the Spirit confirm my sincere desire to have that same blessing and testimony about families.

May I offer several suggestions to help you gain a testimony of the importance of family:

**1. Prayerfully seek the Lord's inspiration** and record your impressions as you study. Purify your life by keeping the commandments. This will help you qualify for the Spirit, who will assist you in your quest.

**2. Read "The Family: A Proclamation to the World,"**<sup>1</sup> first delivered by a prophet almost 20 years ago. My testimony of prophets, seers, and revelators is strengthened as I read this document and consider the changes that have taken place in



the world in relation to the family. As you read the proclamation, make note of the doctrines, counsel, warnings, and promised blessings and what they mean to you personally.

**3. Study the words of the prophets and General Authorities.** Their words are inspired and will bless those who believe and follow them. For example, President Thomas S. Monson has taught: “The family must hold its preeminent place in our way of life because it is the only possible base upon which a society of responsible human beings has ever found it practicable to build for the future and maintain the values they cherish in the present.”<sup>2</sup>

**4. Study the scriptures.** They contain multiple examples of families established on the foundation of righteousness, obedience, and faith in the testimony of Jesus Christ. Read your scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon, with the question, “What teachings would bless me when applied to my present and future family?”

**5. Study For the Strength of Youth, especially the “Family” section.** Learn about the responsibilities and blessings of a family. Make note of the work required for each member to create and maintain a united, gospel-centered family. Recognize how you can strengthen relationships within your family. Look for the assurance and comfort found in the quote to the right.

Truly, every section in *For the Strength of Youth* relates directly to and would improve family relationships. As the standards and commandments are followed by each member, they will feel an increase of love for each other, be blessed with the companionship of the Holy Ghost, and qualify for sacred temple ordinances and covenants that will bless families now and eternally.



### GOD'S PLAN FOR FAMILIES

“God desires that all of His children come into the world as part of an eternal family with a mother and father who love and care for each other and for their children. If this is not your experience, be patient and continue to live righteously. Look for worthy role models. Prepare now to fulfill your divine roles as a husband or wife and as a parent. Commit to marry in the temple and establish your own eternal family.”

*For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 15.

**6. Act upon what you have learned** in your study and *apply* what you have learned in your family (see D&C 88:119).

I have heard touching testimonials by young women who have worked on the third value experience in the Divine Nature section of Personal Progress, where young women are asked to make a special effort to strengthen their family relationships for two weeks (young men can find a similar plan in *Fulfilling My Duty to God* [2010], 80–81). One young woman shares, “I’ve experienced a miracle. I love my sister, and it happened in just two weeks! I’ve made it a goal to repeat this experience for each member of my family every single year. Why? Because it has made me so happy!”

**7. Pray and seek confirmation through the Spirit as to the importance of family.** Be patient and watchful. A testimony will come through the Spirit because “the family is ordained of God” and “it is the most important unit in time and in eternity.”<sup>3</sup>

I know that by doing these things the day will come when you, like Sister Reese, will be able to stand and share, “I have a testimony of the family, and this knowledge gives me comfort and joy.” **NE**

#### NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
2. *Teachings of Thomas S. Monson*, comp. Lynne F. Cannegieter (2011), 112.
3. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 1.1.1.

“My older brother  
isn’t active.  
When I invite  
him to church  
or ask him not to swear,  
he gets upset.  
How do I let him know that  
I want him to come  
back to  
church  
because I care?”

It sounds like your brother is already a bit defensive about your attempts to get him to go to church or to follow gospel teachings, so you’ll probably have more success reaching out to your brother in a non-pressured spirit of love. Your brother needs to know—and really believe—that you care about him as a person and that you’re not just trying to get him to come to church.

Pray to Heavenly Father for guidance on how to approach your brother with the Spirit and with love. Make sure all you do and say to your brother is done with love. Rather than preaching to your brother, you’re probably better off allowing your good example to show him how much joy the gospel brings.

Pray for your brother. Pray for the gifts of the Spirit. Read and ponder the words of living prophets and the scriptures, especially the example of the Savior. Then put your prayers into action by doing things that will show your brother you love him no matter whether he is active in the Church or not.

Hopefully, as you do these things, you will be able to help your brother feel the Spirit in his own life. **NE**

### Arise and Shine



Doctrine and Covenants 115:5 says, “Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations.”

If you let your light shine forth, your brother may realize he needs to come back. Let him feel your love. Let him feel that Heavenly Father desires him to come back to His presence. Don’t let him feel that he is alone. Let him feel the love and guidance of a real brother.

*Ric Eldrid P., 18, Philippines*

### Let the Spirit Guide



My family has a similar situation, and I think one of the most important things to do is pray for him and give him time. He has

agency, so you cannot force him to come back to church. Let the Spirit guide you as you decide when it would be appropriate to give him friendly encouragement and what to say. No matter what, be a supportive and loving sibling and friend. Help him to feel your love and Heavenly Father’s love for him and to feel welcome and included in the family. When he is ready, he will come back.

*Samantha J., 17, New York, USA*

### Serve with Love

At first I was frustrated with my siblings when they wouldn’t respond to my invitations. I became angry with them, and they started avoiding all talk on the subject of church. My dad helped me realize that isn’t what the Church is about. He reminded me, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” I learned over time that I needed to love them as they are. I found



little ways to serve them and show them I genuinely love them. Even though this did not win immediate results, they began to be more open to talk about the Church and were more receptive to my invitations when I showed them love.

*Name withheld, Taiwan*

### Be a Friend

Be his friend. By interacting with him more, you'll show that you care about his life and not just about what religion he attends. The closer you become to him, the more willing he may be to listen to the counsel of a loving sibling.

*Ashley S., 18, Utah, USA*

### Pray and Have Patience

My older brother is inactive. My family and I show him we care, and we're always there for him if he needs us. You can tell your brother he is missed in church and you'd like him back. Be patient and pray that your brother will have guidance back to the Church. He will come when he feels ready.

*Mariah D., 14, Saskatchewan, Canada*

### Be an Example



Remember to be an example. There is no more simple yet straightforward way to teach. Consider the story of Ammon and King

Lamoni (see Alma 17–20). Ammon went to preach the gospel, but instead of lecturing the king, he set out to work in the fields with the sheep. The king recognized Ammon as different from his other servants and learned it was because Ammon had the power of God. This story of being an example is a good starting point to helping others come back into the gospel.

*Jacob W., 15, Nevada, USA*

### Don't Give Up



My brother was less-active for a while. I tried almost everything I could think of to get him back to church. My parents were trying as well. I was almost ready to give up when a thought came to my mind in the middle of sacrament meeting. I followed the prompting, and a few weeks later he started to come for only sacrament meeting. It made me feel wonderful that he was coming back. I know that my Father in Heaven had answered my prayers and was helping my brother and me along in this obstacle in our lives. I know that if you pray for guidance, then Heavenly Father will indeed help you. Just don't give up.

*Hanna M., 15, Denmark*

### Don't Judge

I have the same situation in my home. The best thing to do is love him. Show him you care by serving him. Don't judge him, and give him gentle reminders of your standards. He may or may not come back, but your example of love will stick with him, and it's something he will remember later in life.

*Leah H., 15, Oregon, USA*

### Don't Push

My advice would be to not push him. Let him know you love him and want him to be happy. Express subtly how you feel about the Church. Don't be pushy; he may react by pulling away.

*Gloria H., 17, Arkansas, USA*

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



### GUIDES AND RESCUERS

"Our most important and powerful assignments are in the family. They are important because the family has the opportunity . . . to put feet firmly on the path home. Parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles are made more powerful guides and rescuers by the bonds of love that are the very nature of a family."

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Help Them on Their Way Home," *Ensign*, May 2010, 23.**

## UPCOMING QUESTION

"I sometimes feel like I'm alone in the world and that nobody understands what I'm going through as a teenager. What do I do?"

Send your answer and photo by April 15, 2013.

Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and click "Submit Material."

You can also write to us at [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org) or

*New Era*, Q&A, alone in the world  
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

By Jessica Grayless

# RUNNING *the* EXTRA MILE

**A**ll through elementary school I did well in academics. But I can't say the same about athletics. I didn't feel coordinated or confident when it came to sports or games at recess. I was always picked last for the kickball team. By the time I was in junior high, I had convinced myself that I would never be good at anything remotely resembling a sport.

My family lived in a small town. There were about 30 girls in my grade. During our eighth grade year, at the end of each term, we were required to complete a series of fitness tests that included sit-ups, pull-ups, a flexibility test, and a mile-long timed run. I hated the run most of all. I always finished the required four laps around the track, but I was always one of the last to finish.

One of my close friends, Kathy, seemed to be my complete opposite when it came to athletics. She was a beautiful redhead who was flexible and physically coordinated. She loved to run and was always one of the top two or three who consistently finished the mile in around seven minutes.

On the day of the run, anxiety set in as it always did for me. As we jogged onto the grass area in the middle of the track, I confided in Kathy that I hated all things with the word "gym" or "physical" in them. But as we stretched before running, she kept giving me a pep talk. She told me she knew I could do it and do well. I'm sure she was hoping to make me feel better.

Our teacher divided us into two groups to ensure that she could record our times accurately. I was assigned to run in the first group, and Kathy was assigned to the

*I hated sports until the day my friend decided to run with me.*



second. The teacher got out her stopwatch and signaled for us to be ready.

“Four laps,” I thought to myself. “I just have to get through four laps.” I decided to run on the inside of the track, figuring that it was just a little less effort than running around the outside—and that maybe it would even help to lower the terrible time I knew I would get.

Right before we began, Kathy stepped up on the grass beside me. She again encouraged me and told me she believed in me. Then, as our group took off, Kathy took off with me. I couldn’t believe it! She ran along the grass right next to me and stayed with me for the entire four laps. All along the way she told me I was doing a great job. To my surprise, the four laps passed quickly.

With Kathy beside me, I finished my mile in 7 minutes and 18 seconds. Never before or since have I run a mile with a time like that! I was elated. I caught my breath and reveled in congratulations from my teacher and my friends.

Then the teacher called for the second group. It took me only a moment to remember that Kathy was in that group. She had just run a mile with me at a tiring speed. Now she had to run again. I don’t remember what her time was on her second mile that day, but I am certain her score was lower than usual because she had already spent the best of her energy helping me.

I remember that day as a turning point in my confidence when it came to athletics. I went on to spend two years on the dance team, play basketball and volleyball with the young women at Church tournaments, and earn my toe shoes in ballet.

Just before my junior year of high school, my family moved to another town about half an hour away. The following summer, one of my old friends called with the news that Kathy had been killed in a car accident. I was devastated. At her funeral, I reflected on my many memories of her. The memory that I hold most dear, however, is of the day when she ran the extra mile with me.

The Savior taught, “And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain” (Matthew 5:41). Kathy’s example reminds me to be aware of others and willingly serve them. When we do so, we truly follow the Savior’s admonition to go the extra mile. **NE**

*Jessica Grayless lives in Kansas, USA.*



# MODERN-DAY KORIHORS

By David J. Ridges  
Seminaries and Institutes

*The Book of Mormon helps us recognize false teachers and shows us how to avoid their traps.*

Our Heavenly Father loves His children and wants the highest happiness for them. Jesus tells us that this means inheriting “all that my Father hath” (D&C 84:38). To help us, the Lord provides prophets, teachers, inspired leaders, and the Holy Ghost to guide us. Yet Satan wants all people to be “miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:27), so he recruits wicked men and women to lead us astray. Because of our agency, we are “free to choose” between the two (2 Nephi 2:27). The Book of Mormon provides clear examples of these false teachers to help us recognize them and to warn and educate us about their tactics.

Because Satan’s temptations have not changed, people such as Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor can alert us to the devil’s modern-day attempts to lure us

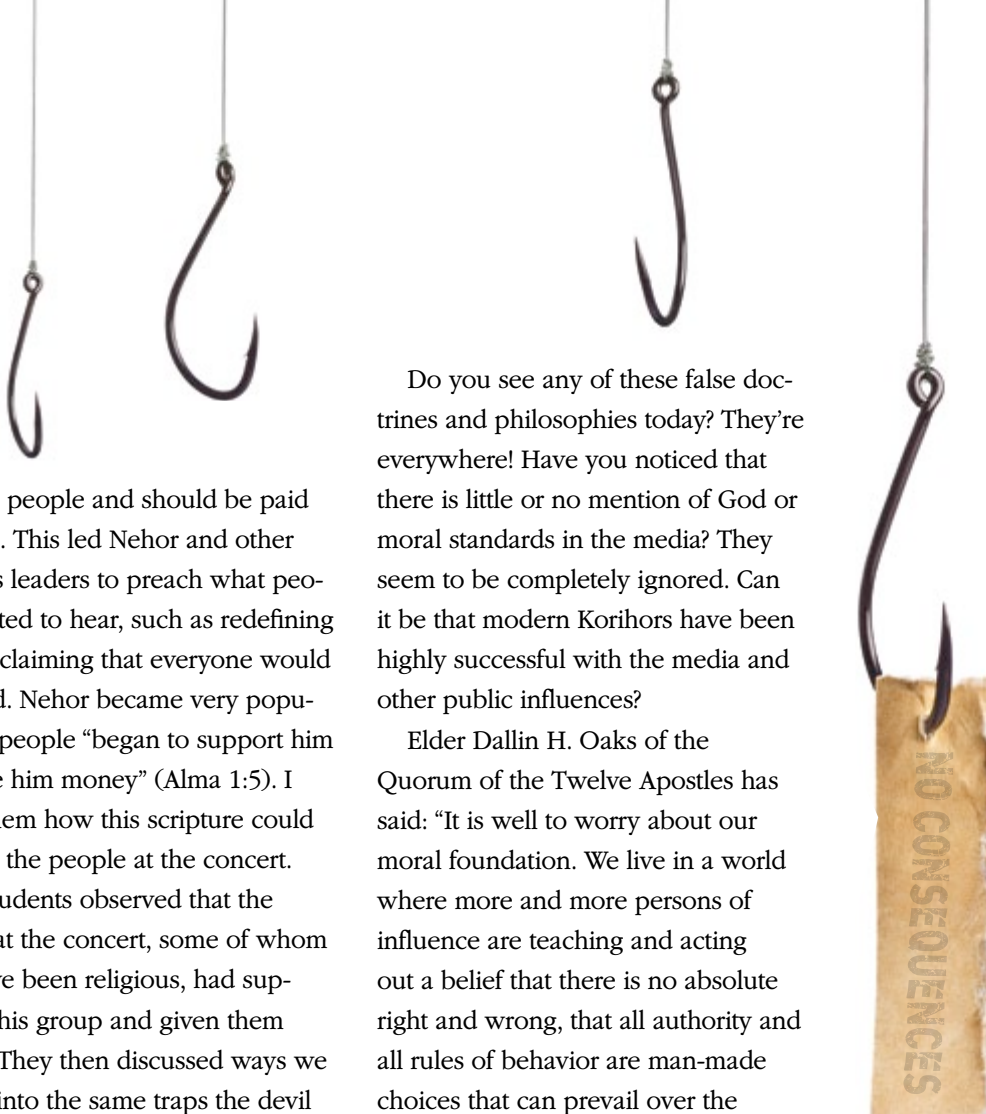
into his traps. Some of his temptations are blatant and obvious. Others are skillfully disguised. Consider some modern replicas of false teachers in the Book of Mormon who sought to destroy the Lord’s people.

## **Nehor: Preaching What the People Want to Hear**

Some years ago my seminary students mentioned a famous rock group that would tear up a Bible during their concerts, denouncing it and all religion as stupid and foolish. They once even tore up a Book of Mormon when visiting a city with a large Latter-day Saint population.

I asked my students to turn to Alma 1, which we had recently discussed in class. This chapter describes an anti-Christ named Nehor, who taught that religious leaders should be popular





with the people and should be paid by them. This led Nehor and other religious leaders to preach what people wanted to hear, such as redefining God by claiming that everyone would be saved. Nehor became very popular, and people “began to support him and give him money” (Alma 1:5). I asked them how this scripture could relate to the people at the concert.

My students observed that the people at the concert, some of whom may have been religious, had supported this group and given them money. They then discussed ways we can fall into the same traps the devil set for people in ancient times by supporting modern-day “Nehors.” By buying and consuming their wares, we not only put our souls in danger but also support these people’s ability to continue corrupting others. The students expressed a strong determination to avoid such behavior.

### **Korihor: Claiming There Is No God**

Korihor (see Alma 30) gathered a large following by boldly preaching against the doctrines and standards of the gospel. He taught that there would be no Christ; that there were no such things as prophecy, right and wrong, and sin; that there was no need for the Atonement; and that a host of other false doctrines were in fact good and true.

Do you see any of these false doctrines and philosophies today? They’re everywhere! Have you noticed that there is little or no mention of God or moral standards in the media? They seem to be completely ignored. Can it be that modern Korihors have been highly successful with the media and other public influences?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said: “It is well to worry about our moral foundation. We live in a world where more and more persons of influence are teaching and acting out a belief that there is no absolute right and wrong, that all authority and all rules of behavior are man-made choices that can prevail over the commandments of God. Many even question whether there is a God.

“The philosophy of moral relativism, which holds that each person is free to choose for himself what is right and wrong, is becoming the unofficial creed for many in America and other Western nations. At the extreme level, evil acts that used





## HOW THE BOOK OF MORMON HELPS US TODAY

"The Book of Mormon exposes the enemies of Christ. It confounds false doctrines and lays down contention. (See 2 Ne. 3:12.) It fortifies the humble followers of Christ against the evil designs, strategies, and doctrines of the devil in our day. The type of apostates in the Book of Mormon are similar to the type we have today. God, with his infinite foreknowledge, so molded the Book of Mormon that we might see the error and know how to combat false educational, political, religious, and philosophical concepts of our time."

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), "The Book of Mormon Is the Word of God," *Ensign*, May 1975, 64.

*If we learn from the Book of Mormon what to watch out for and avoid, we will be spared the misery of going astray.*

to be localized and covered up like a boil are now legalized and paraded like a banner. Persuaded by this philosophy, many of the rising generation—youth and young adults—are caught up in self-serving pleasures, pagan painting and piercing of body parts, foul language, revealing attire, pornography, dishonesty, and degrading sexual indulgence" ("Truth and Tolerance" [Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Sept. 11, 2011], [cesfiresides.lds.org](http://cesfiresides.lds.org)).

Over the years, my seminary students have pointed out many parallels to Korihor's teachings. Some examples are "There is no God," "There will be no Second Coming," "Premarital sexual relations are OK if you love each other," "Do what you want but start repenting a few months before going on a mission or going to the temple," "Experiment with sin and then repent so that later you can better understand and help sinners," "The Church is too strict about the Sabbath," "It is arrogant to claim that we have the only true church," and on and on.

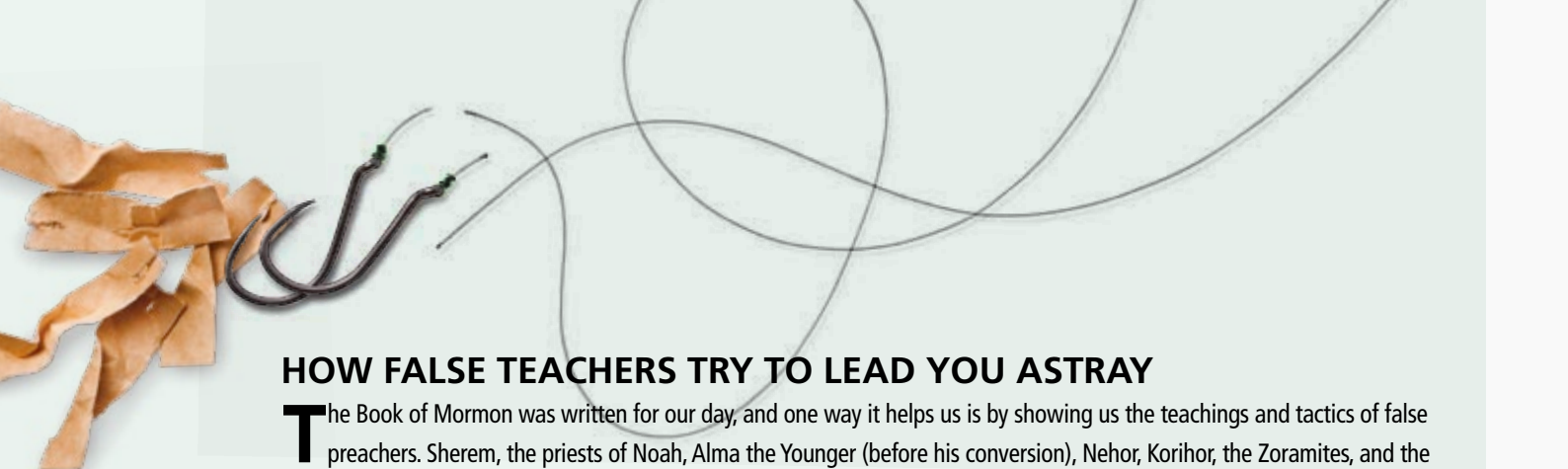
Korihor preached that Church members in his day "durst not enjoy their rights and privileges" (Alma 30:27) for fear that they might "offend some unknown being, who they say is God" (Alma 30:28). Many voices in our day sound similar. For example, a friend asked one student, "Why should we keep the law of chastity since birth control exists?"

Another asked, "Why would God make the desire to use procreative powers so strong and then prohibit their use except within marriage? Such restrictions don't seem fair."

I asked class members how they would respond to such questions. Among their responses was Alma 30:60, which reminds us that while Satan is quick to hype the immediate gratification and pleasure of sin, ultimately remorse and misery take their place. Korihor called gospel standards "the foolish traditions of your fathers" (Alma 30:27). The Lord calls gospel standards the "strait and narrow path," which leads us to joy and happiness (see 2 Nephi 31:16–21).

If we learn from the Book of Mormon what to watch out for and avoid, we will be quick to spot counterfeits of God's ways and we will be spared the misery of going astray. Immodesty, Sabbath breaking, sexual immorality, disrespect for authority, false philosophies, and a host of spiritually devastating lifestyles are among the devil's ancient, well-worn traps in modern clothing. Compared to the deeply satisfying and wonderfully enriching ways of the true gospel of Jesus Christ, the false ways of Korihor and other ancient preachers fade quickly away into oblivion. **NE**





## HOW FALSE TEACHERS TRY TO LEAD YOU ASTRAY

**T**he Book of Mormon was written for our day, and one way it helps us is by showing us the teachings and tactics of false preachers. Sherem, the priests of Noah, Alma the Younger (before his conversion), Nehor, Korihor, the Zoramites, and the people who rejected Samuel the Lamanite all give us some insight into the ways Satan tries to lead us astray through false teachings. Here are some of the methods employed by these false teachers, as well as the contrasting methods of the people who faced them, who were teachers called of God.

### FALSE TEACHERS:

- Use their skill with words to influence people.

*Example:* "He had a perfect knowledge of the language of the people; wherefore, he could use much flattery, and much power of speech, according to the power of the devil" (Jacob 7:4; see also Mosiah 11:7; Mosiah 27:8; Alma 30:31).

- Deny the spirit of prophecy and revelation.

*Example:* "There should be no Christ. . . . No man knoweth of such things; for he cannot tell of things to come" (Jacob 7:2, 7; see also Alma 30:12–13; Helaman 16:16).

- Appeal to people's selfish and carnal desires, causing them to sin.

*Example:* "He led many of the people to do after the manner of his iniquities" (Mosiah 27:8; see also Mosiah 11:19; Alma 1:4; 30:17–18).

- Appeal to "logic" (as defined by them), sometimes using a little truth to get people to believe a big lie.

*Example:* "The Lord had created all men, and had also redeemed all men; and, in the end, all men should have eternal life" (Alma 1:4).

*Example:* "Ye cannot know of things which ye do not see. . . . [Faith in Christ] is the effect of a frenzied mind" (Alma 30:15–16).

*Example:* "It is not reasonable that such a being as a Christ shall come" (Helaman 16:18).

- Find fault with Church teachings or attack Church leaders.

*Example:* "[Prophecies are] foolish traditions of your fathers. . . . [Church leaders] usurp power and authority over [the people], to keep them in ignorance. . . . Ye [Church leaders] keep [the people] down, even as it were in bondage, that ye may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands" (Alma 30:14, 23, 27; see also Jacob 7:7; Mosiah 27:10; Alma 1:7; Alma 31:15–18; Helaman 16:20–21).

### TEACHERS CALLED OF GOD:

- Use scriptures and personal testimony to appeal to people.

*Example:* "[The scriptures] truly testify of Christ. . . . And this is not all—it has been made manifest unto me, for I have heard and seen" (Jacob 7:11–12; see also Alma 1:7; 30:44).

- Testify of Christ.

*Example:* "I know . . . that Christ shall come" (Alma 30:39; see also Jacob 7:12; Mosiah 16:6).

- Appeal to people's spiritual sensibilities, inviting them to repent.

*Example:* "Ought ye not to tremble and repent of your sins, and remember that only in and through Christ ye can be saved?" (Mosiah 16:13; see also Helaman 13:26–29).

- Teach how to know the truth through the Spirit.

*Example:* "It . . . has been made manifest unto me by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Jacob 7:12).

*Example:* "Ye have put off the Spirit of God that it may have no place in you" (Alma 30:42).

- Declare the truth and refute false claims simply and directly.

*Example:* "Thou knowest that we do not glut ourselves upon the labors of this people; for behold I have labored . . . with mine own hands for my support" (Alma 30:32).



*To avoid falling into hidden sinkholes, stay on the path!*

# HIDDEN DANGERS







By Joshua J. Perkey

Church Magazines

Near the summit of Santa Cruz, an island in the Galápagos, lie Los Gemelos, “the Twins.” Each of these two vast sinkholes is large enough to hold several football fields. From the rim, they look much like ancient man-made quarries that supplied stone for bygone temples.

Despite the natural beauty of the area, not all is as it seems. Thick vegetation covers the tropical terrain except where the paths run through. The paths have been well chosen for their firm footing. The ground to either side of the paths, though covered in bushes, plants, and even trees, may not be so firm.

If you were to leave the paths that circle Los Gemelos to explore the rain forest, at any moment you might step on a section of crust that is not strong enough to support your weight. How far would you fall? You wouldn’t know until you hit the bottom. Some of the sinkholes in Santa Cruz are more than 100 feet (30 m) deep. According to local stories, one hole is so deep that the bottom has never been found.

The paths follow a specific route—one you might not think you want to follow. But there is safety in the paths and an assurance of where they lead.

### **Beware the Thin Crust**

In a gospel sense, those paths around Los Gemelos could be

symbolic of a lot of things, such as the commandments, the teachings of the prophets, counsel in *Duty to God* and *Personal Progress*, the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, and the gospel itself. When we participate in the gospel, when we follow the teachings of prophets, when we live according to the guidance of the commandments, we find safety and peace. When we don’t . . . well, things can get a little risky.

At times we may be tempted to stop following the commandments or ignore the teachings of the Church because we feel they are restrictive. We want to choose our own way in life.

But just as the paths around Los Gemelos help people avoid falling through thin crusts, the commandments don’t restrict our agency—rather, they provide the best chance for happiness and success. We can always choose to do what we want to do. We can decide to go our own way rather than follow the one Heavenly Father laid out for us. We certainly won’t get to our destination any faster than by following the proven path, and finding our own way may be painful and arduous.

The same thing applies to the commandments, such as the Word of Wisdom. Heavenly Father and His Church don’t take away our agency by demanding that we refrain from drinking alcohol. We can choose whether we keep that commandment



## ON THE PATH

“Wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen that your Lord and your Redeemer should do; for . . . then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son; and ye have received the Holy Ghost, which witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye entered in by the way ye should receive” (2 Nephi 31:17–18).

or not. But when we make that choice, we’re also choosing the consequences associated with it.

If we choose to break those commandments, then we risk giving up all those blessings. The choice isn’t about whether we are allowed to drink alcohol or do this thing or that thing. It’s about whether or not we want the blessings of the kingdom of heaven and about doing what the Lord asks because we love Him and are converted to Him.

### Safety on the Path

Jessica P. and Nory A., two young women who live on Santa Cruz, know this personally. They are both converts and have both seen the difference keeping the commandments makes. There aren’t very many members in the Galápagos Islands (only 125 members in their branch out of around 25,000 people on their island). It can be difficult to stay on the strait and narrow path (see 1 Nephi 8:20;

2 Nephi 4:33; 31:17–19; Alma 7:19) with temptations such as alcohol and drugs all around.

Nory has seen the challenges in her own family. A year after her family was baptized, they were sealed in the Guayaquil Ecuador Temple. Not long after, however, several members of her family fell away. For a time she and her mom were the only ones who participated in church. How did she stay strong?

“Family home evening,” she says. “For a while, just my mom and I would hold it. Later my older brother and my dad started coming. And every time we study the gospel, my dad says, ‘This is for me.’ Now he is getting stronger and my brother too.”

Jessica has faced a different struggle. “Being the only member of the Church in my family is difficult,” she explains. Some of her family members don’t like the fact that she attends church. In fact, it can lead to arguments.

“Sometimes you wish that your parents, your family, were members of the Church,” she says, “so you could share things with them. That’s hard.

“When you have problems, you can’t go looking in the street or looking to alcohol because they won’t help at all. Instead I come to church, where I have good friends.

“They help me a lot. If I’m feeling down, there’s always Nory or other young women. When I come to church, I feel alive. I feel relief from all the problems in my life.”

### Choosing the Right Path

Jessica and Nory have found joy in living the gospel. Or rather, they have found joy *because* they live the gospel.

The commandments, like the paths around Los Gemelos, don’t restrict us. They provide the guidance necessary to make us perfect through the Atonement of the Savior (see D&C 82:8–9). When we choose to keep the commandments, we are choosing to show love and devotion to God. We are choosing to be worthy of the companionship of the Holy Ghost. We are choosing to be worthy to receive inspiration, to be able to serve, to be able to enter the temple, and to honor the priesthood.

Most important, we are choosing to work toward eternal life in the celestial kingdom with our Father in Heaven. That is the pathway of peace and happiness. **NE**



MORMONAD



# READY TO SERVE

*"As you devote yourself to serving others, . . .  
you will be an instrument in God's hands  
to bless the lives of His children."*

For the Strength of Youth (2011), 33.





# WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE DIE?

*It's a basic question, and through ancient and modern prophets, God has given us answers.*

**O**ur loving Heavenly Father has given us some knowledge of what we can expect once we pass beyond this life. Here are truths that may help you understand where your departed loved ones are now and where all of us eventually will be.

## **What Do We Know about the Spirit World?**

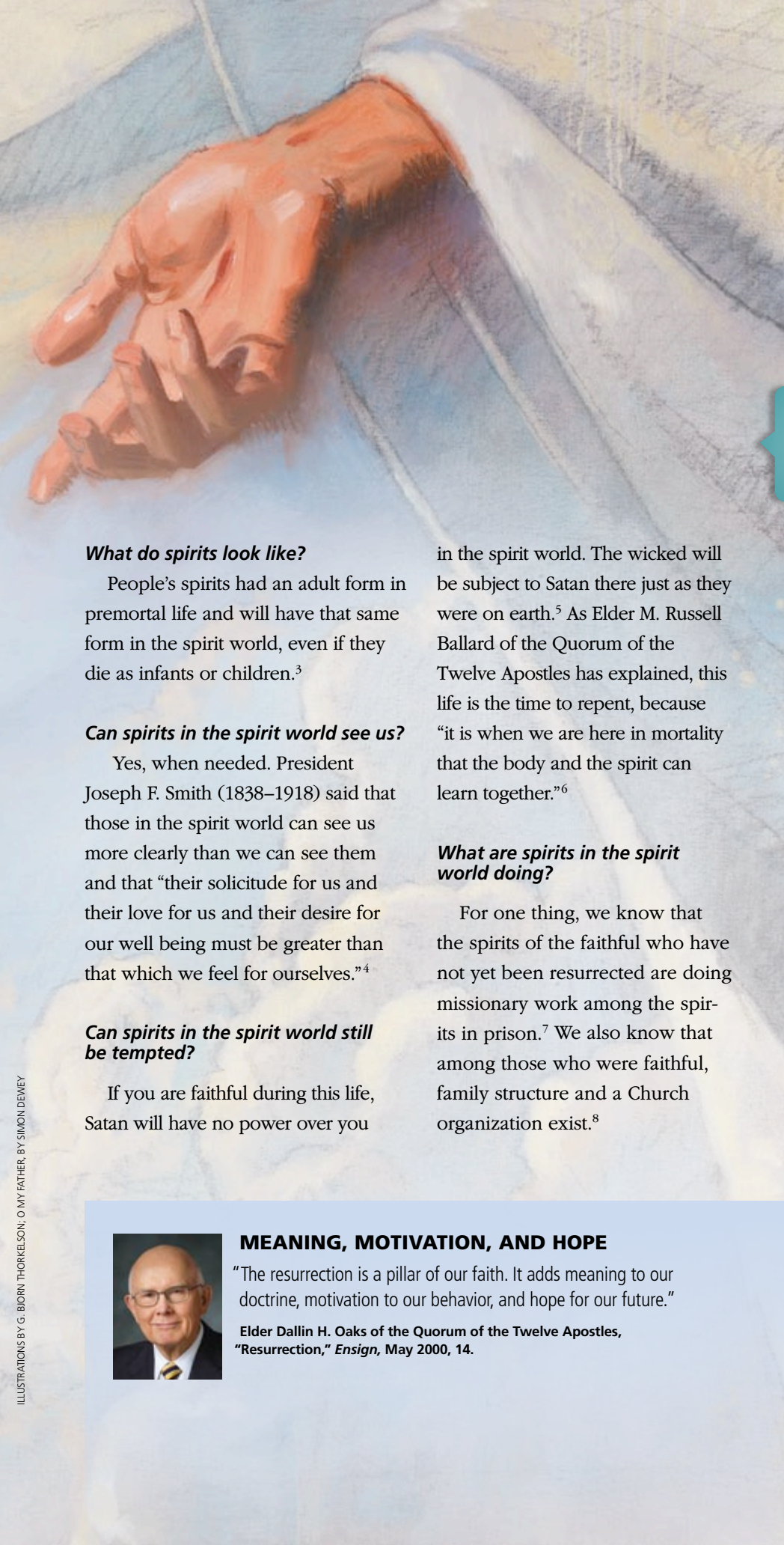
### ***Where is the spirit world?***

President Brigham Young (1801–77) taught that the spirits of those who once lived on earth remain around us on this earth, though we can't see them.<sup>1</sup>

### ***What is the spirit world like?***

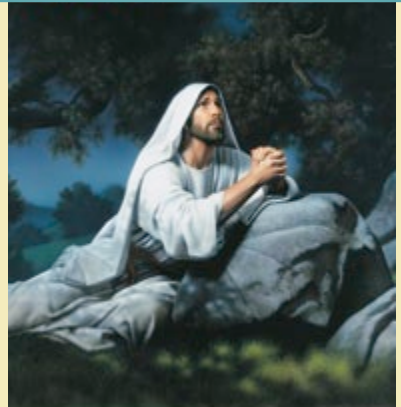
That depends. The righteous will experience paradise—happiness, rest, and peace, without troubles, care, and sorrow (see Alma 40:12). The wicked will experience hell (see Alma 40:13–14). Hell may be defined as “the torment of disappointment in the mind of man.”<sup>2</sup>





**SUNDAY LESSONS**  
 This Month's Topic:  
**The Atonement of Jesus Christ**

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION**



**T**hroughout March you'll be studying the Atonement of Jesus Christ in your priesthood quorums and Young Women and Sunday School classes. One of the many blessings of the Atonement is that through it, we will all be resurrected. Think about how a knowledge of the Atonement and resurrection changes your perspective during difficult times. Try to recall a particular situation and how your testimony of the Atonement and resurrection blessed you, and consider sharing that experience with your family or in an upcoming Church lesson. You can also share your thoughts with other youth at [lds.org/go/33B](https://lds.org/go/33B).

**What do spirits look like?**

People's spirits had an adult form in premortal life and will have that same form in the spirit world, even if they die as infants or children.<sup>3</sup>

**Can spirits in the spirit world see us?**

Yes, when needed. President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) said that those in the spirit world can see us more clearly than we can see them and that “their solicitude for us and their love for us and their desire for our well being must be greater than that which we feel for ourselves.”<sup>4</sup>

**Can spirits in the spirit world still be tempted?**

If you are faithful during this life, Satan will have no power over you

in the spirit world. The wicked will be subject to Satan there just as they were on earth.<sup>5</sup> As Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has explained, this life is the time to repent, because “it is when we are here in mortality that the body and the spirit can learn together.”<sup>6</sup>

**What are spirits in the spirit world doing?**

For one thing, we know that the spirits of the faithful who have not yet been resurrected are doing missionary work among the spirits in prison.<sup>7</sup> We also know that among those who were faithful, family structure and a Church organization exist.<sup>8</sup>



**MEANING, MOTIVATION, AND HOPE**

“The resurrection is a pillar of our faith. It adds meaning to our doctrine, motivation to our behavior, and hope for our future.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Resurrection,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 14.



## What Do We Know about the Resurrection?

### How many people will be resurrected?

All people who ever lived on earth will be resurrected (see 1 Corinthians 15:21–23).

### What will a resurrected body be like?

A resurrected body will be:

- **Immortal.** “This mortal body is raised to an immortal body, . . . that they can die no more” (Alma 11:45).
- **Perfect.** “The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form” (Alma 11:43). President Joseph F. Smith explained, “Deformity will be removed; defects will be eliminated, and men and women shall attain to the perfection of their spirits, to the perfection that God designed in the beginning.”<sup>9</sup>
- **Beautiful.** President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) said, “There is nothing more beautiful to look upon than a resurrected man or woman.”<sup>10</sup>
- **Glorious.** President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has said: “Your spirit is young and vibrant and beautiful. Even if your body is old and diseased or crippled or disabled in any way, when the spirit and body are put together in the Resurrection, then you will be glorious; then you will be glorified.”<sup>11</sup>
- **Without sorrow or pain.** “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain” (Revelation 21:4).

### What will happen to people who died as children?

According to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the parents of a child who died in childhood “will have the joy, the pleasure and satisfaction of nurturing [it], after its resurrection, until it reaches the full stature of its spirit.”<sup>12</sup>

### What will happen to people who were cremated or weren’t buried?

Though the Church does not encourage cremation, we believe that no matter what, all people will be resurrected with a perfect body. President Brigham Young taught that in the resurrection “the peculiar fundamental particles that organized our bodies here, if we do honor to them, though they be deposited in the depths of the sea, and though one particle is in the north, another in the south, another in the east, and another in the west, will be brought together again in the twinkling of an eye, and our spirits will take possession of them.”<sup>13</sup>

## Who will be resurrected, and when?

### FIRST RESURRECTION, OR “RESURRECTION OF THE JUST” (D&C 76:17)

#### ▲ At Christ’s Resurrection

Prophets and certain other righteous people who will receive a celestial glory (see Mosiah 15:21–25).

#### ▲ At Christ’s Second Coming

Those who will receive a celestial glory (see D&C 76:50–70; 88:96–98).

#### ▲ At the Beginning of the Millennium

Those who will receive a terrestrial glory (see D&C 88:99).

### SECOND RESURRECTION, OR “RESURRECTION OF THE UNJUST” (D&C 76:17)

#### ▲ At the End of the Millennium

Those who will receive a telestial glory (see D&C 76:85; 88:100–101).	Sons of perdition (see D&C 76:43–48; 88:102).
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## Why a Physical Resurrection?

The physical resurrection is part of God's plan and has been taught by prophets since the days of Adam (see Moses 5:10). But "the devil has no body, and herein is his punishment,"<sup>14</sup> so he distorts this teaching so that people do not believe in a physical resurrection.

Many people believe that a physical body is like a prison for the spirit and that we can be truly happy only when the spirit is liberated from the body, but this is not true. The Lord has revealed that a physical resurrection is necessary because:

- ***It is how we receive a fulness of joy.*** Only "spirit and element [a physical body], inseparably connected, receive a fulness of

joy" (D&C 93:33). We also know that those who had died and were waiting in the spirit world for Christ's Resurrection "had looked upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage" (D&C 138:50).

- ***It is a blessing of our having chosen Heavenly Father's plan.***

Before we were born on earth, all spirits who would ever live on earth chose to follow our Heavenly Father's plan rather than Satan's rebellion (see Abraham 3:23–28). As a result, we received a mortal body and, through the gift of Christ's Resurrection, will be resurrected with an immortal body. Those who followed Satan in the premortal world

will never receive any kind of physical body.

- ***It brings us back into God's presence to be judged.*** The Book of Mormon clearly teaches that it is the power of the resurrection that allows us to enter God's presence to be judged according to our works.<sup>15</sup>
- ***It is required for salvation.*** Joseph Smith taught, "No person can have . . . salvation except through a tabernacle [a physical body]."<sup>16</sup>
- ***It is how we become like Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.*** "The Father has a body of flesh and bones, as tangible as man's; the Son also" (D&C 130:22). **NE**

### NOTES

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 279.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 224.
3. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 131–32.
4. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 430–31.
5. See *Teachings: Brigham Young*, 282; Alma 34:34–35.
6. M. Russell Ballard, "Is It Worth It?" *New Era*, June 1984, 42.
7. See D&C 138:30; see also *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 474.
8. See *Gospel Principles* (2009), 243; for more on the spirit world, see Dale C. Mouritsen, "The Spirit World, Our Next Home," *Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 46–51.
9. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 23.
10. Lorenzo Snow, *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1996), 99.
11. Boyd K. Packer, "The 20-Mark Note," *New Era*, June 2009, 5.
12. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 177.
13. *Teachings: Brigham Young*, 276.
14. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 211.
15. See 2 Nephi 9:22; Jacob 6:9; Mosiah 16:8–10; Alma 11:41; 33:22; 40:21; Helaman 14:17; Mormon 7:6; 9:13.
16. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 212.







### Faith in the Atonement

This month, your Sunday lessons will focus on the Atonement (see [lds.org/youth/learn](http://lds.org/youth/learn)). As you study this topic, you'll find several talks from the October 2012 general conference that remind us we must have faith in Christ's Atonement.

For example, President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, gave an address titled "The Atonement." Read what he reminded us about how the Atonement allows us to repent in the quote at right, and then read his entire talk at [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org).

IF YOU WILL  
*turn away from sin,*  
YOU WILL BE ABLE ONE DAY  
*to know the*  
**PEACE**  
*that comes from*  
FOLLOWING THE PATHWAY  
*of complete repentance.*

*No matter what our transgressions have been,  
no matter how much our actions may have hurt others,  
that guilt can all be wiped out.*

President Boyd K. Packer,  
President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,  
October 2012 general conference

## THREE PRINCIPLES

of the **ATONEMENT** that . . . will increase  
our **FAITH** in **JESUS CHRIST**:

1 All that is **UNFAIR** about life can be **MADE RIGHT** through the **ATONEMENT** of **JESUS CHRIST**.

2 There is **POWER** in the **ATONEMENT** to enable us to **OVERCOME** the natural man or woman and become true **DISCIPLES** of **JESUS CHRIST**.

3 The **ATONEMENT** is the **GREATEST** evidence we have of the **FATHER'S LOVE** for **HIS CHILDREN**.

Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president,  
October 2012 general conference



### Principles of the Atonement to Increase Our Faith in Christ

In "Is Faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ Written in Our Hearts?" Sister Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, shared the story of a woman who fell into a pit too deep to climb out of. She was saved when a person came and lowered a ladder to help her return to higher ground. Sister Burton said, "Jesus Christ's Atonement could be compared to lowering a ladder into the pit." Read more of her analogy online at [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org). You'll also be able to read more about the three principles of the Atonement in the list at left.

### Download Cards as Posters

Download these two images online at [lds.org/go/33C](http://lds.org/go/33C). Consider using them in your classes or quorums, at family home evening, or on social media. They're also a great size to use as a marker in your scriptures.



# Washed CLEAN



**By President  
Boyd K. Packer**

President of the  
Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

*In ancient times the cry “Unclean!”  
Would warn of lepers near.  
“Unclean! Unclean!” the words rang out;  
Then all drew back in fear,*

*Lest by the touch of lepers’ hands  
They, too, would lepers be.  
There was no cure in ancient times,  
Just hopeless agony.*

*No soap, no balm, no medicine  
Could stay disease or pain.  
There was no salve, no cleansing bath,  
To make them well again.*

*But there was One, the record shows,  
Whose touch could make them pure;  
Could ease their awful suffering,  
Their rotting flesh restore.*

*His coming long had been foretold.  
Signs would precede His birth.  
A Son of God to woman born,  
With power to cleanse the earth.*

*The day He made ten lepers whole,  
The day He made them clean,  
Well symbolized His ministry  
And what His life would mean.*

*However great that miracle,  
This was not why He came.  
He came to rescue every soul  
From death, from sin, from shame.*

*For greater miracles, He said,  
His servants yet would do,  
To rescue every living soul,  
Not just heal up the few.*

*Though we’re redeemed from  
mortal death,  
We still can’t enter in  
Unless we’re clean, cleansed every whit,  
From every mortal sin.*

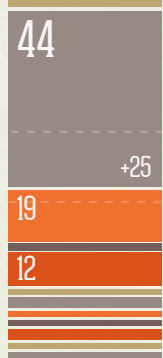
*What must be done to make us clean  
We cannot do alone.  
The law, to be a law, requires  
A pure one must atone.*

*He taught that justice will be stayed  
Till mercy’s claim be heard  
If we repent and are baptized  
And live by every word. . . .*

*If we could only understand  
All we have heard and seen,  
We’d know there is no greater gift  
Than those two words—“Washed clean!”*

From an April 1997 general conference address.

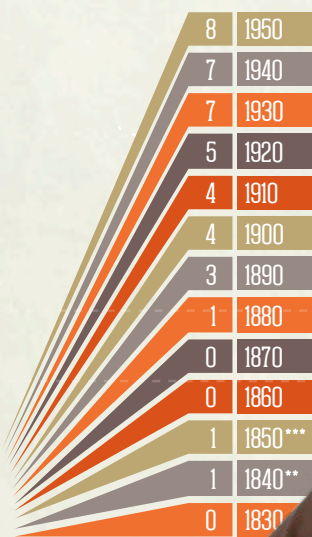




# CHURCH HISTORY

## THEN AND NOW

Recent changes in the missionary age requirements and the new Sunday learning experience for youth remind us that Church history is always evolving—with your membership and experience being a special part. See how the Church has grown over the years, and look forward to how it will change during your lifetime. You can play an important part in it as you prepare to serve God and His Kingdom.



### Temples Built throughout the World\*

**Your Part:** As temples continue to be built throughout the world, think about how you can participate in temple work. Talk with your family about the possibility of attending the temple to do baptisms for the dead. You can participate in FamilySearch to find ancestors who may not yet have received their saving ordinances in the temple. And always live worthy of a temple recommend.



# Number of Stakes Since 1830\*

**Your Part:** As you can see, the Church is growing faster than ever before. Read Elder M. Russell Ballard's quote below, and then think about the special gifts you have been given and can keep developing to help the Church reach individuals throughout the world. You will have many opportunities as "you are true and faithful to the doctrine and gospel of Christ," says Elder Ballard. Consider writing in your journal or talking with your family about the decisions you will make in your youth and how you are preparing now to be worthy to serve the Lord in Church callings and other opportunities in the future.



## YOU ARE THE FUTURE CHURCH LEADERS

"In the Church, your leaders at the ward, stake, and general levels will be inspired to call you to serve in those callings that you have prepared yourself for as a result of your wise choices to keep the commandments of God.

"Thirty years from now the leadership of the Church will largely depend on how well each one of you is prepared to fulfill the calls to serve in the Church that will come to you. . . .

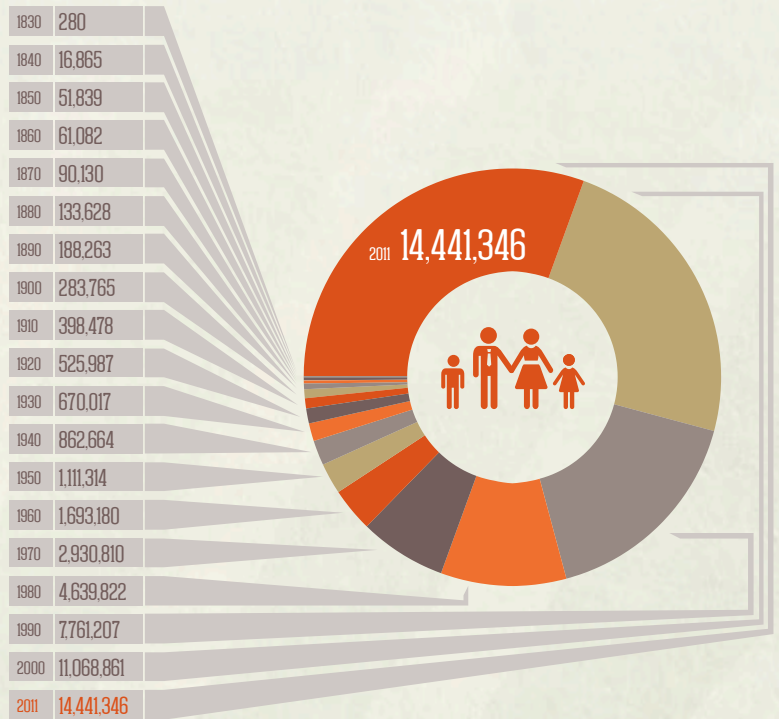
". . . Suppose the Church creates 100 stakes a year. That means by 2040, just 30 years from now, the number of stakes will have doubled to approximately 6,000. . . . Now ask yourself—where are the 6,000 stake presidents? Where are their first counselors, second counselors, executive secretaries, clerks? Where are the 6,000 times 12, or 72,000, high councilors? And suppose that every stake has an average of 10 units . . . , where are the 60,000 bishops, first counselors, second counselors, executive secretaries, clerks, elders quorum presidents and their counselors, . . . Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary presidents and counselors, and on and on? Where are they? . . . *You are they!* Will you be ready to accept the callings that the Lord will extend to you? . . .

". . . I pray with all of my heart that you'll do those things tonight that you need to do if you need to make some course corrections in the way you're living."

**Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Follow the Doctrine and Gospel of Christ" (Church Educational System fireside, Nov. 7, 2010, LDS.org).**

# Church Membership since 1830\*

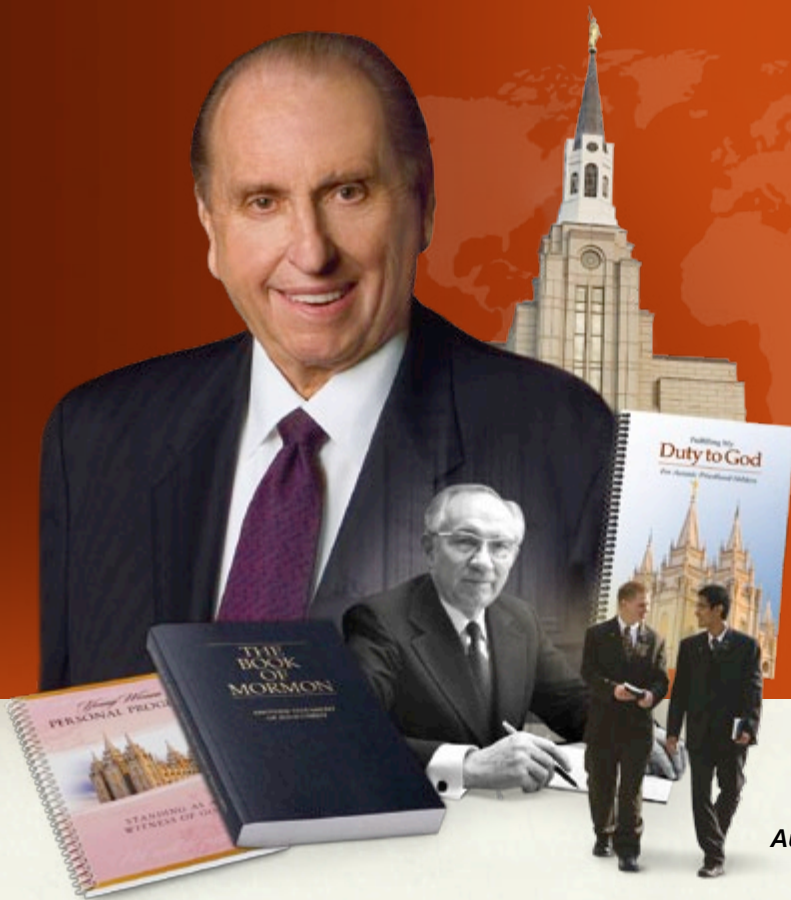
**Your Part:** Think about what you can do to share the gospel today. Consider praying for opportunities to be a missionary in your youth. Young men, prepare now to be a full-time missionary.



\* Numbers reflect the statistics as of December 31 of each year listed.

\*\* The Kirtland Temple was dedicated in 1836 but had to be abandoned when the Saints moved west. It was no longer in use in 1840.

\*\*\* The Nauvoo Temple was dedicated in 1846 but had to be abandoned when the Saints moved west. It was no longer in use in 1850. It was later burned by fire and then rebuilt and dedicated in 2002.



# CHURCH MILESTONES IN YOUR LIFETIME

**Sept. 23, 1995:** “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” is issued by the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles.

**Feb. 28, 1996:** Church membership outside the United States (4,720,000) exceeds Church membership inside it (4,719,000).

**Nov. 2, 1996:** Latter-day Saint Charities, a charitable nonprofit corporation, is established to help the Church give aid to the needy around the world.

**Oct. 4, 1997:** President Gordon B. Hinckley announces that small temples will be built in remote areas.

**May 24, 1999:** The FamilySearch website is officially launched.

**Jan. 1, 2000:** “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles” is issued by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

**Sept. 2000:** Church membership has more non-English-speaking members than English-speaking members.

**Oct. 1, 2000:** The Church’s 100th temple, the Boston Massachusetts Temple, is dedicated.

**Mar. 31, 2001:** The Perpetual Education Fund is announced to help youth in developing areas rise out of poverty through loans for training or advanced education.

**Jan. 11, 2003:** The first global Church leadership training meeting is broadcast via satellite, reaching more than 97 percent of priesthood leaders.

**Aug. 1, 2004:** Church membership in Mexico reaches one million members—the first country outside the United States to do so.

**Nov. 2004:** *Preach My Gospel* is introduced to help prepare and strengthen missionaries.

**June 24, 2007:** President Hinckley announces that an estimated one million missionaries have served since the organization of the Church in 1830.

**Nov. 28, 2008:** Virtue is added as a new value in the Personal Progress program.

**Sept. 13, 2009:** The First Presidency announces the publication of the LDS edition of the Bible in Spanish.

**Apr. 3, 2010:** A new *Fulfilling My Duty to God* booklet is announced, which helps young men focus on the process of “learn, act, share” in their priesthood duties.

**Apr. 23, 2011:** Over 150 million copies of the Book of Mormon have been printed.

**Jan. 22, 2012:** Church Educational System celebrates the 100th anniversary of LDS seminary.

**Sept. 12, 2012:** *Come, Follow Me*, a new learning resource for youth, is announced to enhance gospel study at home and in Sunday classrooms.

**Oct. 6, 2012:** President Thomas S. Monson announces new lowered age requirements for full-time missionary service: 18 for young men and 19 for young women.

**SOURCES:** 2012 *Church Almanac*, *Deseret News* (2012), 5, 318–23; LDS.org.





The fancy dresses, the food, the music, the dancing, the lights, the people—it's prom night! But there's something different about this prom. The dresses are modest and the music and dancing are appropriate. What's going on? It's a special prom hosted by youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



These formal dances are being organized in many locations where youth don't want to deal with the low standards and high cost of school dances but still want to have opportunities to dress up, go on a group date, and attend a special dance.



For these youth, the solution has been to host their own proms where standards are upheld and the cost is low. Here are a few places where youth and leaders have done just that.



### Shining Forth in Tennessee

One stake in Tennessee has been hosting a formal dance since 1996. Leaders and youth were concerned because the local high school proms were expensive and didn't meet the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*. So they started their own dance, and it has been a success ever since.

In 2012, the dance had a new element because some of the young women were able to borrow formal, modest dresses that had been collected from women in the stake after someone watched a *Mormon Messages for Youth* video about a young woman who had done the same thing (see "195 Dresses" at [lds.org/go/33D](http://lds.org/go/33D)).

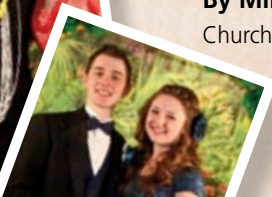
"I believe there is something beautiful about being able to go to a formal event dressed modestly, with a knowledge that there will be other girls

# PROMS

*to Be Proud Of*

Tired of the low standards at prom? Why not hold one of your own?

**By Mindy Raye Friedman**  
Church Magazines



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JILL THOMPSON (ARIZONA), ASHLEY MICKELSON (COLORADO), TRACY ENCE (NEVADA), LAURI SHELL (GEORGIA), BRITTANY AIRD (ALASKA), KRISTIN FULLER (CALIFORNIA), AND CAROL BAKER (VIRGINIA)





there who are dressed modestly as well,” says Christy R., who attended the event.

The event’s theme was “Arise and

Shine Forth” to support the Mutual theme for 2012. Many youth attended, and some even brought friends who aren’t members of the Church.

“It was important to me to show my friend that we can dance differently to different music instead of dancing immorally like what happens at school dances,” says Chris C.

Christy was able to invite a friend as well. “Bringing my nonmember friend from school to prom was a great experience. I enjoyed seeing her being loved and accepted by everyone,” she says.

Josh B., a priest who attended, sums up why he thinks a prom with Latter-day Saint standards is a great idea: “I felt relaxed because we all had the same standards. I didn’t need to worry about what other people were doing. I could be myself.”

### A Growing Trend in Nevada

Las Vegas, Nevada, is a city often known for its less-than-wholesome environment. But there are youth there who know how to have a fun time without compromising their standards. That’s why they love having a great dance to go to. A “Mormon prom” was organized in their area three years ago and has continued to grow—with youth from 10 stakes participating in 2012.

The stakes also offer several pre-dance activities, including a meet-and-



greet, a dating boot camp that teaches proper dating etiquette, a dress swap where young women can borrow a

dance, and dance instruction.

On the night of the dance, families in the participating stakes host three or more couples for dinner. Then the youth go to the formal dance, where they have a good time dancing and socializing. About 800 LDS youth and 70 of their nonmember friends attended the most recent event.

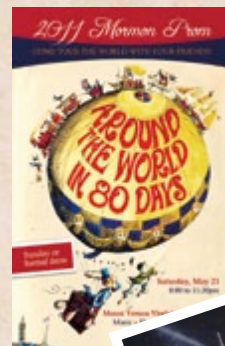
The youth who attended had positive reactions. “It was magical. When I walked in, it took my breath away,” says Ashlyn E. “I will never forget it.”

Bekah O. says, “I didn’t want to go at first, but I’ve never had so much fun in my whole life. I can’t wait until next year!”

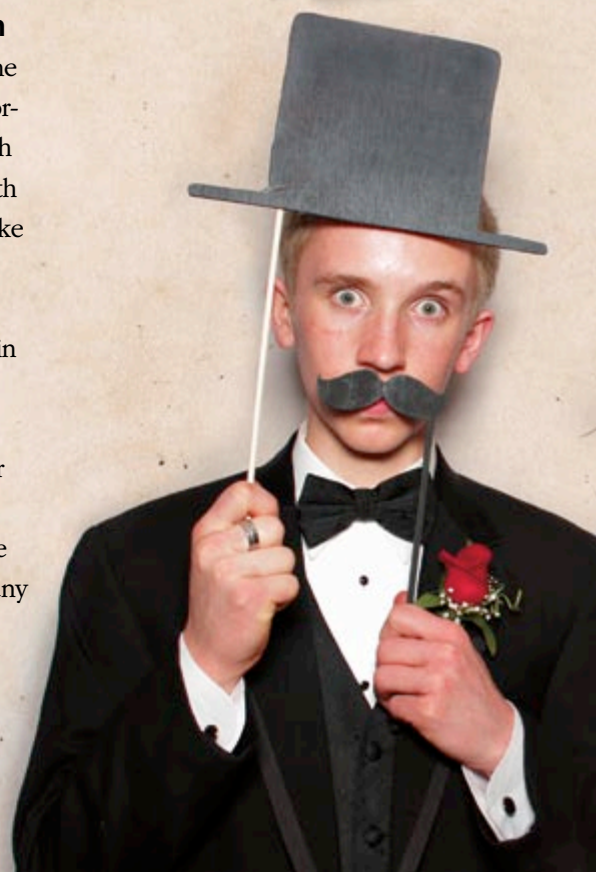
### The “Only Prom” in Wisconsin

A group of Laurels and priests in one Wisconsin ward also wanted the opportunity to have a formal dance with high standards. So in 2009 they invited youth from their stake and a neighboring stake for a formal dance at their ward building. The night was a success, and the stake leaders decided to hold it again in future years. They moved the location to a bigger venue, and it’s continued to grow. Last year, 250 youth from four stakes attended the dance.

Because of the less-than-wholesome environment at their school proms, many of the youth in the area now consider this prom as their only prom. Some even turn down invitations to school



These proms are popping up everywhere. Below: Youth at proms in California, Virginia, Georgia, and Arizona. Top: Some areas have themes, including . . .





... these proms in Virginia over the last four years. Youth love these dances because of the higher standards for dress, music, and dancing.



**Share Your Stories**  
 Have you found ways to live the standards in *For the Strength of Youth* even when it meant starting something new? Tell us about it by sending an email to [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org) or submitting your story online at [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) (click "Submit Material").



proms and instead invite their school friends to attend their prom.

Before attending the dance, all of the youth meet with a bishop and sign a dance card saying they will uphold the standards. No one has ever had a problem with this commitment.

Stephen P. says the prom was an amazing experience: "Being able to not worry about immoral music or dancing was an incredible burden off my shoulders," he says. "It allowed my friends and me to just be able to enjoy ourselves. The leaders who helped plan it did a fantastic job making sure everyone was included and their needs were taken care of. I actually chose to go to the 'Mormon prom' instead of my school prom because I knew our prom would have a more positive environment and the Spirit would always be with us."

### Getting Started in California

The formal dance hosted by one Southern California stake in 2011 expanded to two stakes in 2012. Both stakes had youth who helped plan and carry out the event.

Evan S. was part of the planning committee and was also given a charge to get other youth excited about the dance. "I did all I could to try and make sure people knew it was going to be a fun event and that fun people would be there to make it the best it could possibly be," he says.

The event was held on the estate of a stake member and gathered more than 300 youth. They loved the music, the modest dress, and the appropriate dancing. In addition to the dance, other activities included a photo booth, table tennis, and even a ball pit. And this was all provided at no cost to the youth. One nonmember who was invited to the dance exclaimed, "Your Church provides all this?!"

Darby C. loved going to the prom and sums up why most youth enjoy going to these dances. "It is wonderful," she says. "I don't have to worry about being uncomfortable about lyrics, dance moves, or inappropriate clothing." **NE**



### HAPPINESS IN KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS

"It may appear to you at times that those out in the world are having much more fun than you are. Some of you may feel restricted by the code of conduct to which we in the Church adhere. My brothers and sisters, I declare to you, however, that there is *nothing* which can bring more joy into our lives or more peace to our souls than the Spirit which can come to us as we follow the Savior and keep the commandments."

**President Thomas S. Monson,**  
 "Stand in Holy Places,"  
*Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 83.

### FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

"Attend only those dances where dress, grooming, lighting, lyrics, music, and entertainment contribute to a wholesome atmosphere where the Spirit may be present."

**For the Strength of Youth** (2011), 23.



How do I deal with **conversations about the gospel** when the other person is just trying to **win a debate?**

People like that **don't** want to hear testimony.

**L**ogic and reason can help us understand the truth, of course, and it is possible to make logical arguments in defense of the Church and its teachings. But when one is more interested in winning an argument than understanding another's belief, contention becomes the consistent outcome. Be firm in bearing testimony of what you believe and know is true.

If the person you're talking to presses the issue, let that person know that you respect what he or she believes but that you will have to agree to disagree. Discussions about religious beliefs should not be about "winning." And if you get contentious or angry, you will not be an example of what you believe, nor will you have the Holy Ghost with you.

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught that when we talk to people about the Church, "our aim should be to help them understand the truth, not defend our egos or score points in a theological debate. Our heartfelt testimonies are the most powerful answer we can give our accusers. And such testimonies can only be borne in love and meekness."<sup>1</sup>

Things of the Spirit are learned "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Corinthians 2:4). Even though it may not change anyone's mind, you should bear your testimony and let people know what you believe. And when you share the gospel, *how* you say things may be as important as *what* you say. Speak patiently and with love. Follow the Spirit and you will be prompted to know what to say (and what not to say) and how to react. **NE**

**NOTE**

1. Robert D. Hales, "Christian Courage: The Price of Discipleship," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 73–74.



What is the point of **class** and **quorum** presidencies for **youth**?

**Y**oung Women class presidencies and Aaronic Priesthood quorum presidencies benefit both those who hold the positions and those they serve.

Members of the presidencies are entitled to inspiration about the class or quorum, which can help them know how to pray for and fellowship members of their class or quorum, especially those who are new or less active. Being in a presidency helps youth learn leadership skills such as delegation, service, communication, and participation in councils. Learning to organize and lead meetings and activities helps youth leaders prepare for a mission, parenthood, or other future callings as they learn the importance of doing their duty and how to create a plan and carry it out.

Class and quorum members also get certain blessings through these leaders. They have someone their age to talk to who can help and encourage them in living the gospel and doing many things, especially as they complete Personal Progress or Duty to God. Because the presidents of classes or quorums serve on the bishopric youth committee, they can inform the bishop of problems,



concerns, or good works in their classes and quorums.

Being called to a class or quorum presidency is a great responsibility that helps youth gain greater confidence, learn to be a leader and an example, and develop love and unity within the class or quorum. **NE**

**For the Strength of Youth** says to avoid **extreme hairstyles**. What types of **styles** would be considered **extreme**?

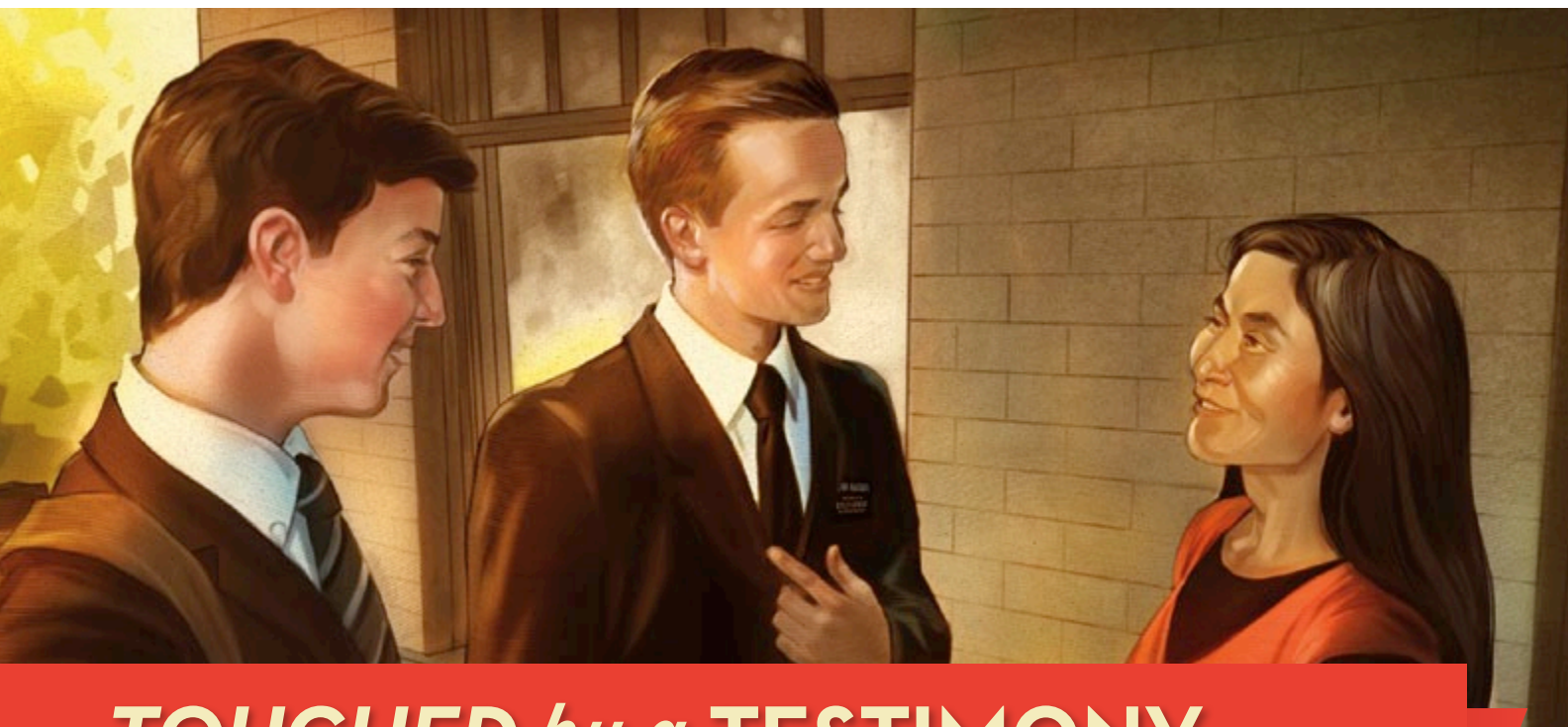
**W**hat is considered extreme may vary from culture to culture and time to time, so it would be difficult to say exactly what hairstyles are extreme for everyone. So how do you know whether a hairstyle is “extreme”? Ask yourself, “Why am I doing this?”

If you’ve gone out of your way to give yourself unusual hair color(s), length(s), and styling solely for the purpose of “making a statement” or getting attention, then you may have gone to the “extreme” referred to in *For the Strength of Youth*.<sup>1</sup>

Do Church leaders ask you to avoid extremes just because they want you to look plain and ordinary, without any style or personality? Of course not. They’ve given this counsel because your appearance says something about you. “Through your dress and appearance, you can show that you know how precious your body is. You can show that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ.”<sup>2</sup> Extreme hairstyles might overshadow this message and send a more worldly message about you. **NE**

**NOTES**

1. See *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 7.
2. *For the Strength of Youth*, 6.



## TOUCHED *by a* TESTIMONY

By Michael Harken

**A**t the beginning of my mission, I served in a small city in South Korea. One rainy day we had not had a lot of success but wanted to keep working until it was time to go home. My companion and I decided that we would knock on a few more doors.

At one door a woman answered, and my companion started talking to her. As a new missionary, I had a hard time understanding, but after a few minutes she began speaking to us in English. We found out that she was from Chicago, Illinois, USA, and had moved here with her family. Her husband was a preacher for a church that did not have friendly feelings toward our beliefs.

The woman was nice but eager to disprove the Book of Mormon and convince us that our church was incorrect. I stood there with my companion as he

tried to answer her difficult questions. My companion tried to testify to her that the Book of Mormon is true and that it could help her, but she insisted on believing that he was incorrect.

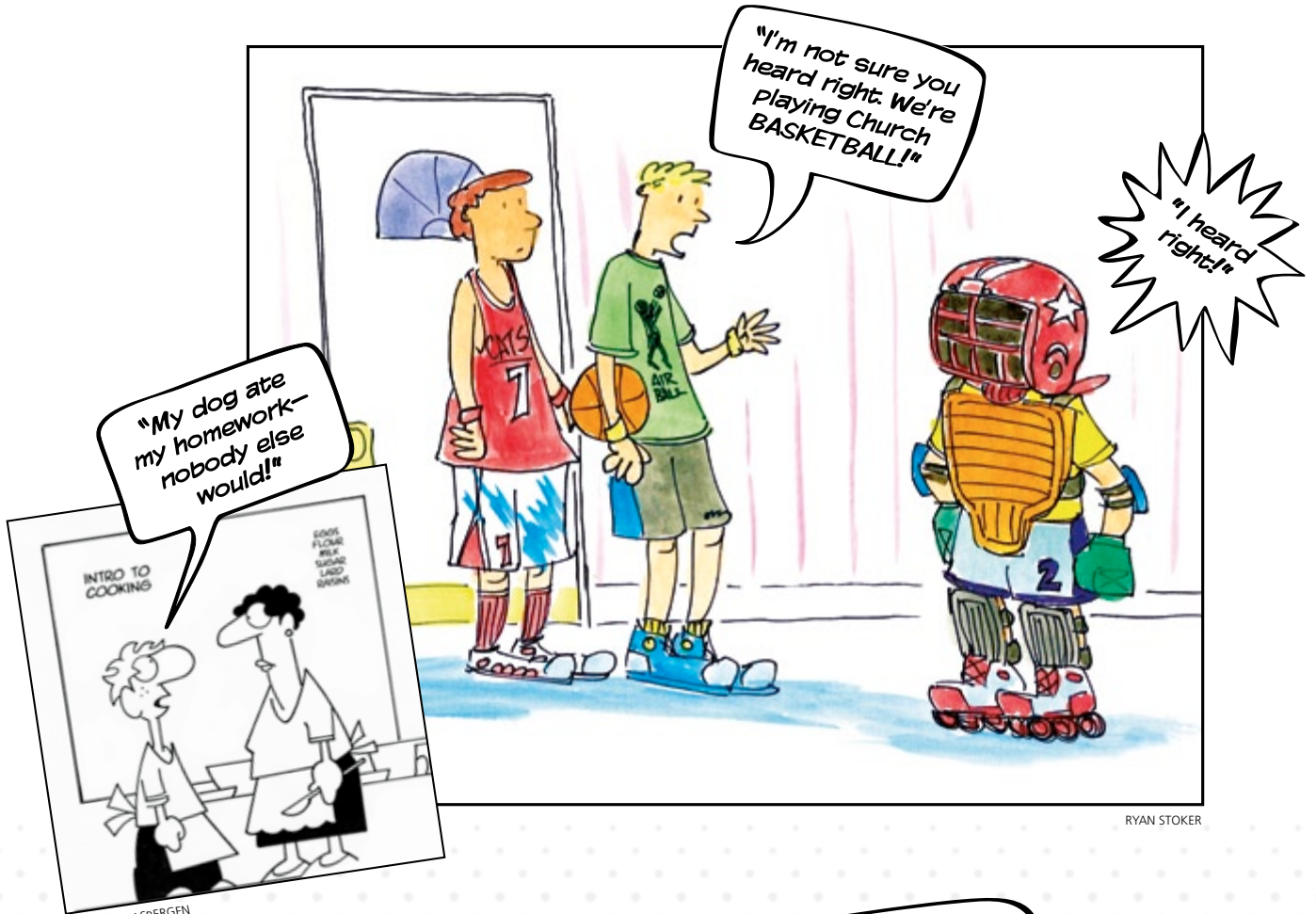
After about 30 minutes of discussion at the door, she asked my companion, “Where will we go after this life?” I could tell she was eager to refute my companion’s teachings, as she had before. My companion testified of the plan of salvation and that we can live with our families forever in the celestial kingdom. Before he could continue, she stopped him and asked him to repeat what he had just said about families being together. He again replied with the same response. I felt the Spirit so strongly, and I could see in her eyes that something had touched her deeply too. After that

short but powerful testimony, she stopped arguing with us, took a Book of Mormon, and asked us to come back to talk with her and her husband about the Book of Mormon.

I remember walking home with my companion that evening, amazed by the effect of my companion’s testimony. I understood then that a testimony accompanied by the Spirit is the most powerful teaching tool we have. I’ll never forget my companion and his testimony that night. After that experience I decided that, even with my limited ability to speak Korean, I would try to bear my testimony no matter what. As I did, I began to feel the Spirit more and more. I learned that the best communication happens when you teach by the Spirit. **NE**

*Michael Harken lives in Utah, USA.*





RANDY GLASBERGEN

RYAN STOKER



RICK + RYAN GOLDSBERRY



KEVIN BECKSTROM

## What We Really Think of Youth



"My dear young women, how we love each one of you. We see you courageously arising and shining forth with light in a world where great challenges accompany great opportunities."

Mary N. Cook, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency, "Seek Learning: You Have a Work to Do," *Ensign*, May 2012, 120.



## Setting Her Sights High

Robin Hood of Sherwood fame makes it look easy to grab any old curved branch from the forest, wrap a string around both ends, and effortlessly shoot arrows into a target 50 yards off with the makeshift bow.

In reality, that kind of precision often requires mastery of some pretty complex technology on a modern bow. You start coming across terms like *stabilizer*, *sight*, *clicker*, and more. "My friends are sometimes shocked at all the gear," says LaNola P., a 17-year-old from California with a true talent for archery. "It's a lot harder than you would think."

LaNola has been involved in archery since she was six years



old, with her dad as her coach and shooting partner. Over the years she's won competitions and set national archery records. Archery hasn't been her only focus, however. She keeps the gospel at the heart of all she does, even when that means getting out of bed at 4:00 a.m. to attend 5:25 a.m. seminary. "The gospel allows me to keep things in perspective," says LaNola. "I know my strength comes from Heavenly Father."

LaNola has recently been accepted to the U.S. Olympic

Training Center in Chula Vista, California. She hopes to compete in the 2016 Olympics. She also plans to continue centering her life on the Savior. As one example, LaNola chooses not to practice on Sundays, a decision many of her athletic peers can't understand.

"I don't think it hurts me in any way," LaNola explains. "It's my day of rest."

# 4,000

## By the Numbers

The approximate number of missionary applications received per week toward the end of October, after the missionary age requirement was lowered in the October 2012 general conference. Previously, the average was about 700 applications per week.

## My Favorite Scripture

*3 Nephi 17:10 "And they did all, both they who had been healed and they who were whole, bow down at his feet, and did worship him; and as many as could come for the multitude did kiss his feet, insomuch that they did bathe his feet with their tears."*



I love this scripture because it shows the people's love for Christ. I really love the whole chapter because, for me, it is the perfect depiction of Christ.

**Samantha T., 15, Utah, USA**



Tell us about your favorite scripture in a paragraph or two. Send it to us, along with a photo, by going to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and clicking "Submit Material."



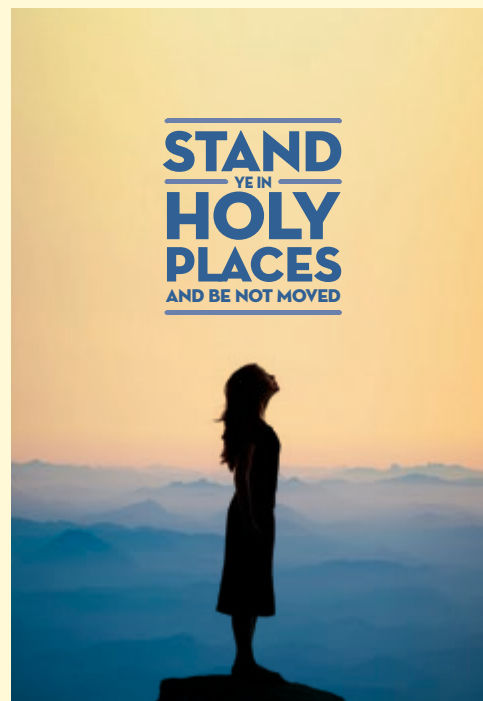
## General Young Women Meeting Broadcast

The Young Women general presidency, under the direction of the First Presidency, invites all young women ages 12 to 18, their mothers, and Young Women leaders to attend the general Young Women meeting on Saturday, March 30, 2013.

The theme for the broadcast is “stand ye in holy places, and be not moved” (D&C 87:8).

The meeting will originate from the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. The live meeting will be broadcast by satellite to meetinghouses worldwide and on the Internet at [broadcast.lds.org](http://broadcast.lds.org).

Live Broadcast	Rebroadcast
8 P.M. Eastern time	10 P.M. Eastern time
7 P.M. Central time	9 P.M. Central time
6 P.M. Mountain time	8 P.M. Mountain time
5 P.M. Pacific time	7 P.M. Pacific time



## MUTUAL ACTIVITY IDEA

### Mixed-up menu: a fun twist on service

Ever try eating spaghetti with a drinking straw? If you hold a “mixed-up menu” activity, then you might just get the chance. Here’s the basic approach: young men offer to cook and serve a three-course meal for the young women (or vice versa). Be sure to prepare and serve a tasty meal, but then add a twist with a wacky menu.

By way of planning, have fun coming up with creative and hard-to-guess names for the menu items—including forks, cups, and napkins. For example, a fork could be “Neptune’s Pride” and a drinking straw might be a “Vacuum Vortex.” Come up with 12 such items, including the actual food (a plate of spaghetti might be “Tangled and Tangy”). At the dinner, pass out menus along with a pencil. Tell each person to fill out the whole menu ahead of time by pre-selecting any four items per course.

For the first course, someone might end up with a cup, straw, napkin, and bowl of ice cream, but that’s the whole point! Separate each course by 10 minutes—adding new courses to the old ones—and let the adventure begin. Who knew service could be this fun?



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JOEL FLAKE

## A Missionary-Minded Branch

In a rural mountain town in Idaho, 12 has become quite the golden number. That’s because in a small branch with only 75 active members, 9 missionaries (8 elders and 1 sister) are serving full-time missions. That adds up to 12 percent of the entire active congregation. Missionary prep is a big deal to this branch, including regular preparation classes. “Serving a mission is the single best decision I’ve ever made,” says Elder Dillon Flake, one of the elders serving from the branch. “It’s the most worthwhile thing I’ve ever done with my life.”

## HANNAH'S MIRACLE

It was a pleasant August evening in Wyoming's Wind River Range mountains. My family and I were hours away from civilization and six miles from our car. It was the last night of our three-day backpacking excursion, and none of us felt ready to hike the six long miles back to our car the next morning. As the cool of the night settled on our camp, my mom placed a pot of water on the stove to boil for hot chocolate. While waiting for the cocoa, my toddler sister dragged me into the woods for a game of hide-and-seek. When it grew dark, we decided to head back to camp.

As soon as we set foot in our campsite, a loud clang broke the silence of the night. Screams erupted in front of me. I looked up and saw my six-year-old sister, Hannah, standing near the pot that had held the boiling water. The water had fallen onto her leg, causing a gruesome second-degree burn that began to blister. Immediately, my parents dumped bottle after bottle of cold water on her leg. Whimpering, she was carried by my parents to the tent.

My siblings and I separated and each prayed for our sister. As I prayed, I felt comfort that Hannah would be OK. When we met back in camp, our family gathered in prayer and my dad gave Hannah a priesthood blessing.

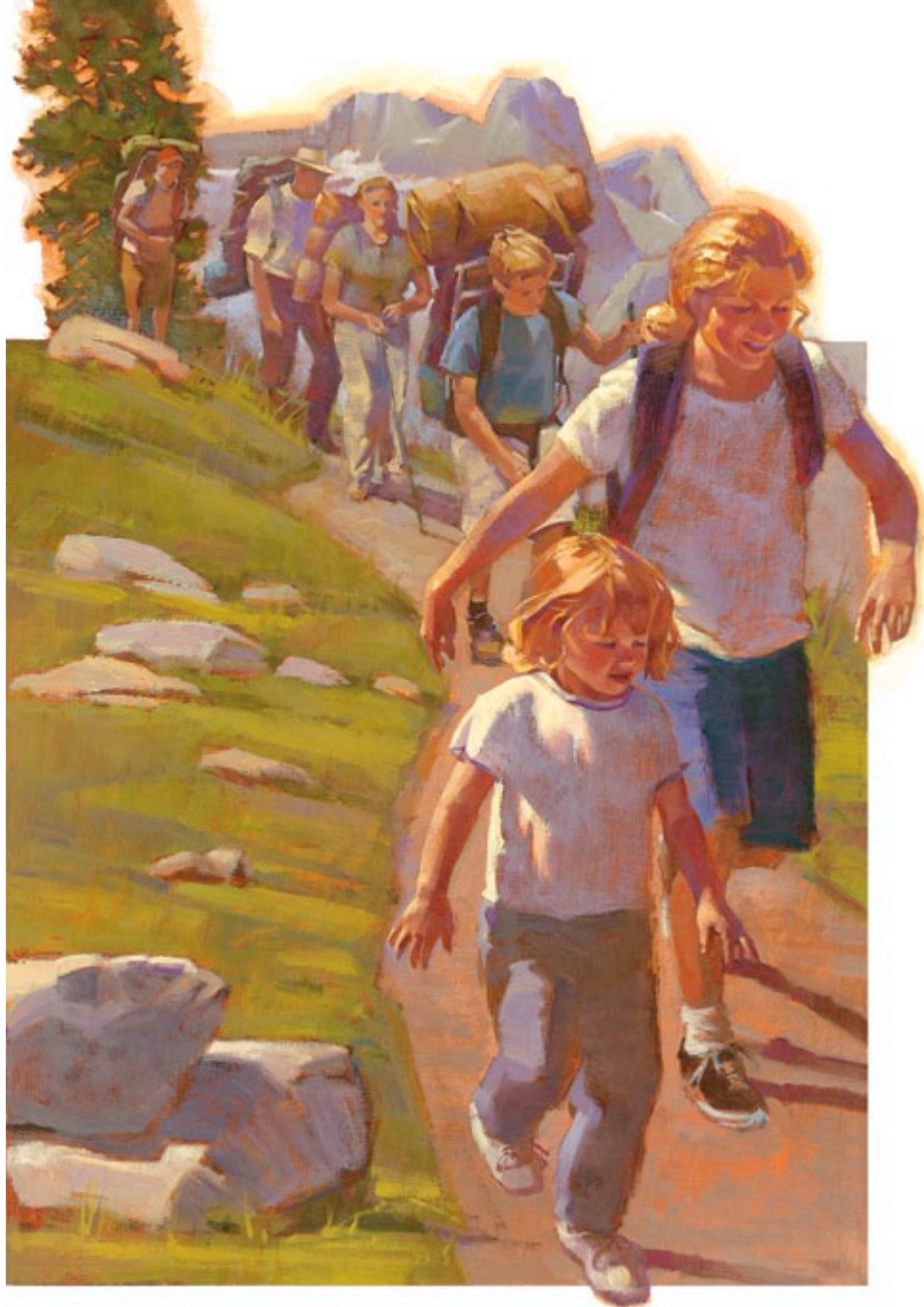


ILLUSTRATION BY DILLEEN MARSH

In it, he promised her that she would have the ability to hike the trail to the car with only minimal pain or discomfort. I looked at the red blister on her leg. It would take a miracle for his promise to be fulfilled, but I trusted in Heavenly Father to heal her.

Morning came bright and early. We took down camp except the tent where Hannah still slept. Then after gently waking her, our anxious family stood by to see whether or not she would be able to walk. We watched

her take a first step and then a second. With only a slight limp, she walked out the tent door. We knew our prayers had been answered. True to the promise given in her blessing, Hannah hiked almost the full six miles to the car “with only minimal pain or discomfort.”

In Doctrine and Covenants 42:48, the Lord promises us, “He that hath faith in me to be healed . . . shall be healed.” I have seen the fulfillment of this promise. I know that through



faith, Hannah was able to hike through the mountains without pain. My testimony of the power of the priesthood has grown tremendously from this experience. I will be eternally grateful to my Father in Heaven for the mercy he showed to a six-year-old girl in the wilderness.  
**Abby B., Idaho, USA**

## BAPTIZING MY BROTHER

Last year I had the opportunity to baptize my little brother. It was by far the most spiritual and rewarding experience in my life. As the second of nine children, I was 17 when my little brother Jase asked me if I would baptize him. I immediately felt unworthy. Although I hadn't stolen anything or committed any major sin, I still felt as if I weren't ready for such a great honor and responsibility. I felt like this was something my dad would be better at.

I explained my concerns to my parents, but they assured me that I could do this and that it would mean a lot to Jase if I did. With my parents' encouragement, I agreed to baptize Jase and began to prepare myself mentally and spiritually so I could truly be worthy to use the Aaronic Priesthood power I had received.

On the day of the baptism, as my brother and I stepped into the font, a calm feeling came over me, and

## BLESSED BY A FAMILIAR BOOK

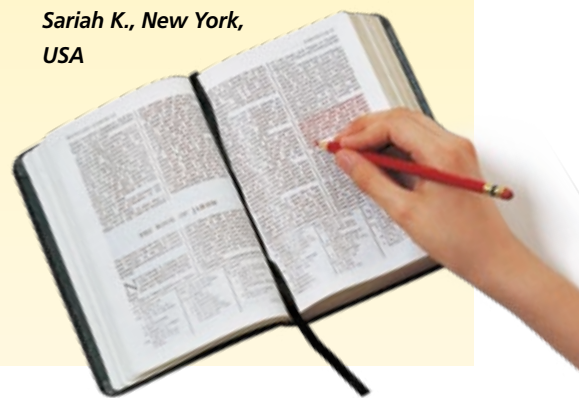
When my family first moved to Italy, I was in eighth grade and was extremely shy. I had a hard time making friends with people at school, and I was the only Church member in my grade. At lunchtime I felt so utterly alone that I ate as quickly as I could and rushed to the library to study or work on the computer.

This habit went on for months until one day I started studying at a new table. There was nothing that made this table particularly different from those around it, but the decision to sit at it changed my life. When I looked at the bookshelf by it, I saw the Book of Mormon. I was so excited to see something familiar. I decided to study the Book of Mormon each day during my lunch period.

I was able to recite the words and perform the ordinance without a mistake. I believe many blessings have come from this one event. I not only drew closer to my brother, but I also drew closer to my family and the Lord. I know that this experience will always stand out as one of the most special in my life and that it will help me as I strive to

Even though I didn't have any friends in school, I soon learned that I could rely on Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. I could feel myself becoming happier as I gained a testimony of His Church. Because I knew I was keeping the commandments, I gained more confidence in myself. Soon I tried out for the school play, and I gained the friends I desired and prayed for.

As I look back on that difficult first year in Italy, I am grateful there is "opposition in all things" (2 Nephi 2:11). Through this and other challenges, I was able to learn that the Church is true and also the greatest life lesson of all: Jesus Christ lives.  
**Sariah K., New York, USA**



prepare to serve a mission and give others the same opportunities to be blessed by the power of the gospel in their lives.

**Jackson B., Montana, USA**

### ▶ Stay Ready

Just as Jackson B. wanted to live worthy to use his priesthood, you can too. Watch a *Mormon Messages for Youth* video about this topic, "Sanctify Yourselves," with Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles at [lds.org/go/33E](https://www.lds.org/go/33E).



**By Elder Neil L. Andersen**

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

# HOW TO RECEIVE GOD'S WORD

**N**ephi promised us that “whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, . . . would never perish; neither could the temptations . . . of the adversary overpower them . . . , to lead them away to destruction” (1 Nephi 15:24).

The iron rod *is* the word of God. I like to think of it in this way: The word of God contains three very strong elements that intertwine and sustain one another to form an immovable rod:

**1. The scriptures, or the words of the ancient prophets.** You will remember Elder David A. Bednar’s piercing question: “Are you and I daily reading, studying, and searching the scriptures in a way that enables us to hold fast to the rod of iron?”<sup>1</sup>

**2. Personal revelation and inspiration that comes to us through the Holy Ghost.** President Boyd K. Packer said it this way: “If you hold to the rod, you can *feel* your way forward with the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . .

Grasp the iron rod, and do not let go. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, you can *feel* your way through life. (See 3 Nephi 18:25; D&C 9:8.)”<sup>2</sup>

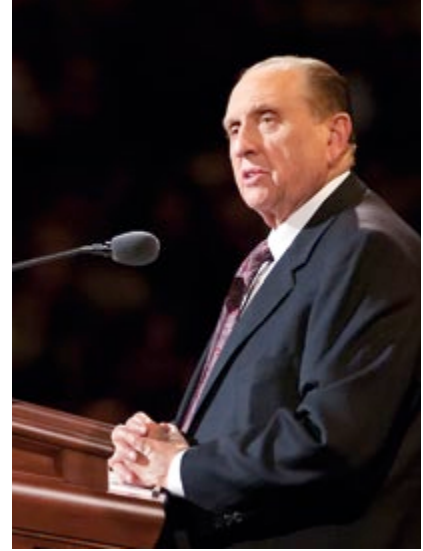
### 3. The words of the living prophets.

We must also hold fast to the word of God as delivered by the living prophets. My prayer is that we will increase our attentiveness to what the living prophets are teaching, accelerate our response to what we are learning, and deepen our understanding of what it means to *hold fast* to their words.

In one month we will have the opportunity to participate in a general conference of the Church and hear the messages of living prophets. General conference is a time to pause from what we are doing, to listen to the Lord’s servants, and to prayerfully set our course for the months ahead. Please consider these questions:

- Have I clearly marked general conference on my calendar so that I will be able to listen to each of the sessions available to me?
- How will I prepare myself during this coming month so that I will be spiritually ready to receive the messages?

And, as general conference concludes, we might ask:



- What specific impressions came to me during the conference?
- What necessary changes will I make in my life?

The iron rod *is* the word of God. The scriptures, the words of the living prophets, and the gift of the Holy Ghost are powerful in their ability to keep us safe. Let us hold fast to the words of the prophets. Let us hold fast to the iron rod. **NE**

*Adapted from “Hold Fast to the Words of the Prophets” (Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Mar. 4, 2007), [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).*

#### NOTES

1. David A. Bednar, “A Reservoir of Living Water” (Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Feb. 4, 2007), 9, [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).
2. Boyd K. Packer, “Lehi’s Dream and You” (Brigham Young University devotional address, Jan. 16, 2007), 3–4, [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).

#### Share Your Experiences

Share your experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other youth by going to [lds.org/go/33F](http://lds.org/go/33F).

## HOW HAVE YOU DONE THIS?

My family fasts at conference and prays about it. Then we have a family home evening the Monday after to talk about what we’ve learned.

**Anton N.**

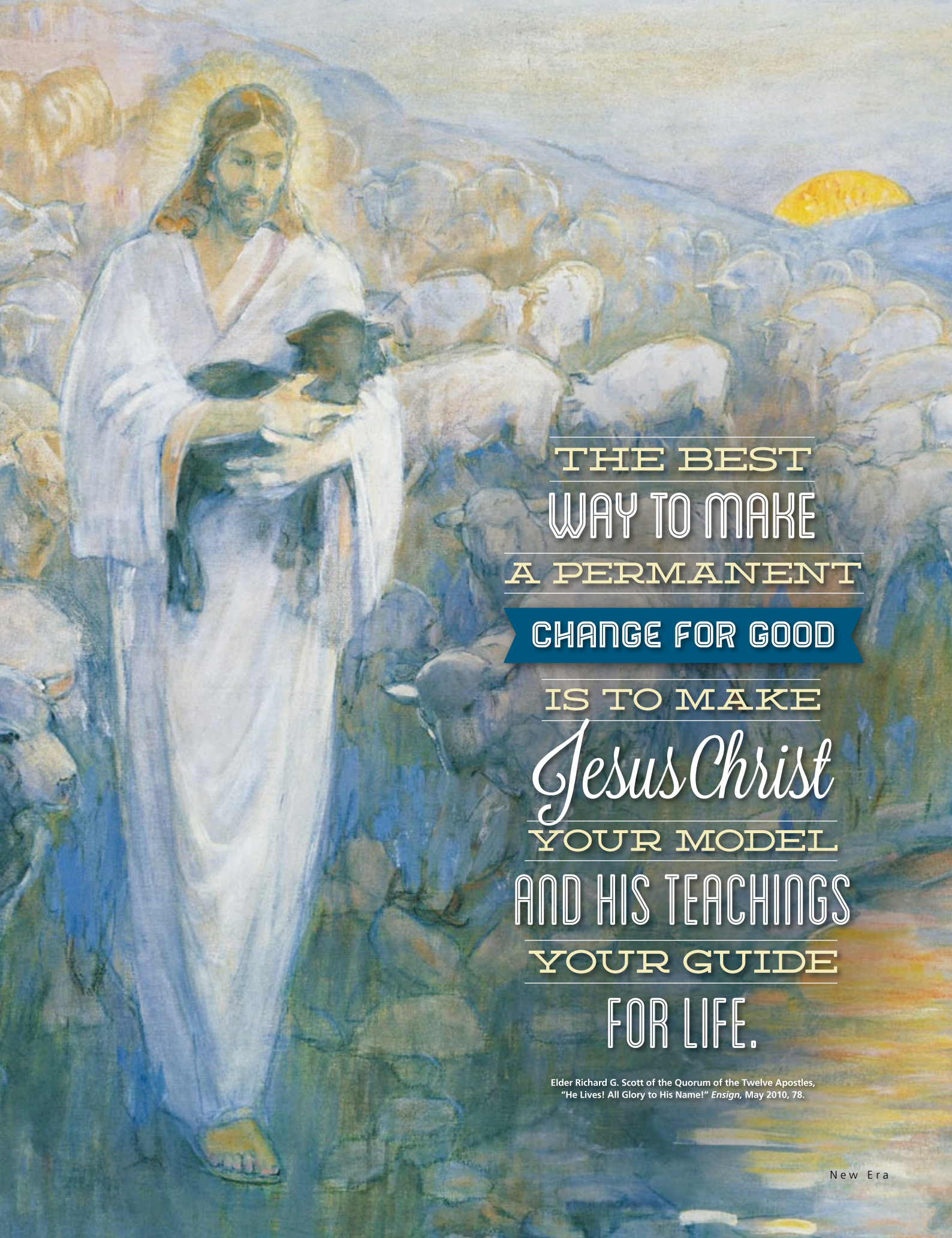
The week before conference, I pray for understanding and the ability to know how to apply it in my life. Then I listen to Church music between sessions to help keep the Spirit.

**Joseph E.**

I take notes in a conference journal. Then every Sunday, I go through one talk and the notes I took.

**Jessica M.**





THE BEST  
WAY TO MAKE  
A PERMANENT  
CHANGE FOR GOOD  
IS TO MAKE  
*Jesus Christ*  
YOUR MODEL  
AND HIS TEACHINGS  
YOUR GUIDE  
FOR LIFE.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,  
"He Lives! All Glory to His Name!" *Ensign*, May 2010, 78.



## WHAT'S ONLINE



### Easter Videos: Centering on Christ

This Easter season, strive to keep Christ as the center of your holiday celebrations. You can watch a video about the last week of the Savior's life at [lds.org/go/33G](https://lds.org/go/33G), about the Atonement at [lds.org/go/33H](https://lds.org/go/33H), about the Resurrection at [lds.org/go/33I](https://lds.org/go/33I), and other videos of Christ's life and teachings at [lds.org/go/33J](https://lds.org/go/33J).

### The Atonement: Not a One-Time Thing

Throughout March, you'll be studying about the Atonement in your Sunday lessons. Watch a short video about one young man's thoughts on and experiences with the Atonement online at [lds.org/go/33K](https://lds.org/go/33K). Learn more about the Atonement as part of your Sunday lessons at [lds.org/youth/learn](https://lds.org/youth/learn).

### General Conference— A Missionary Opportunity

General conference is coming soon (April 6–7), which means it's a great time to extend an invitation to nonmember friends to join you in listening to the words of living prophets. You'll find ideas for extending an invitation through social media online at [lds.org/go/33L](https://lds.org/go/33L). Consider praying about opportunities to share the gospel through general conference, and listen for promptings from the Spirit to help guide you.

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

