

Prophet

President Thomas S. Monson



President Monson said, “I hope that we will take the time to read the conference talks, . . . for they are deserving of our careful study.”

This section is intended to help and encourage you to read and learn from general conference. You can read all the general conference messages in this month’s Ensign magazine.

You can also view video, download MP3s, or read the text of the November 2010 general conference online at conference.lds.org.

Prepare for Service

“Young men, I admonish you to prepare for service as a missionary. Keep yourselves clean and pure and worthy to represent the Lord.

Maintain your health and strength. Study the scriptures. Where such is available, participate in seminary or institute. Familiarize yourself with the missionary handbook *Preach My Gospel*.

“A word to you young sisters: while you do not have the same priesthood responsibility as do the young men to serve as full-time missionaries, you also make a valuable contribution as missionaries, and we welcome your service.”

An Attitude of Gratitude

“We can lift ourselves and others as well when we refuse to remain in the realm of negative thought and cultivate within our hearts an attitude of gratitude. If ingratitude be numbered among the serious sins, then gratitude takes its place among the noblest of virtues. Someone has said that ‘gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues but the parent of all others.’ . . .

“Do material possessions make us happy and grateful? Perhaps momentarily. However, those things which provide deep and lasting happiness and gratitude are the things which

money cannot buy: our families, the gospel, good friends, our health, our abilities, the love we receive from those around us. Unfortunately, these are some of the things we allow ourselves to take for granted. . . .

“A grateful heart, then, comes through expressing gratitude to our Heavenly Father for His blessings and to those around us for all that they bring into our lives. This requires conscious effort—at least until we have truly learned and cultivated an attitude of gratitude.”

You Choose

“Decisions are constantly before us. To make them wisely, courage is needed—the courage to say no, the courage to say yes. Decisions *do* determine destiny.

“I plead with you to make a determination right here, right now, not to deviate from the path which will lead to our goal: eternal life with our Father in Heaven. Along that straight and true path there are other goals: missionary service, temple marriage, Church activity, scripture study, prayer, temple work. There are countless worthy goals to reach as we travel through life. Needed is our commitment to reach them. . . .

“No temptation, no pressure, no enticing can overcome us unless we allow it such. If we make the wrong choice, we have no one to blame but ourselves. President Brigham Young

once expressed this truth by relating it to himself. Said he: 'If Brother Brigham shall take a wrong track, and be shut out of the Kingdom of heaven, no person will be to blame but Brother Brigham. I am the only being in heaven, earth, or hell, that can be blamed.' He continued: 'This will equally apply to every Latter-day Saint. Salvation is an individual operation.'

100 Percent

"When he was 16 years old, Brother Christensen decided, among other things, that he would not play sports on Sunday. Years later, when he attended Oxford University in England, he played center on the basketball team. That year they had an undefeated season and went through to the British equivalent of what in the United States would be the NCAA basketball tournament.

"They won their games fairly easily in the tournament, making it to the final four. It was then that Brother Christensen looked at the schedule and, to his absolute horror, saw that the final basketball game was scheduled to be played on a Sunday. He and the team had worked so hard to get where they were, and he was the starting center. . . .

"He went to his coach, telling him how sorry he was that he wouldn't be playing in the final game. Then he went to the Sunday meetings in the local ward while his team played



without him. He prayed mightily for their success. They did win.

"That fateful, difficult decision was made more than 30 years ago. Brother Christensen has said that as time has passed, he considers it one of the most important decisions he ever made. It would have been very easy to have said, 'You know, in general, keeping the Sabbath day holy is the right commandment, but in my particular extenuating circumstances, it's okay, just this once, if I don't do it.' However, he says his entire life has turned out to be an unending stream of extenuating circumstances, and had he crossed the line just that once, then the next time something came up that was so demanding and critical, it would have been so much easier to cross the line again. The lesson he learned is that it is easier to keep the commandments 100 percent of the time than it is 98 percent of the time."

I loved how encouraging conference was. President Thomas S. Monson's talk on gratitude was revelatory for me. I never realized all that I could do. It's incredible to listen to conference. I love it and wish it happened more often.

Carol J., 16, Idaho, USA

During his opening remarks, President Thomas S. Monson announced the construction of a temple in Urdaneta City, Philippines. This is amazing! It will be just 30 minutes away. Truly no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing. Having a temple in our midst will be a source of strength and inspiration.

Richard S., Philippines

NEmore

For complete text of President Monson's conference addresses, go to conference.lds.org.

INVITING THE

Spirit

**Trust in God**

“More than any other people on earth, we have, through the glorious events of the Restoration of the gospel, felt the peace that the Lord offered His

people with the words ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’”

“If you trust God enough to listen for His message in every sermon, song, and prayer in this conference, you will find it. And if you then go and do what He would have you do, your power to trust Him will grow, and in time you will be overwhelmed with gratitude to find that He has come to trust you.”

Keep the Holy Ghost with You

“We all know that confirmation into the Church gave us the gift of the Holy Ghost. But the companionship of the Holy Ghost, the manifestations of it in our life and service, require us to put our lives in order to qualify.”

“Let us do whatever is required to qualify for the Holy Ghost as our companion and then let us go forward

President Henry B. Eyring reminded us that the Church leaders are called of God to give messages to us. While their talks are directed at the whole Church, I do believe that their messages were meant for me.

Maggie, 16, USA

**President Henry B. Eyring**

First Counselor in the First Presidency

fearlessly that we will be given the powers to do whatever the Lord calls us to do. That growth in power to serve may come slowly, it may come in small steps that are difficult for you to see, but it will come.”

Speaking in Church

“I urge all of us, young and old, who are called to speak in a meeting in the name of the Lord to dismiss our feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy. We don’t have to use soaring language or convey deep insights. Simple words of testimony will do. The Spirit will give you the words for you to speak and will carry them down into the hearts of humble people who look for truth from God. If we keep trying to speak for the Lord, we will be surprised someday to learn that we have warned, exhorted, taught, and invited with the help of the Spirit to bless lives, with power far beyond our own.”

Pondering the Scriptures

“Reading, studying, and pondering are not the same. We read words and we may get ideas. We study and we may discover patterns and connections in scripture. But when we ponder, we invite revelation by the Spirit. Pondering, to me, is the thinking and the praying I do after reading and studying in the scriptures carefully.”

NEmore

For complete text of President Eyring’s conference addresses, go to conference.lds.org.

Humility

AND BASIC TRUTHS

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Second Counselor in the First Presidency



Back to Basics

“The holy scriptures and the spoken word of the living prophets give emphasis to the fundamental principles and doctrines of the

gospel. The reason we return to these foundational principles, to the pure doctrines, is because they are the gateway to truths of profound meaning. They are the door to experiences of sublime importance that would otherwise be beyond our capacity to comprehend. These simple, basic principles are the key to living in harmony with God and man. They are the keys to opening the windows of heaven. They lead us to the peace, joy, and understanding that Heavenly Father has promised to His children who hear and obey Him.”

“Let us simplify our lives a little. Let us make the changes necessary to refocus our lives on the sublime beauty of the simple, humble path of Christian discipleship—the path that leads always toward a life of meaning, gladness, and peace.”

Beware of Pride

“Pride is a deadly cancer. It is a gateway sin that leads to a host of other human weaknesses. In fact, it could be said that every other sin is, in essence, a manifestation of pride.”

“Humility directs our attention and



love toward others and to Heavenly Father’s purposes. Pride does the opposite. Pride draws its energy and strength from the deep wells of selfishness. The moment we stop obsessing with ourselves and lose ourselves in service, our pride diminishes and begins to die.”

Don’t Beat Yourself Up

“Some people can’t get along with themselves. They criticize and belittle themselves all day long until they begin to hate themselves. May I suggest that you reduce the rush and take a little extra time to get to know yourself better. . . . Learn to see yourself as Heavenly Father sees you—as His precious daughter or son with divine potential.”

“Some suppose that humility is about beating ourselves up. Humility

does not mean convincing ourselves that we are worthless, meaningless, or of little value. Nor does it mean denying or withholding the talents God has given us. We don’t discover humility by thinking less *of* ourselves; we discover humility by thinking less *about* ourselves.”

General conference was a great experience! I especially appreciated President Uchtdorf’s talk. I loved the part where he said that we shouldn’t criticize or belittle ourselves but should learn to see ourselves as Heavenly Father sees us. This helped me to have confidence in myself.

Caroline B., 13, Idaho, USA

NEmore

For complete text of President Uchtdorf’s conference addresses, go to conference.lds.org.

Faith and Wisdom

T O F O L L O W

THE STING OF THE SCORPION

As a seven-year-old boy living in the Arabian Peninsula, I was consistently told by my parents to *always* wear my shoes, and I understood why. I knew that shoes would protect my feet against the many threats to be found in the desert, such as

snakes, scorpions, and thorns. One morning after a night's camping in the desert, I wanted to go exploring, but I did not want to bother with putting on my shoes. I rationalized that I was only going for a little wander and I would stay close by the camp. So instead of shoes, I wore flip-flops. I told myself that flip-flops were shoes—of a sort. And anyway, what could possibly happen?

As I walked along the cool sand—in my flip-flops—I felt something like a thorn going into the arch of my foot. I looked down and saw not a thorn but a scorpion. As my mind registered the scorpion and I realized what had just happened, the pain of the sting began to rise from my foot and up my leg. I grabbed the top of my leg to try and stop the searing pain from moving farther, and I cried out for help. My parents came running from the camp.

As my father battered the scorpion with a shovel, an adult friend who was camping with us heroically tried to suck the venom from my foot. At this moment I thought that I was going to die. I sobbed while my parents loaded me into a car and set off across the desert at high speed toward the nearest hospital, which was over two hours away. The pain all through my leg was excruciating, and for that entire journey, I assumed that I was dying.

When we finally reached the hospital, however, the doctor was able to assure us that only small infants and the severely malnourished are threatened by the sting of that type of scorpion. He administered an anesthetic, which numbed my leg and took away any sensation of pain. Within 24 hours I no longer had any effects from the sting of the scorpion. But I had learned a powerful lesson.

I had known that when my parents told me to wear shoes, they did not mean flip-flops; I was old enough to know that flip-flops did not provide the same protection as a pair of shoes. But that morning in the desert, I disregarded what I knew to be right. I ignored what my parents had repeatedly taught me. I had been both lazy and a little rebellious, and I paid a price for it.

Elder Patrick Kearon of the Seventy

I thought conference was wonderful. Some of the emphasis was on following the prophet, following the Holy Ghost and His promptings, and not straying to the temptations of the world. The counsel was so direct and wonderful. There were many other lessons that I learned. When the November Ensign arrives, I look forward to reading the talks again.

Hannah T., 13, California, USA

I love the feeling I get when I listen to them testify. It gives me a glimpse of true happiness. It reminds me of what I can achieve at the end of this life if I stay on the path and do what is right. I have a testimony that the words spoken at conference are true. I know that the talks given really are inspired, and if we listen to them, we will be blessed.

Bailey F., 13, New York, USA

I noticed that a lot of the talks were about following the prophet and listening to his words and the words of the Apostles. This conference testified to me that President Thomas S. Monson really is a prophet of God and that God and Jesus Christ really do speak to him and inspire him.

Taylor S., 16, Idaho, USA



We teach a standard of moral conduct that will protect us from Satan’s many substitutes or counterfeits for marriage. We must understand that any persuasion to enter into any relationship that is not in harmony with the principles of the gospel must be wrong. From the Book of Mormon we learn that “wickedness never was happiness.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In our day the prophet of God has told us to keep the commandments, to love our fellowman, to serve, to take care of the rising generation, to rescue the inactive or less active—to do many things that we call prophetic priorities. We need to understand that these priorities are God’s priorities and the prophet is His voice in communicating them to all of the Church and the world.

Elder Claudio R. M. Costa of the Seventy

Perfection does not come in this life, but we exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and keep our covenants. President Monson has promised, “Your testimony, when constantly nourished, will keep you safe.” We push our spiritual roots deep, feasting daily on the words of Christ in the scriptures. We trust in the words of living prophets, placed before us to show us the way. We pray and pray and listen to the quiet voice of the Holy Ghost that leads us along and speaks peace to our soul. Whatever challenges arise, we never, never leave Him.

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Withstanding

T E M P T A T I O N

CATCHING FISH

The goal of the fly fisherman is to catch trout

through skillful deception. The adept fisherman studies trout behavior, weather, the water current, and the types of insects trout eat and when those insects hatch. He will often craft by hand the lures he uses. He knows these artificial insects embedded with tiny hooks need to be a perfect deception because the trout will identify even the slightest flaw and reject the fly.

What a thrill it is to watch a trout break the surface of the water, inhale the fly, and resist until it is finally exhausted and reeled in. The test is the pitting of the fisherman's knowledge

and skill against the noble trout.

The use of artificial lures to fool and catch a fish is an example of the way Lucifer often tempts, deceives, and tries to ensnare us.

Like the fly fisherman who knows that trout are driven by hunger, Lucifer knows our "hunger," or weaknesses, and tempts us with counterfeit lures which, if taken, can cause us to be yanked from the stream of life into his unmerciful influence. And unlike a fly fisherman who catches and releases the fish unharmed back into the water, Lucifer will not voluntarily let go. His goal is to make his victims as miserable as he is.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

So much of what the speakers were saying seemed especially for me. I received a greater testimony of the importance of the gospel in my life and the lives of my family. I especially loved Elder Ballard's talk about Satan's counterfeits, and avoiding addictive behaviors and media, as well as substances. I know that God loves me personally and that He has called prophets and apostles to help me return home to Him.

Emma G., 15, Missouri, USA

I noticed the word fundamentals a lot. I thought this was interesting because it means we need to pay attention to the basic and most important things. I also liked President Boyd K. Packer's talk because it covered lots of basic principles.

Ceana B., 15, Oregon, USA

When I was watching general conference, I was so very humbled. I learned a lot of great messages about young people and the problems we are faced with in everyday life. With all the temptation we are faced with, we must stay on the strait and narrow path to Heavenly Father.

Abigail C., 13, New York, USA

The old saying "The Lord is voting for me, and Lucifer is voting against me, but it is my vote that counts" describes a doctrinal certainty that our agency is more powerful than the adversary's will. Agency is precious. We can foolishly, blindly give it away, but it cannot be forcibly taken from us.

There is also an age-old excuse: "The devil made me do it." Not so! He can deceive you and mislead you, but he does not have the power to force you or anyone else to transgress or to keep you in transgression.

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Parents can prevent a lot of heartache by teaching their children to postpone romantic relationships until the time comes when they are ready for marriage. Prematurely pairing off with a boyfriend or girlfriend is dangerous. Becoming a "couple" creates emotional intimacy, which too often leads to physical intimacy. Satan knows this sequence and uses it to his advantage. He will do whatever he can to keep young men from serving missions and to prevent temple marriages.

Elder Larry R. Lawrence of the Seventy



It is contrary to the economy of heaven for the Lord to repeat to each of us individually what He has already revealed to us collectively. The scriptures contain the words of Christ. They are the voice of the Lord. Studying the scriptures trains us to hear the Lord's voice.

David M. McConkie, first counselor in the Sunday School general presidency

Satan's increasing influence in the world is allowed to provide an atmosphere in which to prove ourselves. While he causes havoc today, Satan's final destiny was fixed by Jesus Christ through His Atonement and the Resurrection. The devil will not triumph. Even now he must operate within the bounds set by the Lord. He cannot take away any blessing that has been earned. He cannot alter character that has been woven from righteous decisions. He has no power to destroy eternal bonds forged in a holy temple between a husband, wife, and children. He cannot quench true faith. He cannot take away your testimony. Yes, these things can be lost by succumbing to his temptations. But he has no power in and of himself to destroy them.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Freedom and light have never been easy to attain or maintain. Since the War in Heaven, the forces of evil have used every means possible to destroy agency and extinguish light. The assault on moral principles and religious freedom has never been stronger.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Freedom

AND CHOICE

THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS

I felt really uplifted this conference. I realized that most of the talks were about agency and the consequences we receive, either good or bad, from our agency. I really am looking forward to taking these things I have learned and applying them to my life.

Elizabeth P., 14, Utah, USA

I felt like the people who were speaking knew exactly what I needed to hear. I felt like it was an absolute flood of spiritual information, and I'm so glad their talks will come in print, so I will have more time to absorb all of it.

Aaron S., 15, North Carolina, USA

This conference was truly amazing. I loved that all the talks had something that I could apply to my life or work harder on so I can become a better person.

Haley H., Georgia, USA

Shortly after my sweetheart, Devonna, and I were married, she shared with me a story about how she learned in her youth this important doctrine that we are free to choose but that we are not free to choose the consequences of our actions. With

the help of my daughter Shelly, I would like to relate Sister Arnold's experience:

"When I was 15 years old, I often felt that there were too many rules and commandments. I wasn't sure that a normal, fun-loving teenager could enjoy life with so many restrictions. Furthermore, the many hours spent working on my father's ranch were seriously dipping into my time with my friends.

"This particular summer, one of my jobs was to ensure that the cows grazing on the mountain pasture did not break through the fence and get into the wheat field. A cow grazing on the growing wheat can bloat, causing suffocation and death. One cow in particular was always trying to stick her head through the fence. One morning, as I was riding my horse along the fence line checking on the cattle, I found that the cow had broken through the fence and gotten into the wheat field. To my dismay, I realized that she had been eating wheat for quite some time because she was already bloated and looked much like a balloon. I thought, 'You stupid cow! That fence was there to protect you, yet you broke through it and you have eaten so much wheat that your life is in danger.'

"I raced back to the farmhouse to get my dad. However, when we returned, I found her lying dead on the ground. I was saddened by the loss of that cow. We had provided her with a beautiful mountain pasture to graze in and a fence to keep her away from the dangerous wheat, yet she foolishly broke through the fence and caused her own death.

"As I thought about the role of the fence, I realized that it was a protection, just as the commandments and my parents' rules were a protection. The commandments and rules were for my own good. I realized that obedience to the commandments could save me from physical and spiritual death. That enlightenment was a pivotal point in my life."

Elder Mervyn B. Arnold of the Seventy

NEmore

For short video clips of conference messages for youth, go to youth.lds.org.



Remember, brothers and sisters, any kind of addiction is to surrender to something, thus relinquishing agency and becoming dependent. Thus, video-gaming and texting on cell phones need to be added to the list. Some gamers claim to spend up to 18 hours a day going through level after level of video games, neglecting all other aspects of their lives. Texting on cell phones can become an addiction, causing the important interpersonal human communication to become lost. Not long ago a bishop told me two of his youth were standing side by side texting one another rather than talking to each other.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The scriptures teach us that we do have agency, and our righteous exercise of agency always makes a difference in the opportunities we have and our ability to act upon them and progress eternally.

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Young men, I challenge you to build your lives on a foundation of truth and righteousness. It is the only foundation that will stand the pressures of this life and endure through the eternities. The priesthood you bear is a special gift, for the giver is the Lord Himself. Use it, magnify it, and live worthy of it. I want you to know that I have a special and personal testimony of its power. It has blessed my life in so many ways.

I also challenge you to determine today that you will honor this great blessing and prepare to advance in each office of the Aaronic Priesthood—deacon, teacher, and priest. Prepare yourselves for the great blessing of receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood, which you will need to be worthy to receive before you serve as a full-time missionary. The Lord needs you to prepare yourselves for His service, especially the great responsibility you will have of declaring His gospel to the world. I promise you if you will prepare to receive His holy priesthood, He will literally pour out blessings upon your heads.

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Yes, faith is a choice, and it must be sought after and developed. Thus, we are responsible for our own faith. We are also responsible for our lack of faith. The choice is yours.

Bishop Richard C. Edgley, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric



Repentance,

PEACE, AND FORGIVENESS

PAINTING YOURSELF INTO A CORNER

Hearing conference helped me. It reminded me of my life and my duty here on earth. Pres. Thomas S. Monson stated, “Endure to the end,” and I plan on following his counsel.

Alec M., 13, Arizona, USA

I love listening to the prophet. I feel like I’m listening to the Savior when he speaks. My impression is this is the true Church. It is a feeling of peace and surety that I feel in my soul. I cannot deny this. I am so happy to know that there is a way back to my Heavenly Father, no matter the mistakes I have made. The Savior is there for me, and all I have to do is reach out, have faith, and follow the teachings of Jesus.

Robyn B., Texas, USA

Conference was amazing. The Spirit was so strong, and I loved listening to all the speakers and the great things they had to share! I feel like I become a better person and I am encouraged to do what is right. They remind me of my Savior’s love for me and how much He wants me to return to Him, worthily.

Julia I., 15, Utah, USA

One day my father assigned me to varnish a wooden floor. I made the choice to begin at the door and work my way *into* the room. When I was almost finished, I realized I had left myself no way to get out. There was no window or door on the other side. I had literally painted myself into a corner. I had no place to go. I was stuck.

Whenever we disobey, we spiritually paint ourselves into a corner and are captive to our choices. Like repentance, turning around and walking across a newly varnished floor means more work—a lot of re-sanding and refinishing! Returning to the Lord isn’t easy, but it is worth it.

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Every soul confined in a prison of sin, guilt, or perversion has a key to the gate. The key is labeled “repentance.” If you know how to use this key, the adversary cannot hold you. The twin principles of repentance and forgiveness exceed in strength the awesome power of the tempter. If you are bound by a habit or an addiction that is unworthy, you must stop conduct that is harmful. Angels will coach you, and priesthood leaders will guide you through those difficult times.

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The Savior extend[s] His arms to embrace us during our times of true repentance.

He teaches us to become “a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.” And then we will reconcile ourselves to God, and we will become friends to God. I bear witness of the reality and power of the Savior’s Atonement to cleanse, purify, and make us and our homes holy as we strive to put off the natural man and follow Him.

Elder Juan A. Uceda of the Seventy

NEmore

For more information about the new Duty to God program, go to DutyToGod.lds.org.



RETURNING WHAT WAS STOLEN

Many years ago when I was practicing law in California, a friend and client who was not a member of our faith came in to see me and with great enthusiasm showed me a letter he had received from an LDS bishop of a

nearby ward. The bishop reported that a member of his congregation, a former employee of my client, had taken materials from my client's work site and had rationalized that they were surplus. But after becoming a committed Latter-day Saint and attempting to follow Jesus Christ, this employee recognized that what he had done was dishonest. Enclosed in the letter was a sum of money from the man to cover not only the cost of the materials but also interest. My client was impressed that the Church through lay leadership would assist this man in his effort to be reconciled to God.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

I enjoyed conference this year because it help to build my faith. It seemed like every talk was directed to me. Each person telling me a different way to put my trust in the Lord. I know that what was said in conference is modern revelation. I know that as I strive to do what I have been taught, I will receive strength from the Lord.

Caleb W., 16, Utah, USA

My feeling towards the conference is, I want every member of my family to hear with me everything that our leaders say, so it can be something to change their hearts and minds to join us as part of this Church.

Penisimani M., 13, Tongatapu, Tonga

I really enjoyed general conference. The Spirit was extremely strong throughout the meetings. I know that the speakers are truly called of God. The talks focused on the youth I really enjoyed. It reminded me that I am loved and that I have people watching out for me and all of the other youth!

Abby O., 13, Utah, USA

NEmore

For more information on Personal Progress, go to PersonalProgress.lds.org.

FINDING

Answers

It seemed like everything was going wrong with every attempt I made to tune in to conference. Finally, I took a train to the nearest stake center with some of the missionaries in my city and got to watch the last session in peace. That session was truly perfect for me. Every question I had prepared beforehand, hoping to find answers in some of the talks, was addressed and answered powerfully with the Spirit there speaking peace to my soul and helping me know exactly what I needed at that time.

Brooke L., 17, Massachusetts, USA

In my ward, all of the young women were able to use this general conference to complete a value project for Personal Progress. We each decorated a general conference notebook and took notes on each speaker, paying special attention to those who spoke on the value we were completing. I used this for my faith project, and it strengthened my faith so much! I was assured by the Holy Ghost that the men who spoke to us are truly prophets of God.

Emily P., 15, California, USA

Why is it so important to gain my own testimony?

We all need a personal testimony of truth. As our faith develops, we necessarily rely on the words and faith of others, like our parents, teachers, or priesthood leaders (see D&C 46:14). But if we are solely dependent on one particular priesthood leader or teacher for our personal testimony of the truth instead of getting that testimony through the personal line, we will be forever vulnerable to disillusionment by the action of that person. When it comes to a mature knowledge or testimony of the truth, we should not be dependent on a mortal mediator between us and our Heavenly Father.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

What should I say when people ask me about the Church?

Let your response be warm and joyful. And let your response be



relevant to that individual. Remember, he or she is also a child of God, that very God who dearly wants that person to qualify for eternal life and return to Him one day. You may be the very one to open the door to his or her salvation and understanding of the doctrine of Christ.

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Can I still repent?

Not one of you has thrown away your last chance. You can change, you can come back, you can claim mercy. Come unto the only One who can heal, and you will find peace.

Elder Patrick Kearon of the Seventy

Do I have to be so different from others?

Some ask, “Do I have to be so different from others?” “Can’t I be a disciple of Christ without thinking so much about my behavior?” “Can’t I love Christ without keeping the law of chastity?” “Can’t I love Him and do what I want on Sunday?” Jesus gave a simple answer: “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Seventy

How do we keep the Holy Ghost with us?

Our invitations for the companionship of the Holy Ghost occur in many ways: through the making and keeping of covenants; by praying

General conference messages often hold answers to the questions that you or your peers may have.



sincerely as individuals and families; by searching the scriptures diligently; through strengthening appropriate relationships with family members and friends; by seeking after virtuous thoughts, actions, and language; and by worshipping in our homes, in the holy temple, and at church. Conversely, casualness about or the breaking of covenants and commitments, failing to pray and study the scriptures, and inappropriate thoughts, actions, and language cause the Spirit to withdraw from or to avoid us altogether.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

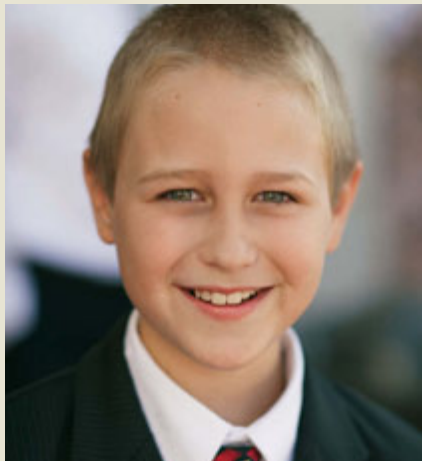
Why is chastity so important?

To be entrusted with the power to create life carries with it the greatest of joys and dangerous temptations. The gift of mortal life and the capacity to kindle other lives is a supernal blessing. Through the righteous

exercise of this power, as in nothing else, we may come close to our Father in Heaven and experience a fullness of joy. This power is not an incidental part of the plan of happiness. It is the key—the very key.

Whether we use this power as the eternal laws require or reject its divine purpose will forever determine what we will become. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Why don't I get answers to my prayers?

With even your strongest faith, God will not always reward you immediately according to your desires. Rather, God will respond with what in His eternal plan is best for you, when it will yield the greatest advantage. Be thankful that sometimes God lets you struggle for a long time before that answer comes. That causes your faith



to increase and your character to grow.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Why do we have so many rules and commandments?

Our kind, wise, and loving Heavenly Father has given us commandments not to restrict us, as the adversary would have us believe, but to bless our lives and to protect our good name and our legacy for our future generations—just as they had for Lehi and Nephi. Just like the cow that received the consequences of her choice, each one of us must learn that the grass is *never* greener on the other side of the fence—nor will it ever be, for “wickedness never was happiness.” Each one of us will receive the consequences of our choices when this life is over. The commandments are clear, they are protective—they are not restrictive—and the wonderful blessings of obedience are numberless!

Elder Mervyn B. Arnold of the Seventy

Answers

I liked David A. Bednar's talk when he said that the Spirit makes you want to act, not be acted upon. Richard G. Scott said: "We become what we want to be by consistently being what we want to become." If we want to be a person who has the Spirit, and therefore have an attitude of gratitude, then we must be constantly worthy of the Spirit, who will help us have a more grateful heart.

Marina S., 16, Pennsylvania, USA

My seminary teacher challenged my class to write down the things troubling us and then pray. I was touched, because during general conference every single problem I had listed on my paper in seminary, and others that I hadn't, were all addressed. I received guidance for each and every one of my problems.

Tiffany E., 17, Utah, USA

I always love general conference. In each session I felt the Holy Spirit. One of my favorite talks was the one by Elder Costa. I thoroughly enjoyed what he said on prophets and how we need to obey and heed their counsel. I also liked the talk that Elder Scott gave and how the greater faith we have will bring us greater joy.

Emily H., 15, Washington, USA



Why do we call ourselves the only true church?

The Lord has declared that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth" (D&C 1:30). This restored Church is true because it is the Savior's Church; He is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). And it is a living church because of the workings and gifts of the Holy Ghost. How blessed we are to live at a time when the priesthood is upon the earth and we can receive the Holy Ghost.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

I don't really know if I have a testimony. What can I do?

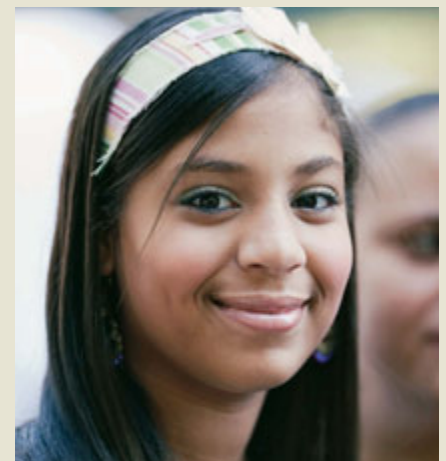
A strong testimony gives peace, comfort, and assurance. It generates the conviction that as the teachings of the Savior are consistently obeyed, life will be beautiful, the future will be

secure, and there will be capacity to overcome the challenges that cross our path. A testimony grows from understanding truth distilled from prayer and the pondering of scriptural doctrine. It is nurtured by living those truths with faith anchored in the secure confidence that the promised results will be obtained.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

If confusion and hopelessness weigh on your mind, *choose* to "awake and arouse your faculties" (Alma 32:27). Humbly approaching the Lord with a broken heart and contrite spirit is the pathway to truth and the Lord's way of light, knowledge, and peace.

If your testimony is immature, untested, and insecure, *choose* to "exercise even a particle of faith"; choose to "experiment upon [His] words" (Alma 32:27). The Savior explained, "If any man will do his



will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:17).

Bishop Richard C. Edgley, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric



Is there anything wrong with having sleepovers?

May I express my personal warning about a practice that is common in many cultures. I am referring to sleepovers, or spending the night at the home of a friend. As a bishop I discovered that too many youth violated the Word of Wisdom or the law of chastity for the first time as part of a sleepover. Too often their first exposure to pornography and even their first encounter with the police occurred when they were spending the night away from home.

Elder Larry R. Lawrence of the Seventy

Should I change friends?

Often, becoming prey to sin starts with someone choosing friends

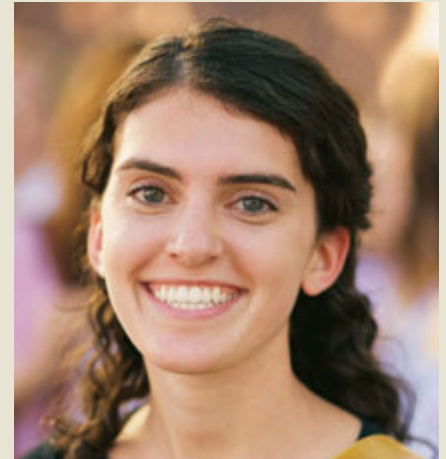
whose standards are not consistent with the gospel; and in order to be popular or to be accepted by peers, the person then compromises gospel principles and laws, going down a path that will bring only pain and sadness to this person and to his or her loved ones.

Elder Jairo Mazzagardi of the Seventy

Should I be the one who decides what I can do with my body?

Those who believe that our bodies are nothing more than the result of evolutionary chance will feel no accountability to God or anyone else for what they do with or to their body. We who have a witness of the broader reality of premortal, mortal, and postmortal eternity, however, must acknowledge that we have a duty to God with respect to this crowning achievement of His physical creation. In Paul’s words:

“What? know ye not that your



body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19--20).

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

What’s so wrong about staying out really late?

When I was a teenager, my curfew was 10:00 p.m. Today, that is the time some go out in order to have fun. Yet we know that it is at night that some of the worst things happen. It is during the dark hours that some youth go to places with inappropriate environments, where music and lyrics do not allow them to have the companionship of the Holy Ghost. Then, under these circumstances, they become easy prey to sin.

Elder Jairo Mazzagardi of the Seventy

Go and Do

A CALL TO YOUTH

We all know there are special keys, covenants, and responsibilities given to the presiding officers of the Church, but we also know that the Church draws incomparable strength, a truly unique vitality, from the faith, devotion, and contribution of *every* member of this Church, whoever you may be. In whatever country you live, however young or inadequate you feel, or however aged or limited you see yourself as being, I testify you are individually loved of God, you are central to the meaning of His work, and you are cherished and prayed for by the presiding officers of His Church. The personal value, the sacred splendor of every *one* of you, is the very reason there is a plan for salvation and exaltation. Contrary to the parlance of the day, this *is* about *you*.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

God has designed this mortal existence to require nearly constant exertion. I recall the Prophet Joseph Smith's simple statement: "By continuous labor [we] were enabled to get a comfortable maintenance" (Joseph Smith—History 1:55). By work we sustain and enrich life. It enables us to survive the disappointments and tragedies of the mortal experience. Hard-earned achievement brings a sense of self-worth. Work builds and refines character, creates beauty, and is the instrument of our service to one another and to God. A consecrated life is filled with work, sometimes repetitive, sometimes menial, sometimes unappreciated, but always work that improves, orders, sustains, lifts, ministers, aspires.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Young women in the Church learn to set goals through the . . . Personal Progress [program], which focus them toward the temple and their future responsibilities. In Relief Society they continue to progress toward the blessings of the temple and eternal life by increasing their faith and personal righteousness, strengthening their families and homes, and seeking out and helping those who are in need.

Sister Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president

Young men and young women, *you* can start today by being an "example of the believers" in faith and in purity. Strengthen your faith and testimony daily through scripture study and prayer. Keep your baptismal covenant which will keep you pure and worthy of the guidance of the Holy Ghost. You can start today to be that example for others to follow.

Sister Mary N. Cook, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency

Learning

FROM CONFERENCE

THE SCRIPTURES IN GENERAL CONFERENCE

Speakers in general conference taught us from the scriptures. You can learn a lot by simply looking up the scriptures they used. The following scriptures were referred to most often:

- 2 Nephi 2:27*
- D&C 20:77
- Mosiah 3:19*
- John 14:15*
- Ephesians 2:19–21
- 1 Timothy 4:12
- 2 Nephi 2:26
- Mosiah 18:9
- Alma 41:10*
- 2 Nephi 28:21–22
- 3 Nephi 19:9
- D&C 1:38*
- D&C 4:2
- D&C 58:42*
- D&C 81:5
- D&C 121:36–37*
- Moses 1:39*

Here are some other scriptures that were referred to more than once:

- Psalm 46:10
- Isaiah 53:5*
- Amos 3:7*
- Matthew 22:37
- Matthew 5:16*
- Luke 2:49
- Luke 23:34
- John 5:39
- John 6:67
- John 14:6
- John 14:26
- John 15:16
- 1 Corinthians 3:16
- 1 Corinthians 10:13*
- 1 Corinthians 13:8
- 1 Nephi 8:12
- 1 Nephi 8:33
- 1 Nephi 11:25
- 2 Nephi 26:33
- 2 Nephi 32:3*
- 2 Nephi 32:5
- Alma 5:14
- Alma 13:28
- Alma 29:8
- Alma 32:27
- 3 Nephi 19:21
- 3 Nephi 28:11
- Ether 12:6*
- Moroni 7:16*
- Moroni 7:47–48
- D&C 1:19
- D&C 1:30
- D&C 12:8
- D&C 19:16*
- D&C 21:5
- D&C 29:36
- D&C 42:14
- D&C 88:11
- Moses 4:1–3
- Abraham 3:25

A LIST OF LISTS

If you look for lists in general conference, you can find some simple truths and effective counsel to follow. Here are some lists that were given by speakers in general conference:

- Three Rs of choice (President Thomas S. Monson, priesthood session)
- Becoming a successful teacher (David M. McConkie)
- What forms your character? (Elder Richard G. Scott)
- Four lessons from the book of Daniel (Elder L. Tom Perry)
- Because of my faith . . . (Bishop Richard C. Edgley)
- Christ teaches ways to bring peace (Elder Juan A. Uceda)
- Following the prophet (Elders Claudio R. M. Costa and Kevin R. Duncan)

NEmore

Watch, read, or listen to conference talks at conference.lds.org.

* Seminary scripture mastery verses

Here are some things that can enhance your study of general conference.

I'm very grateful to live in a world where I can listen to the prophet's voice so easily. Radio, television, live on the Internet. It's everywhere. If I happened to miss one session, I can go online and watch and listen to all of the talks. That in itself is a testimony to me of how far we've come since Joseph Smith's First Vision. I'm grateful for this Church, the gospel, and all of the prophets, seers, and revelators of our time. I'm grateful for the opportunity I had to hear God speak through these people so that I may know that I am a daughter of God and know what I need to do to prepare myself for these last days. With this technology we can listen to them again whenever we need to.

Callie H., 15, Utah, USA

The talk given by Sister Cook really reached out to me. It made me think how much we are blessed and the blessings we receive when we live our lives on the guidelines of the Spirit and prophets.

Allison R., Texas, USA