

NOVEMBER 2015

# THE New Era

THE



## General Conference

HIGHLIGHTS

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*Called*  
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*Remembering*  
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That's only one of a thousand ways a date can start to head downhill. —page 26 • For the first time I focused on preparing for the sacrament all through the week. —page 30 • Plan an obstacle course through your neighborhood. —page 32 • They administered the test and then looked at me in surprise. —page 35 • Do you ever wish you could go back in time to fix the past? —page 36 • What if you could change the color of a flower? —page 40 • I began to feel like an outcast but then realized I had to open up. —page 44 • I started to get worried because I'd only brought one canteen of water. —page 47 • When is it OK to kiss? —page 48 • Is it a sin to overeat or be overweight? —page 48



**Cover:** General conference highlights, pp. 2–22, 49  
**Cover photograph:** Cody Bell

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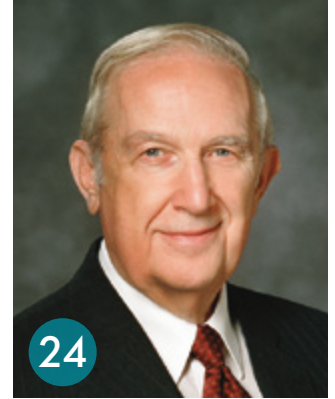
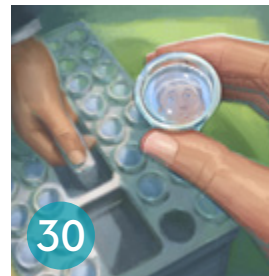


## General Conference HIGHLIGHTS

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President  
Thomas S. Monson

## VIDEOS AND QUOTES

Share designed quotes and short video highlights from President Monson's conference addresses at [lds.org/go/conf15A](https://lds.org/go/conf15A) and [lds.org/go/conf15B](https://lds.org/go/conf15B).

# BE FAITHFUL, BE AN EXAMPLE

## Keep the Commandments

“My message to you . . . is straightforward. It is this: *keep the commandments*.

“God’s commandments are not given to frustrate us or to become obstacles to our happiness. Just the opposite is true. He who created us and who loves us perfectly knows just how we need to live our lives in order to obtain the greatest happiness possible. . . .

“Although there is no time in our lives when we are exempt from temptation, you . . . are at an age when you may be particularly vulnerable. Teenage years are often years of insecurity, of feeling as though you don’t measure up, of trying to find your place with your peers, and of trying to fit in. You may be tempted to lower your standards and

to follow the crowd in order to be accepted by those you desire to have as friends. Please be strong, and be alert to *anything* that would rob you of the blessings of eternity. The choices you make here and now are forever important. . . .

“I plead with you to avoid anything that will deprive you of your happiness here in mortality and eternal life in the world to come. With his deceptions and lies, the adversary will lead you down a slippery slope to your destruction if you allow him to do so. You will likely be on that slippery slope before you even realize that there is no way to stop. . . . The adversary knows us, and he knows the temptations which will be difficult for us to ignore. How vital it is that



we exercise constant vigilance in order to avoid giving in to such lies and temptations.

“Great courage will be required as we remain faithful and true amid the ever-increasing pressures. . . .

“ . . . We will need to nurture strong testimonies by studying the scriptures and by praying and by pondering the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. When firmly planted, our testimonies of the gospel, of the Savior, and of our Heavenly Father will influence all that we do. . . .

“ . . . May we keep the commandments! Wonderful and glorious are the rewards which are in store for us if we do.”

### Be an Example and a Light

“We become examples of the believers by living the gospel of Jesus Christ in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity [see 1 Timothy 4:12]. As we do so, our lights will shine for others to see. . . .

“The Apostle Paul lists six attributes of a believer, attributes that will allow our lights to shine. Let us look at each one.

“I mention the first two attributes together—being an example in word and

in conversation. The words we use can lift and inspire, or they can harm and demean. . . . Let us speak to others with love and respect. . . .

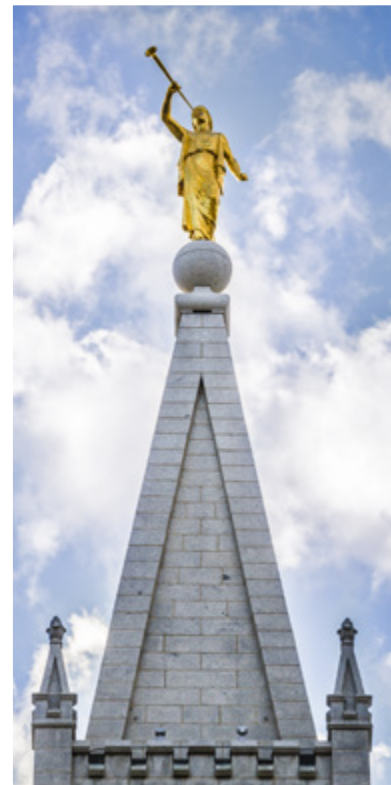
“The next attribute . . . is charity, which has been defined as ‘the pure love of Christ’ [Moroni 7:47]. I am confident there are within our sphere of influence those who are lonely, those who are ill, and those who feel discouraged. Ours is the opportunity to help them and to lift their spirits. The Savior brought hope to the hopeless and strength to the weak. . . . Throughout His ministry He reached out in charity to any in need. As we emulate His example, we will bless lives, including our own.

“Next, we are to be an example in spirit. To me that means we strive to have in our lives kindness, gratitude, forgiveness, and goodwill. . . .

“To be an example of faith means that we trust in the Lord and in His word. It means that we possess and that we nourish the beliefs that will guide our thoughts and our actions. . . . In order to gain and to keep the faith we need, it is essential that we read and study and ponder the scriptures. Communication with our Heavenly Father through prayer is vital. . . .

“Finally, we are to be pure, which means that we are clean in body, mind, and spirit. We know that our body is a temple, to be treated with reverence and respect. Our minds should be filled with uplifting and ennobling thoughts and kept free from those things which will pollute. In order to have the Holy Ghost as our constant companion, we must be worthy. . . .

“ . . . As we follow the example of the Savior, ours will be the opportunity to be a light in the lives of others.”



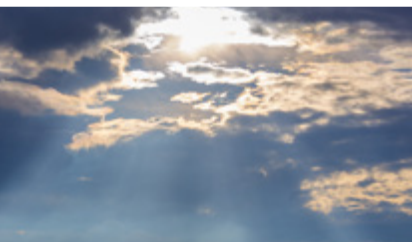
*“I am so grateful for our living prophet, President Thomas S. Monson. I love him and pray for him daily. I know that if we follow his teachings we will always stay safe and be protected.”*

**Kameron G., 12, Kansas, USA**

*“I loved feeling God’s love through His servants! I loved President Monson’s talk about being a light and how we all need to be a light for others and others, in turn, can be lights for us.”*

**Anna T., 17, Virginia, USA**





“Whatever your calling in the priesthood, you may have at times felt Heavenly Father was unaware of you. You can pray to know His will, and with the honest desire to do *whatever* He asks you to do, you will receive an answer. . . .

“It is my prayer that every priesthood holder will reach out in faith to rescue every soul for whom he is responsible. God will add His power to His servant’s efforts. Hearts of people will be touched to make the choices that will bring them along the gospel path toward happiness and away from sorrow.”

### The Holy Ghost as Your Companion

“My purpose today is to increase your desire and your determination to claim the gift promised to each of us after we were baptized. During our confirmation we heard these words: ‘Receive the Holy Ghost.’ From that moment, our lives changed forever.

“We can, if we live worthy of it, have the blessing of the Spirit to be with us, not only now and then . . . but always. . . .

“To always have the Spirit with us is to have the guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost in our daily lives. We can, for instance, be warned by the Spirit to resist the temptation to do evil.

“. . . If we partake of the sacrament in faith, the Holy Ghost will then be able to protect us and those we love from the temptations that come with increasing intensity and frequency. . . .

“. . . The Holy Ghost . . . also gives us the power to discern truth from falsehood. The truth that matters most is verified only by revelation from God. . . .

“As you obey, the impressions from the Spirit will come more frequently, becoming closer and closer to constant companionship. Your power to choose the right will increase.”

## LED AND SUSTAINED

### You Are Not Alone in the Work

“Any calling we receive in the Lord’s kingdom requires more than our human judgment and our personal powers. Those calls require help from the Lord, which will come. Even the new deacon will learn that is true, and he will go on learning over the years. . . .

“As you move from one priesthood service to another, you will see the Lord is in the work with you. . . .

“. . . The Lord’s servants are inspired to know the Lord’s will. . . . The prophet, as the president of the priesthood, is inspired of God to watch over and care for the Lord’s servants and to call them.



**President Henry B. Eyring**  
First Counselor in the First Presidency

### VIDEOS AND QUOTES

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### It Works Wonderfully!

“If you ever think that the gospel isn’t working so well for you, I invite you to step back, look at your life from a higher plane, and simplify your approach to discipleship. Focus on the basic doctrines, principles, and applications of the gospel. . . .

“God will take you as you are at this very moment and begin to work with you. All you need is a willing heart, a desire to believe, and trust in the Lord. . . .

“As you exercise a little faith and begin your walk as a peaceable follower of our Lord Jesus Christ, your heart will change. Your whole being will be filled with light.

“God will help you become something greater than you ever thought possible. And you will discover that the gospel of Jesus Christ is indeed working in your life. It works.”

### Be Not Afraid, Only Believe

“Satan . . . wants us to fail. He spreads lies as part of his effort to destroy our belief. He slyly suggests that the doubter, the skeptic, the cynic is sophisticated and intelligent, while those who have faith in God and His miracles are naive, blind, or brainwashed. . . .

“. . . Another of Satan’s deceptions [is] that belief is available to some people but not to others. There is no magic to belief. But *wanting* to believe is the necessary first step! . . .

“When we choose to believe, exercise faith unto repentance, and follow our Savior, Jesus Christ, we open our spiritual eyes to splendors we can scarcely imagine. Thus our belief and faith will grow stronger, and we will see even more. . . .

“We can choose to believe. . . .

“. . . The gifts of God’s grace will enable us to be true to our faith. . . . We will experience true and lasting joy.”

## FAITH WITHOUT FEAR

### A Summer with Great-Aunt Rose

“... God didn’t design us to be sad. He created us to have joy! So if we trust Him, He will help us to notice the good, bright, hopeful things of life.’ . . .

“... Now is *part* of eternity. It doesn’t only begin after we die! Faith and hope will open your eyes to the happiness that is placed before you.’ . . .

“As you walk along your own bright path of discipleship, I pray that faith will fortify every footstep along your way; that hope will open your eyes to the glories Heavenly Father has in store for you; and that love for God and all His children will fill your hearts.”



**President Dieter F. Uchtdorf**  
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

### VIDEOS AND QUOTES

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## APOSTLES SPEAK to Us



### A PLEA TO MY SISTERS

“It would be impossible to measure the influence that . . . women have, not only on families but also on the Lord’s Church, as wives, mothers, and grandmothers; as sisters and aunts; as teachers and leaders; and especially as exemplars and devout defenders of the faith. . . .

“Sisters, do you realize the breadth and scope of your influence when you speak those things that come to your heart and mind as directed by the Spirit? . . .

“My dear sisters, whatever your calling, whatever your circumstances, we need your impressions, your insights, and your inspiration. . . .

“... We need women who have a bedrock understanding of the doctrine of Christ and who will use that understanding to teach and help raise a sin-resistant generation. We need women who can detect deception in all of its forms. We need women who know how to access the power that God makes available to covenant keepers and who express their beliefs with confidence and charity.

“... Today I plead with my sisters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to step forward! Take your rightful and needful place in your home, in your community, and in the kingdom of God—more than you ever have before. . . . I promise you in the name of Jesus Christ that as you do so, the Holy Ghost will magnify your influence in an unprecedented way!”

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



### STRENGTHENED BY THE ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST

“Our Savior . . . knows our struggles, our heartaches, our temptations, and our suffering, for He willingly experienced them all as an essential part of His Atonement. And because of this, His Atonement empowers Him to succor us—to give us the strength to bear it all. . . .

“... Sometimes His power heals an infirmity, but the scriptures and our experiences teach that sometimes He succors or helps by giving us the strength or patience to endure our infirmities. . . .

“... Our Savior’s Atonement does more than assure us of immortality by a universal resurrection and give us the opportunity to be cleansed from sin by repentance and baptism. His Atonement also provides the opportunity to call upon Him who has experienced all of our mortal infirmities to give us the strength to bear the burdens of mortality. He knows of our anguish, and He is there for us. Like the good Samaritan, when He finds us wounded at the wayside, He will bind up our wounds and care for us (see Luke 10:34). The healing and strengthening power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement is for all of us who will ask. I testify of that as I also testify of our Savior, who makes it all possible.”

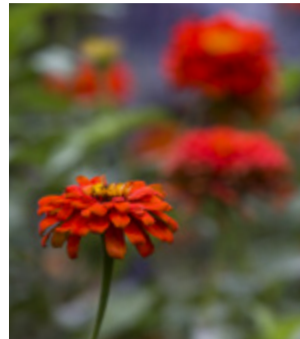
Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles





*"I loved when Elder Robert D. Hales said, 'If you want more than you now have, reach up, not across!' We were encouraged to continually head toward Christ."*

Mary A., from Facebook



## GOD IS AT THE HELM



"Clearly, our Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ have outfitted the Old Ship Zion with clear and simple eternal truths that will help us stay the course through the troubled waters of mortal life. Here are just a few..."

"... Make no mistake about it: the Lord directs His Church through living prophets and apostles. This is the way He has always done His work..."

"A second truth is the doctrine of the plan of salvation. ... [It] is a map of where we came from, our purpose here on earth, and where we are going when we die..."

"Another key truth in the Church is that Heavenly Father created Adam and Eve for a lofty purpose. It was their charge—and, subsequently, the charge of their posterity—to create mortal bodies for God's spirit children so they could experience mortality. By this process, Heavenly Father sends His spirit children to earth to learn and grow through the experiences of earth life..."

"Another important doctrine that we should cling to is to observe the Sabbath day..."

"God's plan is in place. He is at the helm, and His great and powerful ship flows toward salvation and exaltation. Remember that we cannot get there by jumping out of the boat and trying to swim there by ourselves."

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

## MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY'S WORLD



"I would like to speak specifically to the youth—the noble youth—and noble young adults..."

"I testify that if you are there for the Lord, He will be there for you. If you love Him and keep His commandments, you will have His Spirit to be with you and guide you..."

"... Pay your tithing and then save! When you earn more, save more. Don't compete with others to have expensive toys. Don't buy what you can't afford..."

"Education prepares you for better employment opportunities. It puts you in a better position to serve and to bless those around you. It will set you on a path of lifelong learning..."

"... None of us marry *perfection*; we marry *potential*. The right marriage is not only about what I want; it's also about what she—who's going to be my companion—wants and needs me to be..."

"... Begin exercising your faith in every area of your life..."

"... Prayerfully select mentors who have your spiritual well-being at heart. Be careful about taking advice from your peers. If you want more than you now have, reach *up*, not across!"

"Remember, no one can reach upward on your behalf. Only *your* faith and prayers will cause you to lift yourself and have the mighty change of heart. Only *your* resolve to be obedient can change your life."

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





*“As Elder Bednar paid tribute to the six men who had passed during his time in the Quorum of the Twelve, I remembered the last time I heard them speak. This inspired me to become more like the dedicated servants of the Lord by starting from the ground up. From this, I have decided to dust off my scriptures and read them every day.”*

Logan F., 14, Texas, USA



### BEHOLD THY MOTHER

“No love in mortality comes closer to approximating the pure love of Jesus Christ than the selfless love a devoted mother has for her child. . . .

“You see, it is not only that they bear us, but they continue bearing *with us*. It is not only the prenatal carrying but the lifelong carrying that makes mothering such a staggering feat. Of course, there are heartbreaking exceptions, but most mothers know intuitively, instinctively that this is a sacred trust of the highest order. The weight of that realization, especially on young maternal shoulders, can be very daunting. . . .

“To all of our mothers everywhere, past, present, or future, I say, ‘Thank you. Thank you for giving birth, for shaping souls, for forming character, and for demonstrating the pure love of Christ.’ To Mother Eve, to Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, to Mary of Nazareth, and to a Mother in Heaven, I say, ‘Thank you for your crucial role in fulfilling the purposes of eternity.’ To all mothers in every circumstance, including those who struggle—and all will—I say, ‘Be peaceful. Believe in God and yourself. You are doing better than you think you are. In fact, you are saviors on Mount Zion, and like the Master you follow, your love “never faileth” [Moroni 7:46; see also 1 Corinthians 13:8]. I can pay no higher tribute to anyone.”

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



### “CHOSEN TO BEAR TESTIMONY OF MY NAME”

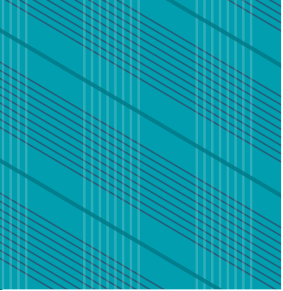
“My purpose is to explain why indeed it is wonderful to have older men of great spiritual maturity and judgment serving in the senior leadership positions of the restored Church of Jesus Christ—and why we should ‘hear’ and ‘hearken’ (Mosiah 2:9) to the teachings of these men whom the Lord has ‘chosen to bear testimony of [His] name . . . among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people’ (D&C 112:1). . . .

“... These men have had a sustained season of tutoring by the Lord, whom they represent, serve, and love. They have learned to understand the divine language of the Holy Spirit and the Lord’s patterns for receiving revelation. These ordinary men have undergone a most extraordinary developmental process that has sharpened their vision, informed their insight, engendered love for people from all nations and circumstances, and affirmed the reality of the Restoration. . . .

“The Savior declared, ‘Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same’ (D&C 1:38). May we hear and heed the eternal truths taught by the Lord’s authorized representatives. As we do so, I promise our faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ will be fortified, and we will receive spiritual guidance and protection for our specific circumstances and needs.”

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





*“When Elder Christofferson said, ‘In the Church, we are all on the same journey,’ I had a tender moment with the Holy Ghost. It was the first time I’d ever thought of people at church in that way.”*  
Breanna D., 17, Idaho, USA



### SHIPSHAPE AND BRISTOL FASHION

“In order to overcome the challenges and temptations that each of us inevitably faces, it will require righteous preparation and the use of divinely provided protections. We must determine to be temple worthy regardless of what befalls us. If we are prepared, we shall not fear. . . .

“How, then, do we prepare in such a difficult time? In addition to being temple worthy, there are many principles that contribute to righteousness. I will emphasize three.

#### “First: Righteous Self-Control and Conduct . . .

“A principle of eternal progression is that exercising self-control and living righteously strengthen our ability to resist temptation. . . .

#### “Second: Honoring the Sabbath Will Increase Righteousness and Be a Protection for the Family . . .

“ . . . Honoring the Sabbath is a form of righteousness that will bless and strengthen families, connect us with our Creator, and increase happiness. . . .

#### “Third: Divine Protections Are Provided When We Are Righteous

“As part of God’s divine plan, we are blessed with the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . The Spirit will help us avoid temptations and dangers, and comfort and lead us through challenges.”

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



### WHY THE CHURCH

“There are those who consider themselves religious or spiritual and yet reject participation in a church or even the need for such an institution. Religious practice is for them purely personal. Yet the Church is the creation of Him in whom our spirituality is centered—Jesus Christ. It is worth pausing to consider why He chooses to use a church, His Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to carry out His and His Father’s work. . . .

“ . . . A major reason the Lord has a church is to create a community of Saints that will sustain one another. . . .

“ . . . As the body of Christ, the members of the Church minister to one another in the reality of day-to-day life. . . .

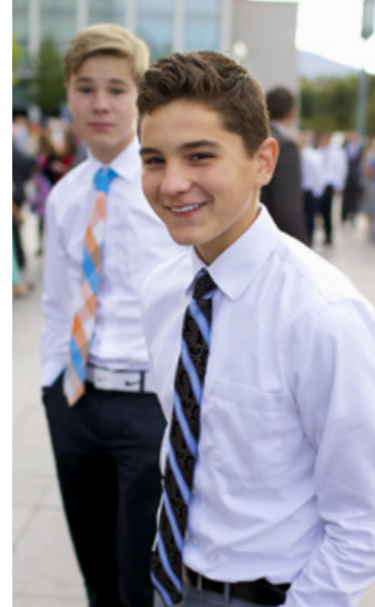
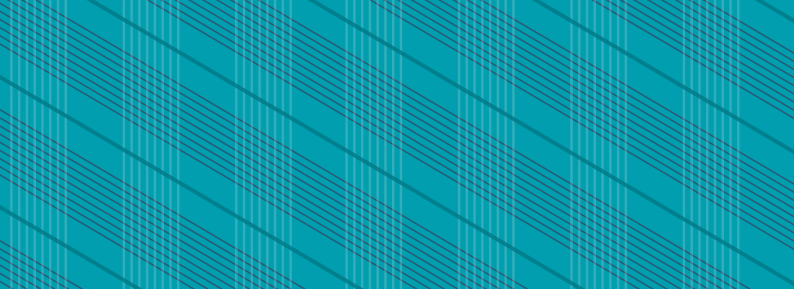
“There is a second major reason the Savior works through a church, His Church, and that is to achieve needful things that cannot be accomplished by individuals or smaller groups. . . .

“ . . . We speak not just of immortality but also of eternal life, and for that the gospel path and gospel covenants are essential. And the Savior needs a church to make them available. . . .

“The final reason I will mention for the Lord to have established His Church is the most unique—the Church is, after all, the kingdom of God on the earth. . . .

“Its destiny is to establish Zion in preparation for the return and millennial rule of Jesus Christ.”

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



*“What meant the most to me was simply that we have Apostles on this earth right now who are called of God. It is such a comfort and blessing to me to have the knowledge that God still speaks to us today through living prophets.”*

Elise F., from Facebook

### 3 NEW APOSTLES CALLED



#### **FAITH IS NOT BY CHANCE, BUT BY CHOICE**

“Faith does not fall upon us by chance or stay with us by birthright. . . . The future of your faith is not by chance, but by choice. . . .

“How we live our lives increases or diminishes our faith. . . . There is an adversary who delights in destroying our faith! Be relentless in protecting your faith.

“Addressing honest questions is an important part of building faith, and we use both our intellect and our feelings. . . . Not all answers will come immediately, but most questions can be resolved through sincere study and seeking answers from God. Using our mind without our heart will not bring spiritual answers. . . .

“Faith never demands an answer to every question but seeks the assurance and courage to move forward, sometimes acknowledging, ‘I don’t know everything, but I do know enough to continue on the path of discipleship.’

“Immersing oneself in persistent doubt, fueled by answers from the faithless and the unfaithful, weakens one’s faith in Jesus Christ and the Restoration. . . .

“The guidance of the First Presidency and the Twelve help protect our faith. . . .

“... I promise you that your faith, through the grace of Jesus Christ, will one day allow you to stand with those you love, clean and pure in the presence of God.”

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



#### **I STAND ALL AMAZED**

“If I could leave one small message with you today, it would be this: the Lord has said, ‘Love one another; as I have loved you’ [John 13:34]. I’m confident that there is no choice, sin, or mistake that you or anyone else can make that

will change His love for you or for them. That does not mean He excuses or condones sinful conduct—I’m sure He does not—but it does mean we are to reach out to our fellowman in love to invite, persuade, serve, and rescue. Jesus Christ looked past people’s ethnicity, rank, and circumstances in order to teach them this profound truth.

“I have been asked many times when I received my testimony.

“I can’t remember not believing in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. I have loved Them since I learned of Them at the knees of my angel mother, reading scripture and gospel stories. That early belief has now grown into a knowledge and a witness of a loving Heavenly Father, who hears and answers our prayers. My testimony of Jesus Christ has been built from many special experiences in which I have come to know His great love for each one of us.

“I’m grateful for our Savior’s Atonement and wish like Alma to shout it with the trump of God [see Alma 29:1]. I know that Joseph Smith is God’s prophet of the Restoration and that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. And I know that President Thomas S. Monson is God’s true servant and prophet.”

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles





*“Elder Dale G. Renlund taught that we need to see through the Lord’s eyes. I’m nearing my mission, and it helped me to open my eyes.”*

Ean P., 17, Washington, USA



San Pedro, Belize

Read more about them on the back cover.



### PLAIN AND PRECIOUS TRUTHS

“Our loving Heavenly Father and His Son, Jehovah, with a knowledge of the end from the beginning, opened the heavens and a new dispensation to offset the calamities that They knew would come. The Apostle

Paul described the forthcoming calamities as ‘perilous times’ [2 Timothy 3:1]. For me, this suggests that Heavenly Father’s generous compensation for living in perilous times is that we also live in the fulness of times.

“As I agonized over my inadequacies this week, I received a distinct impression which both chastened and comforted me: to focus not on what I can’t do but rather on what I can do. I can testify of the plain and precious truths of the gospel.

“These are the words which I have shared hundreds of times with both those who belong to the Church and many who are not members: ‘God is our [loving] Heavenly Father. We are His children. . . . He weeps with us when we suffer and rejoices when we do what is right. He wants to communicate with us, and we can communicate with Him through sincere prayer. . . . Heavenly Father has provided us, His children, with a way to return to live in His presence. . . . Central to our [Heavenly] Father’s plan is Jesus Christ’s Atonement’ (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], 31–32).

“Heavenly Father sent His Son to the earth to atone for the sins of all mankind.”

Elder Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



### THROUGH GOD’S EYES

“To effectively serve others we must see them through a parent’s eyes, through Heavenly Father’s eyes. Only then can we begin to comprehend the true worth of a soul. Only then can we sense the love that Heavenly

Father has for all of His children. Only then can we sense the Savior’s caring concern for them. We cannot completely fulfill our covenant obligation to mourn with those who mourn and comfort those who stand in need of comfort unless we see them through God’s eyes. This expanded perspective will open our hearts to the disappointments, fears, and heartaches of others. But Heavenly Father will aid and comfort us. . . . We need to have eyes that see, ears that hear, and hearts that know and feel if we are to accomplish the rescue so frequently encouraged by President Thomas S. Monson.

“Only when we see through Heavenly Father’s eyes can we be filled with ‘the pure love of Christ’ [Moroni 7:47]. Every day we should plead with God for this love. Mormon admonished, ‘Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ’ [Moroni 7:48].

“With all my heart I want to be a true follower of Jesus Christ. I love Him. I adore Him. I witness of His living reality. I witness that He is the Anointed One, the Messiah. I am a witness of His incomparable mercy, compassion, and love.”

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



## ANSWERS to My Questions



### How can I know if an **impression** is from the **Spirit** or my **own thoughts**?



You can know when these impressions to act for Him are from the Spirit rather than from your own desires. When the impressions square with what the Savior and His living prophets and apostles have said, you can choose to obey with confidence. Then the Lord will send His Spirit to attend you.

For example, if you receive a spiritual impression to honor the Sabbath day, especially when it seems difficult, God will send His Spirit to help.

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency**

*“I came to conference with a simple question: ‘How can I become a better person?’ It was answered by Elder Larry R. Lawrence’s talk, ‘What Lack I Yet?’ I humbly asked in prayer and received a beautiful answer I would’ve never imagined. I will now always come to conference with a question.”*

**Chloe C., 17, Utah, USA**



I've **sinned** so much. Is it really **possible** for me to be **forgiven**?



Some may think they have failed too many times and feel too weak to change sinful acts or worldly desires of the heart. However, as covenant Israel, we don't just try and try on our own to change...

When we offer our broken heart to Jesus Christ, He accepts our offering. He takes us back. No matter what losses, wounds, and rejection we have suffered, His grace and healing are mightier than all.

When we offer our broken heart to Jesus Christ, He accepts our offering. He takes us back. No matter what losses, wounds, and rejection we have suffered, His grace and healing are mightier than all.

**Sister Neill F. Marriott, second counselor in the Young Women general presidency**



I testify that the Savior will never turn away from us when we humbly seek Him in order to repent; will never consider us to be a lost cause; will never say, "Oh no, not you again"; will never reject us because of a failure to understand how hard it is to avoid sin.

**Elder Allen D. Haynie of the Seventy**

How could I answer my friend's question about whether **Church leaders are called of God** when they seem to have **made mistakes**?



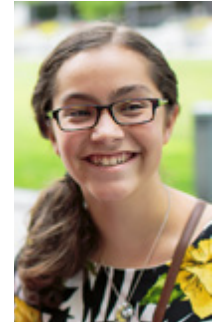
Too many people think Church leaders and members should be perfect or nearly perfect. They forget that the Lord's

grace is sufficient to accomplish His work through mortals. Our leaders have the best intentions, but sometimes we make mistakes...

Looking for human weakness in others is rather easy. However, we make a serious mistake by noticing only the human nature of one another and then failing to see God's hand working through those He has called.

Focusing on how the Lord inspires His chosen leaders and how He moves the Saints to do remarkable and extraordinary things despite their humanity is one way that we hold on to the gospel of Jesus Christ and stay safely aboard the Old Ship Zion.

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



*"During general conference, an overwhelming feeling of quiet happiness and the realization that I am a daughter of Heavenly Father stayed with me. I believe we can be a light and example for those who need help and support."*

**Kateryna P., 18, Ukraine**

How can I have **courage** to **live the gospel** when it makes me seem **so different**?



It is often difficult to be different and to stand alone in a crowd. It is natural to fear what others might think or say.

Comforting are the words of the Psalm: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" [Psalm 27:1]. As we make Christ the center of our lives, our fears will be replaced by the courage of our convictions.

Life is perfect for none of us, and at times the challenges and difficulties we face may become overwhelming, causing our light to dim. However, with help from our Heavenly Father, coupled with support from others, we can regain that light which will illuminate our own path once again and provide the light others may need.

**President Thomas S. Monson**





## Why are we so strict about media?



When we are involved in watching, reading, or experiencing anything that is below our Heavenly Father's standards, it weakens us. . . . If what we look at, read, listen to, or choose to do does not meet the Lord's standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, turn it off, rip it up, throw it out, and slam the door.

**Linda S. Reeves, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency**



## What kind of value do I have as a woman in the Church?



The kingdom of God is not and cannot be complete without women who make sacred covenants and then keep them, women who can speak with the power and authority of God! . . .

Today, let me add that we need women who know how to make important things happen by their faith and who are courageous defenders of morality and families in a sin-sick world. We need women who are devoted to shepherding God's children along the covenant path toward exaltation; women who know how to receive personal revelation, who understand the power and peace of the temple endowment; women who know how to call upon the powers of heaven to protect and strengthen children and families; women who teach fearlessly. . . .

. . . You sisters possess distinctive capabilities and special intuition you have received as gifts from God. We brethren cannot duplicate your unique influence.

**President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles**

*"President Russell M. Nelson's talk really touched me. Sometimes I feel overlooked because we young women don't do all the things the young men do. After this talk, I realized we have divine roles and are really important and needed in the Church. I had been praying for an answer, and this talk answered it!"*

**Kelsey W., 17, Idaho, USA**



## Why do I need organized religion when I can just be spiritual on my own?



Uniting ourselves to the body of Christ—the Church—is an important part of taking His name upon us. . . . Joined in faith, we teach and edify one another and strive to approach the full measure of discipleship. . . .

If one believes that all roads lead to heaven or that there are no particular requirements for salvation, he or she will see no need for proclaiming the gospel or for ordinances and covenants in redeeming either the living or the dead. But we speak not just of immortality but also of eternal life, and for that the gospel path and gospel covenants are essential. And the Savior needs a church to make them available to all of God's children—both the living and the dead.

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







*"I enjoyed Elder Neil L. Andersen's talk. By choosing to never doubt God, we protect our faith. I hope we all have the courage to live righteously and increase our faith."*

Cayden S., 12, Texas, USA



I've come across **challenging questions** about **Joseph Smith**. How should I deal with them?



Questions concerning the Prophet Joseph Smith are not new. They have been hurled by his critics since this work began. To those of faith who, looking through the colored glasses of the 21st century, honestly question events or statements of the Prophet Joseph from nearly 200 years ago, may I share some friendly advice: For now, give Brother Joseph a break! In a future day, you will have 100 times more information than all of today's search engines combined, and it will come from our all-knowing Father in Heaven. Consider the totality of Joseph's life—born in poverty and given little formal education, he translated the Book of Mormon in less than 90 days. Tens of thousands of honest, devoted men and women embraced the cause of the Restoration. At age 38, Joseph sealed his witness with his blood. I testify that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. Settle this in your mind, and move forward!

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



How do I **keep the Spirit** with me when I **keep making mistakes**?



For those who are struggling with the high standard needed to qualify for the gift of the Spirit's companionship,

I offer this encouragement. You have had times when you have felt the influence of the Holy Ghost. It may have happened today for you.

You can treat those moments of inspiration like the seed of faith that Alma described (see Alma 32:28). Plant each one. You can do that by acting on the prompting you felt. The most valuable inspiration will be for you to know what God would have you do. . . . Whatever it is, do it. When you demonstrate your willingness to obey, the Spirit will send you more impressions of what God would have you do for Him.

As you obey, the impressions from the Spirit will come more frequently, becoming closer and closer to constant companionship. Your power to choose the right will increase.

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency







## WORDS to Live By

Because of His atoning experience in mortality, our Savior is able to comfort, heal, and strengthen all men and women everywhere, **but I believe He does so only for those who seek Him and ask for His help.**

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

*Repentance is real and it works.*

Elder Allen D. Haynie of the Seventy

No matter how intense the darkness of doubt, we choose how long and to what extent we allow it to influence us. We must ***remember how much our Heavenly Father and His Son love us.***

Elder Vern P. Stanfill of the Seventy



The resurrected and living Christ directs the affairs of His restored and living Church through His servants who have been chosen to bear testimony of His name.

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

I want to be a *true follower* of Jesus Christ.

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

WHEN FAITH IS EXERCISED,  
**FAITH INCREASES.**

Elder Randall K. Bennett of the Seventy

## Keep the COMMANDMENTS.

President Thomas S. Monson

The Church of Jesus Christ has always been led by living prophets and apostles.

Though mortal and subject to human imperfection, the Lord's servants are inspired to help us avoid obstacles that are spiritually life threatening and to help us pass safely through mortality to our final, ultimate, heavenly destination.

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



Work without faith is dead. We must have **faith** with **works** to receive **answers.**

Elder James B. Martino of the Seventy



We may feel at times that God's laws restrict our personal freedom, take from us our agency, and limit our growth. But as we seek for greater understanding, as we allow our Father to teach us, **WE WILL BEGIN TO SEE THAT HIS LAWS ARE A MANIFESTATION OF HIS LOVE FOR US AND OBEDIENCE TO HIS LAWS IS AN EXPRESSION OF OUR LOVE FOR HIM.**

Carole M. Stephens, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency

A perfect time to ask, “What lack I yet?” is when we take the sacrament. . . . In this reverent atmosphere, as our thoughts are turned heavenward, the Lord can gently tell us what we need to work on next.

Elder Larry R. Lawrence of the Seventy



*The truth that matters most is verified only by*  
**REVELATION FROM GOD.**

President Henry B. Eyring,  
First Counselor in the First Presidency

## *Have* **COURAGE** *to* **BELIEVE.**

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency

**Brethren, we have been given something more: the priesthood of God, the power of God restored to earth by holy angels. This makes you different. You no longer stand on neutral ground. Your faith will grow not by chance, but by choice.**

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

*We need women who have a bedrock UNDERSTANDING of the DOCTRINE OF CHRIST and who will use that understanding to TEACH and help RAISE a SIN-RESISTANT GENERATION.*

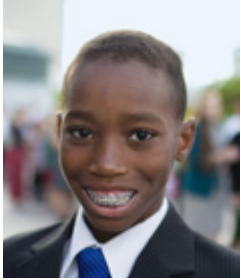
President Russell M. Nelson,  
President of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

**Honoring the Sabbath** is a form of **righteousness** that will **bles**s and **strengthen families**, connect us with **our Creator**, and **increase happiness**. The Sabbath can **help separate us from** that which is **frivolous, inappropriate, or immoral**. It allows us to be **in the world** but **not of the world**.

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







TO ALWAYS HAVE THE SPIRIT WITH US is to have the guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost in our daily lives. . . .

For that reason alone, it is easy to see why the Lord's servants have tried to increase our desire to worship God in our sacrament meetings.

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency



Drammen, Norway

“There are . . . *so many kinds of voices* in the world” [1 Corinthians 14:10]. . . . I admonish you to *turn the volume down* and to *be influenced* instead by that *still, small voice* which will guide you to *safety*.

President Thomas S. Monson

In the work of salvation, there is no room for comparison, criticism, or condemnation. It is not about age, experience, or public acclaim. **This sacred work is about developing a broken heart, a contrite spirit,** and a willingness to use our divine gifts and unique talents to do the Lord's work in His way.

Carol F. McConkie, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency



Cavite, Philippines

Because you are His child, He knows who you can become. . . . Because you are His child, you not only need Him, but He also needs you. Those sitting around you right now . . . need you. The world needs you, and your divine nature allows you to be His trusted disciple to all His children.

Rosemary M. Wixom, Primary general president

## LEARNING FROM CONFERENCE

Sometimes a theme can stand out when you study several conference talks together. Here are some gospel words used frequently by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. What other themes did you hear in conference?

church LOVE CHRIST LORD GOD SAVIOR JESUS FATHER  
 mother PRAY BELIEVE power work  
 truth serve happiness Spirit  
 faith Atonement women  
 follow

### "ALWAYS HAVE HIS SPIRIT TO BE WITH YOU"

In his Sunday morning address, President Eyring said, "We need the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost." Several other Church leaders talked about having the Spirit with us at all times (see pages 4, 6, 7, 9, and 19). What has the Spirit prompted you to do to "always have his Spirit to be with [you]" (D&C 20:77)?



### HOW CAN I HAVE THE CONSTANT COMPANIONSHIP OF THE HOLY GHOST?



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### WHAT WILL YOU DO DIFFERENT?

As you review conference and think about what you're learning, consider this invitation from Elder Hales:



"You may want to conduct what I'll call a 'personal council.' Spend some time alone. Think about what is ahead. Ask yourself: 'What areas of my life do I want to strengthen so that I can strengthen others? Where do I want to be a year from now? Two years from now? What choices do I need to make to get there?' Just remember, you are the pilot. I testify that as you come to yourself, your Heavenly Father will come to you. By the comforting hand of His Holy Spirit, He will lead you along."

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WHEN YOU  
DO YOUR PART,  
THE LORD ADDS  
*His power*  
TO YOUR EFFORTS.

President Henry B. Eyring  
First Counselor in the First Presidency  
October 2015 general conference

*Invitations* TO ACT

Look for invitations given in conference talks that can help you improve, like these:

**President Monson:** Read and study and ponder the scriptures.

**President Uchtdorf:** Simplify. ... Focus on the basic doctrines, principles, and applications of the gospel.

**President Nelson:** Sisters ... take your rightful and needful place in your home, in your community, and in the kingdom of God.

**Elder Cook:** Improve [your] Sabbath worship.

**Elder Hales:** Pay your tithing and then save! ... Don't buy what you can't afford.

**Elder Christofferson:** Consider why [Jesus Christ] chooses to use ... the Church ... to carry out His and His Father's work.

**Elder Andersen:** When was the last time that you read the Book of Mormon from cover to cover? Read it again. It will increase your faith.

**Sister Marriott:** Open [yourself] to the Spirit.

GOD NEVER  
LOSES SIGHT OF OUR  
*eternal potential,*  
EVEN WHEN WE DO.

Carole M. Stephens  
First counselor in the Relief Society general presidency  
October 2015 general conference

WHAT OTHERS HAVE YOU FOUND?



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## SCRIPTURES IN GENERAL CONFERENCE

You can have more of your questions answered by studying general conference on your own, including looking up scriptures that were used in the talks.

**Here are the scriptures that were referred to most often:**

- Doctrine and Covenants 20:77, 79
- Doctrine and Covenants 88:6
- Isaiah 58:13
- 2 Nephi 2:25\*
- 2 Nephi 31:20\*
- Doctrine and Covenants 14:7
- Doctrine and Covenants 84:38
- Moses 1:39\*

\* Seminary scripture mastery verse

**Several other seminary scripture mastery verses were mentioned by more than one speaker:**

- Isaiah 53:4
- Isaiah 58:14
- Matthew 22:39
- Matthew 28:19-20
- Ephesians 4:11-13
- Alma 7:11-12
- Ether 12:27
- Moroni 7:47
- Doctrine and Covenants 1:38
- Doctrine and Covenants 19:19
- Doctrine and Covenants 76:41



"Confidence [that the Lord is with you in His work] grows as you come to see that He called you through His servants. My encouragement is to help you know that when you do your part, the Lord adds His power to your efforts.

"Any calling we receive in the Lord's kingdom requires more than our human judgment and our personal powers. Those calls require help from the Lord, which will come. Even the new deacon will learn that is true, and he will go on learning over the years. . . .

"God will add His power to His servant's efforts. Hearts of people will be touched to make the choices that will bring them along the gospel path toward happiness and away from sorrow. . . .

"... I testify that He has called you and me into His service knowing our capacities and the help we will need. He will bless our efforts beyond our fondest expectations as we give our all in His service."

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, October 2015 general conference**



"In the 'premortal realm' we used our agency to accept God's plan, and we learned that obedience to God's eternal law was vital to our success in His plan. Scriptures teach, 'There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated.'<sup>1</sup> If we obey the law, we receive the blessings.

"Even with all of the mistakes, opposition, and learning that accompany our mortal experience, God never loses sight of our eternal potential, even when we do. We can trust Him 'because God wants His children back.'<sup>2</sup> And He has provided a way through the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ. The Atonement 'is the core of the plan of salvation.'<sup>3</sup>"

**Carole M. Stephens, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, October 2015 general conference**

### NOTES

1. Doctrine and Covenants 130:20.
2. Russell M. Nelson, in R. Scott Lloyd, "God Wants His Children to Return to Him, Elder Nelson Teaches," Church News section of LDS.org, Jan. 28, 2014.
3. Russell M. Nelson, "Prepare for the Blessings of the Temple," *Ensign*, Oct. 2010, 49.



# THE CRYSTAL CATASTROPHE



*A basketball, a broken mirror, a scarred table, and a bunch of smashed dishes. Grandpa was doomed.*

By Zachary Boyd

**M**y great-grandma's candy dish doesn't hold a lot of candy these days. Instead, it sparkles under the display lights in my grandpa's cabinet, and the lights reflect off the grooves of the crystal in the dish.

Most people save things to remind them of happy memories, but my grandpa has saved this candy dish to remind him of an important lesson.

When my grandpa was 10, his family had a rule against playing ball in the house. But he loved basketball, so one day when it was raining outside, you can guess what he decided to do. Instead of following the rules, he went into the living room to play basketball, and it quickly got him into trouble.

He threw a pass, and the basketball hit the bracket of an antique mirror, causing the mirror to fall onto a grand piano where his mom displayed her crystal collection. The mirror shattered onto the piano and broke all the crystal dishes except one single candy dish.

When his mom came to see what had happened, she sent him to his room. He felt awful;

he knew she loved those dishes. His dad came to his room and they discussed a punishment. Then, his mom entered the room with a wrapped box. Inside was the surviving candy dish. His mom said, "I'm giving you this dish to remind you that I love you more than any of the dishes you broke."

One day that candy dish will be passed down to my mom and then to me, but we could never sell it. In our family, the candy dish represents how much love a mother has for

her children. Even though Great-Grandma lost nearly her entire crystal collection, she gained something even more important—a stronger relationship with her son.

Material possessions can be replaced, but families are worth a lot more than crystal. Family members are the most important people. My family, including my mom, dad, and brothers, mean more to me than anything else. I'd give up a million crystal dishes to be with my family forever. **NE**

*Zachary Boyd lives in Montana, USA.*



## REMEMBERING

# ELDER RICHARD G. SCOTT

(1928–2015)



After joining the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1988.

From a young age, Elder Richard G. Scott had a desire to do what was right, even when faced with peer pressure. One summer during high school, he worked on an oyster boat off Long Island, New York, USA. His coworkers tried to get him to do things he knew were wrong. Because he consistently said no, he gained their respect. One night when one of them fell overboard, Richard was the only one who could save his crewmate—because he hadn't gone partying like the others. He said, "Finally, when they understood I would not abandon my principles, we became friends. Then privately, one by one, they asked for help."<sup>1</sup>

Richard was outgoing. He was elected high school class president, played the clarinet, and was drum major for the marching band. He did well in school and had many friends, but he felt lonely and lacked confidence. He realized later, after becoming active in the Church, "that those feelings need not have been part of my life if I had really understood the gospel."<sup>2</sup>

By age 22, Richard was thinking about marriage and a career. But the woman he was dating, Jeanene Watkins, encouraged



His wedding day with Jeanene Watkins. July 16, 1953.

him to serve a mission. After praying about it, that's exactly what he did. "That decision thoroughly changed my life and laid the foundation . . . for a marvelous experience in life together."<sup>3</sup> Two weeks after he returned from his mission to Uruguay, they were sealed in the Manti Utah Temple.

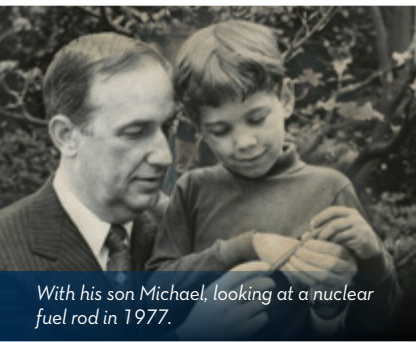
Elder Scott taught and lived by the motto "Do what is right; let the consequence follow."<sup>4</sup> That motto guided him in 1965 when, after receiving a call to serve, he told his boss he would be leaving his job to serve as a mission president in Argentina. His boss, a navy admiral, was angry. He said he would never talk to him again and that Elder Scott would never again work as a nuclear engineer.

Two months later, Elder Scott gave his boss a Book of Mormon. His boss said he would



As a missionary in Uruguay.





With his son Michael, looking at a nuclear fuel rod in 1977.



Time spent watercoloring—a favorite hobby.



The Scott family, from left to right: Ken, David, Linda, Jeanene, Elder Scott, Mike, and Mary Lee.



In the basement workshop of his home, circa 1939.



In his navy uniform.

read it and then surprised Elder Scott when he said, “When you come back . . . , I want you to call me. There will be a job for you.”<sup>5</sup>

After his mission, Elder Scott worked as a nuclear engineering consultant until he was called to the First Quorum of the Seventy in 1977. In 1988 he was called as an Apostle. Fulfilling the call was one way he kept a covenant he had made years before: “When I was very young,” he said, “I made a covenant with the Lord that I would devote my best energies to his work. I have repeated that covenant throughout the years.”<sup>6</sup>

Elder Scott taught how to cope with trials and receive guidance from Heavenly Father. He testified that when we face challenges like doubt, depression, sin, or abuse, we can find strength and relief through faith in Jesus Christ.

He also taught about the importance of making correct choices, that forgiving others heals painful wounds, that sincere prayer opens the door to heavenly guidance, that temple worship and scripture study bring peace and answers, and that marriage and family is central to God’s plan. His faith in Jesus Christ was firm, as was his hope in the blessings that would come in the future. **NE**

**NOTES**

1. Richard G. Scott, “Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 37.
2. In Marvin K. Gardner, “Elder Richard G. Scott: The Real Power Comes from the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1989, 7.
3. “Elder Richard G. Scott: The Mind of a Scientist, the Soul of an Apostle of God,” [mormonnewsroom.org](http://mormonnewsroom.org).
4. “Do What Is Right,” *Hymns*, no. 237.
5. Richard G. Scott, “Making Hard Decisions,” *New Era*, June 2005, 4–5, 6.
6. In “Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 101.

**FACTS AT A GLANCE**

- Born November 7, 1928, in Pocatello, Idaho, USA.
- Studied mechanical engineering at George Washington University.
- Served full-time mission in Uruguay from 1950 to 1953.
- Married Jeanene Watkins in Manti Utah Temple in 1953. They are the parents of seven children.
- Worked on top-secret nuclear program for U.S. Navy.
- Called to serve as mission president of Argentina North Mission in 1965.
- Sustained to First Quorum of the Seventy in 1977 and to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1988.

# SAVE THE DATE!

Date going poorly? Don't wave the white flag of surrender just yet.

By David Dickson  
Church Magazines



PROBLEM:

HELP!  
WE'VE RUN  
OUT OF STUFF  
TO SAY!

POSSIBLE  
FIX:

Few sounds are quite so painful to the ears as awkward silence on a date. All can be laughter and relaxation only a few moments earlier, then . . . WHAM! The cone of silence drops down from nowhere. Even with two or three couples in the group date, it's still all too easy for conversation to dry up like a drop of water on a hot sidewalk.

And that's only one of a thousand ways a date can start to head downhill. What if the food is gross or costs more than you expected? What if your awesome picnic and three-legged race gets rained out? What if you accidentally say something really dumb?

Nine times out of 10, you can still turn things around. You can save the date! Because, really, who wants to bail out at the first obstacle when you're out there to have fun and get to know each other better? (See *For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 4.)

Here are a few tips on how to get your date back on track.



One of the first and best solutions here is to make sure you're thinking more about the other person than about yourself. Ask about the person's interests because you really want to know, and show genuine interest in their responses. Show you're paying attention by asking questions using a detail from a previous answer.

Even so, it can be easy to ultimately hit a brick wall and run out of stuff you can think to say. When that happens, here are three words to remember: *the question game*.

The question game is simple. Everybody takes a turn asking a question for the group to answer one at a time. The key is to make them interesting questions. Favorite ice cream flavors need not apply.

Instead, try something like, "If you had a time machine and could spend one day anywhere/anytime, where and when would you go?" Or, "If you could instantly pass one law that the whole world would have to follow for a year, what would it be?" The more creative and interesting the questions, the more memorable and intriguing the answers.



PROBLEM:

"UGH. EVERYBODY IS BORED."

OR

"GREAT, THE EVENT WE WERE GOING TO IS SOLD OUT."

OR

"GO AWAY, LITTLE BLACK RAIN CLOUD! IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE SUNNY!"

POSSIBLE FIX:



On dates, as in life, things don't always go as planned. Solution? Try something else. Preparation beforehand is key. You can prepare potential backup plans, or better yet, bring a backup backpack. People cart first-aid kits all over the place. Why not come prepared for a dating setback as well?

### SOME STUFF YOU MIGHT CONSIDER PUTTING IN A BACKUP BACKPACK:

- A couple of small board games or other games you can pack.
- A flying disc (aka Frisbee). For maximum awesome, consider investing in a 175-gram disc. They fly SO much better than dollar-store, lightweight varieties.
- A choose-your-own-adventure book.
- A bunch of words on cards for charades written by somebody else and sealed in



- an envelope (so you don't know them ahead of time). A fun twist is to have one person be the guesser while the rest of his/her team gives the clues.
- A small bag of hard candy for a treat. They last a long time and are general crowd-pleasers.
- A sealed-in-an-envelope list of random items for a photo scavenger hunt (again, a list somebody else

created) that your group has to collect in under an hour.



PROBLEM:

THE  
MOVIE  
ISN'T AS CLEAN AS  
WE'D BEEN TOLD.



POSSIBLE  
FIX:

Time to switch gears again. As explained in *For the Strength of Youth*, “Have the courage to walk out of a movie, change your music, or turn off a computer, television, or mobile device if what you see or hear drives away the Spirit” ([2011], 11).

You don't have to be afraid of ruining a date by leaving a theater or turning off a movie or music that is inappropriate. The fix is simple, even if it takes a bit of courage: do something else. Head to a park for games or pull something out of the backup backpack. The whole group will feel happier and have a better experience if there's nothing driving away the Spirit.

And just for the record, you may not even want to start with a movie in the first place. As Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1928–2015) said, “I think it is a stupid idea for two people trying to get to know each other” because you can't talk during a movie.<sup>1</sup>



PROBLEM:

WE WERE  
ATTACKED  
BY A SWARM OF  
ILL-TEMPERED  
WASPS!



POSSIBLE  
FIX:

Um . . . find some ice packs? Seriously, you never know what kind of bumps in the road you'll encounter. Flat tires, tripping in mud puddles, an on-the-date discovery of a food allergy, and other misadventures can show up unannounced and larger than life. Obviously, first do all you can to address the problem. But after that, consider adding the following step when appropriate.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1917–2008) taught: “Over the years I have learned a few things that have helped me through times of testing and trial. . . . The first thing we can do is learn to laugh. . . . The next time you're tempted to groan, you might try to laugh instead. It will extend your life and make the lives of all those around you more enjoyable.”<sup>2</sup>

You might be surprised how many lemons are turned to lemonade through simple laughter.



PROBLEM:

I SAID  
SOMETHING REALLY  
DUMB. IT WAS  
AN ACCIDENT, I  
PROMISE . . .

POSSIBLE  
FIX:

Call your date the wrong name? Accidentally insult a favorite sports team or dis on a cherished childhood toy? Let's face it, it's easy to feel antsy and jittery on a date and end up saying something dumb. When that happens, apologize sincerely and try to laugh at yourself and your blunder if you can do so in a way that doesn't make things worse. You might even volunteer a goofy/embarrassing story of your own to try and balance the scales a little.



PROBLEM:

"MY DATE IS  
JUST PLAIN  
MEAN."

OR

"MY DATE  
WANTS TO BE  
PHYSICAL."

OR

"MY DATE  
WANTS ME TO  
BREAK  
MY STANDARDS."



SOLUTION:

While it's true that 9 times out of 10 a date can be turned around, there are indeed exceptions. If you find yourself in the company of somebody who disrespects you or who tries to get you to break gospel standards, be kind but end the date. Get out and get home. (This is a situation less likely in a group, by the way.)

There's a difference between patiently bearing with annoying behaviors (such as your date texting) and accepting unacceptable behavior. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, "In a dating and courtship relationship, I would not have you spend five minutes with someone who belittles you, who is constantly critical of you, who is cruel at your expense and may even call it humor."<sup>3</sup>

Though it shouldn't happen often, you'll need to know when a date is not worth saving. When that happens you should be respectful, but you don't have to feel bad about choosing to leave. The adventures of dating come with ups and downs aplenty. Yet once you're prepared with a few key strategies, most of the not-so-great dates can still be saved and ready to rock. **NE**



NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, "To Have Peace and Happiness" (Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Sept. 12, 2010), 4, [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).
2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Come What May, and Love It," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 26–27.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, "How Do I Love Thee?" *New Era*, Oct. 2003, 6.

# THE POWER OF PARTAKING WORTHILY

By Ryan Pike

MY LIFE WAS REALLY DIFFERENT WHEN I REMEMBERED THE SAVIOR.

**G**rowing up in the Church, Sundays tended to feel tedious and monotonous. It was rare for me as a kid to actually listen to what was being said. Maybe that's why it's so interesting to me that to this day I remember a single line from a talk I heard when I was Primary age.

At the time I was sitting in sacrament meeting, wondering why I had to be at church every single week. Then the speaker said, "Sunday shouldn't get in the way of our lives, Sunday should be the center of our lives." At the time that idea was so different from what I'd always thought that I wasn't really able to understand what it meant. Even so, I could tell it was important.

In Primary we learned that we came to church to take the sacrament. I figured these two things were related, but I could never figure out how. I didn't think too much about the sacrament. It was just something I did, and it didn't have any meaning to me. Throughout the years, though, those two ideas stayed with me. I knew I was missing something.

Years later, in junior high, I found myself in a hard situation. I had a bad habit I was trying to get rid of. I knew it wasn't so serious that I had to talk to my bishop, but it was still really bothering me.

I was embarrassed and didn't want to ask anyone for help. Not even my parents. Not even Heavenly Father. I determined I could overcome this challenge on my own.

Weeks went by. I tried so hard to be better but without result. I was still struggling. I knew the Sabbath should be the focus of my week because of the sacrament. I had also been taught that the sacrament was a tool I could use to access the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

After trying and failing for so long, I finally decided to turn to the Lord. At last I set aside my pride, opened my heart, and prayed to Heavenly Father. I asked for help, strength, and forgiveness. I stopped waiting for change to happen to me and started focusing on taking small steps toward improvement, with faith that the Lord would bless my efforts.

For the first time I focused on preparing for the sacrament all through the week. The sacrament became something I looked forward to. I began to see it as an opportunity rather than a routine because it brought the power of the Savior's Atonement into my life.

I felt change in my life. The things I was struggling with faded. I became more confident in myself. I was able to open up to my parents and seek more assistance. I felt grateful to the Lord for all of the help I had



received. I felt forgiven. I felt clean.

I grew to understand what that speaker meant all those years ago. When I centered my life around being ready for the Sabbath, I came closer to Jesus Christ in a way that purified me and made me stronger.

Through prayer and guidance from Heavenly Father, I learned that I could not walk through this life alone, but that the Savior and Heavenly Father truly had to be a part of my life. I learned that when I spent my whole week

preparing to partake of the sacrament, I was better able to fully access the power of the Savior's Atonement.

I learned that Heavenly Father loves us and has created a way for us to be forgiven and receive blessings, but we need to do our part to make it more meaningful. I am so grateful to Heavenly Father for all that He has done for me and continues to do for me when I remember to prepare for the Sabbath. **NE**

*Ryan Pike lives in Arizona, USA.*





**SUNDAY LESSONS**  
.....  
This Month's Topic:  
**Spiritual and Temporal  
Self-Reliance**



### EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGGIES

They'll make you feel better, give you energy, and they're full of important nutrients. To keep your routine fresh, try pairing them with another food. For instance, dip snap peas in hummus or slather nut butter over celery or banana slices.



### SET UP AN OBSTACLE COURSE

Test your mettle against the finest athletes in the world—but first, your friends and neighbors! Plan an obstacle course through your neighborhood. Compete on the course every week with your friends and neighbors. Cheer each other on, and be safe!



### RECHARGE YOUR SPIRIT AT THE TEMPLE

One way to relieve stress and feel more peace and mental clarity is to worship at the temple. In the temple, you can feel more connected to God and His love for you. Performing baptisms for the dead blesses not only the lives of those on the other side of the veil but also your own.



### GET ENOUGH SLEEP

It can seem impossible to get eight or nine hours of sleep every night. Start small. If you're not getting enough sleep, make an effort to go to bed just 20 minutes earlier this week. Next week, add 20 more. Keep it up until you hit your goal.



### EXERCISE WITH ONLINE WORKOUT VIDEOS

There are tons of free exercise videos online. From stretching and yoga to strength training and tai chi. Find one that works for you and have fun!

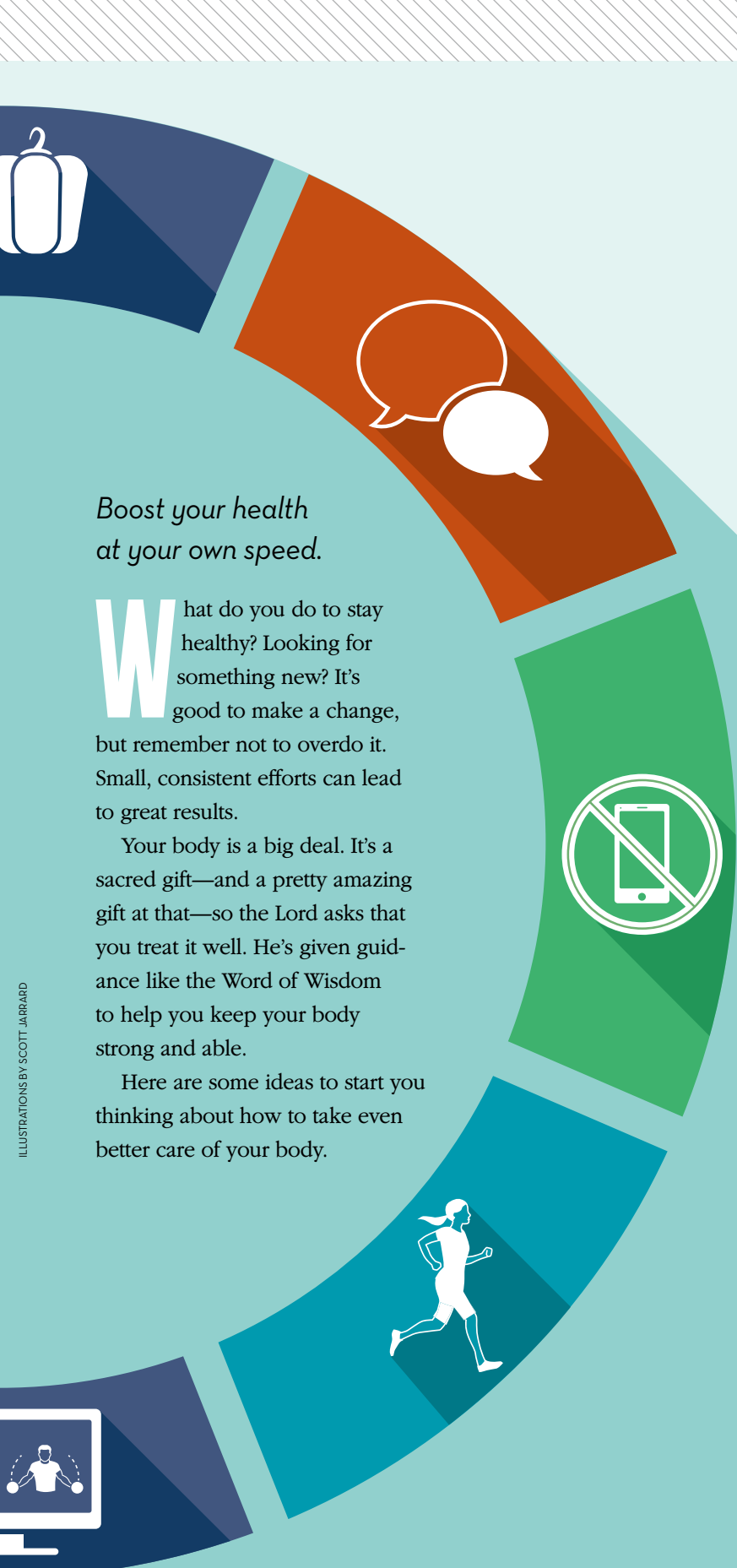


# 8

## WAYS TO BE HEALTHIER







## Boost your health at your own speed.

**W**hat do you do to stay healthy? Looking for something new? It's good to make a change, but remember not to overdo it. Small, consistent efforts can lead to great results.

Your body is a big deal. It's a sacred gift—and a pretty amazing gift at that—so the Lord asks that you treat it well. He's given guidance like the Word of Wisdom to help you keep your body strong and able.

Here are some ideas to start you thinking about how to take even better care of your body.



### CREATE A SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT GROUP

Create a social media group with friends for weekly health goals. You could make goals like “avoid soda this week” or “walk 20 minutes every day.” Motivate each other and celebrate your accomplishments together!



### BE STILL

Take time away from technology, social media, and other potential distractions. Practice breathing deeply. Take inventory of your life. What is causing you stress and negativity? What can you do about it? Ponder on your relationships—especially your relationship with God—and make small adjustments each day to grow closer to Him. As you listen, you'll be amazed at what you can do.



### COMPLETE A 5K

This race comes in all sorts of fun themes: holiday, charity, costume, etc. Training for and running/walking/wheelchairsing this distance can be as challenging or as relaxing as you want. Grab a friend or family member, find a training plan, and sign up for a 5K in your community.

### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

#### THINGS YOU MIGHT DO

- Think about one way to improve your health. Set a goal in that area and make a plan to accomplish that goal.
- Read the suggestions in this article and pick one or two of them to do each day this week.
- Share your goal at home, at church, on social media, or at [lds.org/go/active11NE](https://lds.org/go/active11NE).

# BREATHING EASIER WITH THE GOSPEL

*When I started long-distance running, I had no idea how it would bless my life.*

By Alex Masterson

I still remember sitting in the doctor's office the first time I got an inhaler. I'd just taken a puff when the doctor warned, "Make sure you hold your breath to keep the medicine in longer."

So I just sat there, mouth bloated like a puffer fish.

I looked at the inhaler. "I better get used to you," I thought, "cause you and I are gonna be together for a very long time."

I was in elementary school when the doctor told me I had seasonal asthma. It meant that for eight months out of the year—the warmer months in Texas, USA—I could run just as much as any other





kid. But the second it got cold, I would start to wheeze so bad that it became hard to breathe. And while my asthma could be managed, the doctor really didn't have any good advice for how or if I could ever get rid of it. So as the years went by, I did the only thing I could do. I got used to it.

Once I started middle school, it came time to choose a sport. It seemed like everyone was a part of at least one team, but since I was so scrawny, it didn't really feel like there was much to choose from. In the end, I

settled on running track mostly because the meets were during the warmer months. *And* because it didn't require any upper body strength.

We had to choose an event in track, so my first thoughts were short-distance events. Less pain, I thought. I was all about that.

First, I tried out the 100-meter. I was always last.

Then, I tried the 200. Last. 400. . . . Last.

Hurdles . . . well, that's about when the coaches suggested long distance. Unfortunately for me, that was anything but easier—the very name

made that pretty clear. But it was all that was left.

With the help and motivation of my team and our hard-core coach and with a lot of work, I actually started improving. I even started placing at track meets, getting third and even

second in events like the mile and 1,800-meter run.

The more I ran and the harder I worked, the more I liked it. So I stuck with track. Then when I got to high school, I started cross-country.

The runs got longer and the competition got faster, so I had to step it up too. All the while, I began to notice a change. Running wasn't just a chore to do because of school. It made me feel amazing!

I hardly ever got sick, and whenever I did, I was never down for long.

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## WITH THE HELP AND MOTIVATION OF MY TEAM AND OUR HARD-CORE COACH AND WITH A LOT OF WORK, I ACTUALLY STARTED IMPROVING.

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Being a runner also made me more conscious of what I put in my body. Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs were never remotely an option, because they would ruin years of hard work and because they were against the Word of Wisdom. I even cut back on soda because drinking it seemed to make it harder for me to push myself during workouts.

Long runs stopped being hard, and they became times to think and just enjoy exploring different neighborhoods. I especially loved long-distance runs during warm Texas rainstorms. Those runs made me feel like I could do anything.

During my junior year, I went to an allergist for a checkup. When I said I had asthma too, the allergist's team asked if they could test me to see how

bad it was. When I said they could, they administered the test and then looked at me in surprise.

"It doesn't seem like you have asthma at all," the doctor said.

"What are you talking about? I've always had seasonal asthma."

"OK, when was the last time you used your inhaler?" he asked.

"Well . . . it was . . ." I pored over years of memories. "I don't know," I said.

I finally began to understand the power of the Word of Wisdom.

Heavenly Father had been blessing me all along.

I can't say that long-distance running is a cure-all for everything, and I know that not everyone with seasonal asthma will have my same experience. But I do know that as I exercised regularly and ate wisely, my body and my mind grew stronger. Heavenly Father even took away a weakness I thought I would have my whole life. Now I know that as we do our best to make healthy decisions, the Lord has the power to make us stronger, no matter the odds. **NE**

*Alex Masterson lives in Utah, USA.*





# ADVICE FROM MY FUTURE SELF

By Jessie E. Hawkes

**DO YOU EVER  
WISH YOU COULD  
GO BACK IN TIME  
TO FIX THE PAST?**

If I could travel through time, I'd go back to two months after I got my driver's license and tell myself to drive more carefully in the mall parking lot to avoid hitting that parked car. (That was a rough night.) I'd also tell myself to join more clubs in high school and to not watch that one movie at my friend's house our senior year.

In the moment, it's sometimes tricky to know which choices are trivial and which may affect you for years to come. For instance, which choices in high school actually make a difference when you're a college student or a missionary?

If I could go back to my middle-school or high-school self to help me know which choices would have the biggest impact on my life as a young adult, here's the advice I'd give:



## 1. MAKE A FEW TRUE FRIENDS

Even though I had a lot of good friends in high school, when we left to attend universities in different states we gradually made other friends and drifted apart. Of all the awesome people I knew as a teenager, I'm super close with only one or two of them now. They are the friends I can call anytime with stupid movie quotes or with a broken heart and that I would drive 10 hours to visit.

If I had to go back to my teenage self, I'd make sure to let myself know how important these friends would be. *Having one or two quality friends in high school is so much better than being popular with tons of people.* Good friends will influence your life for many, many years.

## 2. ATTEND SEMINARY AND LEARN THE SCRIPTURES

My mom was my seminary teacher throughout high school, so I didn't have much of a choice about going. Every morning for four years I hauled myself out of bed and into a cold car and zipped off to seminary.

Years later, while in the MTC, I was amazed at how much seminary was still helping me. One day while teaching a lesson, my companion turned to me and asked, "How do you know the scriptures so well?" I was taken aback—I didn't feel like I was a scriptorian at all. "Seminary, I guess?" I stammered.

The more I thought about it, the more I realized that attending seminary and memorizing the scripture mastery verses *was* the reason I felt comfortable in the scriptures (see the scripture mastery verses at [sm.lds.org](http://sm.lds.org)). It was the best preparation I had for serving a mission! Even though I was still an awkward new missionary and I didn't know how to teach, I *did* know 100 scriptures that I could turn to when I didn't know what else to say. So many times, a scripture mastery verse came into my mind through the Spirit when I was teaching investigators.

If I'd read my scriptures just on my own, I wouldn't have had the same experience without going to seminary and learning the scriptures there too. My advice to my teenage self is to *go to seminary—no matter what—and fully participate!* The Lord will use the knowledge you gain for years to come.

## 3. DECIDE TO KEEP THE STANDARDS

You'll never regret obedience. I can't tell you how much I wish I hadn't seen some movies that had a few bad jokes and inappropriate scenes that still come to my mind today. In the same way, I'm so grateful for my decision to keep the Word of Wisdom and the law of chastity when I was a youth.

The choices you make in middle school and high school can make your "confidence wax strong" today (D&C 121:45). I would tell my teenage self to *be obedient, no matter what.* Regardless of the choices you've made in the past, you can work today to keep the standards. Your future self will thank you.

## 4. LEARN TO WORK HARD

Staying on top of your busy schedule can be tough, but learning how to push through will help you in college, on a mission, in the workforce, and as a spouse and parent. In fact, I would say that *learning how to work hard* in middle school and high school was much more helpful in college than the details I learned about calculus, rhetoric, and world history. If I could go back, I'd give my teenage self a hug and tell her to *keep pressing forward when it's hard!* The emotional strength you develop in your teenage years will help you for years to come.

## 5. LOOK FORWARD WITH FAITH

Sure, it doesn't do me any good to wish I could hop in a time machine to chat with my teenage self, but there are things to learn from looking back. Most of all, I'm grateful that no matter what my past looks like, I can have a clear and bright future because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. As Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, "God cares a lot more about who we are and who we are becoming than about who we once were. He cares that we keep on trying" ("Latter-day Saints Keep on Trying," *Ensign*, May 2015, 56). We can all look ahead with excitement, knowing that the good choices we make today will influence us for years. **NE**

*Jessie E. Hawkes lives in Utah, USA.*

# THE 1,200-HOUR CLIMB



Collecting supplies for a school drive.

Cleaning a local school with the young men's help.

Climbing a mountain isn't something you can physically do for somebody else. But there's no reason in the world you can't climb it side by side with another person and also encourage each other along the way.

And when you have a big enough group climbing together, well, look out, mountain. There's not much it can throw at you that you can't conquer.

A group of 30 young women from a ward in Arizona, USA, climbed a mountain of sorts together when they spent a year encouraging and helping one another work on their Personal Progress and earn their Young Womanhood Recognition.

During that time, among other accomplishments the young women put in a seriously impressive 1,200 hours of service. Think of that! That's like one person working a full-time job for over seven months. In addition to donating their own time, the young women also invited others in their ward and community to participate.

Their projects included tying quilts for women's shelters, decorating placemats for a hospice (a health-care facility for people who are nearing death), singing at care centers, sewing pillowcase dresses for children, cleaning school grounds, painting lines and shapes on playgrounds, and much more. They even started dedicating one Wednesday a month to family history.

One of their big projects was a drive for backpacks and school supplies. They collected 70 backpacks and hundreds

THE YOUNG WOMEN PUT IN A SERIOUSLY IMPRESSIVE 1,200 HOURS OF SERVICE. THINK OF THAT! THAT'S LIKE ONE PERSON WORKING A FULL-TIME JOB FOR OVER SEVEN MONTHS.



*Working together on Personal Progress helped these young women accomplish the extraordinary.*

Celebrating at the Snowflake Arizona Temple.

Painting a school playground.

## WORTH IT!

Here's more of what the young women said about their Personal Progress experiences:

- "I have studied the scriptures and developed a relationship with the Savior."
- "When I got in the habit of saying my prayers morning and night, it changed my whole experience of prayer! Now I talk with Heavenly Father all the time and ask Him for the smallest things. I know He hears me and will answer my prayers."
- "Personal Progress helps me focus on the important things in life [as well as] recognizing what a prompting feels like, which helps me with so many things."
- "Personal Progress is so worthwhile and has blessed my life so much. I want everyone to be able to feel this peace."

of school supplies for local school kids who needed a helping hand. "I felt really happy knowing I helped those children who couldn't afford the things they needed," said Katie S., a Beehive.

The service they gave was only part of what made this adventure so cool. The funny thing about service is how much it helps you in the end too. The young women say they picked up useful skills along the way. "Personal Progress has made me more comfortable sharing the gospel and standing up for what I believe," said Jessica R., a Mia Maid. "It's also helped me develop good habits, such as reading my scriptures and saying my prayers daily."

In the end, their "climb" was successful. With medallions around their necks, the young women celebrated their progress with a trip to the Snowflake Arizona Temple.

They discovered that climbing through life is a lot easier when you don't have to go it alone. **NE**

# 24-HOUR FLOWER POWER

## A FLOWER CAN'T CHANGE COLOR, RIGHT?

By Austin Cannon

**Y**ou've heard how it goes: "Roses are red, violets are blue." But what if it didn't have to be that way? What if you could change the color of a flower?

Think of the possibilities. Can't find any green flowers? Make one. Think that dull white flower should be a happy yellow? Done. Orange and blue? Why not?

With just the supplies you have in your house, you can make a flower any color you want. A rainbow bouquet could be just a few hours away.

It will take a little preparation and patience, but it'll be worth it when you can show your flowers off at family home evening.

### SUPPLIES

- Clear cups or glasses
- Water
- Food coloring
- White flowers, such as carnations or roses
- A knife or scissors

### Getting Ready

To have the full effect for your family home evening, you'll need to start this object lesson the day before and keep your project hidden. The flowers need time to change colors.

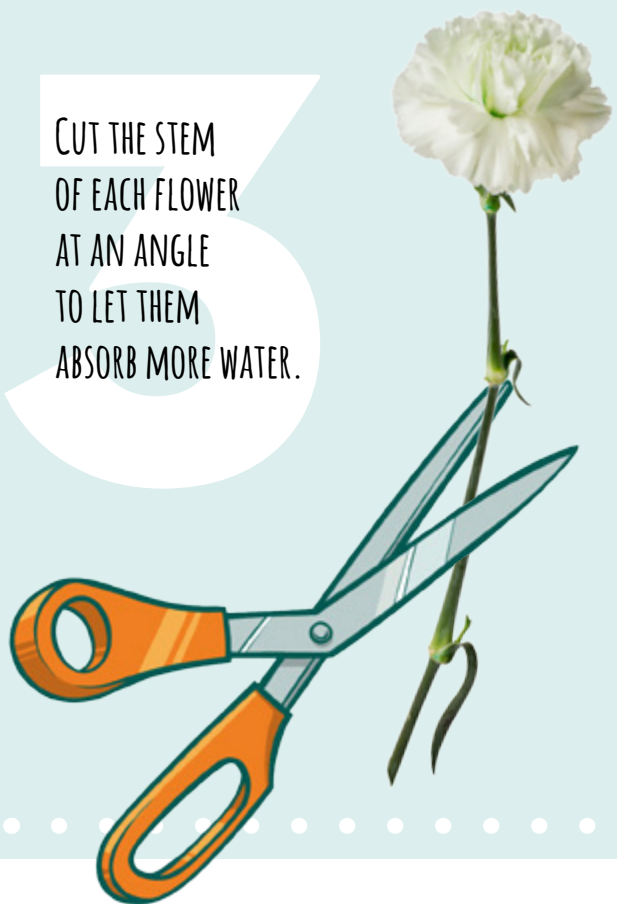
Remember, it can take 24 hours to see the full effects. It's still fun, though, to check on the flowers every once in a while to see how they're changing.

### PREP STEPS:

FOR EACH COLOR YOU WANT, FILL A CUP HALFWAY WITH WATER.



CUT THE STEM OF EACH FLOWER AT AN ANGLE TO LET THEM ABSORB MORE WATER.





ADD THE FOOD COLORING OF YOUR CHOICE TO EACH CUP. THE MORE DROPS OF FOOD COLORING YOU ADD, THE BETTER IT WORKS. TRY 20–30 DROPS.



PUT THE FLOWERS IN THE WATER AND LET THEM SOAK.



### The Lesson

When it's time for family home evening, let everyone in your family have a turn.

Give each person a flower and a glass of water. Invite them to pick their food coloring and color their water. Now ask them what they think will happen to their flower once they place it in the colored water.

After they've made predictions, let everybody put their flower into their colored water. Discuss how the immediate result met or didn't meet their expectations. (They probably won't guess that it takes a few hours to start changing colors.)

Pull out your flowers from the night before. Check out your family members' faces when they see how colorful the flowers are!

Now it's time for the interesting thought: we're kind of like the white flowers. We absorb what we surround ourselves with, whether good or bad, and the influence on us may not always be immediately apparent.

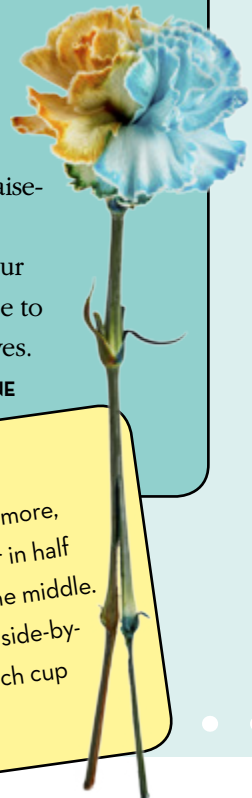
Chat with your family about how the people and things we surround ourselves with affect us. Sometimes bad attitudes and habits can result from who or what is around us. But on the bright side, when we surround ourselves with good things, they will start to show in us too! Maybe that white flower from the experiment is now your favorite color and is even more beautiful. We can be better and more beautiful too if we surround ourselves with good things. Just as it says in the thirteenth article of faith, "If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things."

Discuss ways you can be careful about your surroundings. And remember: We can choose to include uplifting things and people in our lives. When we do, it's fun to see what blossoms! **NE**

*Austin Cannon lives in Utah, USA.*

### MIX IT UP

If you want to experiment even more, try cutting the stem of a flower in half lengthwise so that it splits up the middle. Put each end in separate cups side-by-side with different colors in each cup to see what happens!





# YOU'RE A **BIG DEAL**

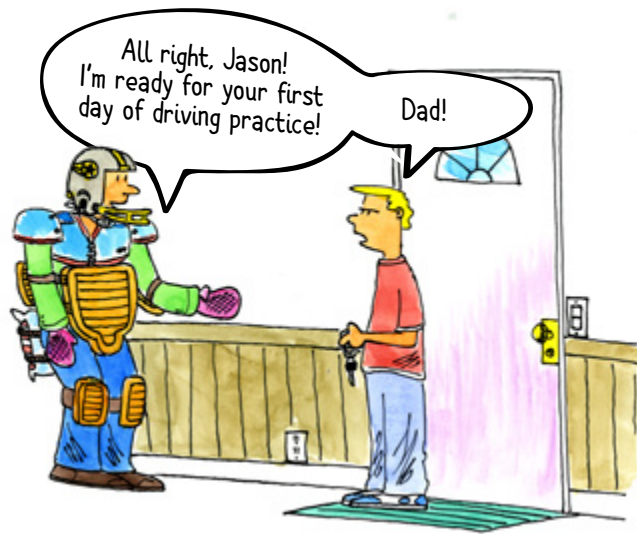
“The Lord uses a scale very different from the world’s to weigh the worth of a soul.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf,  
Second Counselor in the  
First Presidency,  
“You Matter To Him,”  
*Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 22.





**GOT AN IDEA FOR THE EXTRA SMILE?**  
 Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and click "Submit Your Work."



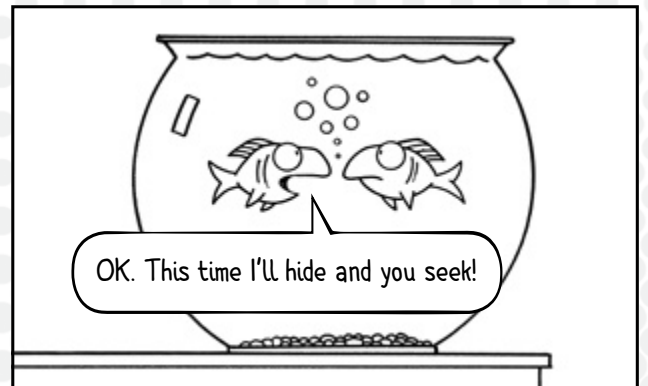
RYAN STOKER



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY; IDEA BY SPENCER S., AGE 13



JON CLARK



GLASBERGEN CARTOON SERVICES

# “What can I do when I feel like I don’t fit in at church?”

**F**eeling like you don’t fit in can be an uncomfortable experience anytime and may even happen at church. As difficult as that can be, there are some things you can do to make the situation more comfortable.

First, think about why we attend church in the first place—because we love God and want to follow Him. We go to partake of the sacrament—a sacred ordinance. Another reason is to learn more about the Savior and His teachings. When Jesus was in His mortal ministry, some of His disciples stopped following Him. But when Jesus asked His Twelve Apostles if they would also abandon Him, Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Just like Peter, we can gain the knowledge we need at church.

Second, think about what you can do to befriend those around you. For example, is there someone else who may be lonely? If so, reach out. You might be surprised that others are just hoping for someone else to be friendly to them too. When you serve others, you’ll find you feel more comfortable around them—and you’ll be a lot happier. Caden W., 14, of Arizona, USA, says, “If you truly feel like you don’t fit in at church, just think about the people who love you, like your parents, Jesus Christ, and Heavenly Father. Try your best to love other people and know deep down in your heart that you do fit in and that you are special. Remember that you are a son or daughter of God.” Our Heavenly Father will always be glad that you go to church. **NE**



## Open Up

Look around to make friends. There might be a girl or boy who seems to be having

even more trouble with fitting in and just needs to have someone take notice. I recently moved to a new ward, and at first I tried to stay clear of everyone. I began to feel like an outcast but then realized I had to open up. Try to look around you and let your light shine. You’ll be surprised by the outcome.

*Britney B., 15, California, USA*



## Focus on the Reason to Go to Church

When I feel excluded at church, I try to focus

on the reason I am there—which is to show my love for Heavenly Father and Jesus and to learn of them—instead of what others may think of me. I also try to let others know I am willing to be a friend to everyone.

*Lillian K., 14, Utah, USA*

## Turn to Prayer

Sometimes the best advice is something simple. The most basic gospel principle is prayer, so get on your knees and pray. Ask God for His comforting Spirit and to bless you with a testimony. Once you have that testimony, you’ll feel more at peace. Remember when you feel alone that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,





has been through it too, and He will comfort you.

*Mattison S., 17, Chihuahua, Mexico*

### Serve Others

Everyone should feel welcome and loved whenever they walk through the doors into a place to worship the Lord, but because we're imperfect, sometimes we exclude others and do unkind things. When you feel like you don't fit in, you might read "Come, Join with Us," by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency (*Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 21). Besides remembering that with Christ we are never truly alone, there are things we can do to ease our burden. Prayer, daily scripture study, obedience to commandments, and service to others will help. Finding opportunities to serve—no matter how seemingly small and insignificant—will allow you to get closer to both the other youth and the adults in your ward. I can testify that Church leaders and other adults care about you and want you to succeed and be happy in church.

*Hannah F., 17, Arizona, USA*



### Make a Friend

When I'm visiting a new ward and don't know anybody there, I find someone who looks to be my age. I think that when we don't feel like we fit in at church we should try to take

action—introduce yourself to somebody and make a friend. We can help others feel welcome at church by introducing ourselves and helping them feel accepted.

*Ryan L., 14, Texas, USA*



### Remember the Lord

For years I felt like I didn't fit in, and I was often teased by others. Then I realized something: going to church isn't about fitting in with the other members. Church is about coming unto Heavenly Father and the Savior. We go to church to express our love and respect for Them. When we go to church with the Lord in mind, we will feel better about what we learn and about ourselves. When you feel alone or isolated at church, remember that the Lord is beside you, and focus on what you can be taught.

*Margaret M., 18, Utah, USA*



### COME, JOIN WITH US

"If you could see into our hearts, you would probably find that you fit in better than you suppose. . . . The Church is designed to nourish the imperfect, the struggling, and the exhausted. It is filled with people who *desire* with all their heart to keep the commandments, even if they haven't *mastered* them yet."

**President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Come, Join with Us," *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 23.**

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

## UPCOMING QUESTION

"I'm starting junior high. There is so much swearing and bad stuff. How do I deal with it? Can I make a difference?"

Send your answer and photo by December 15, 2015.

Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org), and click "Submit Your Work." Sign in with your LDS Account and then select "New Era" under "Choose Magazine." Click "Add File" to select your file and photos, and then click "Submit" to upload.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



## WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK

A couple of months ago in Young Women, we had a lesson on service where we learned about Mosiah 2:17, which says, “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.”

I felt the Spirit so strong all that day, so I prayed all week for opportunities to make a difference and do something that someone *truly* needed. That week at school I found out that one of my friends was feeling sad and lonely and having difficulties with her school friends. I knew this could be an opportunity to serve.

So my other two friends and I decided to get her a little gift, leave

it on her doorstep, and run. Then the next day as I was scrolling through my News Feed on Facebook, I noticed a post from the young woman we’d given the gift to, and my heart leaped in my chest. It read, “To the people who left the bag and card, thank you so much. It feels so good to know that three people love me for who I am and have got my back no matter what.”

Though it might have been a small act of kindness, what we did meant so much, not only to the girl but also to my friends and me as well. I’ve learned that the best way to find happiness is to bring happiness to those who need it.

**Lauren D., Utah, USA**



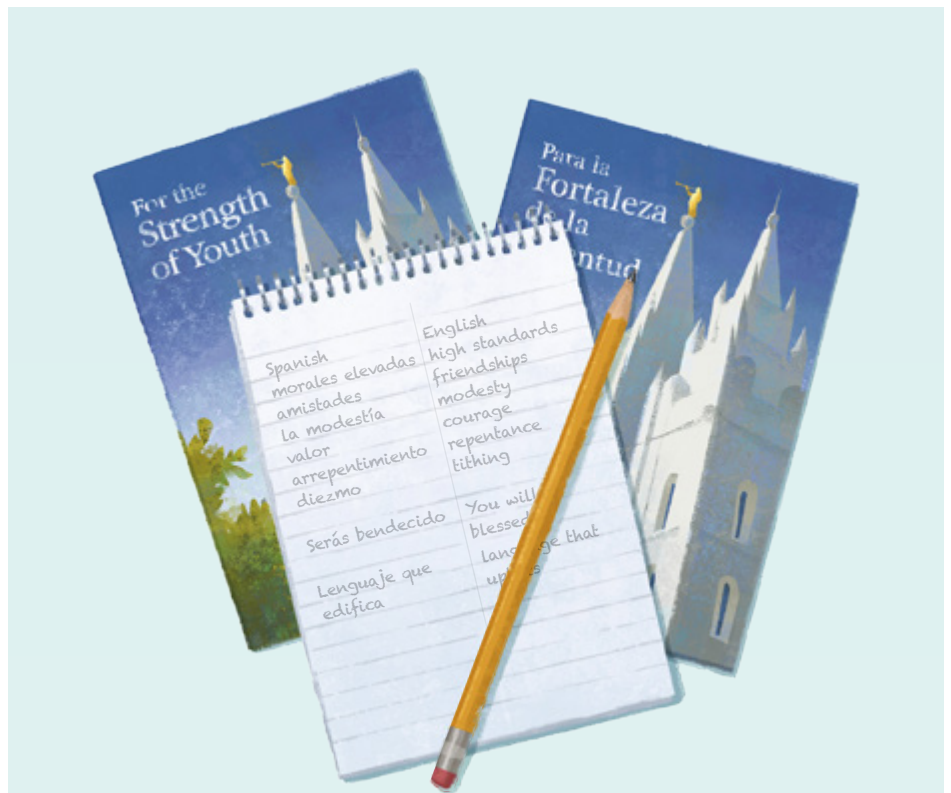
## WHERE WAS THE WATER?

I recently took a backpacking trip with a group of other young men through Yosemite National Park in California, USA. The first day of hiking was the hardest physically because of the elevation gain and the altitude, but it became even harder when we couldn't find any of the planned pools or creeks on the trail to find water we could filter. I started to get worried because I'd only brought one canteen of water, which quickly ran out in the afternoon heat.

After about four miles with no water source, we decided to say a prayer that we would find water soon. About a half-mile farther on, we found a small pool of water fed by a small stream. We were so overjoyed that we decided to give a prayer of thanks to the Lord, much like Lehi and his family when they traveled in the wilderness.

Reflecting back on this journey, I realized that we are all searching for something we desperately need in life: the living water of Christ. Without it, we wouldn't be able to go very far in our personal journeys. I know that we will find different sources that lead to the living water—the scriptures, the words of the prophets, the advice of our bishops and parents—and if we take what we need from these sources, we will stay on the right path.

**Brian B., California, USA**



## FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH AND AN EXAM

When my parents suggested I use the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet to study for my next oral Spanish exam, I was surprised. It did make sense, especially since the examiner *would* be asking me about my stances on moral issues, but I didn't think it would be as helpful as they thought it would be.

My father downloaded a copy of *Para la Fortaleza de la Juventud* from [LDS.org](https://www.lds.org), and for the next few weeks, I cross-referenced my English copy with my Spanish one. I looked up interesting words and useful phrases, and it also helped me get a deeper understanding of the doctrine.

When the morning for the exam came, the language came to me as I needed it, and I was able to talk with confidence about morality, music, abstinence from alcohol, the importance of families, and clean living. I was able to testify of the truthfulness of my beliefs, and I actually enjoyed it.

Studying *Para la Fortaleza de la Juventud* did help me speak better Spanish, but what I didn't expect was how close it brought me to the Spirit. As I answered the questions that day, the Spirit brought so much back to my remembrance. I know now that as long as I do what it takes to have the Spirit in my life, I don't have to be afraid.

**Jacob G., England**



## When is it OK to kiss?

Aside from counseling against “passionate kissing” before marriage (*For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 36), Church leaders have not given specific guidelines about when kissing is “permitted” for youth. This is one of those areas where they teach you correct principles and you govern yourself (see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 284). The correct principles are these: “Treat others with respect, not as objects used to satisfy lustful and selfish desires. . . . Do not do anything . . . that arouses sexual feelings. . . . Pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit so that you can be clean and virtuous” (*For the Strength of Youth*, 36).

Also, kissing often implies the kind of paired-off or serious relationship you’ve been counseled to avoid as a teen (see *For the Strength of Youth*, 4). So, while being attracted to a person is natural, and kissing someone is a natural way of expressing affection or attraction, *that’s precisely why you need to be cautious about it*. If you kiss at all, or kiss too early and too often, you’re more likely to be tempted to move on to other, less-innocent activities.

So, although Church leaders haven’t specifically told you when it’s OK to kiss, if you choose to kiss, it’s probably best to be sparing with your kisses. **NE**

I struggle with my weight, but I love food. Is it a sin to overeat or be overweight?

Although overeating isn’t necessarily a sin, we’ve been counseled against it because it may show a lack of self-discipline and may violate principles implied in the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89). “We should avoid anything that we know is harmful to our bodies. . . . We should . . . avoid overeating. . . . By living the Word of Wisdom, we become stronger spiritually” (*Gospel Principles* [2009], 169). Being overweight may be a health concern, but it has nothing to do with your moral standing before God, especially since weight is not necessarily always linked solely to eating habits.

The Lord has given us the Word of Wisdom because He wants us to have true joy both in this life and in the eternities. Better self-discipline and better health will probably help you to find more joy in this life, so you may want to consider altering your eating habits and watching your weight. Remember that taking care of your physical body is one way to develop self-discipline and overcome the natural man. Plus, better health puts you in a better position to serve God and others. **NE**



A field of dandelions in various stages of bloom, from buds to fully formed seed heads, set against a warm, golden background of a bright sun. The lighting is soft and atmospheric, creating a sense of peace and hope.

WHEN WE  
*keep the commandments,*  
OUR LIVES WILL BE  
HAPPIER, MORE FULFILLING,  
AND LESS COMPLICATED.

President Thomas S. Monson  
October 2015 general conference

## 3 NEW APOSTLES CALLED

Get to know the three newest Apostles sustained on October 3, 2015.



**Elder Ronald A. Rasband**

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

*Elder Rasband* has served as a General Authority since 2000, when he was called to the First Quorum of the Seventy. Most recently, he served in the Presidency of the Seventy. He was a mission president in the New York New York North Mission, where he had originally served as a young missionary. He and his wife, Melanie, have five children and 24 grandchildren. Elder Rasband joined a multinational chemical manufacturing company after graduating college and became its president and chief operating officer in 1987.



**Elder Gary E. Stevenson**

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

*Elder Stevenson* served as Presiding Bishop from March 2012 until his calling to the Twelve. He had previously served in the First Quorum of the Seventy since 2008. Earlier, he served as the mission president for the Japan Nagoya Mission, where he had served as a young missionary. He and his wife, Lesa, have four sons and six grandchildren. Elder Stevenson studied business administration and later cofounded and served as president and chief operating officer of an exercise equipment manufacturing company.



**Elder Dale G. Renlund**

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

*Elder Renlund* was called to the First Quorum of the Seventy in April 2009. From 2009 to 2014, he served as the Area President in the Africa Southeast Area. He and his wife, Ruth, have one daughter. Elder Renlund served a mission in Sweden. He worked as a cardiologist specializing in heart failure and heart transplantation, a professor of medicine at a university, and the medical director of a statewide cardiac transplant program. He is the 100th Apostle to serve since the Church was restored in 1830.

Learn more about the new Apostles at [lds.org/go/Apostles11NE](https://lds.org/go/Apostles11NE).

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



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