

NOVEMBER 2016

THE

New Era



General Conference

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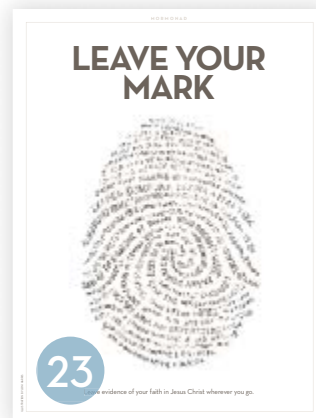
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Messages FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY



President
Thomas S. Monson

PRINCIPLES AND PROMISES

“Those who are obedient to the Lord’s commandments and who faithfully observe the Word of Wisdom are promised particular blessings, among which are good health and added physical stamina [see D&C 89:18–21].

“Recently I read the true account of a dramatic manifestation concerning these promises. A faithful member of the Church, John A. Larsen, served during World War II in the United States Coast Guard on the ship *USS Cambria*. During a battle in the Philippines, word came of an approaching squadron of bombers and kamikaze fighter planes. . . . John and three companions gathered their gear and hurried to the beach, hoping for a lift out to one of the departing ships. Fortunately, a landing craft picked them up

and sped toward the last ship leaving the bay. The men on that departing ship . . . had time only to throw ropes to the four men, that they might hopefully be able to climb to the deck.

“John, with a heavy radio strapped to his back, found himself dangling at the end of a 40-foot (12 m) rope, at the side of a ship headed out to the open sea. He began pulling himself up, hand over hand, knowing that if he lost his grip, he would almost certainly perish. After climbing only a third of the way, he felt his arms burning with pain. He had become so weak that he felt he could no longer hold on.

“With his strength depleted, as he grimly contemplated his fate, John silently cried unto God, telling Him that he had always kept the Word of Wisdom and had lived a clean life—and he now desperately needed the promised blessings.

“John later said that as he finished his prayer, he felt a great surge of strength. He began climbing once again and fairly flew up the rope. When he reached the deck, his breathing was normal and not the least bit labored. The blessings of added health and stamina promised in the Word of Wisdom had been his. He gave thanks to his Heavenly Father then, and throughout the remainder of his life, for the answer to his desperate prayer for help.

“. . . May we care for our bodies and our minds by observing the principles set forth in the Word of Wisdom, a divinely provided plan. With all my heart and soul, I testify of the glorious blessings which await us as we do.”

THE PERFECT PATH TO HAPPINESS

“Our Father’s plan for our happiness and our salvation is shared by our missionaries throughout the world. Not all who hear this divine message accept and embrace it. However, men and women everywhere, . . . recognize its truths, and they plant their feet on the path that will lead them safely home. Their lives are forever changed.

“Essential to the plan is our Savior, Jesus



Christ. Without His atoning sacrifice, all would be lost. It is not enough, however, merely to believe in Him and His mission. We need to work and learn, search and pray, repent and improve. We need to know God’s laws and live them. We need to receive His saving ordinances. Only by so doing will we obtain true, eternal happiness.

“We are blessed to *have* the truth. We have a mandate to *share* the truth. Let us *live* the truth, that we might merit all that the Father has for us. He does nothing save it be for our benefit. He has told us, ‘This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’ [Moses 1:39].

“From the depths of my soul, and in all humility, I testify of the great gift which is our Father’s plan for us. It is the one perfect path to peace and happiness both here and in the world to come.”

“As I listened to the words of the Lord’s inspired leaders, something I felt I should change was to trust in Heavenly Father and in His laws, His corrections, and His way of guiding us through life because He knows us, He knows what we need, and He wants the best for us.”

Augusto M., 17, Federal District, Brazil





“The Aaronic Priesthood holders will also need daily and even hourly encouragement and correction from the Lord Himself through the Holy Ghost. That will be available to them as they *choose to remain worthy of it.*”

GRATITUDE ON THE SABBATH DAY

“For Latter-day Saints, the Sabbath is . . . a day . . . of gratitude and love. . . .

“One blessing for which we can be grateful is that we are there in that sacrament meeting at all. . . . The fact that we are able to gather with even one other Saint and partake of the sacrament will help us begin to feel gratitude and love for God’s kindness.

“Because of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the restored gospel, another blessing we can count is that we have the opportunity to take the sacrament each week—prepared, blessed, and passed by authorized servants of God. . . .

“Of all the blessings we can count, the greatest by far is the feeling of forgiveness that comes as we partake of the sacrament. We will feel greater love and appreciation for the Savior. . . .

“The blessing of love we receive will make it easier for us to keep the commandment to ‘always remember him’ [Moroni 4:3; 5:2]. You may even feel love and gratitude, as I do, for the Holy Ghost, who Heavenly Father has promised will always be with us as we remain faithful to the covenants we have made. . . .

“You could begin today with a private and family prayer of thanks for all God has done for you. You could pray to know what the Lord would have you do to serve Him and others. . . .

“I can promise you your prayers will be answered, and as you act on the answers you will receive, you will find joy in the Sabbath, and your heart will overflow with thankfulness.”

THAT HE MAY BECOME STRONG ALSO

“The Lord is preparing the Aaronic Priesthood holder to become an elder serving with faith, power, and gratitude in that glorious Melchizedek Priesthood. . . .

“Many things may help strengthen our younger brothers to rise up in the priesthood, but nothing will be more powerful than our helping them develop the faith and confidence that they can draw on the power of God in their priesthood service.

“That faith and confidence won’t stay with them from a single experience of being lifted by even the most gifted Melchizedek Priesthood holder. The ability to draw on those powers must be cultivated by many expressions of confidence from those who are more experienced in the priesthood.



President Henry B. Eyring
First Counselor in the First Presidency

“I will pray more earnestly for opportunities to serve and also to see where and whom Heavenly Father would like me to serve each day.”

Alexis L., 13, West Yorkshire, England



General
Conference
HIGHLIGHTS

“ . . . [God’s] reward is not usually behind the first door. So we need to keep knocking. . . . Don’t give up. Seek God with all your heart. Exercise faith. Walk in righteousness.”

O HOW GREAT THE PLAN OF OUR GOD!

“We are surrounded by . . . an astonishing wealth of light and truth. . . .

“ . . . How could it ever be possible that we of all people would not be excited about attending our Church worship services? Or get tired of reading the holy scriptures? . . . Life-changing truths are before our eyes and at our fingertips, but sometimes we sleepwalk on the path of discipleship. . . .

“I invite each of us to consider this question. What shall we give in return for the flood of light and truth God has poured out upon us?

“ . . . Let us take courage and trust in the guidance of the Spirit. Let us in word and in deed share with our fellowmen the amazing . . . message of God’s plan of happiness.”



LEARN FROM ALMA AND AMULEK

“Alma found Amulek and asked him for help.

“And Alma received help. . . .

“In whatever position you currently serve . . . to be successful, you must find your Amuleks. . . .

“Perhaps, like Amulek, you know in your heart that the Lord has ‘called [you] many times,’ but you ‘would not hear’ [Alma 10:6]. . . .

“ . . . It is my hope that those who have strayed from the path of discipleship—even by only a few degrees—will contemplate the goodness and grace of God, see with their hearts, learn from Alma and Amulek, and hear the life-changing words of the Savior: ‘Come, follow me.’”

FOURTH FLOOR, LAST DOOR

“The purpose of faith is not to *change* God’s will but to empower us to *act on* God’s will.

Faith is trust—trust that God sees what we cannot and that He knows what we do not. . . .

“Faith means that we trust not only in God’s wisdom but that we trust also in His love. . . .

“With this kind of faith, though we may not understand why certain things happen or why certain prayers go unanswered, we can know that in the end everything will make sense. . . .

“Until then, we walk by whatever faith we have, seeking always to increase our faith. . . .

“[Faith] comes to those who pay the price of faithfulness. . . .

“In our search for enduring faith, . . . let us remember the Lord’s promise: ‘Knock, and it shall be opened unto you’ [Matthew 7:7]. . . .



President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Second Counselor in
the First Presidency



Apostles Speak TO US



JOY AND SPIRITUAL SURVIVAL

"I would like to discuss a principle that is key to our spiritual survival. It is a principle that will only become more important as the tragedies and travesties around us increase. . . .

"When the focus of our lives is on God's plan of salvation . . . and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy. . . .

"How, then, can we claim that joy? We can start by 'looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith' [Hebrews 12:2] 'in every thought' [D&C 6:36]. We can give thanks for Him in our prayers and by keeping covenants we've made with Him and our Heavenly Father. As our Savior becomes more and more real to us and as we plead for His joy to be given to us, our joy will increase.

"Joy is powerful, and focusing on joy brings God's power into our lives. As in all things, Jesus Christ is our ultimate exemplar, 'who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross' [Hebrews 12:2]. Think of that! In order for Him to endure the most excruciating experience ever endured on earth, our Savior focused on joy! . . .

"... Joy is a gift for the faithful. It is the gift that comes from intentionally trying to live a righteous life, as taught by Jesus Christ."

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



SHARING THE RESTORED GOSPEL

"We need the help of every member, and every member can help, since there are many tasks to perform as we share the restored gospel with every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. . . .

"There are three things all members can do to help share the gospel, regardless of the circumstances in which they live and work. All of us should do all of these.

"*First*, we can all pray for desire to help with this vital part of the work of salvation. All efforts begin with *desire*.

"*Second*, we can keep the commandments ourselves. Faithful, obedient members are the most persuasive witnesses of the truth and value of the restored gospel. Even more important, faithful members will always have the Savior's Spirit to be with them to guide them as they seek to participate in the great work of sharing the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

"*Third*, we can pray for inspiration on what we can do in our individual circumstances to share the gospel with others. . . .

"As an Apostle of the Lord, I urge every member and family in the Church to pray for the Lord to help them find persons prepared to receive the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. . . .

"... I . . . promise that with faith in the Lord's help, we will be guided, be inspired, and find great joy in this eternally important work of love. We will come to understand that success in sharing the gospel is inviting people with love and genuine intent to help them, no matter what their response."

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



“From President Nelson’s talk, I now have a better understanding of joy, so I can share it with others. I also know that through trials or success I can still experience joy!”

Kaleigh J., 13, Nevada, USA



TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?

“One of the most heart-wrenching stories in scripture occurred when ‘many of [the Lord’s] disciples’ found it hard to accept His teachings and doctrine, and they ‘went back, and *walked no more with him*’ [John 6:66; emphasis added]. . .

“Today is no different. For some, Christ’s invitation to believe and remain continues to be hard—or difficult to accept. Some disciples struggle to understand a specific Church policy or teaching. Others find concerns in our history or in the imperfections of some members and leaders, past and present. Still others find it difficult to live a religion that requires so much. Finally, some have become ‘weary in well-doing’ [D&C 64:33]. . .

“If any one of you is faltering in your faith, I ask you the same question that Peter asked: ‘To whom shall [you] go?’ [John 6:68]. If you choose to become inactive or to leave the restored Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where will you go? What will you do? . . .

“... Before you make that spiritually perilous choice to leave, I encourage you to stop and think carefully before giving up whatever it was that brought you to your testimony of the restored Church of Jesus Christ in the first place. Stop and think about what you have felt here and why you felt it. Think about the times when the Holy Ghost has borne witness to you of eternal truth. . .

“... He will never abandon His Church and . . . He will never abandon any one of us.”

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



“COME, FOLLOW ME” BY PRACTICING CHRISTIAN LOVE AND SERVICE

“Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel was in the hospital recovering from open-heart surgery when he was visited by his five-year-old grandson. As the little boy looked into his grandfather’s eyes, he saw his pain. ‘Grandpa,’ he asked, ‘if I loved you more, would you [hurt less]?’ [in Elie Wiesel, *Open Heart*, trans. Marion Wiesel (2012), 70]. Today I ask a similar question of each of us: ‘If we love the Savior more, will we suffer less?’ . . .

“As the Savior’s latter-day disciples, we come unto Him by loving and serving God’s children. As we do, we may not be able to avoid tribulation, affliction, and suffering in the flesh, but we will suffer less spiritually. Even in our trials we can experience joy and peace.

“Our Christian love and service naturally begin in the home. . .

“As we follow Jesus Christ, His love motivates us to support each other on our mortal journey. We cannot do it alone. . .

“Teach[ing] one another the doctrine of the kingdom’ [D&C 88:77] is a way to love and serve each other. . .

“I testify that the Savior’s true posture toward us is the one posed by the outstretched arms of Thorvaldsen’s statue *Christus*. He continues to stretch forth His hands, beckoning, ‘Come, follow me.’ We follow Him by loving and serving one another and keeping His commandments.”

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



“I’ve just recently started home teaching, and when I heard Elder Holland’s story, I felt inspired to make sure I do my home teaching. Home teachers are there to bless and comfort those in need.”

Jack T., 14, Ohio, USA



EMISSARIES TO THE CHURCH

“Brethren, the appeal I am making tonight is for you to lift your vision of home teaching. Please, in newer, better ways see yourselves as emissaries of the Lord to His children. That means leaving behind the tradition of a frantic, law of Moses–like, end-of-the-month calendar in which you rush to give a scripted message from the Church magazines that the family has already read. We would hope, rather, that you will establish an era of genuine, gospel-oriented concern for the members, watching over and caring for each other, addressing spiritual and temporal needs in any way that helps.

“Now, as for what ‘counts’ as home teaching, every good thing you do ‘counts,’ so report it all! Indeed, the report that matters most is how you have blessed and cared for those within your stewardship, which has virtually nothing to do with a specific calendar or a particular location. What matters is that you love your people and are fulfilling the commandment ‘to watch over the church always’ [D&C 20:53]....

“...When we speak of home teaching or watchcare or personal priesthood ministry—call it what you will—this is what we are talking about. We are asking you as home teachers to be God’s emissaries to His children, to love and care and pray for the people you are assigned, as we love and care and pray for you. May you be vigilant in tending the flock of God in ways consistent with your circumstances.”

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



“IF YE HAD KNOWN ME”

“Jesus said: ... ‘If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also’ [John 14:7]....

“We come to know the Father as we come to know His Beloved Son.

“...Four essential steps that can help us come to know the Lord are exercising faith in Him, following Him, serving Him, and believing Him....

“The exercise of faith in Jesus Christ is relying upon His merits, mercy, and grace. ... As our faith in the Lord increases, we trust in Him and have confidence in His power to redeem, heal, and strengthen us....

“The Savior has admonished us to become as He is. ... Following the Lord includes emulating Him. We continue to come to know the Lord as we seek through the power of His Atonement to become like Him....

“We more fully come to know the Lord as we serve Him and labor in His kingdom. As we do so, He generously blesses us with heavenly help, spiritual gifts, and increased capacity....

“We come to know the Savior as we do our best to go where He wants us to go, as we strive to say what He wants us to say, and as we become what He wants us to become....

“...Believing Him with our whole soul comes as we press forward along the covenant pathway, surrender our will to His, and submit to His priorities and timing for us.”

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



VALIANT IN THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS

“There are a number of stumbling blocks to our valor that can prevent us from reaching the goal of eternal life...”

“One Stumbling Block Is the Philosophies of Men

“... The preferred strategy of the adversary is to lead people away from God and cause them to stumble by emphasizing the philosophies of men over the Savior and His teachings....”

“... Some members of the Church ... lose their bearings and become influenced by the cause of the moment—many of which are clearly not righteous....”

“Another Stumbling Block Is Refusing to See Sin in Its True Light

“... Many people ... have no remorse or willingness to acknowledge their conduct as being morally wrong. Even some who profess a belief in the Father and the Son wrongfully take the position that a loving Father in Heaven should exact no consequences for conduct that is contrary to His commandments....”

“Looking beyond the Mark Is a Stumbling Block ...

“... Some members elevate causes, many of which are good, to a status superior to basic gospel doctrine. ... If we elevate anything above our devotion to the Savior, ... then we are looking beyond the mark. Jesus Christ is the mark!”

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



“ABIDE IN MY LOVE”

“One of the terms we hear often today is that God’s love is ‘unconditional.’ While in one sense that is true, the descriptor *unconditional* appears nowhere in scripture. Rather, His love is described in scripture as ‘great and wonderful love’ [D&C 138:3], ‘perfect love’ [1 John 4:18; Moroni 8:16], ‘redeeming love’ [Alma 5:26], and ‘everlasting love’ [Jeremiah 31:3]. These are better terms because the word *unconditional* can convey mistaken impressions about divine love, such as, God tolerates and excuses anything we do because His love is unconditional, or God makes no demands upon us because His love is unconditional, or *all* are saved in the heavenly kingdom of God because His love is unconditional. God’s love is infinite and it will endure forever, but what it means for each of us depends on how we respond to His love....”

“To ‘continue in’ or ‘abide in’ the Savior’s love means to receive His grace and be perfected by it. To receive His grace, we must have faith in Jesus Christ and keep His commandments, including repenting of our sins, being baptized for the remission of sins, receiving the Holy Ghost, and continuing in the path of obedience....”

“To abide in God’s love in this sense means to submit fully to His will. It means to accept His correction when needed. ... It means to love and serve one another as Jesus has loved and served us. It means to learn ‘to abide the law of a celestial kingdom’ so that we can ‘abide a celestial glory’ [D&C 88:22].”

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



"I decided to make a calendar for something nice I can do each day to help somebody else be happy. President Uchtdorf's story about 'fourth floor, last door' taught me to always keep trying, because I never know when I'll end up helping someone."

Lisa D., 13, Utah, USA



A WITNESS OF GOD

"Our concern for our brothers and sisters and our desire to please God bring a compelling urgency to share and strengthen the kingdom of God across the world..."

"I suggest that you stop feeling guilty about any insufficiency you think you have in sharing the gospel. Rather, pray ... for opportunities..."

"Be open about your faith in Christ. When the occasion presents itself, speak of His life, His teachings, and His incomparable gift to all mankind. Share His powerful truths from the Book of Mormon. He has given us this promise: 'Whosoever ... shall confess me before men, him will I confess ... before my Father ... in heaven' [Matthew 10:32]. I promise you that as you pray often and sincerely for opportunities to 'stand as a witness of God,' those opportunities will come, and those who seek more light and knowledge will be put before you. As you respond to spiritual promptings, the Holy Ghost will carry your words to the heart of another, and one day the Savior will confess you before His Father..."

"Please don't see your efforts to share the love of the Savior with another as a pass/fail test with your grade determined by how positively your friends respond to your feelings or invitation to meet the missionaries. With our mortal eyes, we cannot judge the effect of our efforts, nor can we establish the timetable. When you share the love of the Savior with another, your grade is always an A+."

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



LEST THOU FORGET

"Jesus Christ knows about fierce struggles and trials. He gave His life for us. His final hours were brutal, beyond anything we can even comprehend, but His sacrifice for each one of us was the ultimate expression

of His pure love.

"... Do not forget, Heavenly Father knows and loves each of you, and He is always ready to help..."

"... To all who wish to bolster their faith, I give you this promise: as you faithfully live the gospel of Jesus Christ and abide by its teachings, your testimony will be protected and it will grow. Keep the covenants you have made, regardless of the actions of those around you. Be diligent parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends who strengthen loved ones with personal testimony and who share spiritual experiences. Remain faithful and steadfast, even if storms of doubt invade your lives through the actions of others. Seek that which will edify and fortify you spiritually. Avoid counterfeit offerings of so-called 'truths' which are so pervasive, and remember to record your feelings of 'love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, [and] temperance' [Galatians 5:22-23]."

"In the midst of life's greatest storms, do not forget your divine heritage as a son or daughter of God or your eternal destiny to one day return to live with Him, which will surpass anything the world has to offer."

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



LOOK TO THE BOOK, LOOK TO THE LORD

“Each of you can . . . receive a personal witness of this book! Do you realize that the Book of Mormon was written for you—and for your day? This book is one of the blessings of living in what we call the dispensation of the fulness of times. . . .

“In order to help the Book of Mormon become the keystone of your testimony, I offer you a challenge. I recently learned that many young people spend an average of seven hours a day looking at TV, computer, and smartphone screens. With this in mind, would you make a small change? Will you replace some of that daily screen time—particularly that devoted to social media, the internet, gaming, or television—with reading the Book of Mormon? If the studies I referred to are accurate, you could easily find time for daily study of the Book of Mormon even if for only 10 minutes a day. And you can study in a way that allows you to enjoy it and understand it—either on your device or in book form. . . .

“Within the book’s pages, you will discover the infinite love and incomprehensible grace of God. As you strive to follow the teachings you find there, your joy will expand, your understanding will increase, and the answers you seek to the many challenges mortality presents will be opened to you. As you look to the book, you look to the Lord. The Book of Mormon is the revealed word of God.”

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



REPENTANCE: A JOYFUL CHOICE

“Real repentance must involve faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, faith that He can change us, faith that He can forgive us, and faith that He will help us avoid more mistakes. . . . Without the Redeemer, the inherent hope and joy evaporate, and repentance becomes simply miserable behavior modification. But by exercising faith in Him, we become converted to His ability and willingness to forgive sin. . . .

“ . . . Repentance is a choice.

“We can—and sometimes do—make different choices. Such choices may not seem intrinsically wrong, but they prevent us from becoming truly penitent and thus preclude our pursuit of real repentance. . . .

“Jesus Christ can forgive because He paid the price for our sins. Our Redeemer chooses to forgive because of His incomparable compassion, mercy, and love. Our Savior wants to forgive because this is one of His divine attributes. And, like the Good Shepherd He is, He is joyful when we choose to repent.

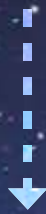
“Even as we feel godly sorrow for our actions, when we choose to repent, we immediately invite the Savior into our lives. . . .

“The fact that we can repent is the good news of the gospel! Guilt can be ‘swept away’ [Enos 1:6]. . . . Repentance is not only possible but also joyful because of our Savior. . . .

“ . . . May we choose to repent, forsake our sins, and turn our hearts and wills around to follow our Savior.”

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

I testify of the
great gift which is
our Father's plan
for us.



It is the

**ONE PERFECT
PEACE AND**

The background of the image is a composite of two celestial scenes. The upper portion shows a vibrant view of the Milky Way galaxy, with its characteristic band of stars and dust stretching across the sky in shades of purple, pink, and orange. The lower portion shows a sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with a bright orange and yellow glow on the horizon and dark silhouettes of land or rocks in the foreground.

CT PATH TO HAPPINESS

both here and in the
world to come.

—President Thomas S. Monson



My heartfelt plea is that we will encourage, accept, understand, and love those who are struggling with their faith. . . . We are all at different places on the path, and we need to minister to one another accordingly.

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

When you pray, are you really praying or just saying prayers?

Elder Juan A. Uceda of the Seventy

Whether our **testimony of the Book of Mormon** comes the first time we open it or over a period of time, **it will influence us all of our days** if we continue to **read it** and **apply its teachings**.

Elder LeGrand R. Curtis Jr. of the Seventy

We need not be timid about **TESTIFYING** of **JOSEPH'S** mission as **PROPHET, SEER,** and **REVELATOR,** for the **LORD** has always worked through **PROPHETS.**

Elder Craig C. Christensen
of the Presidency of the Seventy

The **only opinion** of us that **matters** is what our **Heavenly Father** thinks of us.

Elder J. Devn Cornish
of the Seventy

Just SERVE.

Elder Carl B. Cook of the Seventy

Many of us have pleaded with God to remove the cause of our suffering, and when the relief we seek has not come, we have been tempted to think He is not listening. I testify that, even in those moments, He hears our prayers, has a reason for allowing our afflictions to continue, and will help us bear them.

Elder Evan A. Schmutz of the Seventy



There is only one way to judge **righteous judgment,** as **Jesus Christ** does, and that is to **be as He is.**

Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Presidency of the Seventy



One is never too young to **SEEK** and **RECEIVE** a **PERSONAL TESTIMONY** of the **BOOK OF MORMON.**

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

The [sacrament] prayers introduce the covenants with the phrase **“that they are willing”** This phrase has so much potential power for us. Are we willing to serve and participate? Are we willing to change? Are we willing to address our weaknesses? Are we willing to reach out and bless others? Are we willing to trust the Savior?

Elder Peter F. Meurs of the Seventy



Repentance ... is His gift to us, purchased at a very dear price.

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

INSTEAD OF *making* **EXCUSES,**
let us **CHOOSE REPENTANCE.**

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

Worshipping God is such an essential element in the life of a disciple of Jesus Christ that if we fail to receive Him in our hearts, we will seek for Him in vain in our councils, churches, and temples.

Bishop Dean M. Davies, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

Never FORGET, QUESTION, OR IGNORE PERSONAL, SACRED SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES.

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

The **Sabbath** is . . . a **perfect time** to remember **the covenant** we made at the waters of **baptism** to **love** and **serve** Heavenly Father’s children. Fulfilling that **promise** on the **Sabbath** will include participating in a class or quorum **with full purpose of heart** to build **faith** and **love** among our **brothers** and **sisters** who are there **with us.**

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





WE CANNOT AFFORD TO HAVE OUR TESTIMONIES of the Father and the Son become confused and complicated by stumbling blocks. . . . Our testimonies of Them need to remain pure and simple.

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



Youth, you are some of our most effective gospel teachers. . . . ***Don't be afraid. Have faith to testify*** of what ***you know to be true.***

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

Young women of the Church need to see themselves as **essential participants in the priesthood-directed work of salvation** and not just as onlookers and supporters. You hold callings and are set apart by those holding priesthood keys to function as leaders with power and authority in this work. As you magnify your callings in class presidencies and prepare spiritually, counsel together, reach out to minister to your class members, and teach one another the gospel, you are taking your place in this work and both you and your peers will be blessed.

Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women General President



To help address special needs, we [as home teachers] might send a scriptural quote or a line from a general conference talk or a Mormon Message drawn from the wealth of material on **LDS.org**.

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



TO OUR AMAZING YOUTH... *across the world, I give a special invitation and challenge to be “witnesses of God.” Those who surround you are open to spiritual inquiry. . . . You do not come to the table with empty hands but with technology and social media at your command. We need you; the Lord needs you to be even more engaged in this great cause.*

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

To me, the **greatest miracles in life** are not the parting of the Red Sea, the moving of mountains, or even the healing of the body. The greatest miracle happens when **we humbly approach our Father in Heaven in prayer, fervently plead to be forgiven, and then are cleansed** of those sins through the atoning sacrifice of our Savior.

Linda S. Reeves, Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

Prayer is essential to developing **FAITH.**

Carol F. McConkie, First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

The gospel truly is about the one. . . . **It is about each one of us**—as imperfect as we may be—**becoming one with the Savior** as He is one with His Father (see John 17:21).

Elder K. Brett Nattress of the Seventy

Don't GIVE UP.

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

We were never expected “**to have a perfect knowledge of things**” during this mortal existence. Instead, we are expected to “**hope for things which are not seen, which are true**” [Alma 32:21].

Elder W. Mark Bassett of the Seventy



We can bring the light of the gospel into our homes, schools, and workplaces if we look for and share positive things about others and let the less-than-perfect fade away.

Jean B. Bingham, First Counselor in the Primary General Presidency

We are ambitious for Christ when we serve faithfully, accept humbly, endure nobly, pray fervently, and partake worthily.

Elder Kazuhiko Yamashita of the Seventy



Hope and healing are not found in the dark abyss of secrecy but in the light and love of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Carole M. Stephens, First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

Our young members' fascination and expertise with social media gives them unique opportunities to reach out to interest others in the gospel. Describing the Savior's appearance to the Nephites, Mormon writes, "He did teach and minister unto the children . . . , and he did loose their tongues . . . that they could utter" (3 Nephi 26:14). **Today I suppose we would say "loose their [thumbs] that they could utter." Go to it, youth!**

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

Repentance is not a backup plan just in case our plan to live perfectly fails. Continual repentance is the only path that can bring us lasting joy and enable us to return to live with our Heavenly Father.

Brian K. Ashton, Second Counselor in the Sunday School General Presidency

*Believing Him is **TRUSTING** that His bounteous **BLESSINGS ARE AVAILABLE** and applicable in our individual lives and families. . . . **BELIEVING HIM**—accepting as true His power and promises—**INVITES PERSPECTIVE, PEACE, and JOY** into **OUR LIVES.***

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

The **JOY WE FEEL** has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and **EVERYTHING TO DO** with the **FOCUS OF OUR LIVES.**

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



CONFERENCE CROSSWORD

Use the clues below to solve this puzzle with teachings from conference. (Hint: All of the phrases can be found on pages 2-11.)

Across

3. This word was used by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland as another way to describe home teaching.

6. Elder Gary E. Stevenson challenged youth to read the Book of Mormon for at least this long every day.

8. This principle, taught President Russell M. Nelson, "is key to our spiritual survival."

10. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf taught about a Book of Mormon prophet who needed help. This man helped him.

11. Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught that "all efforts begin with" this.

13. This essential step that helps us come to know our Savior includes surrendering our will to His, taught Elder David A. Bednar.

15. Elder D. Todd Christofferson said that this term, often used by others to describe God's love for us, is actually not found in scripture and "can convey mistaken impressions about divine love."

Down

1. The grade you always get "when you share the love of the Savior with another," taught Elder Neil L. Andersen.

2. Elder Dale G. Renlund quoted Enos 1:6 to remind us that through repentance, this feeling can be "swept away."

4. This place is where we should begin practicing "our Christian love and service," taught Elder Robert D. Hales.

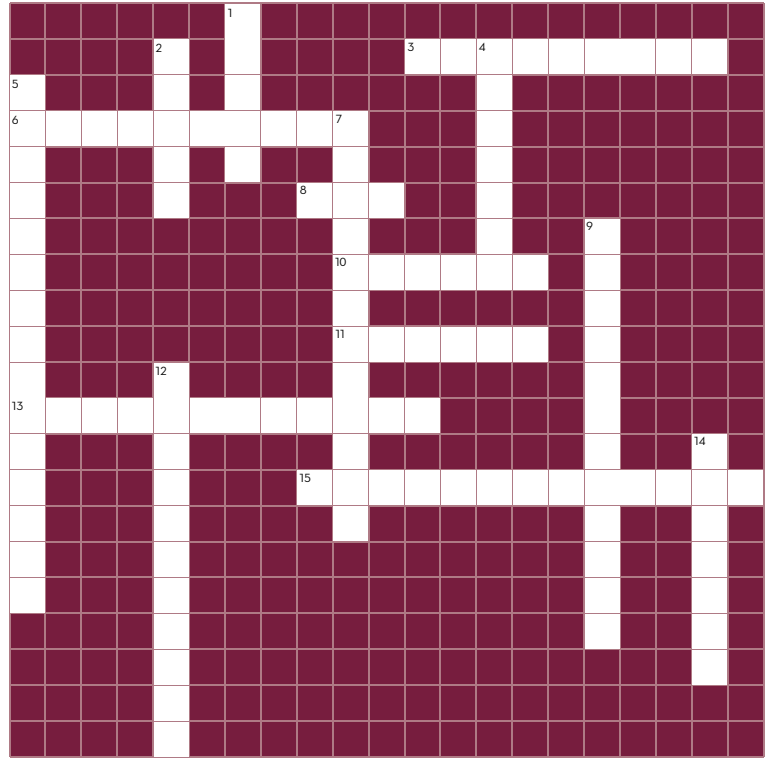
5. Elder Quentin L. Cook used this phrase to describe things that can "prevent us from reaching the goal of eternal life."

7. Elder M. Russell Ballard urged all who might think about leaving the Church to do this.

9. President Thomas S. Monson talked about this gospel principle, which promises health and stamina.

12. If you "faithfully live the gospel . . . and abide by its teachings," you'll receive this blessing and your testimony will grow, taught Elder Ronald A. Rasband.

14. President Henry B. Eyring taught that this day is a day "of gratitude and love."



	live			God's				to
laws		to	We		live			know
		God's		need	to			laws
		and	God's		need		live	them
		them	live	to		laws	need	
need		live		know	We			God's
God's			need					
			to	We		God's	know	and
and	to	know			God's	We	them	

CONFERENCE QUEST

The point of a regular Sudoku is to fill the 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time. This time, use the following nine words of counsel that President Thomas S. Monson gave during conference to complete the puzzle:

"We need to know God's laws and live them."



WE NEED TO
**KNOW
GOD'S LAWS
AND LIVE THEM...**

ONLY BY SO DOING WILL WE
**OBTAIN TRUE,
ETERNAL
HAPPINESS.**

President Thomas S. Monson
October 2016 general conference

**SCRIPTURES IN
GENERAL CONFERENCE**

Not only can you learn from the conference talks, but you can also learn by studying the scriptures the speakers use. The scriptures below were referred to by multiple speakers. The first two in bold were mentioned most often.

- **2 Nephi 31:19-21**
- **Moroni 10:4-5***
- Matthew 28:19
- John 17:21
- James 1:5*
- 1 John 4:19
- 1 Nephi 14:14
- 2 Nephi 2:8
- 2 Nephi 31:17
- Mosiah 2:17*
- Mosiah 3:19*
- Alma 5:26
- Alma 7:11-12*
- 3 Nephi 11:11*
- 3 Nephi 27:27
- Ether 12:27*
- Moroni 4:3
- Moroni 7:48*
- Doctrine and Covenants 19:18*
- Doctrine and Covenants 84:20*

* Seminary doctrinal mastery passages



FOR
LATTER-DAY SAINTS,

THE SABBATH IS
... A DAY ...
OF **GRATITUDE**
AND **LOVE.**

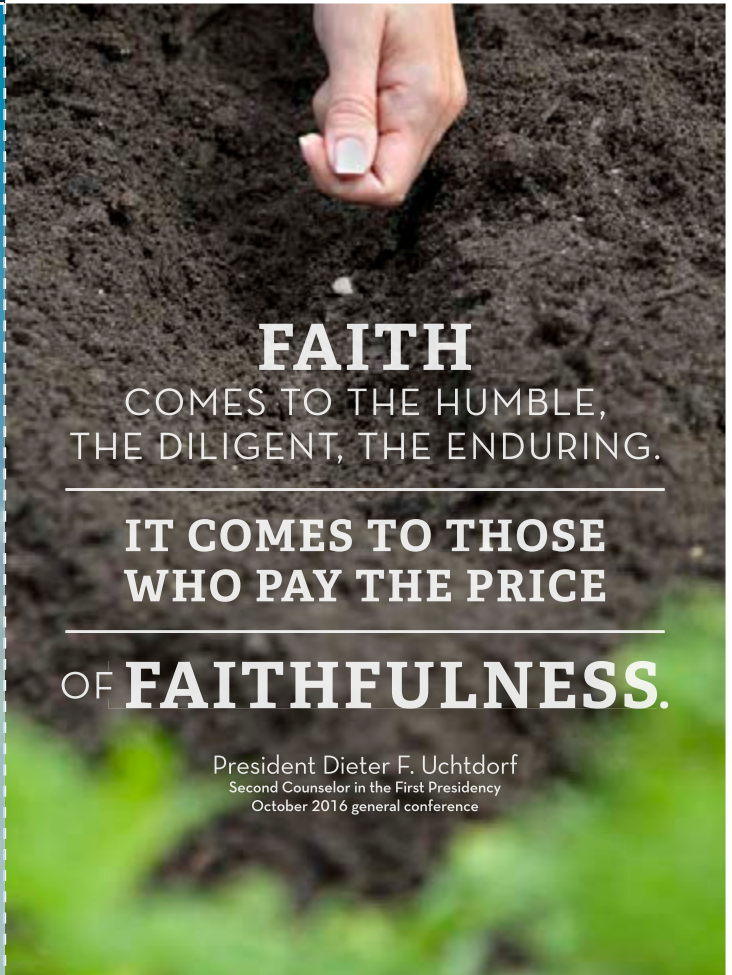
President Henry B. Eyring
First Counselor in the First Presidency
October 2016 general conference

FAITH
COMES TO THE HUMBLE,
THE DILIGENT, THE ENDURING.

**IT COMES TO THOSE
WHO PAY THE PRICE**

OF **FAITHFULNESS.**

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Second Counselor in the First Presidency
October 2016 general conference



Invitations TO ACT

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

President Monson: “May we care for our bodies and our minds by observing the principles set forth in the Word of Wisdom.”

“We need to work and learn, search and pray, repent and improve. We need to know God’s laws and live them. We need to receive His saving ordinances.”

President Eyring: “The Lord is preparing the Aaronic Priesthood holder to become an elder serving with faith, power, and gratitude in that glorious Melchizedek Priesthood.”

“Live and worship on [the] Sabbath day to demonstrate your gratitude and to strengthen yourself and others.”

President Uchtdorf: “In our search for enduring faith, . . . let us remember the Lord’s promise: ‘Knock, and it shall be opened unto you’ [Matthew 7:7]. . . . Seek God with all your heart.”

“Let us in word and in deed share with our fellowmen the amazing and awe-inspiring message of God’s plan of happiness.”

“I would like to ask you to consider two questions: First: ‘What can I learn from Alma?’ Second: ‘How am I like Amulek?’ [See Alma 8–16.]”



“Our Father’s plan for our happiness and our salvation is shared by our missionaries throughout the world. Not all who hear this divine message accept and embrace it. However, men and women everywhere . . . recognize its truths, and they plant their feet on the path that will lead them safely home. Their lives are forever changed.

“Essential to the plan is our Savior, Jesus Christ. Without His atoning sacrifice, all would be lost. It is not enough, however, merely to believe in Him and His mission. We need to work and learn, search and pray, repent and improve. We need to know God’s laws and live them. We need to receive His saving ordinances. Only by so doing will we obtain true, eternal happiness.

“We are blessed to have the truth. We have a mandate to share the truth. Let us live the truth, that we might merit all that the Father has for us. He does nothing save it be for our benefit.”

President Thomas S. Monson,
October 2016 general conference



“For Latter-day Saints, the Sabbath is . . . a day . . . of gratitude and love [see D&C 59:5, 7–8]. . . .

“You might well be wondering what you could do to live and worship on this Sabbath day to demonstrate your gratitude. . . .

“You could begin today with a private and family prayer of thanks for all God has done for you. You could pray to know what the Lord would have you do to serve Him and others. Particularly, you could pray to have the Holy Ghost tell you of someone who is lonely or in need to whom the Lord would have you go.

“I can promise you your prayers will be answered, and as you act on the answers you will receive, you will find joy in the Sabbath, and your heart will overflow with thankfulness.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, October 2016 general conference



“Though we may not understand why certain things happen or why certain prayers go unanswered, we can know that in the end everything will

make sense. . . .

“All will be made right. All will be well.

“We can be certain that answers will come, and we may be confident that we will not only be content with the answers but we will also be overwhelmed by the grace, mercy, generosity, and love of our Heavenly Father for us, His children. . . .

“Until then, we walk by whatever faith we have, seeking always to increase our faith. Sometimes this is not an easy quest. Those who are impatient, uncommitted, or careless may find faith to be elusive. Those who are easily discouraged or distracted may hardly experience it. Faith comes to the humble, the diligent, the enduring.

“It comes to those who pay the price of faithfulness.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, October 2016 general conference

RIVAL BANDS,

One day at a band competition,
I realized I wasn't as alone as I'd thought.

SAME BELIEFS



By Nolan Krawczak

I play baritone sax in my high school's marching band. One day we got on buses to go to our last competition of the season, and everyone was excited and ready to compete. We put everything we had into our final show, and it was one of our best performances. We were soon done and were waiting quietly in line with other bands to receive our awards when one of my friends behind me started to make conversation. Before long we were having a great time—talking, laughing, and joking around—while we waited to take the field again for the awards ceremony. I looked around and saw that other bands started doing the same.

One of my friends told a joke, but the punch line had a cuss word in it. I asked him to cut it out, and when everyone asked why, another one of my friends stepped in and said it was because I was Mormon and didn't like

to hear that type of language. I was relieved to see that my good friend knew about my standards and was willing to stand up for them. But I was still a little embarrassed that I was the one to ruin the fun everyone was having telling jokes, so I turned around to go join another group of friends.

Right as I turned, I heard someone to the right of me yell, "Hey! I'm Mormon too!" I glanced over to see a member of another band smiling at me. We started to talk and were soon explaining to groups of friends in both bands what our standards are and why we have them. As more and more people joined to ask questions and hear our answers, I was starting to feel overwhelmed by the questions being thrown at us—not because they were hard questions but because there were so many!

I felt a tap on my shoulder. Thinking it was another question, I continued answering the current question. I felt the tap again, so I turned and saw yet another young man from a different band smiling at me. "Are you guys talking about Mormonism? Dude! I'm Mormon too!" I couldn't believe it! We all soon

gathered up the Mormons in each of our bands to share our testimonies and experiences with everyone in the crowd. It was so fun to be surrounded by people I knew shared my same standards and beliefs and to teach others about the gospel.

I know if we're ever in a bad situation where we think the Spirit can't be there, then it's important to remove ourselves from that place. In my case, I was able to change my situation without compromising my standards to make it one where the Spirit *could* dwell. I also know if you feel alone, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are always there for you and can help give you the courage you need. That day, I was blessed with friends who knew my standards and stood up for me as well as new friends who shared my standards. I'm truly blessed to be surrounded by so many people who believe as I do, such as my family and my Sunday School teachers, and I know Heavenly Father had a huge part in that. I know that there are always people around me who can and will comfort me in times of need. **NE**

The author lives in Washington, USA.



ILLUSTRATION BY PETUR ANTONSSON



GOAL of a LIFETIME

By Donald Smurthwaite

A few years ago, I coached a boys' soccer team. They were an amazing group of players—fast, agile, with the instinct of anticipating where the ball would or should go on the next kick. The players really clicked as a team. They breezed through the season with a perfect record, most of the games ending in lopsided scores.

One of my favorite players on the team was Matt. Matt was an exception to most of his teammates. He wasn't as skilled or naturally athletic as they were, but he played with a lot of heart. He developed a knack for playing defense. Matt wasn't a fast runner, but he had courage and the uncanny ability to get himself right in front of a player ready to shoot on goal. Matt stopped dozens of shots that season with almost every part of his body—feet, legs, stomach, chest, and, on one memorable shot, his face. Matt earned the nickname "The Wall" because it seemed like no opposing player could get the ball past him.

Matt had one dream for that season: he wanted to score a goal. Since he played defense, at the opposite end of the field from the opponents' net, he had little chance to score.

The last game of the season came and our team raced out to a quick and comfortable lead. As the

Matt "The Wall" achieved his goal, and so can you if you learn the lessons of his memorable moment.

match wore down, I called Matt over to the sideline and told him to play forward for the remainder of the game, a position where he'd have a better chance to score. With a confidence that surprised me, I told him, "Whenever their goalie has the ball, plant yourself in front of the box. Be in the right place at the right time and you'll get your goal today."

A few minutes later, one of our players kicked the ball on goal. The other team's goalkeeper stopped the shot, put the ball on the turf, and kicked the ball low and hard.

And Matt, true to his nature, got right in front of it.

The ball thudded into his chest and ricocheted past the shocked and flailing goalkeeper into the net. Matt's teammates and their parents exploded in cheers.

It wasn't pretty, but Matt got his goal. He couldn't have been more excited if he'd scored in a World Cup match.

I've often thought about Matt's extraordinary goal and the parallels between what happened on the soccer field that day and the way we choose to live. Here are six simple thoughts that have come from Matt's memorable moment.

If you're in the right place at the right time, good things will result.

Matt's goal wasn't sheer luck. He knew where he should be and what to do when the opportunity came. Blessings come to us when we're in the right place at the right time. Think of the "right places" in your life—at home, church, the temple, in service to others, or with friends in safe surroundings. When we put ourselves in the right places, it becomes much easier to receive guidance and blessings from God.

Friends cheer for each other.

Next to the thrill of seeing Matt score that day, the best memory is how his teammates reacted. They were genuinely happy for him. The cheers were never louder that season than when Matt sent the ball into the net. True friends find happiness in others' successes. It's a mark of maturity and selflessness when you're able to sincerely congratulate a friend, family member, acquaintance, or teammate who has done well.

Listen to trusted advice. Then follow it.

Matt readily accepted the instructions he received that day on the sideline. He could have easily ignored my advice or given a halfhearted effort. But he trusted my words and followed up. His willingness to do so resulted in a goal for him and a valuable lesson about listening to good counsel and acting on it.

Everyone has a place. Find yours. Then shine.

It was clear early in the season that Matt didn't possess the skill level of his teammates. But he figured out a way he could contribute, and he took his role seriously. He became an important part of our team. We relied on his defense and determination. He set a good example for the other players. Whether it's in your quorum or Young Women class, in school, around the community, among your friends, on a team, or participating in an extra-curricular activity, you can find a way to contribute. If you're not in a leadership or key position or are naturally quiet, it doesn't matter. You can still find your place and make a contribution in almost any situation. You don't need to be in the limelight to shine.

Perfection is not required, but doing your best is.

Young men and women often feel pressure and competition—from looking a certain way to getting top grades to making a team or landing a role in a school play. There's pressure to be perfect, or close to it. Matt's goal certainly was not pretty, but it didn't matter. What did matter is he achieved it, even if it came in less than a picture-perfect way. Heavenly Father and the Savior expect you to do your best, even if your efforts aren't perfect. If you do your share, They will increase your abilities and you'll be able to achieve your worthy goals.

Patience pays. So does persistence.

It was the last part of the last game of the season when Matt scored his goal. He spent many hours at practice and games, waiting patiently for his chance. He never gave up. So often in life, we want results and gratification now. When we think or act that way, we lose the opportunity to develop two valuable character traits: patience and persistence. No worthy goal—on the athletic field or elsewhere—was ever achieved without a measure of these two characteristics. It takes patience and persistence to be a good student, a true friend, a great missionary, an exceptional family member.

What took place on the soccer field that memorable afternoon? The obvious answer is that Matt got his goal. But it also included learning lessons about life that applied beyond the playing field.

I bumped into Matt a while ago, and it didn't take long for us to start reminiscing about his amazing goal. We both agreed that, while his goal was thrilling and something neither of us would ever forget, it was the lessons we learned about life that warm autumn day that mattered most. **NE**

The author lives in Idaho, USA.



Do **YOUR BEST.**

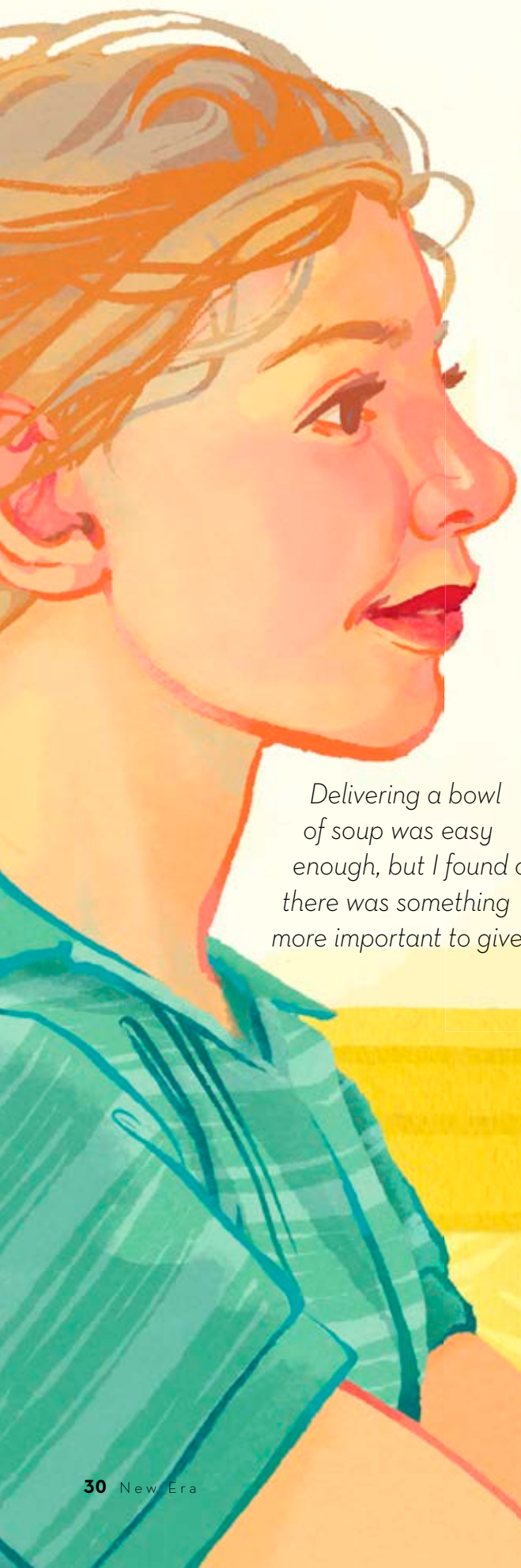
Be in the
Right **PLACE.**

CHEER for **YOUR FRIENDS.**

PATIENCE Pays.

Follow **TRUSTED ADVICE.**

Find **YOUR PLACE. Then SHINE.**



SERVING MORE THAN SOUP

By Brooke Jameson

Delivering a bowl of soup was easy enough, but I found out there was something more important to give.

I still remember that cold, crisp Sunday night in December. Our mom had just made her delicious potato soup with steaming vegetables for me and my brothers to take to a few of our neighbors. When she handed me a warm bowl of soup, she said, “This one goes to Ben’s house.”

I knew of Ben, but I’d never really seen or talked to him before. So I wasn’t very excited about dropping this soup off to him. As I walked over, I noticed the run-down home with leaves everywhere, and I decided I didn’t want to stay and try to get to know this stranger. I left the soup on the porch, rang the doorbell, and hurried away. But just before I crossed the street, I hid behind a bush and watched as a tall, delicate, older man opened his door and picked up the soup. But rather than rushing inside, he stood there for a moment and looked around to see who’d left it. As I watched him, he seemed very humble, with his knitted old sweater, simple black sweatpants, and worn-out shoes. Soon, I walked home, but I couldn’t get the picture of Ben on his porch out of my head.

As I sat down for dinner, my

parents asked my older brother how the neighbor he dropped off the soup to was doing, then she asked my younger brother, and then she asked me. I paused hesitantly before saying, "Well, he's doing fine, I think."

My mom asked, "What did he say to you?"

I stared at the plate in front of me and mumbled, "I didn't really talk to him. I just dropped it off and hurried back home."

At this point my parents seemed less than happy about what I'd done—or perhaps what I had *not* done—so I asked them what they wanted me to do differently. In a loving way, they explained that the soup was not just something to give to the neighbors but an opportunity to get to know and spend time with others, which would've been far more significant than just a simple bowl of soup.

Later that week, I watched Ben's home as I went out to get the mail. I noticed he hadn't shoveled his driveway after it had recently snowed, and I ran home to ask my brothers for help. We got our shovels and hurried across the street to the home. The more I shoveled, the more I realized this man must be all alone here in this large and empty home. We finished shoveling, and Ben came out, smiled, and motioned for us to come inside. As we entered, we were surprised to see the house was beautiful, filled with pictures of his kids, grandkids, and even great-grandkids.

As we sat down, he handed each of us a piece of candy and thanked us one by one, telling us how happy he was to have company. Later he even mentioned the bowl of soup.

"The soup was delicious, but I don't know who dropped it off. I wanted to thank them and return the bowl."

I smiled and said, "It's my mom's soup, but I dropped it off."

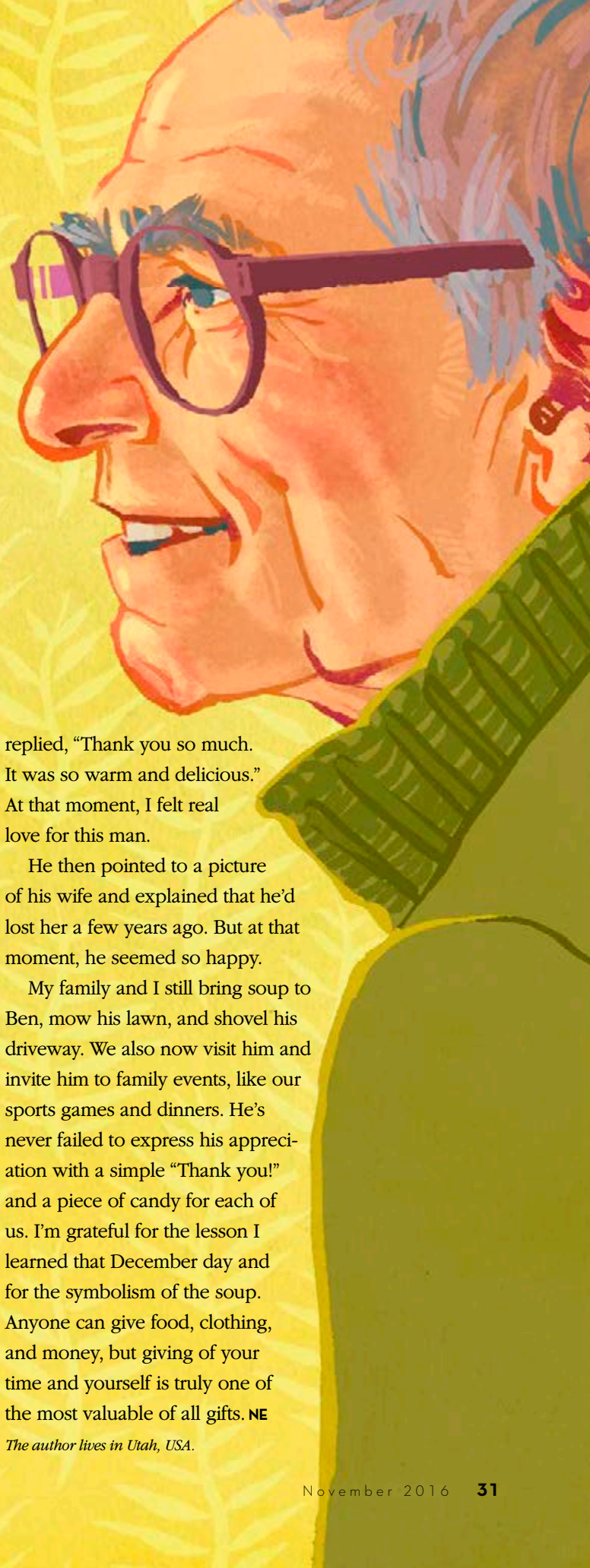
He brightened and

replied, "Thank you so much. It was so warm and delicious." At that moment, I felt real love for this man.

He then pointed to a picture of his wife and explained that he'd lost her a few years ago. But at that moment, he seemed so happy.

My family and I still bring soup to Ben, mow his lawn, and shovel his driveway. We also now visit him and invite him to family events, like our sports games and dinners. He's never failed to express his appreciation with a simple "Thank you!" and a piece of candy for each of us. I'm grateful for the lesson I learned that December day and for the symbolism of the soup. Anyone can give food, clothing, and money, but giving of your time and yourself is truly one of the most valuable of all gifts. **NE**

The author lives in Utah, USA.





THE LOST

Jesus Christ's parables about lost things teach us about God's love, our individual worth, and not judging others unrighteously.

By David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

Have you ever been lost? Perhaps as a child you wandered into an unfamiliar place. Or perhaps someone gave you bad directions for how to get somewhere. Or maybe you decided to go your own way even though someone you could trust told you where to go. No matter how you got lost, once you realized you were lost, the feeling was the same—frustrated, confused, perhaps panicked and desperate, even if you stubbornly persisted in getting more lost. And imagine how your parents would've felt if they couldn't find you.

Jesus Christ told three parables about things that were lost: a sheep, a piece of silver, and a son (see Luke 15).

He told these parables after the Pharisees and scribes criticized Him for associating with sinners who had come to hear Him (see Luke 15:1–2). The Pharisees thought that the kind of people who were gathered around Jesus were unclean—so unclean, in fact, that being around them and eating with them made you unclean too.

In sharing these parables of lost things, the Savior told the Pharisees and scribes—and tells us—something about His mission, the worth of every soul in God's eyes, the importance of repentance, and how He feels when we judge one another unrighteously and think we're better than others.

THE LOST SHEEP (LUKE 15:4-7)

Situation	A man has 100 sheep.
Problem	One sheep is lost.
Solution	The man leaves the 99 and seeks the lost sheep until he finds it.
Result	The man brings back the lost sheep on his shoulders, calls friends and neighbors together to rejoice.
Lesson	“ Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.”



BIBLE FACTS: SHEEP

- Sheep were one of the earliest domesticated animals many thousands of years ago.
- Sheep were important to the economy of the ancient Middle East, providing meat, milk, fat, horns, wool, and skins. Sheep were also important because of their use in religious sacrifices.
- If a sheep is lost and separated from the shepherd and flock, it's defenseless against predators.

How was it lost? Through unintentionally wandering.
What was its value? The same as each of the other sheep.
How was it found? Through the shepherd's tireless seeking.
How does finding it make the shepherd feel? Joyful.

Bible Video
 Watch a video about the parable of the lost sheep at lds.org/go/sheepNE1116.



THE PIECE OF SILVER (LUKE 15:8-10)

Situation	A woman has 10 pieces of silver.
Problem	One piece is lost.
Solution	The woman lights a candle, sweeps the house, and seeks diligently until she finds it.
Result	The woman calls friends and neighbors together to rejoice.
Lesson	“There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

How was it lost? Through carelessness.
What was its value? The same as each of the other pieces of silver.
How was it found? Through the woman's diligent seeking.
How does finding it make the woman feel? Joyful.

BIBLE FACTS: PIECES OF SILVER

- The piece of silver in this parable is a Greek coin called a *drachma*.
- A drachma was worth relatively little, but a poor person could have used it to pay for two days' worth of food.
- A day laborer's daily wages would have been about one drachma, but a woman likely would have earned less than half that amount for a day's work.

Part One

THE PRODIGAL SON (LUKE 15:11-32)

Situation	A man has two sons.
Problem	One son asks for his inheritance, takes it and goes to a far country, wastes his money on “riotous living,” is left with nothing, and is reduced to feeding swine to get by.
Solution	The son “comes to himself,” remembers his father’s house, decides to return to confess his sins and beg to be his father’s servant.
Result	The father sees his son from far off, runs to him, receives him with gladness, clothes him with fine things, and tells his servants to kill the fatted calf and call everyone together to make merry.
Lesson	“Let us eat, and be merry : for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.”



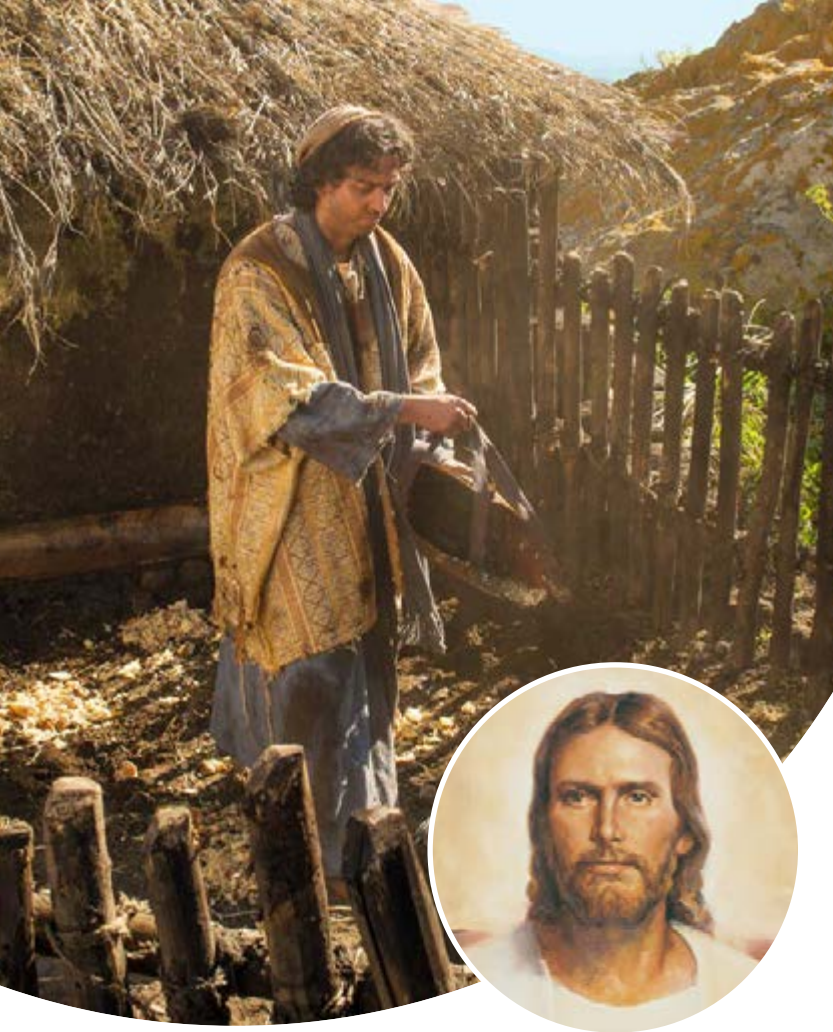
How was the younger son lost? Through his own deliberate choices—he lost himself.
How was he found? He “came to himself”—he found himself by remembering his true self, his identity as his father’s son. Then he chose to return.
How does finding him make the father feel? Compassionate (see Luke 15:20) and merry (see Luke 15:24).

Part Two



Situation	The man’s older son comes in from the field as the celebration is taking place and learns of his brother’s return.
Problem	The older son is angry and refuses to go in because he’s been good but has never been given a celebration.
Solution	The father comes out to ask his son in. He hears his son’s complaint and reminds him, “Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.”
Result	Unknown. The story ends with the older son still outside.
Lesson	“It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad : for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.”

How was the older son lost? Pride, anger, and jealousy (he would not go into his father’s house to celebrate).
How may he be found? By listening to his father, humbling himself, and choosing to rejoice over his brother rather than stubbornly insisting on his own superiority.
How would finding him make the father feel? Joyful.



BIBLE FACTS: PRODIGAL SON

- Under Jewish law, the oldest son would receive a double portion (see Deuteronomy 21:17). So since the father in this parable had two sons, the oldest son stood to receive two-thirds and the younger son one-third of the inheritance.
- Normally, an inheritance was claimed only after the father's death. To demand it earlier would have been very unusual and probably very impudent.
- Swine are considered unclean animals under Jewish dietary laws (see Leviticus 11:7), so the “far country” the prodigal son went to may have been among Gentiles, those who were not the Lord's covenant people.
- When he returns to his father's house, the younger son first addresses him with a title (“Father, . . .”), a sign of respect and dignity. When the angry oldest son speaks to his father outside the house, he does not greet him with a title.

Bible Video

Watch a video about the parable of the prodigal son at lds.org/go/prodigalNE1116.

POWERFUL MESSAGES

The messages from these parables are simple and powerful:

- The Savior's mission is to save every soul who repents and comes unto Him.
- Every soul is of equal worth to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
- The worth of each soul is so great that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ will go to every effort to seek out, find, and save each one—one by one.
- If we repent, the Savior will carry us on His shoulders to return us back to the fold—to safety, peace, and, ultimately, salvation and exaltation.
- Every lost soul who repents and is found causes joy in heaven.
- There's more than one way people become lost, but how they're lost doesn't matter—they can be found, and the Lord and His servants will try to find them.
- Even those who deliberately lose themselves can “come to themselves” and return to Heavenly Father through humble repentance.
- Everyone needs repentance (perhaps especially those who think they don't).
- Everyone can change. The promise of cleansing and healing through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ is real. Jesus Christ invites *all people* to come unto Him and be transformed through His grace.
- It isn't for us to judge someone as beyond saving.
- The Savior doesn't give up on anyone—not you nor anyone you might think of as lost. We shouldn't give up on anyone, either, including ourselves. **NE**



NONE ARE SO LOST

“If for any reason you . . . have lost your way, then you need only apply the Savior's teachings from Luke, chapter 15, to correct your course. . . . Why did Jesus teach these parables? He wanted us to know that none of us will ever be so lost that we cannot find our way again through His Atonement and His teachings.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2012 general conference.

GETTING REEL

ABOUT HER FUTURE

By Joshua J. Perkey

Church Magazines

Ever dream about your future career? You know, what you'll do when you head out on your own, become an adult, and realize it's time to earn your own living? And what do you want to do when you get there? Fly planes? Create video games? Play professional football? How about acting in movies? How about *making* your own movies?

That's exactly what Kamila T. of New York, USA, 16, hopes to do. That's why she's enrolled in a school of art and design. Kamila doesn't just like *watching* movies; she loves *making* them too. But she knows that if she wants to make a living at it, she's going to have to learn a few things and get to work right now. No matter how young you are, you can start thinking about your future. As it says in *For the Strength of Youth*, "Set high goals for yourself, and be willing to work hard to achieve them" ([2011], 40).

CHOOSING HER FUTURE

Kamila's love for making movies started when she was 12. "My friends and I used iMovie on a tablet to make funny movies," she said. "I became interested in it then. I started making films for my school and really enjoyed it."

Pretty soon Kamila decided she wanted to pursue film in high school. But most high schools don't have a strong film program, so she started looking around.

She explained, "When I originally heard about the school of art and design, I didn't want to go. But my dad wanted me to. He has a lot of friends who are in film, and he thought it would be a good decision for my career. He said it was the best school for film. So I visited the school to check it out and really liked it."



*Kamila knows how to
make her dreams
come true.*





Liking the school was one thing, but getting accepted was another thing altogether.

“I had to audition in front of the teacher,” Kamila said. “It was really hectic, because I had to create two storyboards [outlines of her film ideas] to present. I wasn’t prepared on the first day like everyone else, so I had to go on the second day. On the way there we got a little lost, and I was late. My mom told me not to worry and to call my dad. I did, and he said a prayer with me over the phone. It was nice.”

Kamila calmed down and presented her storyboards. The result? She was accepted into the program, and she just started her third year there.

NEXT STEPS

For Kamila, studying film has been amazing. Recently her class created a public service announcement for a competition. Experiences like that have helped her see what she can achieve.

But going to her school also comes with sacrifice. It’s an hour and a half commute each way. Plus, “All the other kids in my area go to a normal high school with football fields and other sports,” she said. “My school is different because everyone’s interested in the arts. But going there has also prepared me for things in life. I know how to take the train and how to get around on my own.”

At the same time, Kamila knows that making a living as a filmographer—especially for one holding LDS standards—can present challenges. So she’s kept her mind open to other interesting options.

“In English class we learned about psychology, and I really liked it,” she said. “My mom is going back to school, getting a minor in psychology and a major in teaching. So she shares with me what’s she’s learning. I still want to follow film, but psychology is my backup. Or finding a way to combine

film and psychology would be great.”

Kamila is developing her gifts and talents for a career and independence—and a future family. “I hope to get married in the temple and be a mom one day,” she said. “I believe that by developing my talents like psychology and film, I would be able to have more open communication with my family.”

As prophets have counseled: “Heavenly Father has given you gifts and talents and knows what you are capable of achieving. Seek His help and guidance as you work to achieve your goals” (*For the Strength of Youth*, 40).

For other youth trying to figure out their goals and future plans for education, jobs, and family, Kamila had this advice: “Follow your dreams. Do what most interests you. It’s not a status thing or an obsession—it’s doing something you’ve always wanted to do, the thing you really want to be in the back of your mind. You can do it!” **NE**



FINDING BALANCE AND GOOD FRIENDS

Kamila works hard at school, but even when preparing for long-term goals, she knows the importance of balance.

“Whenever I’m with my friends or family, we always squeeze a little fun time in,” she said, “usually on the weekends. Going to church is also fun because I get to see my friends, ward members, and other people there who make me happy.”

Because there aren’t a lot of Latter-day Saint youth where Kamila lives—she has only one close LDS friend—she’s chosen a good group of friends from other churches. They make movies together, play on the weekends, and even support each other through difficult times.

“My friends are a good influence on me,” she said.

No matter what career path you take, choosing good friends who support you will be critical to your journey.



KEYS

TO KEEPING YOUR

COOL

IN CONVERSATIONS

You're in school when someone asks you why LDS people are bigoted. Or you're at a party when someone makes fun of you for believing in God. Or perhaps you're at a family reunion when a cousin thinks you're harming women's rights because you don't support abortion.

All of these situations likely put you in a tense spot. (Can you already feel your blood pressure rising just thinking about them?) At times like these, you'd probably want to back away or change the subject rather than face a scary conversation that isn't likely to end well if it becomes more like an argument.

But it doesn't have to be that way. With a few tips, you can help minimize the confrontation and turn the conversation into a chat that helps you understand one another better while still sticking to and sharing your beliefs.

*When your beliefs
come under attack,
you don't have to
make it a battle.*

TO REMAIN CALM WITH THOSE OF DIFFERING BELIEFS, TRY THESE IDEAS:



FIRST SEEK TO UNDERSTAND, NOT JUDGE.

Don't start a conversation with the intent to "win," because the only win-win situation is when everyone understands and truly cares about the others' opinions. Rather than trying to shut the other person down, seek to find common ground. Ask questions with the intent to understand.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: "We should not presume to judge our neighbors or associates on the ultimate effect of their behaviors. That judgment is the Lord's, not ours. Even He refrained from a final mortal judgment of the woman taken in adultery. Tolerance requires a similar refraining in our judgment of others."¹



REMEMBER THAT THE PEOPLE YOU'RE TALKING WITH ARE CHILDREN OF GOD.

It might sound like a cliché, but it's true. And that means Heavenly Father has given others the same agency He's given you to believe how you want. Remember that He loves them no matter what they believe, and we should do the same. Ask Him to help you see others as He sees them, and that might help you remember that the conversation is about understanding others' perspectives while helping them understand yours.



EXPRESS YOUR BELIEFS CALMLY AND SINCERELY, FROM YOUR PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE.

You can start by saying things like, "Thanks for sharing your perspective. Can I share mine, too, so we can both understand each other better?" Explain your beliefs as simply, clearly, and sincerely as you can. Explain why they mean so much to you and those you love. Ask for the same respect you're willing to give.

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, "Remember how the Savior handled tough questions and challenging viewpoints. He remained calm, He showed respect, and He taught truth, but He never forced anyone to live the way He taught."²

4

STAY TRUE TO YOUR BELIEFS.

The point of understanding others is not to give up our own beliefs or pretend there aren't differences. The gospel of Jesus Christ truly is the only way back to Heavenly Father. Elder Oaks provides this important counsel: "Even as we seek to be meek and to avoid contention, we must not compromise or dilute our commitment to the truths we understand. We must not surrender our positions or our values. The gospel of Jesus Christ and the covenants we have made inevitably cast us as combatants in the eternal contest between truth and error. There is no middle ground in that contest."³

5

RELY ON THE HOLY GHOST.

He knows you, and He knows those you're talking to. He can help you know how to express your thoughts and understand the opinions of others in a meaningful, peaceful, and calm way. He can help you personalize your conversations in every situation (see 2 Nephi 32:5).



6

BE KIND, LISTEN, AND LOVE.

Above all else, be kind. Show Christlike love. As Elder Oaks has taught: "Followers of Christ should be examples of civility. We should love all people, be good listeners, and show concern for their sincere beliefs. Though we may disagree, we should not be disagreeable. Our stands and communications on controversial topics should not be contentious. . . .

"When our positions do not prevail, we should accept unfavorable results graciously and practice civility with our adversaries. In any event, we should be persons of goodwill toward all, rejecting persecution of any kind, including persecution based on race, ethnicity, religious belief or nonbelief, and differences in sexual orientation."⁴

7

KNOW WHEN TO END THE CONVERSATION.

Even if you're seeking to simply understand others and are offering them respect, they may not always respond the same way. When others aren't willing to listen with an open mind, the best approach may be to change the subject or simply walk away. But remain friendly, and be ready to have the conversation again when others really want to understand your perspective. **NE**

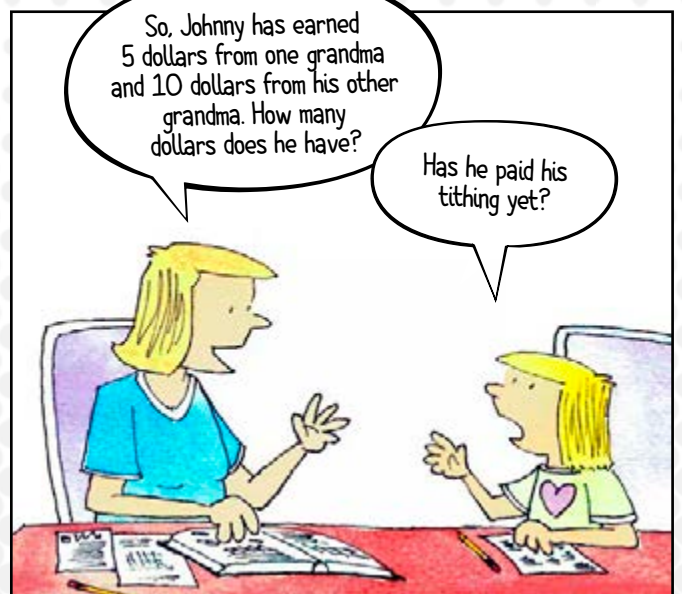
NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, "Truth and Tolerance" (Church Educational System Devotional for Young Adults, Sept. 11, 2011), broadcasts.lds.org.
2. Ronald A. Rasband, "Faith, Fairness, and Religious Freedom," *Ensign*, Sept. 2016, 31.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, Oct. 2014 general conference.
4. Dallin H. Oaks, Oct. 2014 general conference.

**Watch a Video**

See an example of how one student handled a situation like this at lds.org/go/conversationsNE1116.





“I just started high school. There’s so much swearing and bad stuff. How do I deal with it?”

Sometimes it feels like swearing, immorality, and other social problems are surrounding us more and more. We know that this is a sign of the last days (see 2 Timothy 3:1–7), but what can we do to protect ourselves and combat it?

Remember that in order to have the Spirit of the Lord with us, we need to keep our thoughts and actions clean. One way is to choose friends who share the same standards. Another way is to find other things to focus on, such as a favorite hymn, a scripture, or a favorite quote by a trusted leader. As we keep the commandments and build our testimonies, it becomes easier to resist temptations that are all around us.

There are times when it’s difficult to avoid bad language. That’s when we need to do as the Apostle Paul teaches: “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

We’re examples of the believers when we keep our language clean and let those around us know what our standards are. Matthew T., 18, from Nevada, USA, said, “You can make a big difference just by living your standards and being yourself. People will notice your good behavior because it’s different, and they may ask you about it or change their behavior because of you.” **NE**



Ignore the Language

I go to a small school where inappropriate language is used often. It’s hard to walk through the hallway and listen to it. I had a hard time with it at first, but when I was at a youth fireside, someone mentioned that having a playlist of Church music in your head would help you ignore the language. I tried it, and it works for me. You can also kindly ask them to avoid speaking like that around you. As you do this, you’ll need courage. Remember Joshua 1:9: “Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”

Emily A., 17, Missouri, USA



Know What’s Right

It’s hard sometimes to listen to people say bad things. I’ve learned that the best way to avoid bad language at school is to be yourself and share the gospel. Knowing what’s right is helpful. God knows that your example will impact those who need it. You can make a difference with your example!

Bryanna M., 13, Oregon, USA

Concentrate on the Savior

I hear a lot of swearing on the school bus. To counter it, I like to read the

scriptures. In doing so, I don't have to listen to the swearing and I can concentrate on the Savior.

Jaron G., 16, Washington, USA



Lead by Example

Encourage others to stop swearing. Don't be afraid to leave your table at lunch if someone refuses to stop. If you can't avoid it, try to ignore it. Fill your mind with uplifting things like hymns. Review the standards in the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet often. Find good friends who have the same standards as you, and that will help.

Sam N., 14, Wyoming, USA

Start with a Different Perspective

Sometimes it isn't what you do at school that makes a difference but what you do *not* do. When I entered junior high, I wanted to be a great example to others. Heavenly Father showed me that the best way to start was to not participate in swearing or other bad activities. This is a great way to start becoming the kind of example you want to be, because it shows people your standards.

Anna G., 15, Michigan, USA

Ask Others to Pray for You

I just started attending a junior high that's mixed with high schoolers. Every day I hear swearing and mean comments.

My family prays together every morning before school. We ask if anyone needs any special prayers. Sometimes I ask whoever is praying to pray to help me in junior high.

I know I can make a small difference, so when someone is mean or starts to swear I just change the subject. I know that if I have faith the Savior can help me avoid bad stuff at school.

Brendon W., 15, California, USA



Be Positive!

I have found that two things help to handle the swearing and inappropriate content of today's world. First, find something else to focus on instead, whether it's thinking of a blessing that day, remembering words to a favorite hymn, or something else that's positive. Second, pray to and show love for your Heavenly Father.



SPEAK UP

"Sometimes we can remove ourselves from language that is profane or vulgar. If this is not possible, we can at least register an objection so that others cannot conclude that our silence means approval."

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Reverent and Clean," Apr. 1986 general conference.

He loves you and can help you through anything. Trust in Him and stay positive!

Anna G., 16, Utah, USA

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

UPCOMING QUESTION

"People make fun of me for standing up for what's right, even at Church activities. What can I do?"

Send your answer and photo by December 15, 2016.

Go to newera.lds.org, and click "Submit Your Work." Sign in with your LDS Account, and then select "New Era" under "Choose Magazine." Type your info, click "Add File" to select your file and photos, and then click "Submit" to upload and send us your file.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



TALKING ABOUT OUR CHURCHES

While talking in history class about different religious denominations, my friend asked me about my CTR ring. Without hesitating, I explained that *CTR* meant “choose the right” and that my parents gave it to me for my birthday. He asked which church I belong to, and I told him I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or a Mormon. Until then I hadn’t realized that people don’t actually know much about the Church, but he seemed sincerely interested to learn more and asked me if I was an altar boy. I had no idea what that was, so he explained,

and then I told him we had something similar called deacons.

We proceeded to ask each other questions, including, “Can your bishops marry?” and “Who is your archbishop?” He also asked, “You use the Bible, right?” To that, I explained our beliefs in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, which complement each other. The next day, I offered him a copy of the Book of Mormon. Inside the cover, I told him where he could get a CTR ring, because he was interested in getting one. My friend carried that Book of Mormon to school for about a week and said he couldn’t put it down. Though he never came

to church with me, I’ve learned that a great way to share the gospel with others is to find common ground and to be interested in their beliefs as well. Throughout this experience, I learned a lot about what my friend believes, while he learned what I believe, and we’ve come to respect each other’s beliefs. I know one of the best ways to share the gospel is just to open our mouths and talk to our friends.

Parker L., California, USA

“ARE MORMONS CHRISTIANS?”

Members of my seminary class often share missionary experiences. But one time, two months had gone by since anyone shared, so I thought it was time to make a move. I prayed to Heavenly Father, saying that if He would let me have a missionary experience that day at school, I'd do everything in my power to teach others as much about the gospel as I possibly could. The first question came from my locker partner and close friend, Tabitha.

“Are Mormons Christians?” she asked.

“Of course I'm a Christian!” I cheerfully responded, “I believe in Jesus. Did you know that the actual name of my church is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?” Then we talked a little more.

Throughout the day it seemed like people flooded me with questions.

The next day, as I related my stories to my seminary class, I knew that I'd have missionary moments as long as I desired them.

Katherine C., Illinois, USA

STANDARDS ON STAGE

Last year I joined my school's musical as the lead female role. I was thrilled to get the part, but some of my scenes involved kissing. I'd decided to follow the *For the Strength of Youth* standards and not date until I was 16. For me, it didn't feel right to kiss at my age either, so I didn't feel comfortable with the scenes. I asked my director about it, and she said we'd just cut the kiss off before it happened.

I was relieved but felt bad because the lead male thought I just didn't want to kiss him. I tried to explain my decision, but he thought I was making excuses. I didn't know what to do to make him believe me, but then my friends assured him that I was telling the truth. Since they aren't members of the Church, I was surprised at how much they'd noticed and supported my standards.

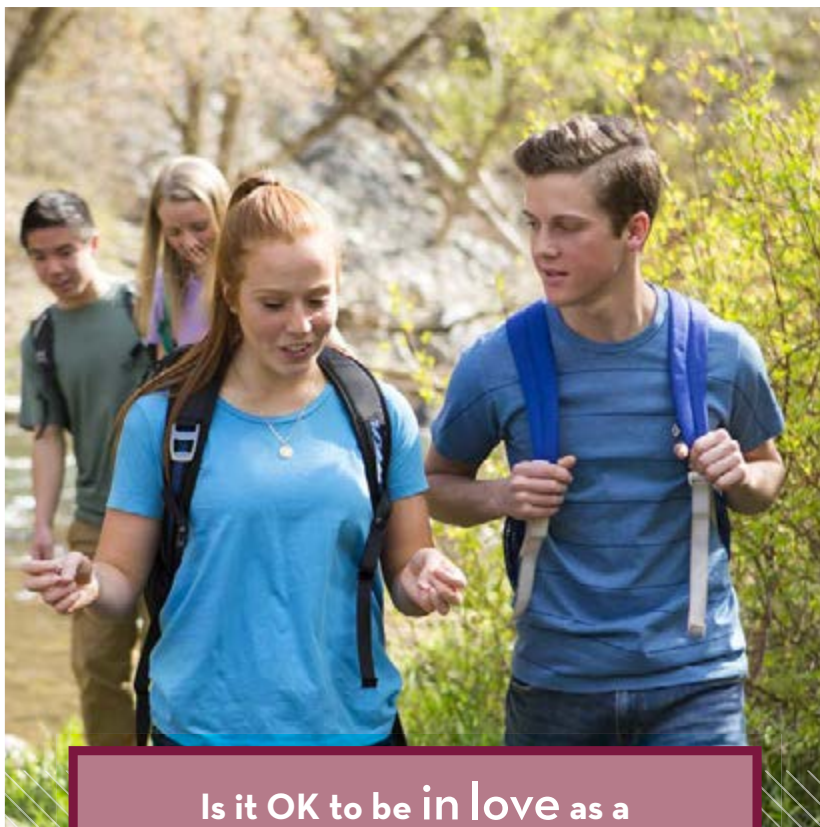
As we continued practicing for our show, I saw others around me standing up for my beliefs. When I wanted to find a modest dance costume, many girls helped me find one that worked; when I had to be dragged around on stage, the actor holding my feet made sure my skirt always covered my knees; and when we had to learn extra dances, we sacrificed lunch hours practicing then instead of on Sundays.

Some people still questioned my actions, but I hadn't realized until then what an influence I'd been. By simply living the gospel, I was being an example, and others had noticed and were willing to stand by me to help me continue keeping my standards.

I know that Heavenly Father is always looking out for us and will give us ways to share the gospel in our lives every day—even by simply setting an example.

Samantha W., Alberta, Canada





Is it OK to be in love as a teenager?

It's certainly *possible* and *natural* for teenagers to be in love—their feelings, though perhaps less mature, are no less real than the feelings of people who are older. But as Latter-day Saint youth, you need to consider romantic love in the context of God's plan and the covenants you have made with Him.

Though you *are* doing things now to prepare for marriage, it's still a ways off, so wondering whether you're in love with someone is a bit premature. Both you and the other person have more learning and growing to do as well as some important decisions to make before focusing on being in love. Finding someone to be in love with is best left for the courtship phase of life, which nowadays generally comes after secondary school, a mission (for young men), and the beginning of higher education or career training. For now, in the dating stage of life, follow the counsel of prophets: have fun and don't let things get serious (see *For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 4–5). **NE**

How can we explain polygamy when someone asks about it?

We believe that the marriage of one man and one woman is God's standing law of marriage. But at various times throughout history, God has commanded certain people to practice plural marriage. In the Bible, for instance, we read about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others who were told to take multiple wives. Though we don't know all of the reasons God might command people to practice plural marriage, one reason mentioned in the Book of Mormon is to "raise up seed unto [the Lord]" (Jacob 2:30)—or to increase the number of children born in the covenant.

It's important to understand that plural marriage in the Church in the 19th century was revealed through the Lord's prophets (see D&C 132), that it was regulated (people entered into it only by invitation or approval of Church leaders), and that women could choose freely whether to be in a plural marriage or not. Also, it's worth mentioning that Church members' acceptance of this practice was a great trial of their faith. It was never easy. It went against cultural norms, laws, and, often, their own personal desires.

Through revelation, the Church ended plural marriage around the turn of the 20th century (see Official Declaration 1). Nobody is authorized to practice it today. **NE**



For more information, see "Plural Marriage in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics/lds.org)



JOY

IS POWERFUL, AND
FOCUSING ON JOY
**BRINGS GOD'S
POWER INTO
OUR LIVES.**

President Russell M. Nelson
President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
October 2016 general conference

WHAT'S ONLINE



OUR ETERNAL *Potential*

Sometimes little things hold us back from being our best selves and we don't even realize it. Check out lds.org/go/hatchetNE1116 for a humorous story from a General Authority's experience trying—and failing—to chop wood. When he realized what was holding him back, he was able to improve and become better for it.



CHECK OUT
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SERVICE *Even When Nervous*

Using your talents in front of others can be scary. This young man had been playing piano for only a few months when he was called to be ward pianist. He was surprised and nervous, but he accepted. Check out how he was blessed by embracing the call.

SUNDAYS *with the Spirit*

Need some new ideas of things to do on the Sabbath day? Check out this list of 80 creative ideas to help you make the Sabbath a delight—and then come up with some additional ideas of your own!



CHECK OUT
"80 IDEAS FOR MORE
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