



## TALKING ABOUT OUR CHURCHES

**W**hile 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**

## 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**



## “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**