



HOCUS
Bogus

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DITCH THE DELUSIONS FROM HALF-BAKED ILLUSIONS.

“Abracadabra, TOADS IN A POND, Troubles now vanish by magical wand!”

Poof! Your previously disaster-zone-like bedroom is now instantly clean and tidy. Nice! Clearly, you scored a real treasure at the yard sale of the retired stage magician down the street. His old wand is going to make your life so much better.

Time to try it again!

Poof! This time, all the grades on your midterm report card transform into a solid line of A's in sparkling golden ink.

Oh, yeah. You could get used to this.

There's only one catch. All these magical alterations are changed in appearance only. Because, you know, your neighbor didn't *actually* saw his assistant in half night after night. It's smoke and mirrors. Illusion.

Your closet door bulges suspiciously for a moment before flinging open and spilling out everything that had moments earlier been on the floor. Drat. And those golden-inked A's? They have no bearing whatsoever on your real grades.

Still want to keep waving that wand?

BEAT THE Bogus

Satan is a master of deception. He tries hard to conceal the true nature of things, offering up his versions of reality as truth.

The good news is, with the Holy Ghost, we have all the help we need to pull back the cloak of mystery. And doing so allows something truly magical to happen.

President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency has taught, “The companionship of the Holy Ghost makes what is good more attractive and temptation less compelling.”¹

Think about it! There's serious power in this doctrine, but it's easy to miss. The Holy Ghost can make the good and righteous things in your life become *more attractive* as well as make temptation *less compelling*. It's pretty much the opposite of Satan's illusions. Imagine replacing a carnival mirror with a glass window, allowing you to see clearly for the first time.

Once this concept fully clicks, you'll never need to reach for a magic wand again.

Here are five of Satan's lies, and tips on how to chase away those shadowy bogus ideas with a 25-million candlepower spotlight.

1 THE BOGUS OF
Kickin' Back

First, let's return to your tsunami-wrecked bedroom.

It's clear that serious effort is needed. You also admit (even if grudgingly) that you'll feel better once it's clean and you can find your stuff again. All of that is eye-rollingly obvious.

But is President Eyring teaching us that you can actually enjoy cleaning your room? Even when your favorite TV show just released a new season that you now can't binge-watch because you're cleaning instead?!

Yes. And that's true even if you've always loathed this particular chore. Remember, with the help of the Holy Ghost, good things become more appealing.

Working hard is a righteous principle (see Moses 5:1). Satan would rather we be idle instead. Most of us understand that. But what the devil tries to keep hidden is that righteous principles, like learning to work hard, can become easier and *more enjoyable* as we allow the Spirit to transform us. We learn to want—not merely tolerate or endure—what's good.

THE BOGUS OF **Being "Like"- minded**

We learn in the scriptures to **"love thy neighbour as thyself"** (Leviticus 19:18) and that when we serve others we **"are only in the service of [our] God"** (Mosiah 2:17). Being kind and building true friendships is a righteous principle.

What does Satan want us to focus on instead? In a word, popularity. The world and the devil shout, "You must be liked! You must be liked!" over and over. Popularity looks inward, never outward. And there's not much worth anything at the end of that road.

Yet by the power of the Holy Ghost, you can begin to stop caring how many people admire you. Instead, your life becomes infinitely better as you build valuable friendships and help others.

It's not only *your* life that improves, either. As you show kindness and create true friendships, you'll change lives for the better—possibly for eternity. You can be an answer to prayers day after day. Your spontaneous smile and friendly greeting in the hallway at school might be exactly the lift somebody needs after praying to know that someone cares.

3 | THE BOGUS OF **CONSTANT THRILLS**

Far from being boring, this life is truly amazing! We are meant to have joy (see 2 Nephi 2:25).

And yet, the adversary has found some sort of cosmic volume knob that he delights in turning up, up, up. Satan insists that your entire life should be high energy and loud and that it should positively electrify you with fast-paced entertainment.

Back to our magician friend for a moment. Imagine a crowd's befuddled reaction should he attempt the following: "And now, ladies and gentlemen, I shall plant this watermelon seed into the ground! In three months, it shall transform into a 15-pound fruit."

When you think about it, though, isn't that feat of nature downright amazing? Some of the most miraculous things in this life require time and quiet patience—not the flash-bang-POP! of instantaneous thrills. Especially not when following the gentle promptings of the Holy Ghost.

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: "Don't expect fireworks because you responded to the Holy Ghost. Remember, you are about the work of the still, small voice."²

THE BOGUS OF

BEING OVER-BUSY

For some, keeping a spotless bedroom is no challenge whatsoever. And that row of sparkling A's on the report card? "Ha! Nothing but A-pluses for me!" Maybe you're good at getting stuff done. But maybe you also lean on this strength too heavily.

Don't misunderstand. Hard, diligent work really is a righteous principle. But sometimes Satan can twist even our virtues out of shape. We can tackle too much at once and overwhelm our lives unnecessarily.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency has taught: "It is said that any virtue when taken to an extreme can become a vice. Overscheduling our days would certainly qualify for this. There comes a point where milestones can become millstones and ambitions, albatrosses around our necks."³

With the help of the Holy Ghost, we can learn to see the value in living a balanced life. This includes leaving a little breathing room for you to recharge.



5 THE BOGUS OF DESPAIR

The devil heaps out discouragement by the dump-truck-load. And he always asserts that whatever you feel wrong in your life is wrong permanently.

It's an absurd notion once you can see past the bogus. Pretend a rainy day ruined your plans for a ball game. Would you chuck your ball in the garbage and weep bitterly, knowing there would never again be a sunny day? Of course not.

Satan tries to push this bizarre way of thinking. Maybe you're having a hard time fitting in at school. If you are, don't buy into the bogus idea that this is your lot forever. You'll find friends over time. It's the same with other discouragements.

President Uchtdorf has taught, "Even though we may feel lost in the midst of our current circumstances, God promises the hope of His light—He promises to illuminate the way before us and show us the way out of darkness."⁴

Things really will improve. God is in charge, and the final victory is set.

BEYOND THE Bogus

Satan's deceptions aim to keep you tripped up and spinning in circles. But you're smarter than that. Learning to beat the bogus and see things as they really are brings hope and happiness. Even better, it sets you on the path to eternal life.

No magic wand necessary. **NE**

NOTES

1. Henry B. Eyring, "The Holy Ghost as Your Companion," Oct. 2015 general conference.
2. Ronald A. Rasband, Apr. 2017 general conference.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Of Things That Matter Most," Oct. 2010 general conference.
4. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Hope of God's Light," Apr. 2013 general conference.