

10 SECRETS OF *True Popularity*

WHERE COULD I FIND THE
SECRET TO POPULARITY IN THE
NEW TESTAMENT?

By Kersten Campbell

“**W**e’re number one!” shouted the cheerleader at a high school football game. I admired her straight teeth and perfect smile. I watched as she laughed and talked to the girls and flirted with the boys.

“It must be glorious to be her,” I thought, reflecting on my own loneliness. My father’s job required us to move every three to five years, so it was hard for my sister and me to form lasting friendships.

The cheerleader had a reputation for dressing immodestly and going to drinking parties. Watching her, I began to ache for the popularity that I thought she represented. I wanted friends so badly that for one fleeting moment I wondered if I should lower my standards to become like her.

While my sister and I drove home, I was wallowing in self-pity, and I prayed in my heart to Heavenly Father. I asked Him to tell me the secret that would take away my

loneliness and insecurity. Although I wasn’t a Church member at this time, I had a strong faith in God.

Immediately came into my mind the idea, “Stop thinking about yourself.”

“That’s the secret?” I thought disappointedly. “How can that help me to become popular?”

Later that week, I read about charity in 1 Corinthians 13. It helped me understand that Heavenly Father was trying to teach me to have charity toward others rather than focus on how they were treating me. I took the characteristics of charity listed there and put them to work. When I did this, I found that my whole school experience changed. Here are some of the valuable things I learned.

CHARITY SUFFERETH LONG

I tried to become more patient with people at school. One boy teased me during gym class, but I tried to meet his ill will with kindness and smiles. Eventually he stopped teasing me. By the end of the year, we became good friends.

CHARITY ENVIETH NOT

My sister and I were jealous of the talents of a basketball player in our school, and we used to make cutting remarks about her. I decided to start rejoicing in her victories instead. I also began to develop my own talents. When I did these things, I lost my bitter burden, and I was much happier.

CHARITY IS KIND

I had always admired a girl in my class who was friendly to everyone, no matter how popular or unpopular they were. I began to follow her example and look for opportunities to show kindness to others.

CHARITY REJOICETH IN THE TRUTH

One thing my Latter-day Saint friends taught me was that gossiping and spreading lies is evil. I tried to avoid gossip and changed the subject whenever someone started to say unkind things.

CHARITY IS NOT PUFFED UP

I sometimes thought I was better than some people because I lived higher moral standards. When I thought about the Savior, who was meek and loved all people, I decided to change my attitude. As I tried to be humble and kind, people began to make the effort to be my friend.

CHARITY BELIEVETH ALL THINGS, HOPETH ALL THINGS

I began to see the good in people and be optimistic. When I made this attitude change, people began to feel uplifted around me. This made them want to associate with me more often.

CHARITY DOETH NOT BEHAVE ITSELF UNSEEMLY

I loved the Lord and had high moral standards. I decided that compromising these standards would make me unhappy.

CHARITY ENDURETH ALL THINGS

When my sister became seriously ill and lost her ability to walk normally, many of her friends abandoned her because she walked funny. I saw her heartbreak, and I realized the importance of sticking with people through tough times.

CHARITY IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED

Once, a teacher made a comment that hurt my feelings. Rather than reacting, I asked her if she was having a hard day. She admitted that she was and then apologized. Those comments had come from her personal problems and had nothing to do with me.

CHARITY NEVER FAILETH

When I practiced charity in my relationships, I developed many true and lasting friendships. My loneliness disappeared, and I realized popularity was nothing compared to the real treasure of friendship and respect that comes from living gospel principles.

I am thankful for a Father in Heaven who took the time to teach a sophomore in high school the secret of gaining friendships that would last. **NE**
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Charity Is a Spiritual Gift

Mormon teaches us how to develop charity, the pure love of Christ. You can study Moroni 7:44–48 to learn how to “be filled with this love” (Moroni 7:48).