



I WANTED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Going into my senior year of high school, I had to make the decision whether or not I would play football. The previous year I'd decided not to play because of the rough environment on the football team. But I felt that in my senior year I could have some sort of influence on my teammates. So after a lot of prayer and a lot of thought, I decided to play.

As the season began, the same doubts I'd had about playing the year before returned. The conversations among teammates were often inappropriate, and I felt alone a lot of the

time. I kept praying that I could be an influence for good, but I couldn't see how I was making any difference to my teammates. This continued until the last game of the season. Our team played hard, but we lost and finished the season with a losing record.

I walked into the locker room, packed up my stuff, and headed for the bus, feeling like a failure. As I walked, one of my teammates ran up beside me. We started talking about the game and the season and then he said something I didn't expect. He told me that he appreciated my

kindness to him and the rest of the team throughout the season. He said that no matter what, he knew I would be kind to him and the others on the team.

As we rode the bus back to our school, I looked with a new perspective on the past few months. I realized that the feelings of failure I'd felt had been worth the feelings of success that I was having now. I knew that even if it was for only one person on my team, I had made a difference.

Hunter D., Tennessee, USA

STUDYING ON A DIFFERENT DAY

“**T**here has to be a better way!” I thought to myself at 11:30 on Sunday night. Here I was again, trying to cram a whole weekend’s worth of homework into Sunday evening.

Each weekend I would find excuses to postpone my homework until the very last minute—Sunday night. I realized that stressing over homework was not the best way to keep the Sabbath day holy, but what was I supposed to do? Homework was a part of life.

Then that night, I felt inspired that I would be blessed if I stopped doing homework on Sunday. I wasn’t sure how I would make it work; I felt like I was already busy with school and that giving up one day of studying would leave me even less prepared than I already felt. Then I thought of the scripture, “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise” (D&C 82:10), and since I’d felt prompted that changing my homework pattern could help me with my concerns, I decided to not do homework on Sunday.

The following weekend I finished my homework by Saturday afternoon. I spent the evening watching a movie

A BLESSING FROM MY DAD?

A few days before school was supposed to start, my mom came to me and said, “Why don’t you ask Dad to give you a father’s blessing to help you with school?”

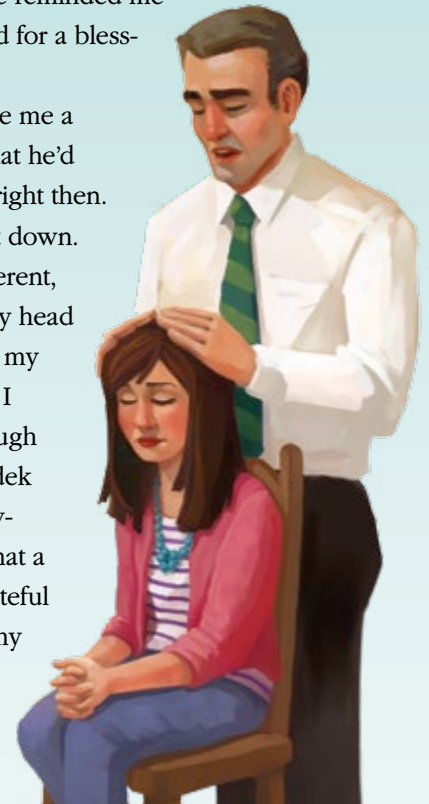
I didn’t want to ask my father for a blessing. My father is a very good man and always keeps the commandments, but he wasn’t someone I thought of as really spiritual. Besides, we hadn’t been getting along very well recently. He always seemed to be keeping me from doing what I wanted to do. I wasn’t sure that any blessing he gave me would do me any good, but my mom continued to encourage me to ask him.

The night before school started, she reminded me again. Hesitantly, I went to ask my dad for a blessing, almost positive that he’d say no.

He didn’t. Instead, he agreed to give me a blessing and immediately stopped what he’d been working on so it could happen right then. My mom brought out a chair and I sat down.

I didn’t expect to feel anything different, but as soon as he laid his hands on my head and began to speak, tears rushed into my eyes and I felt the Spirit very strongly. I realized at that moment that even though my dad isn’t perfect, he is a Melchizedek Priesthood holder. He respects his covenants, and he loves me. I realized what a great blessing that is, and I was so grateful for the opportunity to be blessed by my father through the priesthood.

Mary-Celeste L., Utah, USA



with friends, and I found it even more fun than before, since I didn’t have homework hanging over my head.

Sunday was simply wonderful. I felt no stress from uncompleted assignments. I was able to enjoy my Church meetings and spend the day pondering the scriptures and spending time with family and friends. Best of all, I was able to get to bed at a

reasonable time and was well rested in the morning.

Deciding to not do homework on Sunday allowed me to break my habit of procrastination, and my grades were better than ever. I know Heavenly Father blessed me for making a better effort to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Afton N., Oregon, USA