

SEPTEMBER 2016

THE **New Era**



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for
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page 9 • **We went against the cultural**

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be “ward” activities. —page 19 • **The**

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—page 23 • Even when I commit a user error,

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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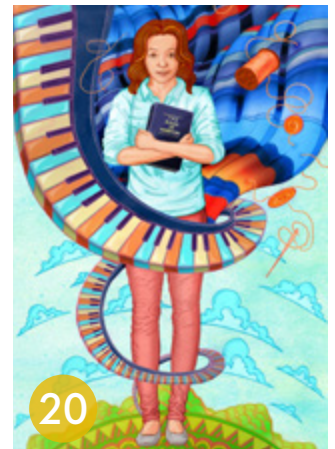
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“WALK THE PATH THAT happy people walk. If you do, your chance to find joy in unexpected moments, to find peace in unexpected places, to find the help of angels when you didn’t even know they knew you existed, improves exponentially.” –Elder Jeffrey R. Holland



By Elder
Jeffrey R. Holland

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

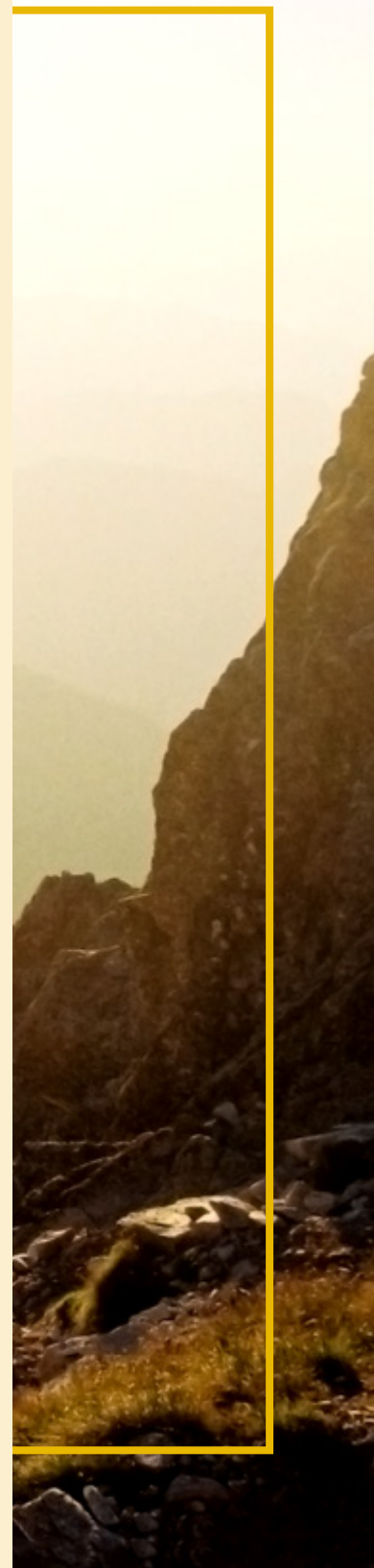
THE QUEST *for Happiness*

So much of your happiness is in your hands, not in events or circumstances or fortune or misfortune.

wish to comment on Nephi's phrase about living "after the manner of happiness" (2 Nephi 5:27). It suggests a *quest* for happiness, not necessarily happiness itself.

I do not think God in his glory or the angels of heaven or the prophets on earth intend to make us happy all the time, every day in every way, given the testing and trial this earthly realm is intended to provide. As President James E. Faust (1920–2007) once phrased it: "Happiness is not given to us in a package that we can just open up and consume. Nobody is ever happy 24 hours a day, seven days a week."¹ But my reassurance to you today is that in God's plan we can do very much to find the happiness we do desire. We can take certain steps, we can form certain habits, we can do certain things that God and history tell us lead to happiness.

In short, your best chance for being happy is to do the things that happy people do. Live the way happy people live. Walk the path that happy people walk. If you do, your chance to find joy in unexpected moments, to find peace in unexpected places, to find the help of angels when you didn't even know they knew you existed, improves exponentially. Here are at least a few ideas about how one might live "after the manner of happiness."





CHRIST IS “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6)—no one comes to true happiness except by Him.



1. LIVE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

Above all else, ultimate happiness, true peace, and anything even remotely close to scriptural joy are found first, foremost, and forever in living the gospel of Jesus Christ. Lots of other philosophies and systems of belief have been tried. Indeed it seems safe to say that virtually *every* other philosophy and system has been tried down through the centuries of history. But when the Apostle Thomas asked the Lord the question young people often ask today, “How can we know the way?” (and at your age in life that really translates, “How can we know the way to be happy?”), Jesus gave the answer that rings from eternity to all eternity, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . . And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do. . . . If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it” (John 14:5–6, 13–14).

What a promise! Live my way, live my truth, live my life—live in this manner that I am showing you and teaching you—and whatsoever you ask will be given, whatsoever you seek you will find, including happiness. Parts of the blessing may come soon, parts may come later, and parts may not come until heaven, but they will come—all of them. What encouragement that is after a blue Monday or a sad Tuesday or a tearful Wednesday! And it is a promise the realization of which *cannot come any other way* than by devotion to eternal truth!

2. CHOOSE TO BE HAPPY.

Second, learn as quickly as you can that so much of your happiness is in your hands, not in events or circumstances or fortune or misfortune. That is part of what the battle for agency was over in the premortal councils of heaven. We have choice, we have the power to make our own decisions, we have agency, and we can choose if not happiness per se, then we can choose to live after the manner of it. Happiness comes first by what comes into your head a long time before it comes into your hand.



KINDNESS AND PLEASANTNESS AND FAITH-BASED OPTIMISM are characteristics of happy people.



For example, “Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly” (D&C 121:45). That is not only good counsel against the modern plague of pornography, but it is counsel for all kinds of gospel thoughts, good thoughts, constructive thoughts, hopeful thoughts. Those faith-filled thoughts will alter how you see life’s problems and how you find resolution to them. “The Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind” (D&C 64:34), the revelations say. Too often we have thought it was all up to the heart; it is not. God expects a willing mind in the quest for happiness and peace as well. Put your head into this. All of this takes effort. It is a battle but a battle for happiness that is worth waging. Don’t be passive. Think and speak and act positively. That is what happy people do.

3. DON’T BE NEGATIVE, MEAN, OR ANGRY.

You can never, worlds without end, build your happiness on someone else’s unhappiness. That is what bullying is. That is what catty remarks are. That is what arrogance and superficiality and exclusiveness are. Perhaps we think if we are negative enough, or cynical enough, or just plain mean enough, then expectations won’t be too high; we can keep everyone down to a flaw-filled level and therefore our flaws won’t be so glaring. Happy people aren’t negative or cynical or mean, so don’t plan on that being part of the “manner” of happiness. If my life has taught me anything, it is that kindness and pleasantness and faith-based optimism are characteristics of happy people. A related step along the path toward happiness is to avoid animosity, contention, and anger in your life.

4. WORK HARD AND STUDY.

One last suggestion when there are so many others we should consider: Nephi said that in an effort to find happiness in their new land after their 30 years of trouble, “I, Nephi, did cause my people to be industrious, and to labor with their hands” (2 Nephi 5:17). By contrast, those from whom they fled “became an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety” (2 Nephi 5:24).

If you want to be happy in school, or on a mission, or in a marriage—work at it. Learn to work. Serve diligently. Don’t be idle and mischievous. A homespun definition of Christlike character might be the integrity to do the right thing at the right time in the right way. So don’t be idle. Don’t be wasteful. Do the right thing at the right time. “Seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118). “Be industrious, and . . . labor,” including laboring for and serving others, one of the truly great keys to true happiness.

GOD WANTS YOU TO BE HAPPY.

The Book of Mormon teaches many powerful, provocative truths. One of them is that the nature of God is synonymous with the nature of happiness (see Alma 41:11). It also teaches, therefore, that “wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10). So I ask you to reject transgression in order to live consistent with the nature of God, which is the nature of true happiness. I encourage you and applaud you in pursuing the path that leads to happiness. You can’t find it any other way.

My testimony to you is that God, your Eternal Father in Heaven, is always encouraging and applauding your pursuit even more lovingly than I. He wants you to be happy, to have true joy. The Atonement of His Only Begotten Son provides the right path and, if necessary, a new start on it, a second chance, a change in our nature if necessary. Christ



ALL OF THIS TAKES EFFORT. It is a battle but a battle for happiness that is worth waging.



is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6)—no one comes to true happiness except by Him. **NE**

From a Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional given on Sept. 23, 2014.

NOTE

1. James E. Faust, “Our Search for Happiness,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2000, 2.

MORMONAD

LOOK TO THE LIGHT

“Even though we may feel lost in the midst of our current circumstances, God promises the hope of His light.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency,
“The Hope of God’s Light,” April 2013 general conference.







GO SEE REBECCA

By Mindy Raye Friedman

I was a few months into my mission in the Illinois Chicago South Mission and still serving in my first area. The sisters' area next to us had recently been closed, so we had responsibility for all of the Spanish-speaking investigators from that area. Among them was a woman named Rebecca.

The first time we met Rebecca, I was impressed by her faith. She lived in the basement of a house, so we had to knock on her window for her to come open the door for us. The previous missionaries had begun to teach her after she requested a Church video. If she had not called for a video, the missionaries may never have found her.

I could tell from what she told us that Rebecca had a hard life. She had once been a very happy person, but now she was separated from her son and other family. Although she was in humble circumstances, I felt the Lord's love for her.

As we taught her, I could tell she was feeling the Spirit. Our visits would lift her mood considerably. Unfortunately, she lived far away, and it was hard to visit her as often as we would have liked.

One Friday when we had zone conference, we planned to go out to that part of our area afterwards since we were already halfway there. We asked Rebecca if she would be home, but she said she would be working. We decided we would still visit other investigators we had in the area.

We ended up with some extra time there, and we weren't sure what to do. Then my

companion said, "I think we should go see if Rebecca is home." This suggestion didn't make sense to me since Rebecca told us she would not be home. It was then I heard a voice telling me, "Go back and visit her." I felt as if my body was literally being pulled in the direction of Rebecca's house. It was the strongest impression I have ever felt.

I told my companion to turn the car around, and we went to Rebecca's house. We knocked on the windows twice, and no one answered. I was so disappointed because I knew there had to be a reason the Lord sent us. I suggested we knock one more time. We waited, and then just as we were about to leave, Rebecca answered the door.

She was home because she had just been fired from her job, and she really needed someone to talk to. She had been praying that we would come. She told us we were her angels. We were able to talk to her and help her feel better by teaching her more about the gospel.

I'm so glad Heavenly Father cares for each of His children and listened to Rebecca's prayer, and I'm glad we could follow the prompting to go visit her, so we could be that answer. Our Heavenly Father knows all the things that are going on in each of our lives, and when we rely on Him and ask in faith, He will help us with the things we need. **NE**

The author lives in Utah, USA.

No one came to the door when we knocked, but we knew we had been sent there to help one of God's children.

SCRIPTURE POWER and YOU

By Michael R. Morris
Church Magazines

Our ward deacons, teachers, and priests had gathered for a special combined priesthood meeting with the stake president. He wanted to share some important things he'd discovered about learning from and teaching the gospel. He said one of the keys to preparing to teach knowing and using the scriptures. He encouraged the young men to read and study the standard works, especially the Book of Mormon.

"Can you testify of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon if you haven't even read it?" he asked. "In the battle for the souls of God's children, we must be prepared."

Preparing for that battle doesn't begin when you're 18 or 19. You're battling to save souls already—your own and that of your friends and family. Every time you use the scriptures to prepare a talk, teach a lesson, answer a gospel question, strengthen your testimony, or share that testimony with others, you're turning to one of the greatest learning and teaching tools God has given us.

OPEN the SCRIPTURES

The Savior Jesus Christ used scriptures when He taught. His example shows us how and why the scriptures are so powerful when learners and teachers use them effectively.

Following His Crucifixion and Resurrection, the Savior appeared to two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus. Not recognizing Him, they told the stranger they were sad because Jesus had been crucified, and they expressed surprise over reports "which said that he was alive" (Luke 24:23).

The Savior scolded them for being slow to believe the words of the prophets. Then He "expounded unto them *in all the scriptures* the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27; emphasis added).

It wasn't until later, when He blessed and broke bread with them, that their eyes were opened. As soon as they recognized Him, He vanished from their sight.

Then they declared to each other the power of the word of God: "Did not our heart *burn within us*, while he talked with us by the way, and while he *opened to us the scriptures?*" (see Luke 24:13–32; emphasis added).

The scriptures invite the Spirit and power of God. So, the Lord says, "First seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men" (D&C 11:21).

Every time you use the scriptures, you're turning to one of the most powerful learning and teaching tools God has given us.

USE the SCRIPTURES

One of the blessings of *Come, Follow Me* is that you have many opportunities to participate in lessons and to teach others. That gives you more chances to use the scriptures, like Jesus.

When you study, prepare, and teach a lesson, participate in a class discussion, or answer a question, do you just share your opinion or do you quote scripture the way the Savior did? He could've testified of Himself, but He often let the scriptures do that for Him. By using the scriptures to testify of His mission, He showed us that they are powerful learning and teaching tools. Here are three other reasons to use the scriptures:

1. They teach us of Jesus Christ and help us come unto Him. Jesus taught, "The scriptures . . . testify of me" (John 5:39).
2. They give strength, authority, support, and power to our teaching, provided we use them and cite them correctly. "Their use provides a foundation of truth that can be awakened by the Holy Ghost," said Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Learning, pondering, searching, and memorizing scriptures is like filling a filing cabinet with friends, values, and truths that can be called upon anytime, anywhere in the world."¹
3. They will guide and protect you in your personal life and help you know what and how to teach. "The words of Christ," as found in the scriptures, "will tell you all things what ye should do" (2 Nephi 32:3).

MEMORIZE the SCRIPTURES

When Jesus "opened . . . the scriptures" to His two sad disciples, He likely quoted them from memory. Elder Scott says memorizing a scripture is like making a faithful new friend: "Great power can come from memorizing scriptures. To memorize a scripture is to forge a new friendship. It is like discovering a new individual who can help in time of need, give inspiration and comfort, and be a source of motivation for needed change."

A memorized scripture can also "become the key to open the channel to communion with our Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ."² Whether in a priesthood meeting or Young Women class, Sunday School or seminary, institute or the mission field, we have been promised a "wealth of blessings"³ as we access the power found in the holy scriptures. And whether you quote a verse from memory or simply read from the scriptures, you will find power in teaching with the word of God. **NE**

NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, Oct. 2011 general conference.
2. Richard G. Scott, Oct. 2011 general conference.
3. Richard G. Scott, Oct. 2011 general conference.

SECTION 12

Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet . . . at Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 1829. Joseph Knight delivered declarations of Joseph Smith concerning his possession of the Book of Mormon plates and the work of translation then in progress and several times had . . . to Joseph Smith and his scri

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL MULLAN



Why the Book of Mormon?

I had always depended on others for a testimony of the Book of Mormon, but I decided it was time to seek my own.

By Elvin Jerome Laceda

Why do we need the Book of Mormon when we already have the Holy Bible? I've thought about this question a lot. As a teenager I was curious about the Book of Mormon, but I didn't have the motivation to read it. For one thing, nobody encouraged me to read it at home because I was the only member of the Church in my family, except for my grandfather who had passed away.

One Sunday at a testimony meeting, many members testified about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, which I had recently begun to doubt. They challenged those who hadn't read it to gain their own testimony that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the kingdom of God on the earth.

I pondered if my testimony of the Church and of Joseph

Smith was strong enough to withstand the temptations and enticements of Satan. I realized that it wasn't. My testimony was weak because I had depended only on the testimonies of Church leaders and members. I promised myself that starting that day, I would seek my own testimony.

I decided to read the Book of Mormon. In the introduction I read, "We invite all men everywhere to read the Book of Mormon, to ponder in their hearts the message it contains, and then to ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ if the book is true. Those who pursue this course and ask in faith will gain a testimony of its truth and divinity by the power of the Holy Ghost. (See Moroni 10:3–5.)" I knew I was personally being invited to read the Book of Mormon. As I continued reading, I felt the warmth of the Holy Ghost testifying of the book's divinity and truthfulness.



I found that the Book of Mormon does testify of Christ, and I was ashamed for doubting its truthfulness. At school I had learned how judges of the law carefully study a case's evidence before passing judgment. I had done the opposite with the Book of Mormon: I had judged it before I read it.

I finished reading with a humble heart and courage to defend what I believe. Also, I'm happy because I have a companion as I read the Book of Mormon again. My grandmother was baptized shortly before I finished reading the Book of Mormon the first time.

I have a firm testimony that Jesus Christ is my Savior, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true and living Church of God here on the earth. **NE**

The author lives in the Philippines.

ILLUSTRATION BY JIM MADSEN



THE BOOK OF MORMON WILL INCREASE YOUR FAITH

“Both the Bible and the Book of Mormon give us the beautiful assurance that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. . . . Some or all of the Book of Mormon is now in 110 languages across the world. It provides a spiritual and tangible witness of the truthfulness of the Restoration. When was the last time that you read the Book of Mormon from cover to cover? Read it again. It will increase your faith.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 2015 general conference.

65

TRUTHS

IN THE

NEW TESTAMENT

Here's just a sampling of the important teachings taught by the Savior and His disciples in the New Testament.

Remembering truths TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE WILL HELP US RESIST TEMPTATION.
Matthew 4:3-11

Come unto Christ; He will give you rest.
Matthew 11:28-30

OUR THOUGHTS AND DESIRES can make us unclean.
Matthew 15:10-20

The members of the Godhead are **three distinct and separate beings.**
Matthew 3:16-17

Jesus Christ calls Apostles and confers **His authority** upon them.
Matthew 10:1-4



A testimony of **JESUS CHRIST COMES THROUGH REVELATION.**
Matthew 16:15-19

Focusing on the SAVIOR will help us **overcome our doubts and fears.**
Matthew 14:27-31



Everyone is your neighbor. To love your neighbor, be like **the Good Samaritan.**
Luke 10:25-37

Jesus Christ has a resurrected body of **flesh and bones.**
Luke 24:13-43

THE DEAD WILL BE JUDGED OUT OF THOSE THINGS written in the books, ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS.



Revelation 20:12

You show your love of **JESUS CHRIST** BY KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS.



John 14:15

The **JEHOVAH of the OLD TESTAMENT** is **Jesus Christ.**

John 8:56-58

WE MUST BE spiritually reborn

>>> TO RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE. <<<

John 3:3-5

SUBJECT YOURSELF UNTO THE Father of spirits AND LIVE.
Hebrews 12:9

During the dispensation of the **FULNESS OF TIMES**, all things from former dispensations **WILL BE RESTORED.**
Ephesians 1:10

JESUS CHRIST HAS POWER OVER DEATH.

John 10:17-18

If you do God's will, you will **RECEIVE A TESTIMONY** of His doctrine.
John 7:17

JESUS CHRIST calls upon us to teach **ALL NATIONS**, baptizing them.
Matthew 28:19-20

The sacrament HELPS US REMEMBER **the Atonement of Jesus Christ** AND RECEIVE A **REMISSION OF OUR SINS.**
Matthew 26:26-28



TO RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE, **be willing TO GIVE UP OR SACRIFICE WHATEVER THE LORD REQUIRES.**
Mark 10:17-22

ETERNAL LIFE IS KNOWING HEAVENLY FATHER AND JESUS CHRIST.
John 17:3

THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS are to love the Lord thy God and to love thy neighbor as thyself.
Matthew 22:35-40

Watching for signs and **obeying** the commandments will **prepare** us for the Second Coming.
Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:38-54 (see Matthew 24:32-51)



Marriage AS ORDAINED BY GOD IS A **sacred relationship** BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN.
Matthew 19:3-9

JOHN THE BAPTIST prepared the way for **JESUS CHRIST.**
Luke 7:27-28

Truths from trusted sources and the scriptures **WILL HELP US OVERCOME the perils of the last days.**

2 Timothy 3:15-17

RESPOND WITH COMPASSION WHEN OTHERS SIN AND JOY WHEN THEY REPENT.

Luke 15:3-32

BY FAITH you can ENDURE TRIALS, ACCOMPLISH MIRACLES, and MOVE TOWARD PERFECTION.
Hebrews 11:4-9, 17-31

The Lord has called *apostles, prophets,* and other *Church leaders* so we can *have true doctrine and not be deceived.*
Ephesians 4:11-14

UNDER THE FATHER'S DIRECTION, JESUS CHRIST is the CREATOR of all things, HEAD OF THE CHURCH, and FIRST TO BE RESURRECTED.
Colossians 1:12-19

We are spirit children of our HEAVENLY FATHER and can become joint-heirs with JESUS CHRIST.
Romans 8:16-18

Repent, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
Acts 2:36-38

YOU CAN OVERCOME SATAN'S INFLUENCES THROUGH THE >> SAVIOR'S << ATONEMENT.
Revelation 12:11



BECAUSE OF THE GRACE OF JESUS CHRIST, ALL MANKIND CAN BE SAVED THROUGH FAITH IN HIM.
Ephesians 2:7-10; see also James 2:17-18

Baptism is completed when individuals receive the *Holy Ghost*.
>>> Acts 19:2-6 <<<

Serving others will bring us **HAPPINESS.**
John 13:12-17

Keep the Sabbath day holy BY GLORIFYING GOD AND DOING GOOD WORKS.
Mark 2:23-3:6

YOU CAN know AND understand THE THINGS OF GOD ONLY THROUGH His Spirit.
1 Corinthians 2:10-11, 14



IN THE LORD'S PLAN, man and woman cannot obtain eternal life without each other.
1 Corinthians 11:11

Prepare for the Second Coming by being **faithful and watchful.**
1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

JESUS CHRIST OVERCAME DEATH THROUGH HIS RESURRECTION.

John 20:17-20

God confers PRIESTHOOD KEYS upon His chosen servants to direct His work.
Matthew 17:3-9



Jesus Christ is in the express image of the Father.
Hebrews 1:3



BECAUSE OF THE Resurrection of Jesus Christ, everyone BORN ON EARTH will be resurrected.
1 Corinthians 15:20-22



A falling away (apostasy) was prophesied to come before the Second Coming.
2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

Prophets foretold the latter-day Restoration of the gospel.
Acts 3:21-24

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT INCLUDE LOVE, JOY, PEACE, AND MANY OTHERS.
Galatians 5:22-23

Godly sorrow leads us to repent of our sins and receive salvation.
2 Corinthians 7:10

Understanding you are God's offspring can help you recognize your infinite worth and potential.
Acts 17:28



JESUS CHRIST KNOWS EACH OF US AND LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US.
John 10:11-15

FAITHFUL ACCEPTANCE OF THE Savior's Atonement MAKES salvation POSSIBLE.
Romans 3:24-26

>>> To become converted, <<< **we must be fully committed** >>> to living the gospel. <<<
Acts 26:26-29

God may change or add to instruction He gives according to His wisdom.
Acts 10:28-35, 44-48



OUR BODIES ARE TEMPLES OF GOD WHERE THE SPIRIT CAN DWELL.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Looking to JESUS CHRIST WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH TO ENDURE opposition.
Hebrews 12:2-4



You can do ALL THINGS through Christ.
Philippians 4:13

Baptism is a symbol of the death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.
Romans 6:3-6

The Holy Ghost will guide us to all truth.
John 16:13



Priesthood holders must be **called of God by revelation** through His authorized servants.
Hebrews 5:4



THERE ARE THREE DEGREES OF GLORY IN THE NEXT LIFE.
1 Corinthians 15:40-42



Jesus Christ suffered and sorrowed in the Garden of Gethsemane.
Mark 14:32-34

God gives wisdom to those who ask of Him in faith.
James 1:5-6

The gospel is preached to those who have died.
1 Peter 4:6

We can BECOME PERFECT like our Father in Heaven.
Matthew 5:48

Let your LIGHT SHINE before men.
Matthew 5:14-16





By Elder Yoon
Hwan Choi
Of the Seventy

STRENGTHENED

by the Word of God

When I learned how to apply the words of the prophets, I changed my life from what I wanted to be to what the Lord wanted me to be.

While I was growing up in Korea, my father allowed his children to attend the church of our choice, but often during dinner we disagreed about our different religious beliefs. Because of this contention, my father wanted to unify our family's religious beliefs. Since my younger brother was going to meetings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with my uncle, my dad began attending meetings with them to learn more about the Church. I also attended and was impressed by fun Mutual activities and how the seminary program strengthened young people spiritually.

When I was 16, my parents and I were baptized, and the rest of our 23

family members and relatives joined the Church within seven months.

When we joined the Church, we committed to being fully active and to continuing to learn about gospel doctrines. We did this by studying the scriptures faithfully every day, along with reading many other Church books and manuals. During the next few years, I learned two important principles about staying strong in the Church:

1. Study the scriptures at seminary, church, and home.
2. Listen to and follow the counsel of the prophet.

STRENGTH IN THE SCRIPTURES

In addition to studying the scriptures at home, my brother and I also faithfully attended seminary and Mutual. In those days, we had Sunday School in the morning, with sacrament meeting in the late afternoon. Because of the distance to our meetinghouse, we stayed at the Church building, attended seminary class, and enjoyed visiting and being with other members of the Church until after sacrament meeting. A lot of young people were joining the Church in Korea at that time, and as we learned together and had fun at activities, we became close.

I was called to serve in my Aaronic Priesthood quorum and worked closely with the young women who served in their classes. We learned how to care for and pray for those we

led as well as how to plan activities together and use our time wisely.

During the week, I studied the scriptures for seminary before I did my schoolwork. When I was too tired to do my homework or was having challenges at school, I opened my seminary manual, studied, and prayed. I found that when I did that, I could refresh my mind and focus better on my homework. I still apply this in my life. Today, whenever I have a hard time, I still read my scriptures or general conference talks to refresh my mind.

Many high school students in Korea spend most of their time going to school and studying late. We learned that when we took time out for seminary and Mutual activities, we felt refreshed and were blessed to do better with our schoolwork. The lessons I learned there also helped me in other situations while I was still in school.

One day at school, one of my teachers taught a lesson about Utah, USA, in our geography class and said some things about the Church that were wrong. I thought, “Should I correct him in front of everyone, or should I go up to him privately after class?” In that moment, the words of my seminary teacher came to my mind. She had said, “Do not argue with or offend anyone when someone says wrong things about the Church.”

I felt that I should remain quiet and respectful during class. When I



visited with him afterward, I told him that I was a member of the Church, and I corrected him on the incorrect things that he had taught in the class. He said, “I didn’t know you were a Mormon. Thank you for telling me.” Afterward he corrected his lecture to give accurate information, and he still treated me with respect. I was grateful for the counsel I’d been taught through my seminary teacher.

MILITARY OR MISSION?

When I was young, I wanted to be a general in the army. I planned to apply to the military academy in order to further my goal. That decision meant that I wasn’t expecting to serve a mission because I knew that the program in the academy for military officers would not excuse anyone for any religious activity.

Then I had the opportunity to go to a regional conference in Seoul, Korea—an experience that changed the direction of my life. During the conference, I heard President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) counsel youth to:

- a) attend seminary,
- b) serve an honorable mission,
- c) marry in the temple, and
- d) work toward exaltation.

I knew his counsel was right, and I remembered the verse that says, “My word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my

servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

When I heard the prophet speak about the importance of serving a mission as a priority in life, I knew I should put my trust in the Lord, serve a mission, and forego my dream to become a general, remembering to “seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

Even though I no longer planned to attend the military academy, serving three years as a soldier was still required for all young men. I had already served one year in the Korea Busan Mission when I received orders from the Korean government to report for military duty. I served three years in the army, and after I was discharged, I wanted to finish my mission. I was then called to the Korea Seoul Mission and served another year there.

“ARE YOU CRAZY?”

When I returned from my mission, I was again blessed by following the counsel from prophets. For example, when I finished my mission, I decided to marry, even though I hadn’t finished my schooling. In Korea, the tradition is to be financially stable and complete your schooling before marrying and starting a family. But I knew I needed to follow the counsel of the prophet and work toward marriage right away. My wife and I had met when we were in the

MY ADVICE TO YOU

As you follow the counsel of the prophets and apostles, you will be blessed.

1. Study the scriptures, go to seminary, participate in the *Come, Follow Me* lessons, and use *Preach My Gospel* to be a great missionary both now and, for those who serve, as a full-time missionary.
2. Listen to and follow the counsel of the prophet.
3. Do all things in wisdom and order.

youth program and were good friends before my mission, so we knew each other well. We were married shortly after I came home, even though her friends said, “Are you crazy? You don’t have any money.”

We went against the cultural tradition because we knew we needed to follow the Lord’s counsel. Our lives have been blessed by following the counsel of the prophet, and we have had experiences we might not otherwise have had.

The Lord’s counsel to do all things in wisdom and order (see Mosiah 4:27) is sometimes different from what society teaches, but when we are obedient to the Lord’s timetable, we will find our lives changed for the better. I am grateful for the living prophet, who leads us in the Lord’s way today. I know that “when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:21). **NE**

SOMETHING I'D NEVER FELT BEFORE

I remember the feeling I had when I first heard about eternal families.

By Audrey Hansen

I grew up in a quiet town in Idaho, USA. My family is Catholic, but we always felt very welcomed by the large Latter-day Saint community. We were often invited to what I now know to be “ward” activities, and I would get invited to attend Primary. I don’t remember going to Primary that often, but when I became Young Women age, I participated in lessons and was asked to play on the volleyball and softball teams.

One very special activity I went to was Young Women in Excellence night. Leigh Anne, my best friend since second grade, had invited me. I wasn’t familiar with what happened at these activities, and she’d told me just to come in a dress and to listen with my heart. She walked me through the displays of handmade crafts, desserts, inspirational thoughts, and more crafts.

Then a movie was shown of a boy with his mother, who spoke to him about eternal families. As she spoke to him, I recognized a warmth and swelling in my heart that I’d never felt before, and it made me want to cry. I wasn’t sure what it was.

I looked at Leigh Anne, and she was looking at me. She knew what I was feeling. She didn’t say a word. She just looked at me with tears in her eyes, nodding that she understood and wanted me to keep listening.

I remember the feeling I had as the Holy Ghost testified of the truthfulness of eternal families. I learned to recognize the witness of the Holy Ghost because my friend was someone I could trust and because she followed the prompting to allow me to learn. I’m so grateful for this first step in my conversion process.

Never underestimate what your small work may inspire. “Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great” (D&C 64:33). **NE**

The author lives in Utah, USA.



SEWING & A SECOND CLASSES & CHANCE

*I missed a chance to share the gospel with my piano teacher.
Could I follow through on this next prompting?*

By Belen Chaparro

When I was 18, my family moved from southern Argentina to northern Argentina, where my father served as a mission president. The first few months were a difficult adjustment for my family and me. We hadn't made friends yet, so we started looking for activities to participate in. I signed up for piano classes.

My piano teacher, Mabel, was the best teacher I'd ever had. I greatly enjoyed the classes, and I began to advance rapidly in my ability to play. However, Mabel was ill with cancer and was having a hard time. She spent a lot of time traveling to visit healers, doctors, and priests in different places. She had to be hospitalized several times, but she would recuperate and come back to teach with the same good spirits and dedication.

Day after day, class after class, I wanted to share with her the hope of God's plan, the hope that Jesus Christ gives with His power, but I didn't know how.

When classes started up after summer vacation, Mabel was ill again. After some time of not hearing from her, I called and left a message asking how she was doing. The next day her daughter told me that Mabel had passed away. I fell into a profound sorrow. I knew that I should have shared the gospel with her but had put off that moment for so long that I lost the opportunity.

I began taking sewing classes, and I had another wonderful teacher. She believes in God but belongs to a different religion. In one of the classes, the gospel came up, and when she asked me what religion I belonged to, I replied that I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She seemed confused at the name, and I clarified, "People also know us as Mormons." She immediately got excited and said, "I love the Mormons!" with a smile on her face.

She continued, "I can tell you're a Mormon," and she began to list the

reasons why. I was happy that she noticed I strived to live the gospel. She asked me a little about baptism in the Church. As I explained it, she said right away, "I can't get baptized into your church because I was raised in a different religion." In hearing her tell me about her beliefs, I learned a lot about what I could share with her. I felt the quiet but firm feeling to give her a Book of Mormon, and I knew it was the Spirit speaking to me.

I obtained a Book of Mormon, grabbed a sheet of paper, and wrote her a short but sincere dedication with my phone number on the other side, in case she had questions. I put the paper in the book, wrapped it up, and put a bow on it. I gave it to her the next class. She was thrilled to receive it and thanked me.

All week I wondered how she had reacted to opening the gift—if she liked it or not. The next class I arrived a little late and was surprised with her reaction as I entered

the room. She hugged me and said emphatically, “I loved it, loved it, loved it! The book you gave me is lovely, beginning at the introduction when it talks about the plates. It is so true! It has lovely scriptures. I started reading, and I’m halfway through. I can’t stop reading it!”

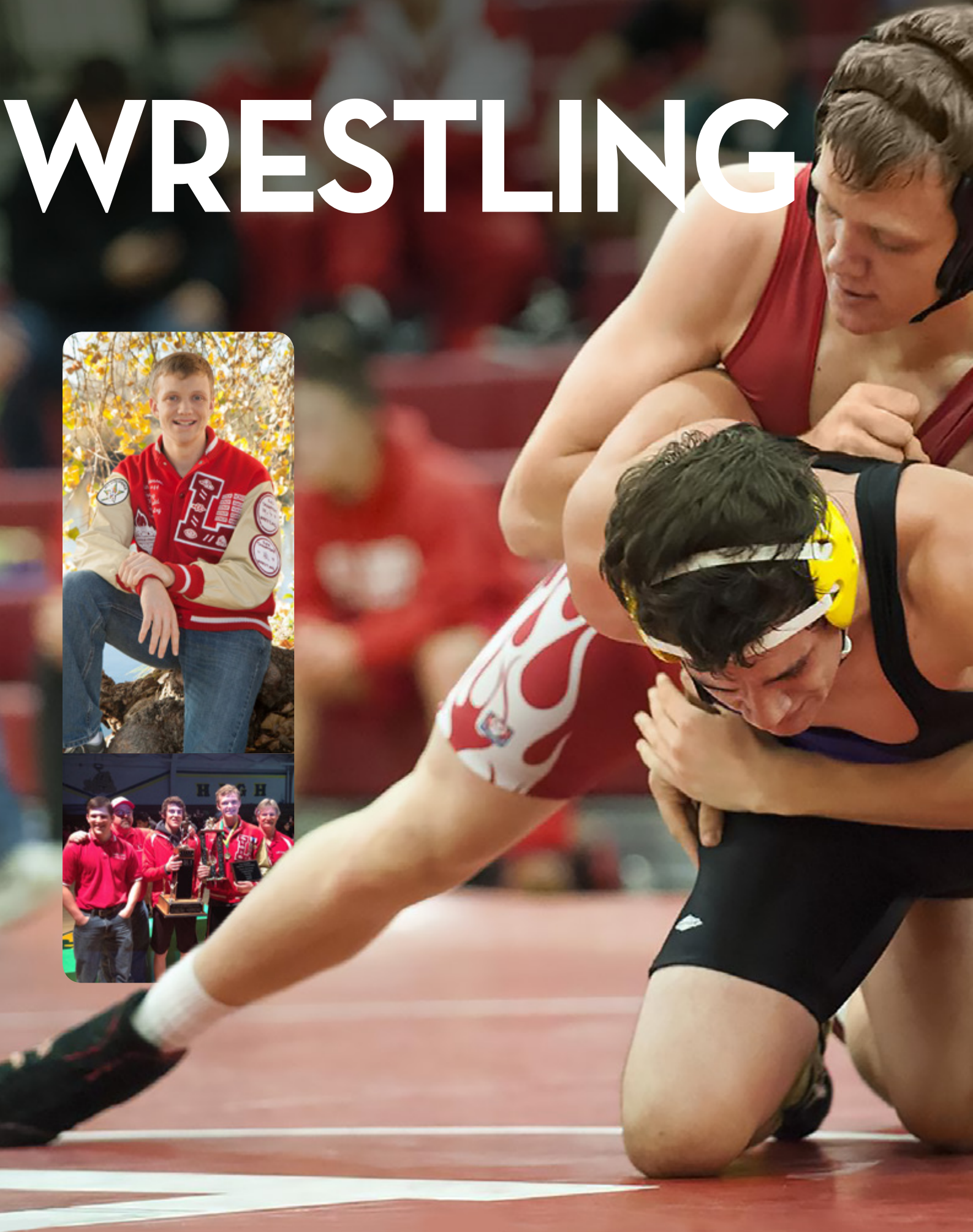
Hearing so much excitement, the rest of the class turned around to see what was going on. One of my classmates, whom I had been talking to about the Book of Mormon, asked if this book brought peace. My teacher replied, “It made me want to weep, not from sadness but from being blessed.” She couldn’t stop smiling and hugging me.

I felt very happy. At that moment, I came to understand that we cannot judge who is ready to receive the word of God. We cannot know how open a person’s heart is. If God inspires us to share, we need to take action because He knows better than we do. **NE**

The author lives in Salta, Argentina.



WRESTLING





with

As a team captain, this leader knew hazing wasn't the way to go.

A NEW APPROACH

By Drew Quinn
Church Magazines

The final whistle sounded, and Kyle* left the mat feeling discouraged about losing the match. Team captain Colin Anderson from California, USA, put his arm around Kyle and offered him a ride to get burgers with the rest of the team.

They sat in the restaurant parking lot while Colin listened to the freshman pour out his frustrations. Kyle had done well in middle school, but he was struggling with the switch to high school competition. Colin hadn't been very good as a freshman either, but he *had* kept trying. So he turned to his teammate and encouraged him: "Look, you're just a freshman. You have time. You'll do fine."

Encouraging his teammates was something Colin tried to do as often as he could. But it certainly wasn't the norm when he was coming up in the program.

By the time Colin reached his senior year and was made a cocaptain of his high school wrestling team, he'd worked hard and learned a lot. He'd begun "at the bottom of the food chain," kept his head down, and tried to improve. At that time the team was run like a boot camp, using fierce competitiveness and hazing to try to toughen the wrestlers and build camaraderie. But when it was his turn to lead, Colin knew that wasn't right. "I didn't feel I could do what had been done in the past."

Colin's mother often drove him to wrestling meets, and on the long drives they talked about his wrestling and the team. These conversations helped shape the idea of how Colin would lead if given the chance. "I decided to

lead in the Lord's way, as I'd learned in priesthood." When he was made a captain, he used encouragement, love, and persuasion to help his team members improve.

Things didn't turn around all at once. The coaches considered it a building year because the team was so young, with Colin and his cocaptain as the only seniors. The "building year" was evident early in the season, when a rivalry meet was a disaster. Afterward, Colin told his team, "I'm not angry at our loss. You don't have to win everything; you just have to give it your best."

From then on, the team worked together toward the same goal, and everything changed. They started building success. As he worked with and instructed others, Colin's own wrestling improved. "The greatest way to learn is to teach," he said. At the end of the season, the team won their league and sent seven wrestlers to postseason tournaments.

Looking back, Colin will always remember two things about his wrestling career. First, being a leader is really about service. "I didn't make state but it was a good year anyway, because my focus was on helping others; that helped me improve too."

Second, Colin learned that you can have a greater effect on others than you might ever suspect. "You have a great ability to shape how others see their experiences and to influence their perspective. Independent of the team and my own success, I will always remember Kyle and talking to him in the parking lot." True leadership really can have a lasting effect. **NE**

* Name has been changed.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF IAN JONSSON/LODI NEWS SENTINEL AND ANNI KERR

WOE vs. JOY:

Pick the System That's Right for You

Check out the features and reviews. Then decide which system will serve you best.

By David A. Edwards

Church Magazines

You're here on a mission: to follow Heavenly Father's plan so that you can become more like Him and live in an eternal family in the celestial kingdom—in other words, to receive a fulness of joy. It all comes down to which system you choose to navigate your life with: the JOY system or the WOE4U system. Compare their features and user reviews and see which is more appealing to you.

WOE4U System (see remote at right)

From Mass Industries Systems Enterprises Reaching Youth

"Join us. We love company."

REVIEWS

★★ *by gimmenow*

The instant gratification button worked great—for about two minutes! It got less and less reliable.

★ *by greenergrass*

The ad said this has the quality of JOY, only cheaper and easier. False! It always broke down.

★★ *by thataintright*

"Just once" almost always skipped to the next level so you started paying for it right away.

★ *by iheartjoy*

Do yourself a favor—stick with JOY. This one costs more, long-term, and is a bad experience.

★ *by morris_les*

At first, I thought, "Cool! Way more options." But the "options" took me down a rabbit hole of complex and time-consuming choices. I spent half my time fiddling with the Lie Adjustment Control just to keep up with all the variations necessary. What a waste!

★ *by whoathere*

I thought guilt management would be an innovation. What hyped-up rubbish! The Guilt Overlays and Self-Deception Inputs degraded over time. And they didn't get rid of the guilt.

★ *by lemmego*

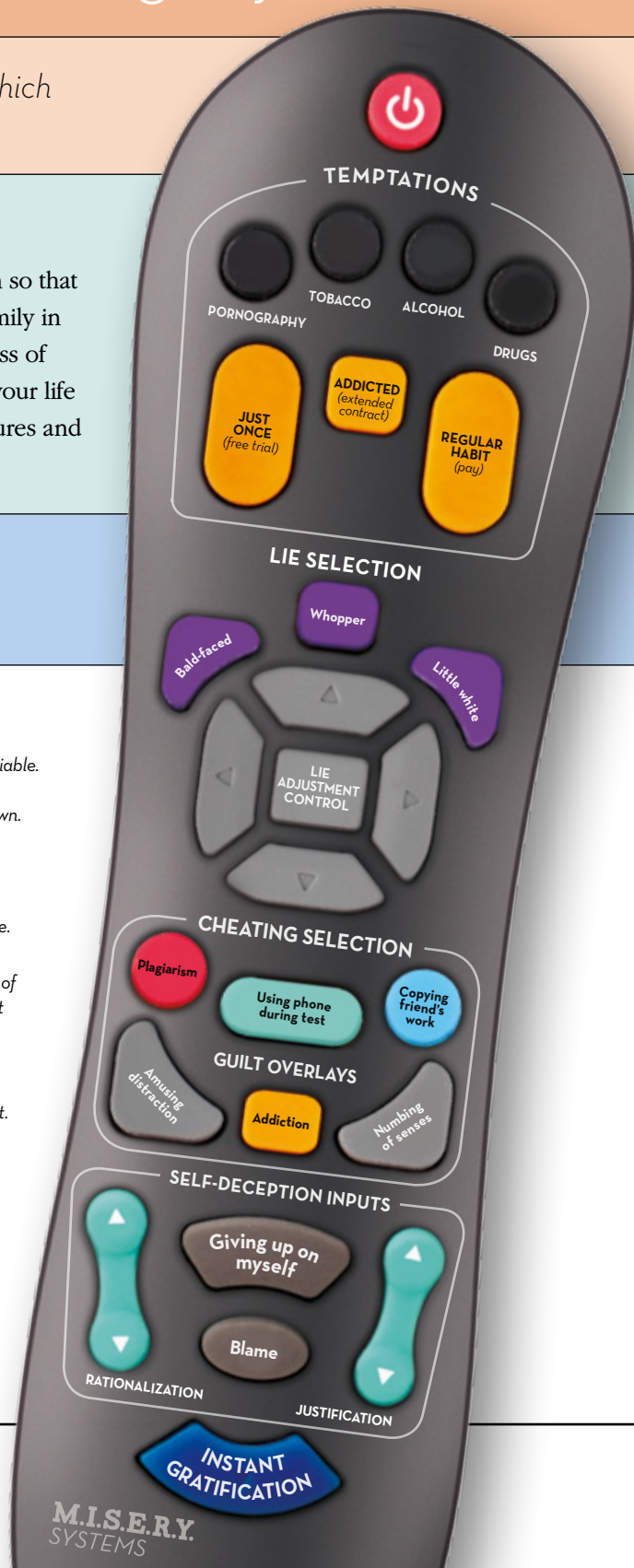
Many of the features are designed to get you to sign up for an extended contract so that you'd be locked into this system for good. A massive nothingburger of a system.

★★ *by hope_goodwin*

It made the picture look fuzzy, so I read the fine print in the warranty—basically nothing's covered. And the customer service was rude and insulting, but they seemed so cool that I wanted them to like me even though they made me feel bad about myself.

★ *by not4saken*

This system acts more like a virus or a Trojan horse. Luckily you can reset everything and delete all of the malicious code by following the steps in the JOY system's Repent option.



WHOSE LEADER IS BETTER?

Mass Industries Systems Enterprises Reaching Youth
(maker of the WOE4U system)

Personal Elevation And Cleansing Endeavors
(maker of the JOY system)

“Seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself”
(2 Nephi 2:27).

“Doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world”
(2 Nephi 26:24).

“Will not support his children at the last day, but doth speedily drag them down to hell”
(Alma 30:60).

“Stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long”
(Jacob 6:4).

JOY System (see remote at right) From Personal Elevation and Cleansing Endeavors

“We glory in plainness. We glory in truth.”

REVIEWS

★★★★★ *by riverofpeace*

It works. It just works.

★★★★★ *by joyfan14*

It seems too simple sometimes, but that's exactly why it works so well.

★★★★★ *by ic_sharp*

The picture is always clear.

★★★★★ *by tookamulligan*

Even when I commit a user error, customer service never makes me feel stupid. They're always helpful and friendly, and they always make me feel good about myself.

★★★★★ *by needforfreed*

At first I thought the options were too limiting, but then I realized that they actually allowed me greater freedom as I continued to use it and was able to customize my experience with the Have Faith and Do Good Works features.

★★★★★ *by annette_positive*

You have to put forth some effort to get the most out of this system, but that's a good thing. It leaves the control in your hands and offers you guidance. Pretty soon you realize just how powerful this thing is. Truly amazing.

★★★★★ *by howie_lovegood*

I once tried to add the WOE4U system because I believed all the hype about its being easier and cooler, but it caused me all kinds of problems. Good thing the Repent option is always available, even when you've messed things up badly. It may take a little effort and patience, but it always works.

★★★★★ *by rock_steadman*

I love to press Forward! It helps you skip all of the garbage and move on to good stuff.

So, as a discerning customer, which system do you think will help you be happier? Which will help you reach your highest potential?

It's no contest, really. You don't even have to try the WOE4U system to know it's not going to work. Go for the JOY, all the way. **NE**



INFINITE JOY

“[Heavenly Father's] plan is to build us into something far greater than what we were—far greater than what we can ever imagine. With each step of faith on the path of discipleship, we grow into the beings of eternal glory and infinite joy we were designed to become.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “He Will Place You on His Shoulders and Carry You Home,” Apr. 2016 general conference.



5

COMMANDMENT-KEEPING

MYTHS

BUSTED



Still not perfect yet? It's OK. Here's why.

By Bethany Bartholomew

Church Magazines

Ever feel like you don't measure up? First, remember that no one is perfect. We all "come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). And second, give yourself a break! You're probably doing better than you think. Here are some common myths about keeping commandments, along with some facts to keep in mind.

MYTH #1: GOD EXPECTS PERFECTION NOW.

Heavenly Father doesn't expect us to do everything perfectly right now; He does expect us to do our best and then to have faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ to help us change.

FACT:

He knows we will struggle. He is pleased when we do our best and keep trying.



"We need not be dismayed if our earnest efforts toward perfection now seem so arduous and endless. Perfection is pending. It can come in full only after the Resurrection and only through the Lord."

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 1995 general conference.



"With the gift of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the strength of heaven to help us, we can improve, and the great thing about the gospel is we get credit for *trying*, even if we don't always succeed. . . . Keep trying. Keep trusting. Keep believing. Keep growing. Heaven is cheering you on today, tomorrow, and forever."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2016 general conference.

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN KACHIK

MYTH #2:
I KEEP MAKING THE SAME MISTAKES. I MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP, BECAUSE I CAN'T CHANGE.


FACT:
When we keep trying and turn to God, He can help us change—no matter what.

The whole point of this life is to change—to become, to grow, and to learn so that one day we can become like our Father in Heaven (see Gospel Topics, “Becoming Like God,” [lds.org/topics](https://www.lds.org/topics)).

But we have to make the choice to change.

Elder Donald L. Hallstrom of the Presidency of the Seventy warned, “Once any of us conclude[s,] ‘That’s just the way I am,’ we give up our ability to change” (Apr. 2014 general conference). So whatever we do, we shouldn’t give up.

When we choose to change, that doesn’t mean we’ll be perfect right away (see myth #1). But it can mean that our heart wants to be obedient and that we’ll keep trying again whenever we fall short of where we want to be. When we make that choice to turn to God, He will give us strength beyond the strength we’d have on our own—and He will help us change.

 Learn more about how commandments bring happiness at lds.org/go/happyNE916.



“[God] cares that we keep on trying. . . . Even if we’ve been a conscious, deliberate sinner or have repeatedly faced failure and disappointment, the moment we decide to try again, the Atonement of Christ can help us. And we need to remember that it is not the Holy Ghost that tells us we’re so far gone that we might as well give up.”

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2015 general conference.

MYTH #3:
EVERYBODY ELSE IS DOING BETTER THAN I AM.

FACT:
God doesn’t judge us by comparison. We shouldn’t either.

Don’t worry if you think others are doing much better than you.



“God is fully aware that you and I are not perfect. . . . God is also fully aware that the people you think are perfect are not.

“And yet we spend so much time and energy comparing ourselves to others—usually comparing our weaknesses to their strengths. This drives us to create expectations for ourselves that are impossible to meet. . . .

“Be compassionate and patient with yourself.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Forget Me Not,” Oct. 2011 general conference.

And remember, “We are not in a race against each other. . . . The race we are *really* in is the race against sin” (Jeffrey R. Holland, Apr. 2012 general conference). So just try to do *your* best to become better each day.

MYTH #4:
I KNOW I SHOULD
BE BETTER. I'M JUST
NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

FACT:
God knows our
limitations. He
won't measure us
against an impos-
sible standard.

Sometimes we assume we know how God will judge us. But He reminds us, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Isaiah 55:8). He is the perfect judge, and He judges with a perfect understanding of our situation.

Think of it this way: If you try to jump as high as you can right now, you can probably jump pretty high. But if you try it again while holding 20 pounds of weight, you won't be able to jump as high. Does that mean you aren't as good now as you were before? No. You didn't change; your circumstances did.

Sometimes we have to deal with heavy things. God knows what you're capable of, but He also understands better than you do what your limitations are. He will judge with that understanding in mind. He just wants us to do the best we can with what we have.

President Thomas S. Monson has said, "Our task is to become our best selves. One of God's greatest gifts to us is the joy of trying again, for no failure ever need be final" ("The Will Within," Apr. 1987 general conference). So believe in yourself and God, and keep trying.

MYTH #5:
COMMANDMENTS ARE
TOO RESTRICTIVE; THEY
TAKE AWAY MY AGENCY.

FACT:
Commandments
lead us to incred-
ible freedom and
blessings.

Rather than restricting our agency, commandments open our lives to more freedom and blessings—they're like a how-to booklet for happiness (see D&C 82:8–9). President Dieter F. Uchtdorf has said, "Maybe obedience is not so much the process of bending, twisting, and pounding our souls into something we are not. Instead, it is the process by which we discover what we truly are made of. . . .

"We come to see obedience not as a punishment but as a liberating path to our divine destiny. . . . Eventually, the priceless, eternal spirit of the heavenly being within us is revealed, and a radiance of goodness becomes our nature" ("He Will Place You on His Shoulders and Carry You Home," Apr. 2016 general conference).

So the next time you feel like you just don't measure up, remember that you are a divine son or daughter of heavenly parents—a royal soul with infinite potential.

And that is what Heavenly Father sees in you—that's why He gives commandments.



"Some see only sacrifice and limitations in obedience to the commandments of the new and everlasting covenant, but those who live the experience—who give themselves freely and unreservedly to the covenant life—find greater liberty and fulfillment. When we truly understand, we seek more commandments, not fewer. Each new law or commandment we learn and live is like one more rung or step on a ladder that enables us to climb higher and higher. Truly, the gospel life is the good life."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2009 general conference, footnote 2.

COMMANDMENTS = LOVE

By Charlotte Larcabal
Church Magazines

When you think about commandments, you might think of stone tablets, rules, boundaries, demands, or requirements. You probably don't automatically think of love. What do commandments have to do with love? Well, everything.

BECAUSE HE LOVES US

Remember when you were little and your parents didn't let you play on a busy street? or when they made you eat more vegetables or go to bed earlier than you wanted to?

You probably didn't understand why there were so many rules. And you probably weren't always happy about them, either. But now that you're older, can you see why your parents gave you all those rules?

It was because they loved you and wanted what was best for you.

As the most perfect parent, Heavenly Father gives us rules or commandments for the same reason: He loves us and wants what's best for us. Even more than that, He wants us to become like Him and receive all that He has.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained this with a parable:

"A wealthy father knew that if he were to bestow his wealth upon a child who had not yet developed the needed wisdom and stature, the inheritance would probably be wasted. The father said to his child:

"All that I have I desire to give you—not only my wealth,





but also my position and standing among men. That which I *have* I can easily give you, but that which I *am* you must obtain for yourself. You will qualify for your inheritance by learning what I have learned and by living as I have lived. I will give you the laws and principles by which I have acquired my wisdom and stature. Follow my example, mastering as I have mastered, and you will become as I am, and all that I have will be yours.”¹

Like the father in Elder Oaks’s story, Heavenly Father wants us to have everything He has and become everything He is. His commandments are like stepping stones to help us learn and grow and become like Him.

“I give unto you a new commandment, . . . or, in other words, I give unto you directions how you may act before me, that it may turn to you for your salvation” (D&C 82:8–9).

Like a toddler who doesn’t understand why he’s not allowed to play in the middle of a busy, dangerous street, we may not always understand the reasoning behind certain commandments or standards. But when we understand that God gives us commandments because He loves us and wants to guide us so that we will become like Him, it becomes easier to obey Him.

BECAUSE WE LOVE HIM

You could think of every commandment as a big “I love you!” sign from God. And when we choose to keep His commandments, it’s like we’re saying “I love you!” right back to Him.

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



AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE

“God’s commandments are a manifestation of His love for us, and obedience to His commandments is an expression of our love for Him.”

Carole M. Stephens, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, Oct. 2015 general conference.

it simply when he answered the question “Why bother with God’s commandments?”

“We obey the commandments of God—out of love for Him! . . .

“ . . . Our obedience to God’s commandments comes as a natural outgrowth of our endless love and gratitude for the goodness of God.”²

Heavenly Father has given us everything we have—from the ability to move to the very air we breathe—and all He asks is that we keep His commandments (see Mosiah 2:21–22). It’s the best way we can show our love and gratitude to Him.

Jesus Christ said so Himself (see John 14:15).

Why does Heavenly Father give us commandments? Because He loves us.

Why do we keep His commandments? Because we love Him.

Commandments equal love.

It’s that simple. **NE**

NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, Oct. 2000 general conference.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Gift of Grace,” Apr. 2015 general conference.

*Everyone feels down sometimes.
But some people have a more
serious difficulty to deal with.
Here are some ways to help.*

By Eric B. Murdock

Church Magazines

Imagine this scenario: Your friend hasn't been herself lately. Usually she's upbeat and fun, but now she doesn't want to do things that she used to have fun doing. You were surprised when she decided to stay home rather than go to a dance last Saturday. Every time you see her now she seems sad, withdrawn, and irritable. And this has been going on for a while.

As you think about it, you realize your friend was always a good student, but last week she didn't turn in her history paper for the third time in a row. It's like she's lost her motivation. She says she feels tired all the time but can't fall asleep at night and mentions how she always feels sad but doesn't know why. She's been this way for a while, and you're worried she might be depressed.

SADNESS VS. DEPRESSION

There's a difference between feeling sad and experiencing depression. For example, you can feel sad after failing a test or discouraged because your team is on a losing streak. Sadness and discouragement are normal reactions to life's challenges and disappointments. So how can you tell if you or someone you know is depressed or just experiencing life's ups and downs?

To start, depression is more than just sadness. Depression is a medical condition that affects millions of people of all ages and situations. It negatively affects how a person thinks,


feels, and acts. Some of the symptoms of depression include persistent sadness, lack of energy, and feelings of despair and hopelessness that last weeks, months, or longer. Those with depression might not enjoy many of the things they used to and can find it difficult to handle daily activities.

There's no one cause for depression, but causes include genetics, chemical imbalance, certain patterns of thinking, and stressful life events. Fortunately, there is help.

HELPING A FRIEND

It can be hard to know what to say or do when a friend is depressed. But you can start by offering support and encouragement. Here are other ways to help:

- 1. Pray.** Ask Heavenly Father how you can best help your friend. Pay attention to promptings you get. It might just be something simple and good you feel you should do.
- 2. Listen.** You don't have to fix anything; you just need to be a good listener. Really listen to what your friend is saying and let your friend know you'll always be there.
- 3. Guide.** Simply suggest, "Have you thought about getting help?" You can help your friend reach out to a parent, Church leader, or other trusted adult. This can guide your friend to the right resources to get better. If your friend doesn't accept your invitations to talk to someone and you're still concerned, you may need to confide in an adult who can get help.



4. Invite. Those with depression tend to withdraw and isolate themselves. Help your friend get out. Include your friend in Church activities and service opportunities. Be direct, but don't take it personally if your friend doesn't respond. Interacting with others lessens feelings of isolation and depression, but it can be a difficult step for people to take.

SHOW PATIENCE AND CHARITY

People with depression can't just wave a magic wand and cheer up, snap out of it, or forget about it on their own; it will take patience and love on your part to help them. No matter what your friend may be facing, remember what President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has taught: "The beginning and end of the solution is charity, the pure love of Christ."¹ Your support, encouragement, and love can play an important role in getting your friend needed help.

WHAT IF I FEEL DEPRESSED?

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, "Life is not easy, nor was it meant to be. It is a time of testing and

trial.”² For divine purposes, our life on earth is challenging. Depression can be one of the challenges we face here.

If you’re struggling with depression, realize that it isn’t a sign of weakness or something to be embarrassed about or to hide. Unfortunately, depression and other mental conditions can carry a stigma. This often leaves those who struggle with depression feeling stereotyped and alienated, which can keep them from getting help. The truth is, no one would look down on you for going to the doctor for a broken leg or heart trouble. Getting help for depression is just as important.

HELP AND HOPE

Negative thoughts and feelings of hopelessness are symptoms of a depression condition, not the reality of your situation. Help and hope are available. Here are things you can do:

1. Talk to someone such as a parent or Church leader. It can be hard to open up and share how you’re feeling, but it will help. A strong support system is key to overcoming depression, so reach out!
2. How we treat our bodies affects our minds and spirits. A healthy diet, regular exercise, and sufficient sleep really help our physical, mental and spiritual well-being.
3. Journaling can be a great way to safely unload negative thoughts and feelings and work through problems. As you write, make a commitment to focus on healthy and positive thinking.
4. Turn to things that bring the Spirit into your life. Depression can affect you spiritually as well as physically

and emotionally. The Spirit brings feelings of peace and calm which can be hard to feel when you’re depressed. But it’s important to pray to Heavenly Father and tell Him how you’re feeling. Remember your blessings, and read scriptures that bring peace, hope, and strength. Live with faith, and do your best each day. And then if you still feel like you can’t feel the Spirit anymore, keep pressing forward; eventually the light will come.

5. Your depression may need to be treated with medication and therapy from a professional. There’s nothing wrong with seeking professional help; in fact, it can be a really good thing. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has explained, “If you had appendicitis, God would expect you to seek a priesthood blessing *and* get the best medical care available. So too with emotional disorders. Our Father in Heaven expects us to use *all* the marvelous gifts He has provided in this glorious dispensation.”³

DEPRESSION AND WORTHINESS

Often people mistakenly think feelings of depression are the result of unrighteousness or unworthiness. While it’s true that “despair cometh because of iniquity” (Moroni 10:22), we shouldn’t assume that depression is always caused by unrighteous living. If a person feels despair and sadness because of sin, repentance is a precious gift that can bring joy. But if depression hits you out of nowhere, don’t think it’s a punishment from God or that it indicates a lack of faith, character, or worthiness. Even President George Albert Smith battled depression for many years. Remember that you are a precious

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

- A persistent sad, helpless, hopeless, or worthless feeling.
- Decreased energy and motivation, and increased fatigue.
- A loss of interest in activities one used to enjoy.
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions.
- Appetite change and weight loss or gain.
- Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up.
- Thoughts about death and suicide.

son or daughter of God. He knows you and loves you. “The worth of souls is great in the sight of God” (D&C 18:10). As a child of God, you are of eternal worth.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Jesus Christ came to dispel all darkness. He is “the light and life of the world” (3 Nephi 11:11) and “a light that shineth in a dark place” (1 Peter 1:19). He wants to help you. The Savior said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Depression may be a continual struggle, but Christ’s promises are real: “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:18). He perfectly understands because He took upon Himself the “pains and afflictions and temptations of *every* kind” for “*every* living creature, both men, women, and children” (Alma 7:11–12; 2 Nephi 9:21; emphasis added). Jesus Christ knows what depression feels like, and He knows what your depression or your friend’s depression feels like. With the Savior’s help, you can come out of the darkness of depression and see more of the good that is around you. **NE**

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “In Praise of Those Who Save,” Apr. 2016 general conference.
2. Quentin L. Cook, Oct. 2015 general conference.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, Oct. 2013 general conference.

If you or someone you know shows persistent signs of depression, they or you might need some help. So talk to someone, and go to mentalhealth.lds.org.



UNDERSTANDING SUICIDE

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, **seek help immediately.** Do it before you do anything else. Tell your parents, your bishop, or another trusted adult. Don't let fear, shame, or embarrassment keep you from getting help for yourself or someone you care about. A life is on the line.

Suicide Prevention Lifelines

Nearest Location	Phone Number	Web Address
Worldwide		befrienders.org iasp.info/resources/Crisis_Centres
USA		
Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-8255	suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Crisis Textline	Text START to 741-741	crisistextline.org
Native Youth Crisis Hotline	1-877-209-1266	save.org/airesources
Canada		
Distress Center	403.266.4357	distresscentre.com
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868	kidshelpphone.ca/Teens
UK and Ireland	116 123	samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/contact-us
Australia		
Beyond Blue	1300 22 4636	youthbeyondblue.com
Kids Helpline	1800 55 1800	kidshelpline.com.au

DEPRESSION AND THE RISK OF SUICIDE

The deep despair and hopelessness depression brings can cause people to feel trapped to the point where ending their life seems like the only way to escape the pain.

Most who consider suicide, however, don't really want to die; they just want relief from the pain. Suicidal talk and behavior is often a cry for help. Be aware of statements such as, "I don't care if I live or die" or "Everyone would be better off without me." Never ignore suicidal talk or any signals your friend may be giving you, such as when your friend:

- Always wants to be alone.
- Is moody and irritable.
- Has a sudden change in personality.
- Is using drugs or alcohol.
- Is sleeping too much or too little.
- Is giving possessions away.
- Expresses feelings of hopelessness, feeling trapped, and having no reason to live.
- Talks about killing or harming himself or herself.



One of these signs by itself may not necessarily mean something serious, but it could—especially if you sense a sudden change in your friend or start seeing other signs. It may be hard to believe that anyone you know would consider suicide, but if a friend has mentioned it or even joked about it, you should tell a trusted adult immediately. It may be tempting to try to help on your own, but it's always best to get help.

If your friend wants you to keep suicidal feelings a secret, it might feel like betrayal if you tell an adult. But your friend could be in real danger, so your duty is to get help and get it fast. It's better that your friend be angry with you than you lose that friend.

WHAT IF IT'S ME?

Having thoughts about suicide is frightening. When you're at this point, it's nearly impossible to see the bright and hopeful things in your life

because everything you notice is dark and sad. But others have felt this way and have overcome the challenge with the help of friends, family, and others. You are not alone. Here's what you can do.

- Reach out for help. Talk to someone you trust—a parent, priesthood leader, or teacher.
- Pray to your Heavenly Father even if you don't feel like it or feel it hasn't helped before. Turn to Him (see Alma 32:37).
- Read and ponder the scriptures—especially stories of those who faced trials and gained strength from God—and the teachings of the Savior.
- Serve others. As difficult as it may be to start, serving others will help you feel better.
- Go out and do something. You can listen to uplifting music, visit a friend, or go for a walk, a jog, or a bike ride. Exercise dramatically

increases energy and positive feelings in the body and relieves stress. Do whatever will take your mind off negative and dangerous thoughts.

THINGS WILL GET BETTER

Right now your problems feel like they'll last forever, but you have no idea what tomorrow will bring or what next week will be like. You can work through your problems, and you can take steps to improve. Things will get better. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has said, "Even after the darkest night, the Savior of the world will lead you to a gradual, sweet, and bright dawn that will assuredly rise within you."¹ So hold on; there is hope. **NE**

NOTE

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Hope of God's Light," Apr. 2013 general conference.



DIGITAL

DARK AGES

*Just one more video, just one more level...
then I'll be happy, right?*

Name Withheld

I refer to my middle school years as the Dark Ages because of my personal trial during that time.

My parents thought they had a strict electronics policy, but they were unaware that their online filters only worked on the computers and not on other electronic devices.

I got hooked on YouTube and games on my smartphone and tablet. I would think of bizarre questions and just look them up. I let my curiosity control me. Inevitably, I even ran into pornography.

I wasted hours upon hours staying up late at night watching pranks and funny videos. I thought it was making me happy. But deep down I knew it was destroying me. I also spent hours upon hours playing games. I downloaded new ones when I got bored of the old ones. I “earned” points and “bought” things to “benefit” my “character.” I leveled up and leveled up. And for what?

Nothing.

It all boiled down to colorful, pointless pixels that wasted countless hours of valuable time. Distraction—it’s one of Satan’s biggest and most effective tools.

During the Dark Ages, I drew away from my family, finding sneaky ways to be on my electronic devices without my parents’ knowing. I was constantly on edge, worrying that my problem would be discovered.

During the Dark Ages, I began to develop awful ideas. I doubted my beliefs. I had unclean thoughts and unrighteous plans for my future. I was desensitized. I let my electronics control me.

One day, my parents found out I had the Internet on my device and asked to see it for inspection. I could’ve easily covered up my tracks; I’d done it before.

My mom and I sat on the end of her bed. She assured me that I’d get my phone back the next day and explained what she and my dad were doing.

I felt the strongest impression to confess. I got hit in the head with the brick I’d been dodging for so long; I knew *I needed to change*. I was afraid, but the Lord gave me the strength I needed to confess.

When I told my parents, they were disappointed but understanding. I lost their trust for a while after that. My electronics went into my parents’ custody, and I chose to go to the bishop to help me repent. It would be months before I touched my electronics again.

I hadn’t fully realized the extent of my problem until I quit. For years, I’d been relying on it for a false sense of comfort and security. Whenever I still had a bad day, I’d think, “Well, I’ll just watch some funny videos and play some games.” But then I’d realize that those days were gone. My main source of pleasure was now gone. I felt

confused and lost. What was I supposed to do now?

Gradually I lost my attachment to my electronics and discovered new ways to find joy. Over time, I realized how badly I'd been destroying myself.

I wish I could say it was over after that. I've fallen into the habit again a few times since then. But every time it happens, I can feel the companionship of the Spirit leave as I get sucked into the distractions of the world.

Whenever that happens, I force myself to delete all the games on my phone and disconnect with the Wi-Fi. I have to do this in one brief moment, as soon as the realization comes. Otherwise, if I procrastinate, I allow myself to rationalize.

Each time I'm reminded of the Dark Ages, I see how far I've come since then. I don't want to go backward or wayward; I want to go forward. The Lord, my family and friends, my future children—all of them need me to press forward.



BE CAREFUL

"Take care that your use of media does not dull your sensitivity to the Spirit or interfere with your personal relationships with others. Spending long periods of time using the Internet or a mobile device, playing video games, or watching television or other media can keep you from valuable interactions with other people. Be careful that your use of social media does not replace spending time with your family and friends."

For the Strength of Youth (2011), 12-13.

Going anywhere but forward is selfish and prideful. Satan feeds off of it. He knows that his hold is firm on the selfish and proud. If people think their decisions affect only themselves, then they'll choose to do whatever they want at the moment.

I've also learned to use media and entertainment sparingly. I enjoy watching movies, because movies end. When I was on the Internet so much, I just kept going and going like it would never end.

I use social media only occasionally.

Even then, I can get distracted and waste time. I have to be careful.

Often when I tell other teenagers of the blessings of limiting their technology use, they get defensive. But trust me, life is so much better this way.

I'm closer to my family. I realize what has real value in my mortal and eternal life, and I cling to it. I can experience true joy as I draw closer to the Lord in righteous thoughts and actions.

Yes, it will be hard, but it is *so* worth it. **NE**

▶ Using Technology

Check out a clip from Elder Ian S. Ardern of the Seventy about tuning in to the Lord in a world full of technology at lds.org/go/technologyNE916.



If I was faithful in the premortal life, why is it so hard to be so now?

All people who come to earth chose in the premortal life to follow Heavenly Father's plan and to accept Jesus Christ as the Savior. But that doesn't mean that obedience and righteousness in this life will be easy. Because Heavenly Father's plan intends for this life to be a true test of how we use our agency, our memories of premortal life have been removed. Also, as part of His plan, we have received physical bodies, which are subject to appetites, lusts, and temptations we did not know as spirits. This makes us more easily enticed by things that are "carnal, sensual, and devilish" (Moses 5:13), which is why "the natural man is an enemy to God" (Mosiah 3:19).

A person can overcome these challenges only if he or she "yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord" (Mosiah 3:19). It isn't easy, but Jesus Christ will strengthen you and transform you as you listen to the Spirit, make good choices, and come unto Him. **NE**

What should I do if I question something a prophet has taught?

When the restored Church was organized, Joseph Smith received a revelation telling the early Saints, "His [the prophet's] word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith" (D&C 21:5).

Joseph Smith also said that "a prophet [is] a prophet only when he [is] acting as such."¹ This means that "a statement made by one leader on a single occasion often represents a personal, though well-considered, opinion, not meant to be official or binding for the whole Church."² It's usually obvious when the prophet is "acting as such," such as addressing Church members in an official capacity.

It is our privilege to ask the Lord for our own witness "about whatever His prophet has proclaimed."³ If we don't receive a witness, then we should study what other prophets have said about the matter and choose a course of action. The best course of action is to follow the combined, consistent counsel of the prophets "in all patience and faith." As we do, we will be blessed (see 1 Nephi 2:11, 16, 19). **NE**

NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 5:265.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, Apr. 2012 general conference.
3. Russell M. Nelson, "Becoming True Millennials" (worldwide devotional for young adults, Jan. 10, 2016), [lds.org/broadcasts](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts).

Why is it wrong to cheat at school if you're only trying to help another person?

When we say we believe in being “honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men” (Articles of Faith 1:13), we mean more than just not lying. Being honest means that we don’t mislead others by our words or actions. It also means not helping someone else cheat or steal.

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, reminded us: “Cheating in school is a form of self-deception. We go to school to learn. We cheat ourselves when we coast on the efforts and scholarship of someone else. . . . Others can challenge and motivate us, but we must reach down deep into our souls and call forth our God-given intelligence and capabilities. We cannot do this when we depend on the efforts of someone else” (“Honesty—a Moral Compass,” Oct. 1996 general conference).

So, even though you may think you’re helping friends who want you to give them answers, in reality you’re hurting them. And you’re hurting yourself. If you truly want to help your friends succeed, help them study, show them how to find answers themselves, and encourage them along the way.

When you take the high road and refuse to help your friend cheat—even when it’s hard—you build character and integrity. As you build integrity in your life, others will know that they can trust you, and, more important, Heavenly Father will know He can trust you. **NE**

▶ See a *Mormon Messages* video that won a Church International Video Contest, “Honesty: You Better Believe It,” at lds.org/go/honestyNE916.



Think about Why It Hurts Them

When we pass homework to our friends or we pass them answers to a test, we may think we’re helping them, but the truth is we’re only hurting them, because they’ll never learn how to do things on their own. Our Heavenly Father is always looking at what we do, and what He wants for all His children is to be honest and help each other to be better here on earth in order to live with Him someday. Plus, honesty helps a person conquer problems and excel in life.

Vanessa J., 18, Mexico



Recognize What It Really Is

Letting others copy your work is plagiarism. Helping them steal your work and claiming it to be their own is lying to the teacher. Also, they won’t learn anything and will start depending on your work so much that on a test they’ll likely fail.

Hyrum L., 14, Arizona, USA

Don’t Defeat the Purpose

Helping someone cheat is dishonest academic performance, is unfair to those who didn’t cheat, and defeats the purpose of the assignment or test. Cheating to help someone isn’t helping them at all; it encourages sin in their own life and is the opposite of being a light on a hill. When I was

tempted to help a classmate during an exam, I realized that politely declining his request was the only way I could be a Christlike example for him. A year later, I can see that helping him cheat then would have had no benefit to him in the long run.

Jami H., 18, Canada



Offer Real Help Instead

It's so easy to use the word "helping" as an excuse to cheat. We're deceiving ourselves when we say that. They're missing out on the opportunity to learn something that will help them later on. Don't give in to the peer pressure either; offer to help instead.

Annie R., 17, New Mexico, USA



Help Them Study

Like the thirteenth article of faith says, "We believe in being honest [and] true." Cheating goes totally against that, even if it's for our best friend. We have to do the right thing, which will be to not tell him the answer and to encourage him to do his best.

It will be better if he starts studying more and paying more attention in class. We can help him remember to study, or we can study with him in the afternoons.

Daniel R., 18, Mexico

Look at the Consequences

Whenever you're faced with a question like this, take a moment to think through possible consequences. At first, it seems like cheating with the intent to help someone will have good consequences! Both of you can get through the assignment with a good grade, right? But by looking at the negative consequence as well, you can come to realize that cheating is definitely not worth it. Not only does it give you dishonest habits, but it also doesn't let you learn the importance of being prepared! Besides, it not only affects you but your friend as well. Have the courage to refuse to cheat.

Naomi W., 17, Utah, USA

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



NO EXCUSES

"'Everybody's doing it' is often given as an excuse. No society can be healthy without honesty, trust, and self-restraint."

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895-1985), "A Report and a Challenge," Oct. 1976 general conference.



UPCOMING QUESTION

At school, people say rude things about me. How can I react without getting upset and not let these comments affect my confidence?

Send your answer and photo by October 15, 2016.

Go to newera.lds.org, click "Submit Your Work," sign in with your LDS account, and then select "New Era" under "Choose Magazine." Click "Add File" to select your file and your photos, and then click "Submit" to upload.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



Commandments

Servants of the Lord have always taught people to keep the Lord's commandments. They've said it in many ways and under many different circumstances. But the message is always the same. As you think about this month's *Come, Follow Me* theme, review the talks from the most recent general conference with this theme in mind. For instance:

- "He Will Place You on His Shoulders and Carry You Home," by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf
- "Opposition in All Things," by Elder Dallin H. Oaks
- "Always Retain a Remission of Your Sins," by Elder David A. Bednar
- "A Pattern for Peace," by Bishop W. Christopher Waddell

Find these and more at conference.lds.org.



Share These Cards

Give yourself an easy reminder to think about this month's theme. Just place these cards in your scriptures, locker, or bedroom. You can also download or share them online at lds.org/go/cardsNE916.

HOWEVER FAR we may wander from the path, THE SAVIOR INVITES us to return and WALK WITH HIM.

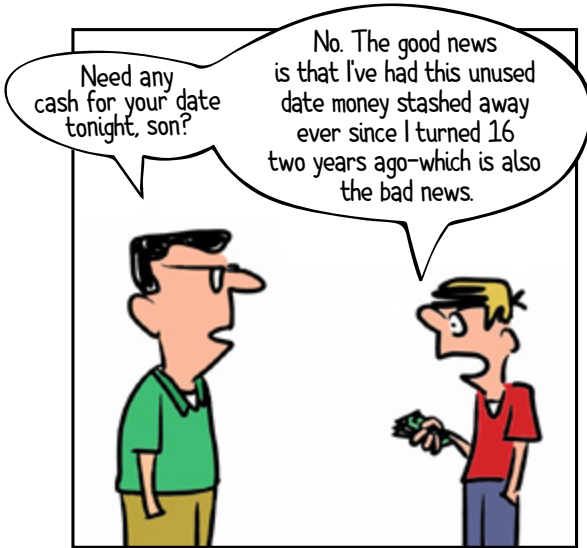
Bishop W. Christopher Waddell
Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric
April 2016 general conference



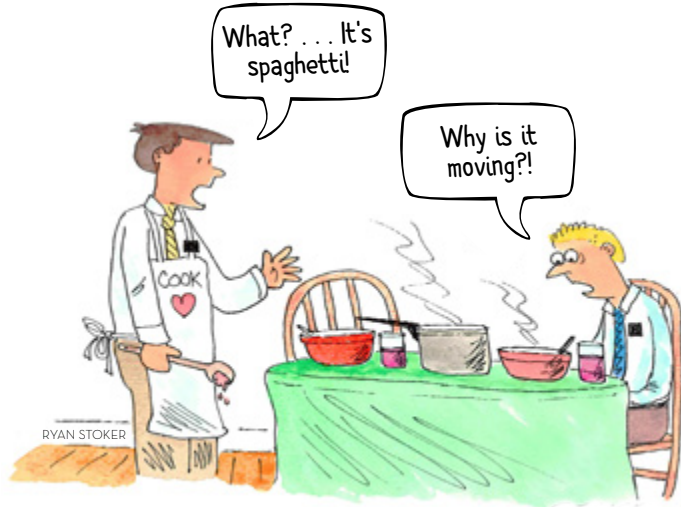
Faithfulness in OBEYING THE COMMANDMENTS and KEEPING OUR COVENANTS WILL PROTECT US from being deceived.

Elder Robert D. Hales
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
April 2016 general conference





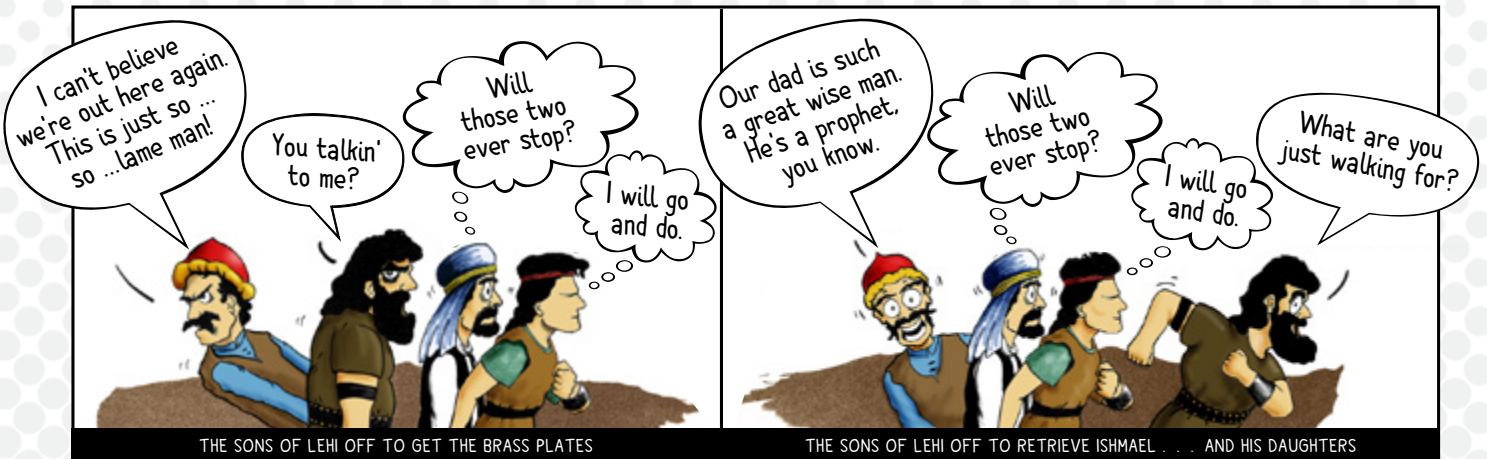
JON CLARK



RYAN STOKER



KEVIN BECKSTROM



THE SONS OF LEHI OFF TO GET THE BRASS PLATES

THE SONS OF LEHI OFF TO RETRIEVE ISHMAEL . . . AND HIS DAUGHTERS

KEITH MALOY



GOD SAW MY SADNESS

One Sunday at church I realized that my time with the Young Women program was almost over and I would soon be with the young single adults. I was sad because I knew that things would never be the same. After Sunday School, I tried to cheer up, but I just couldn't do it. I tried to tell myself that Heavenly Father did not want me to feel sadness but rather joy (see 2 Nephi 2:25).

I was just about to cry on my friend's shoulder in the hallway when the ward clerk came up to me and said, "Sister Danelys, here's the mail!" He handed me a white envelope with

only my name on it. I was curious to know what it was, so I asked the clerk who had sent it. As he walked away, he told me it was from the patriarch and that it was a copy of my patriarchal blessing. I did cry, but my tears were tears of joy because I knew God had seen my sadness and had provided a way for me to find joy in my sadness. My patriarchal blessing had finally arrived in writing, at the precise moment when I needed it most.

When I got home and read it, I cried again and prayed and thanked God for it and for helping me to remember how fortunate I am to be His daughter and to have the light of

the everlasting gospel in my life.

When sad times come, even though I may not understand them at the time, I know that God can help me find happiness. I learned this through the love that God offers me in my life. He offers this love to each one of us, and it is within us to accept this marvelous feeling. We can overcome trials with God's guidance. We can smile and be happy.

Danelys R., Dominican Republic

MORMONS ARE CHRISTIANS

In discussing religion with my friends, I've often heard criticisms that Mormons aren't Christians. It's baffled me that anyone could make a claim that a church bearing the name "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" isn't a Christian religion. Growing up, I was always told that our religion was based on Jesus Christ, so it seemed natural to consider myself a Christian. But because of the discussions with my friends, I've realized more fully what it truly means to be a Christian; it's more than just a self-proclamation. I've needed to gain knowledge of the reality of the Savior before I could sincerely explain to my friends how I know that I truly am a Christian.

The Book of Mormon has been critical in helping me realize that Christ is the foundation of our doctrine. It is filled with prophecies of Christ and the necessity for His Atonement. As the keystone of our religion, the Book of Mormon helps me explain why I believe in Christ and helps me define what it means to be a Christian as I follow Christ.

Through this journey, I've come to a knowledge that Jesus Christ is my Savior and that everything we do as members of the LDS Church directs us to Him. Jesus Christ is our gospel, and we are Christians.

Joseph P., California, USA

PASSING ON FOOTBALL

I was born in a tiny peninsula on an island south of India called Sri Lanka. Growing up there, I was fascinated with American football. I was five when I got my first football and learned how to play with the plushy ball. But my parents were not able to put me on a football team due to financial problems.

Years later, my family moved to New York, USA. Going into high school, I finally had a chance to get into an official team for free. There was one specific requirement: I had to go to football camp for a month, which meant no church for a month. On top of that, I had games on Sundays.

I was very upset and had no idea what to do. I prayed every day for an answer. One evening, I read a talk from President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) where he said, "We must put God in the forefront of everything else in our lives" ("The Great Commandment: Love the Lord," Apr. 1988 general conference). This struck me so hard that as soon as I read that, I knelt down and thanked the Lord for giving me an answer. I told my parents that I wasn't going to play football. They supported me through everything. I still am grateful I made that decision.

Dilán F., New York, USA



CHOOSING THE RIGHT SONG

One day I bought a song I'd heard on the radio. After it downloaded, I realized it was an explicit version. I was so disappointed because I'd wanted to listen to the radio's clean version. I deleted the song from my library, sad that I'd wasted my money on a bad song.

I decided to email the people at the music store, saying that I was unable to listen to the song I bought because it was against my standards. Surprisingly, the next day I got an

email with an apology and a free song credit.

I didn't end up buying that song at all, because I realized I didn't even feel good about the clean version. It helped me realize that I need to focus on the music I listen to and that I can correct my mistakes, even something as simple as buying the wrong song. I also realized how much the prophet's guidance really does help.

Rachel Z., Ohio, USA



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

HOW TO SHOW GRATITUDE

My deepest gratitude is for the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The Atonement is the foundation upon which all gospel truths reside. . . .

Gratitude is a state of appreciation, an act of thanksgiving, which causes us to be humble because we recognize an act of kindness, service, or caring from someone else which lifts us and strengthens us.

Ingratitude is the attitude of being unaware or not recognizing when someone has assisted us or helped us or, even worse, when we know we have been helped and have not given thanks privately or publicly.

In some quiet way, the expression and feelings of gratitude have a wonderful cleansing or healing nature. Gratitude brings warmth to the giver and the receiver alike.

Gratitude expressed to our Heavenly Father in prayer for what we have brings a calming peace—a peace which allows us to not canker our souls for what we don’t have. Gratitude brings a peace that helps

us overcome the pain of adversity and failure. Gratitude on a daily basis means we **express appreciation** for what we have now without qualification for what we had in the past or desire in the future. A recognition of and appreciation for our gifts and talents which have been given also allows us to **acknowledge the need for help and assistance** from the gifts and talents possessed by others.

Gratitude is a divine principle: “Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things” (D&C 59:7).

This scripture means that we **express thankfulness** for what happens, not only for the good things in life but also for the opposition and challenges of life that add to our experience and faith. We **put our lives in His hands**, realizing that all that transpires will be for our experience.

When in prayer we say, “Thy will be done,” we are really expressing faith and gratitude and acknowledging that we will **accept whatever happens in our lives**.



HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?

I know that whenever I am grateful to my Heavenly Father, I am much happier. I love to serve others and show my thankfulness toward my Heavenly Father. By doing this, I am able to gain a better understanding of why I was sent here and what my mission is here on earth. Having a grateful heart brings us peace.

Callie M., 15, Arizona, USA



Share Your Experiences

Share how you show gratitude and read the experiences of other youth at lds.org/go/gratitudeNE916.

May we feel true gratitude for the goodness of God for all the blessings that have been given to us and express those feelings of thankfulness in prayer to our Heavenly Father. **NE**
From an April 1992 general conference address.

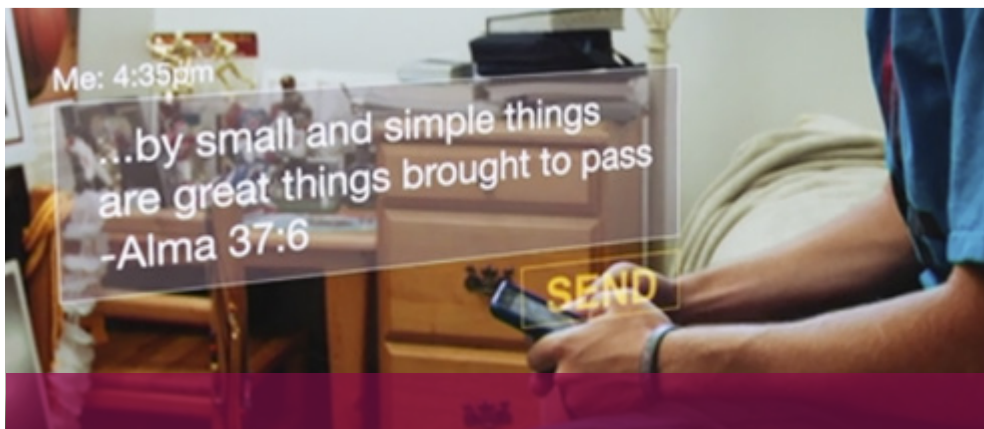


IF WE CHOOSE
CHRIST,
WE WILL HAVE MADE
THE CORRECT CHOICE.

President Thomas S. Monson
April 2016 general conference

New Era

WHAT'S ONLINE



GROUP TEXTS *and Mission Prep*

Normally, learning how to communicate outside of text messages is an important step to mission prep. But one group of young men has created a way that texting helps them prepare. See how at lds.org/go/textNE916.



**CHECK OUT
RESOURCES AT**

mentalhealth.lds.org

HELP FOR *Depression and Mental Illness*

What do you do when you or those you love experience sometimes-crushing depression? When prayer, scripture study, and gospel living alone don't seem to take away the pain, go to mentalhealth.lds.org for ideas and hope. You can also check out pages 32-37 of this issue for more ideas.

AVOIDING *Dangerous Waters*

Some people say that commandments restrict us, but the truth is that they keep us out of dangerous waters. Watch this short, humorous video to see how.



WATCH
"WHY DOES GOD GIVE US
COMMANDMENTS?" AT

lds.org/go/commandmentsNE916