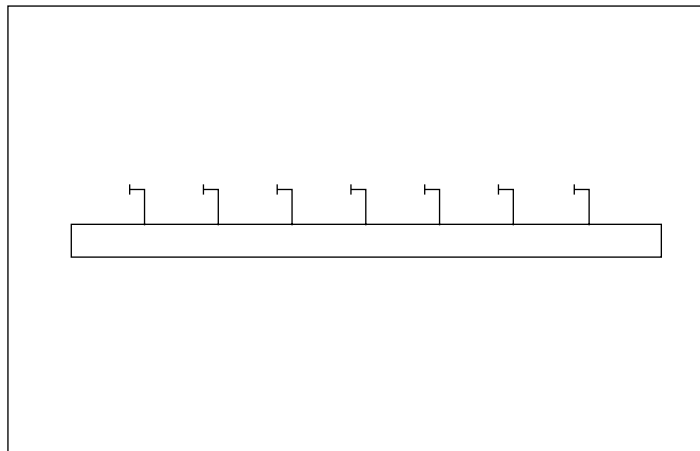

Purpose To help class members understand the importance of being morally clean.

- Preparation**
1. Prayerfully study Genesis 39:1–20; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 2 Nephi 28:8, 20–22; Moroni 7:16–17; Doctrine and Covenants 98:11; 133:5; Articles of Faith 1:13.
 2. Additional reading:
 - a. *For the Strength of Youth* (34285). You may want to consult the bishop about obtaining copies of this pamphlet for class members who do not have one.
 - b. Two addresses given by Elder Richard G. Scott: “Making the Right Choices” (Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 49–53; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 37–39) and “Do What Is Right” (*Ensign*, June 1997, 51–55).
 3. Prepare a snapping turtle trap: Pound nails into a two-foot-long piece of board at three- or four-inch intervals. Bend the head of each nail at a 90-degree angle (see the illustration). If it is not feasible to prepare this trap, draw a picture of it on the chalkboard.



4. Materials needed:
 - a. A chart containing the thirteenth article of faith (make your own or use chart 65013 from the meetinghouse library).
 - b. A set of scriptures and a scripture marking pencil for each class member.
Continue to encourage class members to bring their own scriptures to class each week.

Note to the teacher For youth there are few challenges as important, as difficult, or as far-reaching as staying morally clean. Satan is walking among our youth “as a roaring lion, . . . seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

Use tact and sensitivity as you help class members understand that sexual intimacy is a gift from God that can bring great fulfillment and pleasure but must be used within the guidelines God has established. He has instructed us that this intimacy should take

place only within marriage. Satan tries to convince us that this gift can be used freely, but following his temptations will bring regret, pain, sorrow, and destruction. Teach class members about the happiness and peace of mind that can be theirs if they stand firm against Satan and keep the Lord's standards of moral cleanliness.

You may want to take two weeks to teach this lesson. If you teach the entire lesson in one week, discuss the media and clothing only briefly, or focus on the parts of the lesson you feel are most necessary for your class.

Suggested Lesson Development

Chastity Is a Precious Gift

Quotation and discussion

Read the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:

“May I talk to you just a moment or two about that which is most dear and precious above all things. Can you think what it would be? Would it be bonds, stocks, or diamonds? Would it be herds or flocks? Would it be automobiles and houses? Would it be medals in athletics?”

- What do you think President Kimball is talking about?

Allow class members a few moments to respond, then continue the statement:

“It cannot be purchased with money, but may be enjoyed by all, even those of humble circumstances as well as the affluent, as much by the high school student as by those who have doctors degrees. . . . That of which I speak is chastity and virtue” (in Conference Report, Sydney Australia Area Conference 1976, 54).

- What is chastity?

Help class members understand that being chaste means keeping the Lord's standard of moral (sexual) cleanliness. Heavenly Father has commanded that we abstain from any kind of sexual intimacy before marriage and be completely faithful to our spouse after marriage. He has also commanded us to avoid immoral forms of entertainment and to keep our thoughts pure.

- President Kimball said that chastity is more important than money, possessions, or awards. Why do you think he felt so strongly about chastity?

Scripture story and discussion

Point out that the scriptures contain many examples of people who understood the importance of chastity. One of these people was Joseph, who was sold into slavery by his brothers and became the servant of Potiphar, a prosperous Egyptian (see Genesis 37; 39).

Have class members read Genesis 39:7–12. Explain that Joseph knew the Lord's standard of chastity and recognized that Potiphar's wife was trying to persuade him to violate that standard (see Genesis 39:9).

- What did Joseph do when his chastity was threatened? (Genesis 39:12.)
What did he risk by doing this?

Explain that Joseph had held a high position in Potiphar's household. However, when Potiphar's wife lied about the incident and said Joseph had made improper advances to her, Joseph was thrown into prison (see Genesis 39:13–20).

- Why do you think Joseph was willing to risk so much in order to stay chaste?

Ask class members to think about the following questions without answering them out loud:

- What would you have done in a similar situation? How important is chastity to you?

We Must Resist Satan's Temptations

Object lesson

Display the snapping turtle trap (or refer to the drawing on the chalkboard).

- What do you think this object might be?

After class members have had a chance to respond, explain that it is a trap to catch snapping turtles. Give the following information in your own words:

Delicious soup can be made from the meat of snapping turtles. However, these turtles are very smart and very mean, so they are difficult to catch. When they are in the water, they can use their beak-like mouths to steal the bait used to lure them without even touching the hook holding the bait. In the water they are safe and in control. If you can lure them out of the water, however, they are easier to catch.

Hold up one end of the trap so that the bent nails are pointing upward.

If you put raw meat on the top of this trap and set the bottom end of the trap in the water, the turtle will smell the meat and climb up the trap to eat it. When you move toward the trap, the turtle, sensing danger, will pull into its shell and try to slide back into the water. But its shell will catch on one of the nails and it will be stuck. Then you can take it home and make it into turtle soup.

Explain that a man who fished for snapping turtles compared the turtles' safety in the pond to our safety in the gospel. Then he made the following statement:

"Television, movies, magazines, and other media of our day scream out that good times are associated with immorality, alcohol, and violence. Some seemingly good kids in your school may smoke marijuana and use drugs. The attractive young men and women in beer commercials seem to be having fun.

"It's bait. Just like the smelly meat on the plank in my Georgia pond, this bait can be used to trick and betray you. If we allow ourselves to be tricked into leaving the safety of the Church and gospel, we may also be trapped. You simply cannot afford to take the risk of becoming turtle soup!" (Ron Whipple, "Catch a Snapping Turtle," *New Era*, July 1996, 26–27).

Discussion

- Why does a turtle climb up on the trap?

Point out that the turtle is seeking something desirable—food. In other circumstances, it would be good for the turtle to eat the food. In this case, however, the food is being improperly offered, and it results in death to the turtle. Similarly, sexual pleasure is not inherently bad, but when sought in the wrong circumstances—in any situation outside of marriage—it becomes destructive and can result in spiritual death.

Explain that when Satan designs bait to lure us into improper behavior, he is very subtle. He does not begin by immediately tempting us to commit serious sins. Instead, he tempts us into seemingly innocent thoughts and activities that can easily lead to more serious sins (see 2 Nephi 28:8, 20–22).

- What are some kinds of bait that Satan uses to lure us into immorality? (Answers may include immodest clothing, unclean movies or television programs, dirty jokes, and immoral music.)

Satan Uses the Media to Lure Us into Immorality

Quotation
and teacher
presentation

Explain that some of Satan’s bait comes through the media. Read the following statement from *For the Strength of Youth* (if you brought copies for class members, have them follow along on page 11):

“Whatever you read, listen to, or watch makes an impression on you. Public entertainment and the media can provide you with much positive experience. They can uplift and inspire you, teach you good and moral principles, and bring you closer to the beauty this world offers. But they can also make what is wrong and evil look normal, exciting, and acceptable.”

Point out that many popular movies, television programs, books, magazines, and music reflect the world’s standards, which are very different from the Lord’s standards. Not only do worldly standards promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, and violence, they incorrectly suggest that sexual intimacy should be available to anyone at any time. Media that promote worldly standards usually fail to show the physical and spiritual harm that comes from breaking God’s commandments.

Quotation

Have a class member read the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“There are storms blowing around you. There is the clever exploitation of sex and violence to be seen on television and through videotapes, [pornographic] magazines, long distance telephone services, and even the Internet.

“My plea to you . . . is to distance yourselves from these things. You can [change the channel] on the TV set. You can shun like a plague the renting or acquisition of videotapes designed to titillate and lead you into regrettable paths. . . . You don’t have to read sleazy literature of any kind. It will not help you. It will only injure you” (“True to the Faith,” *Ensign*, June 1996, 4).

Discussion

- Have you ever said or heard someone else say, “This movie is OK because it only has one bad scene” or “I like the music but I never listen to the words”? What is wrong with these justifications for watching or listening to immoral things?

Point out that even a small amount of evil can affect us negatively by making us temporarily unable to feel the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Accepting a small amount of evil will also make us more susceptible to greater evil. If we watch movies with “just one” bad scene, we will become less concerned about movies with several bad scenes and will accept more immorality and evil into our lives. When we listen to music, even if we do not consciously notice the lyrics, our subconscious mind may be listening to them and recording them in our memory.

- How can you make sure that the movies, television shows, music, books, magazines, and other media that influence you are reflective of the Lord's standards, rather than the world's?

Scripture discussion

Have class members read Moroni 7:16–17 and discuss what these verses teach about how to evaluate what is good and what is evil.

Then display the chart containing the thirteenth article of faith, and refer to the last sentence, which can help us in our selection of movies, music, and other media.

Help class members understand that we should do more than just avoid evil. We are instructed to “forsake all evil,” but at the same time to “cleave unto all good” (D&C 98:11). The thirteenth article of faith says that we should “seek after” good things—make an effort to find them, study them, and discover their beauty. We should shun media that do not meet the Lord's standards, but we should also seek out media that support the Lord's standards.

Invite class members to tell about ways they have sought out and found worthy movies, music, books, and other media.

Satan Uses Fashion to Lure Us into Immorality

Quotation

Explain that another way Satan lures us into immoral behavior is by encouraging us to wear immodest clothing. Have a class member read the following statement from *For the Strength of Youth* (if you brought copies for class members, have them follow along on page 8):

“Servants of God have always counseled his children to dress modestly to show respect for him and for themselves. Because the way you dress sends messages about yourself to others and often influences the way you and others act, you should dress in such a way as to bring out the best in yourself and those around you.”

Story and discussion

To illustrate the point that how a person dresses affects how he or she behaves, tell the following story in your own words:

A coach of a professional sports team was very disturbed by the actions and language of team members when they were traveling by chartered airplane to their various destinations. They harassed the flight attendants, threw food, and yelled the length of the airplane to one another. The airlines had a difficult time getting flight attendants that would work when this team was flying.

After much thought, the coach came up with a solution. From that point on, the team members were required to wear a suit, tie, and dress shoes when traveling, instead of the casual attire they had been allowed to wear before. Their behavior improved greatly. It seemed that when they were dressed like gentlemen, they behaved like gentlemen. Flight attendants even began requesting to work on flights chartered by this team.

- What helped the team members improve their behavior?
- How does your behavior change depending on what you are wearing? How do you act when you are wearing your oldest, dirtiest clothes? How do you act when you are wearing your Sunday best?

Explain that when we wear immodest clothing—clothing that is too short or too tight or that draws inappropriate attention to our bodies—we may begin to think and act immodestly as well.

Point out that how we dress also affects those around us. Immodest clothing may encourage those who see us to pay too much attention to our bodies. It may also lead them to believe untrue things about our standards and our behavior.

Discussion

You may need to point out that the styles that are most fashionable are not always modest. Ask class members for suggestions on what they can do when the clothing that is currently fashionable is immodest. Help them understand that sometimes fashionable styles can be modified so that they are modest (for example, a skirt can be lengthened or a shirt can be made out of a similar but heavier fabric). If the styles cannot be modified, however, we should always choose modesty over fashion.

Read again the statement from page 8 of *For the Strength of Youth*.

- How can you show your respect for God and for yourself by the way you dress? How can you “dress in such a way as to bring out the best in yourself and those around you”?

Satan Appeals to Natural Desires to Lure Us into Immorality

Teacher presentation

Present the following information in your own words, being sensitive to the maturity level of the members of your class (some 12- and 13-year-olds are very interested in members of the opposite sex and need guidance in forming appropriate relationships with them, while others of the same age may be uninterested or even embarrassed by the suggestion of interest in the opposite sex):

Physical attraction to members of the opposite sex is natural and normal. Heavenly Father has given us these feelings, but he has also instructed us to control them until the appropriate time and circumstance for expressing them.

To help control these feelings, Church leaders have counseled youth not to date until they are at least 16 years old. Some physical expressions of affection may be appropriate in dating situations, but they should be reserved for specially selected people at the proper time in your life, not indulged in casually. These expressions are not appropriate before you are old enough and mature enough to date properly.

Other expressions of affection are only appropriate with your spouse after you are married. These expressions include sexual intercourse and any actions that lead to it, such as intense kissing, touching any part of another person's body under their clothing, or touching another person's “private parts” on top of or underneath their clothing. A good rule of thumb is that any thoughts or actions that increase your interest in or desire for another person's body are inappropriate. These thoughts and actions are sinful outside of the marriage relationship.

Remind class members that if they have already participated in inappropriate behavior, they should talk with the bishop. He can counsel them about how to repent. If class members have concerns about what is or is not appropriate, encourage them to talk privately with their parents or the bishop.

Joy Awaits the Pure

Story and discussion

Point out that keeping the Lord's standards of moral cleanliness will not necessarily make us popular. But it will lead us toward eternal happiness, which is much more valuable than the approval of the world.

Tell the following story in your own words:

Hal had always done his best to serve the Lord. He tried to keep the commandments and do what the Lord would have him do. Sometimes this was not easy.

Many of Hal's friends and acquaintances were uninterested in religion and lived a lifestyle that seemed to mock Christian teachings. Everyone knew Hal was a Latter-day Saint, and sometimes his companions ridiculed him for his beliefs. Usually Hal ignored their teasing, but sometimes it made him feel isolated and rejected. He sometimes wondered if working so hard to keep the commandments and maintain his integrity was worth it.

During his dating years, Hal dated several girls who were attractive and made him feel less isolated and rejected. When he became aware that these girls desired physical affection from him, Hal often wondered, "Am I really different from the others? Why should I keep trying to stay morally clean? It would be so easy not to." But Hal knew what the Lord expected of him. He knew that he should continue the pattern of righteousness he had established in his life. He lived the law of chastity, although it was painful when some girls seemed to lose interest in him because he maintained the Lord's standards.

When Hal found the young woman who was right for him, he was worthy to marry her in the temple for eternity. Years later, Hal looked back at his early life and realized that all that made him happy—his wife, his family, the Church—were his because he had maintained his standards and sought to live righteously. He thanked Heavenly Father for giving him the strength to do what was right. Now he understood what happiness could come from keeping himself morally clean.

- What might have happened if Hal had not remained morally clean?
- What blessings do we receive in this life for staying morally clean?
- What blessings will we receive in eternity for staying morally clean?

Testimony

Explain that our bodies are temples and the Lord has commanded us to keep these temples clean (see 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; D&C 133:5), which includes being clean in body, mind, and spirit. Bear your testimony of the importance of staying morally clean.

Urge class members to keep the Lord's standards and be morally pure and clean.

Enrichment Activities

You may want to use one or more of these activities during the lesson.

1. Ask the bishop to recommend a young adult whom class members can look up to. This person could be someone who has recently received a mission call or is preparing for a temple marriage. Invite him or her to come to class and share his or her feelings about living a clean life and the peace and joy that come from keeping the law of chastity.

2. If the following video segments are available, show one of them:
 - a. "Morality for Youth," a 22-minute segment of *Come unto Me* (53146).
 - b. "Chastity: As a Man Soweth," a 2-minute segment of *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277).
3. Discuss with class members the article "You Promised," by Elder M. Russell Ballard (*New Era*, Feb. 1994, 4–7). You may want to make a copy of this article for each class member to take home and study.
4. Explain that in today's world, we are often led to believe that important expressions of affection should always be physical. However, there are many ways we can express affection or appreciation without violating the Lord's standards. Ask class members to suggest righteous and wholesome ways they can show affection or appreciation for members of the opposite sex. List responses on the chalkboard.
5. If you feel class members need more emphasis on avoiding the evils of pornography, read or tell the story "The Enemy in the Gutter" (John Bytheway, *New Era*, Mar. 1992, 8).