

Those Words

By Angie Bergstrom Miller

Based on a true story

*“Ye shall not swear by my name falsely,
neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God”
(Leviticus 19:12).*

Shelby didn't like hearing bad words, especially when her friends at school took the Lord's name in vain.

“Please don't say those words around me,” she'd say to her friends.

But sometimes they forgot, and she had to remind them.

One day Shelby's friend Beth rolled her eyes and said, “Oh, yeah, I forgot. Nobody says *those* words in front of Shelby. She's trying to make us *good* like she is.”

The other girls laughed.

Shelby was embarrassed. She felt bad for always asking her friends not to say those words around her—especially when they didn't think the words were bad.

When Shelby got home from school, she flopped down on her bed. Her mother came in a few minutes later, and Shelby told her what had happened.

“Try not to worry about it,” Mom said. “You just keep doing the right thing, and eventually your friends won't want to say those words anymore.”

“Why does it matter if my friends say those words?” Shelby asked. “It's not like I am swearing.”

“The prophets have taught us that we should keep ourselves worthy to feel the Spirit at all times. Bad words offend the Spirit,” Mom said.

Shelby remembered times she had felt the Spirit: at family home evening, when she bore her testimony, when she got a blessing from her father. Shelby liked feeling the Spirit, and she didn't want



to do anything that would offend that warm, peaceful comfort.

She made up her mind to keep being an example to her friends and help them to understand that she didn't like to hear those words.

The next day at school, she heard those words again.

"Please don't say those words around me," Shelby asked Becca.

Becca glared at Shelby and then ignored her. Shelby was glad she had said something but felt sad that her friend was upset.

At recess Shelby heard someone say those words again. This time it was Beth.

"Please don't say that around me," Shelby said.

"Sorry," Beth said, rolling her eyes.

Shelby felt silly once again.

At softball practice after school, Shelby hit a ball. It bounced to first base and got there before Shelby did. Shelby heard Bonnie, the new girl on the team, take the Lord's name in vain.

Shelby hesitated. She was tired of asking people not to say those kinds of words around her. She didn't want the other girls to make fun of her.

"Please don't say those words around her."

Shelby turned around to see who had spoken.

Beth was telling Bonnie that Shelby was a Latter-day Saint and that she didn't say those kinds of words and didn't feel comfortable hearing those words either.

Bonnie turned and looked at Shelby. "Sorry, Shelby. I didn't know."

Beth grinned at Shelby. "I guess we're all becoming more like you," Beth said.

Shelby smiled. She was happy she had made the decision to be a good example to her friends and to follow the prophet's counsel to keep the Spirit with her. ■

I will use the names of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ reverently. I will not swear or use crude words."

My Gospel Standards

