

ONE WORD AND A LESSON OF A LIFETIME

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Integrity is the way you act when you think no one is looking.

It was a blistering 115 degrees F (46°C) outside, typical for a summer day out on the farm in Brawley, California, USA. I kicked the tire of the huge water truck that had broken down for the third time in four days. I relied on my summer job to pay for entertainment, school clothes, and

eventually college. Despite the heat, I hated having to cut a day's work short, but it looked like I was going to have to do so again.

David, a member of our ward and a family friend, walked over from the mill to take a look at the truck. Venting my frustrations to him, I was tempted to say a word I had heard others use when they were annoyed. The moment before I actually said it, the thought crossed my mind that I shouldn't because I knew it was a bad word. But in an instant, I brushed it off, thinking no one would ever find out. I said the word, but it didn't make me feel any better.



INTEGRITY AND SELF- RESPECT

"Perhaps the surest test of an individual's

integrity is his refusal to do or say anything that would damage his self-respect."

President Thomas S. Monson, "In Search of an Abundant Life," *Liahona*, Aug. 1988, 3; "In Quest of the Abundant Life," *Ensign*, Mar. 1988, 4.

Looking up, David told me he and Dad would fix the truck when they could. In the meantime, I found other work to do for the rest of the day.

Hopping into Dad's truck at the end of the day, we began the drive home. Not too long after getting on the road, Dad looked over at me and mentioned that David had told him about my reaction to the truck breaking down, swear word and all. "David said he never expected to hear something like that come out of my daughter's mouth," Dad said.

"He respects you too much, honey."

I hung my head, and the tears came quickly. I had lowered myself in the eyes of people whose opinions I cared about. But most of all, I felt disappointed in myself and knew God did too. I realized that was why saying the word hadn't made me feel any better.

I made a promise never to say that word again or anything else that would not please God, not because I didn't want to make my dad and David ashamed of me but because it was the right thing to do. Integrity, I learned, is the way you act when you think no one is looking. ■