

THE **New Era**

JANUARY 2012



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SHINE FORTH,”**
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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431.



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The New Era Magazine Volume 42, Number 1 January 2012

The monthly publication for youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Editorial Offices:
New Era
50 E. North Temple St.
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Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

E-mail Address:
newera@ldschurch.org

To Change Address:
Send old and new address information to:
Distribution Services
P.O. Box 26368
Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.
Please allow 60 days for changes to take effect.

Cover: "Arise and shine forth"—the 2012 Mutual theme, p. 6.

Cover photography: Robert Casey

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By Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

KEEPING COVENANTS

A MESSAGE FOR
THOSE WHO WILL
SERVE A MISSION



The key to this work is in keeping our covenants. In no other way can we claim and demonstrate the powers of godliness.

I am going to talk to you about the tremendous importance of keeping covenants—me keeping mine and you keeping yours. This is a subject larger than a discussion of obedience, though obedience is certainly a part of it. And it is a very personal subject.

In a way it is the most fundamental thing we can discuss in the gospel plan, because only covenant makers and covenant keepers can claim the ultimate blessings of the celestial kingdom. Yes, when we talk about covenant keeping, we are talking about the heart and soul of our purpose in mortality.

Building the Kingdom One Covenant at a Time

A covenant is a binding spiritual contract, a solemn promise to God our Father that we will live and think and act in a certain way—the way of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In return, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost promise us the full splendor of eternal life.

It is interesting to me that covenants are made personally, individually. There is a covenant at the time of baptism and confirmation, which starts us on the way to eternal life. Those ordinances are performed for individual persons, one by one, no matter how many must ultimately receive them.

There is a covenant at the time men receive the priesthood. That conferral is always given to one individual at a time.

The highest covenants we can make are in the temple. That is where we make our most solemn promises to our Father in Heaven and where He opens to us more fully the real meaning of His promises to us. Once again, these are individual experiences, even as we go to the temple to be sealed to other individuals.

That's how the kingdom of God is built—one person at a time, one covenant at a time, all roads in our mortal journey leading to the ultimate covenants of the holy temple.

The Role of Temple Covenants

It is so important for you to understand that going to the temple for your own endowment, including the magnificent ordinances that prepare you for that endowment, are an integral part of your mission preparation and your mission commitment.

When you go to the temple, you will begin to understand the significance of those temple covenants, the inextricable link between your endowment there and your missionary success.

Indeed, the very word *endowment* conveys the essence of that vital link. An endowment is a gift. It contains the same root word as *dowry*, which is a special gift to start a new couple on their married life. While I was president of Brigham Young University, I spent a certain amount of my time trying to build up the university's endowment, its treasury of gifts from generous donors.

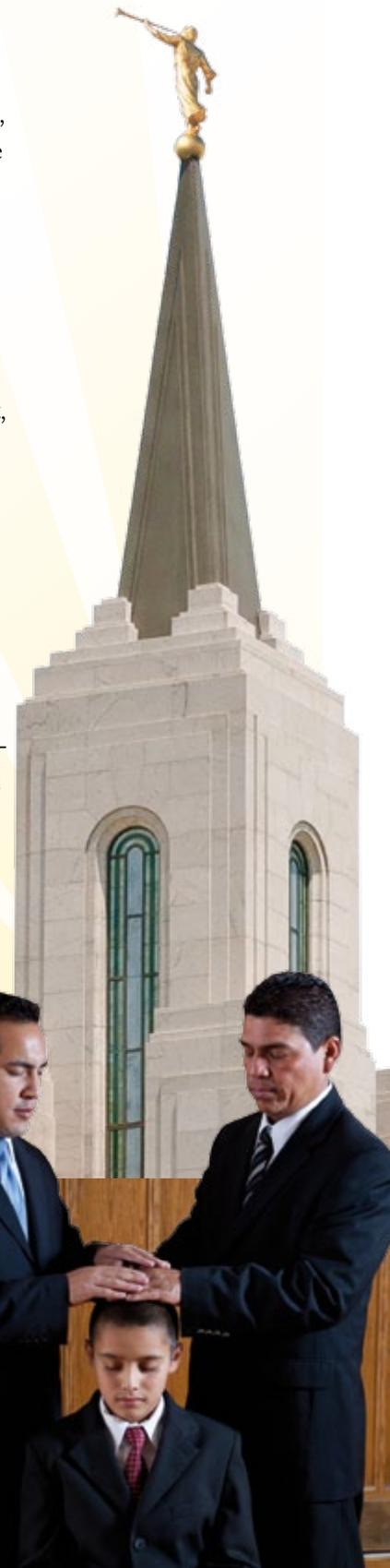
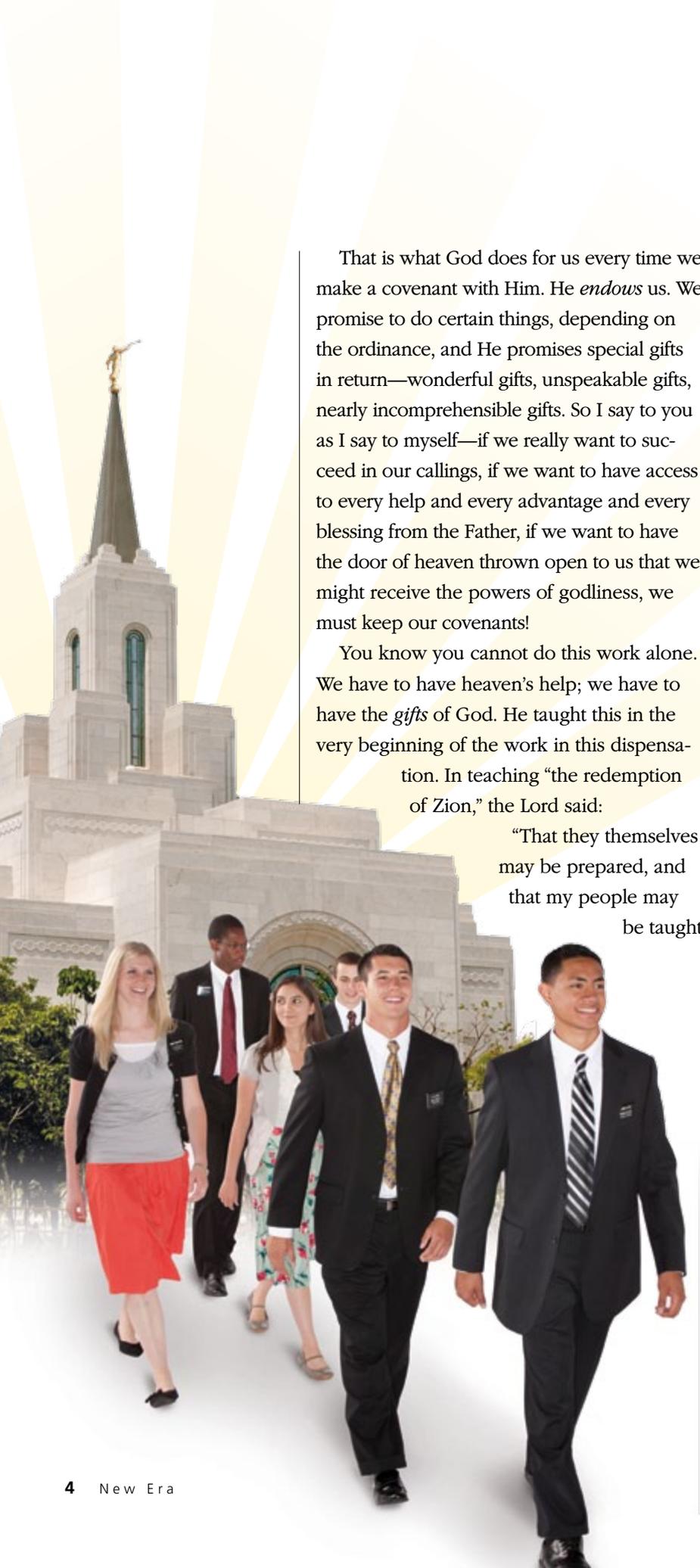


PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHRISTINA SMITH AND MATTHEW REIER





That is what God does for us every time we make a covenant with Him. He *endows* us. We promise to do certain things, depending on the ordinance, and He promises special gifts in return—wonderful gifts, unspeakable gifts, nearly incomprehensible gifts. So I say to you as I say to myself—if we really want to succeed in our callings, if we want to have access to every help and every advantage and every blessing from the Father, if we want to have the door of heaven thrown open to us that we might receive the powers of godliness, we must keep our covenants!

You know you cannot do this work alone. We have to have heaven's help; we have to have the *gifts* of God. He taught this in the very beginning of the work in this dispensation. In teaching “the redemption of Zion,” the Lord said:

“That they themselves may be prepared, and that my people may be taught

more perfectly, and have experience, and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands.

“And this cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high.

“For behold, I have prepared a great endowment and blessing to be poured out upon them, inasmuch as they are faithful and continue in humility before me” (D&C 105:10–12).

This work is so serious and the adversary's opposition to it is so great that we need every divine power to enhance our effort and move the Church steadily forward. The key to that for us as individuals is the covenant we make in the temple—our promise to obey and sacrifice, to consecrate unto the Father, and His promise to empower us with “a great endowment.”

Covenants and the Lord's Work

Does this help you see how fundamental our personal, individual promises are to the overall sweep and grandeur of the work? Like everything else in the plan of salvation, the success of all of the elders and sisters around the world is determined one missionary at a time.

We don't make covenants as entire wards or stakes. No, we make covenants as Brother Brown or Brother Burns, Sister Jones or Sister Jensen. The key to this work is the keeping of covenants by individuals.

I don't know what mission you will serve in, but I don't believe our Father in Heaven has made any particular promises to your mission as a mission. I do know He has made great promises to you personally.

It is when an entire mission is united by the strength of every missionary's integrity, every

missionary's personal covenant keeping, that we move mountains. When there is such unity and power, an endowment from heaven, coming to every individual in the mission, nothing can "stop the work from progressing." It is in this way that the "truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent."¹

We have that confidence when there is no weak link in the chain, when there is no vulnerable chink in the armor. The war against evil and error is the way every gospel victory is achieved—one covenant at a time, one individual at a time, one missionary at a time.

That is why the Lord said to the early leaders of the Church, "Bind yourselves to act in all holiness before me—that inasmuch as ye do this, glory shall be added to the kingdom which ye have received" (D&C 43:9–10).

That is covenant language. That is precisely what we go to the temple to do—to bind ourselves to the Lord and to each other and with that strength to then "act in all holiness." In return, power and glory come to us and our work. It is in precisely that context of covenant keeping the Lord said, "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise" (D&C 82:10).

Trust me. The key to this work is in keeping our covenants. In no other way can we claim and demonstrate the powers of godliness. You have the word of the Lord on that subject.

You will go to the temple to prepare you for your mission. Keep your covenants made there, every one of them. They are very personal, very sacred pledges each of us makes with our Father in Heaven.

A Covenant to Bear Witness

As I ask this of you, I want you to know I will be doing the same. I will keep my

covenants too. One of those covenants is to be, as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a special witness "of the name of Christ in all the world" (D&C 107:23). In keeping my covenants, I not only bear witness to you today of the Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified, but I am such a witness—called, ordained, commissioned to take that testimony to the world. I am happy to join you in that ministry, my beloved young friends.

I know that God lives, that He is our literal Father in Heaven, and that He will keep His promises to us forever. I know Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of the Father in the flesh, and the Savior of the world. I know He suffered, bled, and died that we might have eternal life.

I know the Father and the Son appeared to the boy prophet Joseph Smith, the great founding prophet of this dispensation, who also shed his blood as a testament of his calling, the ultimate symbol of one's loyalty to his covenants. I know those prophetic keys have descended in an unbroken chain down through 15 other men until at this time they reside in the possession and prophetic ministry of President Thomas S. Monson, God's presiding high priest on the earth today.

This work is true. These declarations are true. I know them independent of any other mortal man or woman who has ever lived. I know them by the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, which give direction to my life and meaning to my testimony and which send me forth—with you—to be a special witness of the Redeemer of the world. ■

From a missionary satellite broadcast address given on April 25, 1997.

NOTE

1. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:540.





YOUNG WOMEN, ARISE AND SHINE!

BY THE YOUNG WOMEN GENERAL PRESIDENCY

This year's Mutual theme is a call for you to be a leader. It is a call for you to lead out in purity, modesty, and holiness. It is a call to change the world!

When you became part of the Young Women organization, you

were given a gold-and-white torch necklace to wear as a reminder that as a young woman in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, you will stand for truth and righteousness and

arise and let your light shine forth to the world. That means you will be true to your divine identity as a precious daughter of God. It means you will strive to stand as a witness of Him and of the Savior "at all times and in all things, and in all places" (Mosiah 18:9).

We hope that this year you will wear your torch necklace proudly to remind yourself that you are an example to those around you. You will "shine forth" as you **pray** daily, **read** in the Book of Mormon, **obey** the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, and **smile**. We know that as you keep the commandments and live the standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*, you will radiate joy and qualify to be guided by the Holy Ghost. This guidance will enable each of you to make choices that will help you be worthy to receive a temple recommend.

As a Young Women general presidency, we testify that as you do these things, the Savior will be there to light your path. He promises, "I will also be your light . . . ; and I will prepare the way before you, if it so be that ye shall keep my commandments; . . . and ye shall know that it is by me that ye are led" (1 Nephi 17:13). **NE**

2012 MUTUAL THEME

"Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations" (D&C 115:5).



Top: Elaine S. Dalton (center), president; Mary N. Cook (left), first counselor; and Ann M. Dibb (right), second counselor. Above: David L. Beck (center), president; Larry M. Gibson (left), first counselor; and Adrián Ochoa (right), second counselor.





BE A SHINING EXAMPLE

BY THE YOUNG MEN GENERAL PRESIDENCY

Young men of the Church—deacons, teachers, and priests of the magnificent Aaronic Priesthood—you have taken upon you the name of the Savior; you bear His holy priesthood; you have been called to do His work and to bless all who know you. Now is the time for you to fulfill your priesthood duties and “shine forth” as a “standard for the nations” (D&C 115:5).

Now is the time to “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Jesus Christ is the perfect example. Strive to know Him, follow Him, and become more like Him by obeying His commandments and keeping the standards of the Church as described in *For the Strength of Youth*. As you do, you will be a shining force of spiritual strength to those around you.

The Lord said, “Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord” (D&C 133:5). Your moral cleanliness will allow you to shine forth with a special light to your ward or branch

members as you worthily represent the Savior in administering the sacred sacrament to them each Sunday.

Watch for and seize opportunities every day to serve your family, friends, quorum members, and others. You will become a joyful example of light to them and to those who quietly observe you.

Shine forth with sincere friendship and kindness to all. Share the wonderful blessings of Church activities and gospel teachings with your friends. Be courageous and invite them to come unto the Light and Life of the World—even Jesus Christ.

We love you. We pray for you. We bear testimony that the Lord loves you and needs you to help build His kingdom. Now is the time for you to “arise and shine forth” as a holder of His holy priesthood. As you magnify this priesthood and fulfill your duty to God, your light will become “a standard for the nations.” **NE**

New Youth Videos for 2012

Visit lds.org/go/121 to watch several short videos about young men and young women who are choosing to arise and shine forth.



Doctrine and Covenants 115:5

The Lord has commanded us to arise and shine forth.

I Say unto You All

In this revelation from 1838, the Lord gave directions regarding the building of a temple in Far West, Missouri, as well as other aspects of the establishment of Zion. He also gave the name of His Church in the last days: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Although this revelation was addressed to Church leaders of that day, the commandment to “arise and shine forth” applies to all of us today.



Arise and Shine Forth

“The Lord has a great work for each of you to do. ‘Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations’ (D&C 115:5). He trusts you, and He calls and relies on you to stand taller and shine brighter in these challenging but wonderful days.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Your Right to Choose the Right,” *New Era*, Aug. 2005, 8.

Thy Light

How can you let your light shine forth? Consider these ideas and write

down some of your own in your journal.

- Be kind, generous, and humble.
- Stand up for and live by Church standards.
- Smile and show the joy of living the gospel.
- Share the gospel with your friends.
- Bear your testimony of the truth.

4 For thus shall ye be called in the last day, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

5 Verily I say unto you all: ‘Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations;

6 And that the gathering together upon the land of Zion, and upon her stakes, may be for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be



Nations

“Today the Lord’s people are gathering ‘out from among the nations’ as they gather into the congregations and stakes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that are scattered throughout the nations. . . . The Lord calls upon us to be beacons of righteousness to guide

those who seek the safety and blessings of Zion.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Come to Zion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 37.

Standard

Standard—an object, usually a flag, placed on top of a pole and used as a rallying point or emblem. See Doctrine and Covenants 45:9.



“Standard-bearers march at the vanguard of a worthy cause. They represent that which is good and noble. They often carry flags or other symbols to express identity, purpose, and unity. . . .

“As His standard-bearers, we are to help the honest in heart to find Jesus. We don’t wave flags. . . . Instead, as standard-bearers for Jesus the Christ, we willingly and gratefully take His sacred name upon us. We enlist in His cause by covenant.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Standards of the Lord’s Standard-Bearers,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1991, 7.

Editors’ note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected scripture verse, only a starting point for your own study.

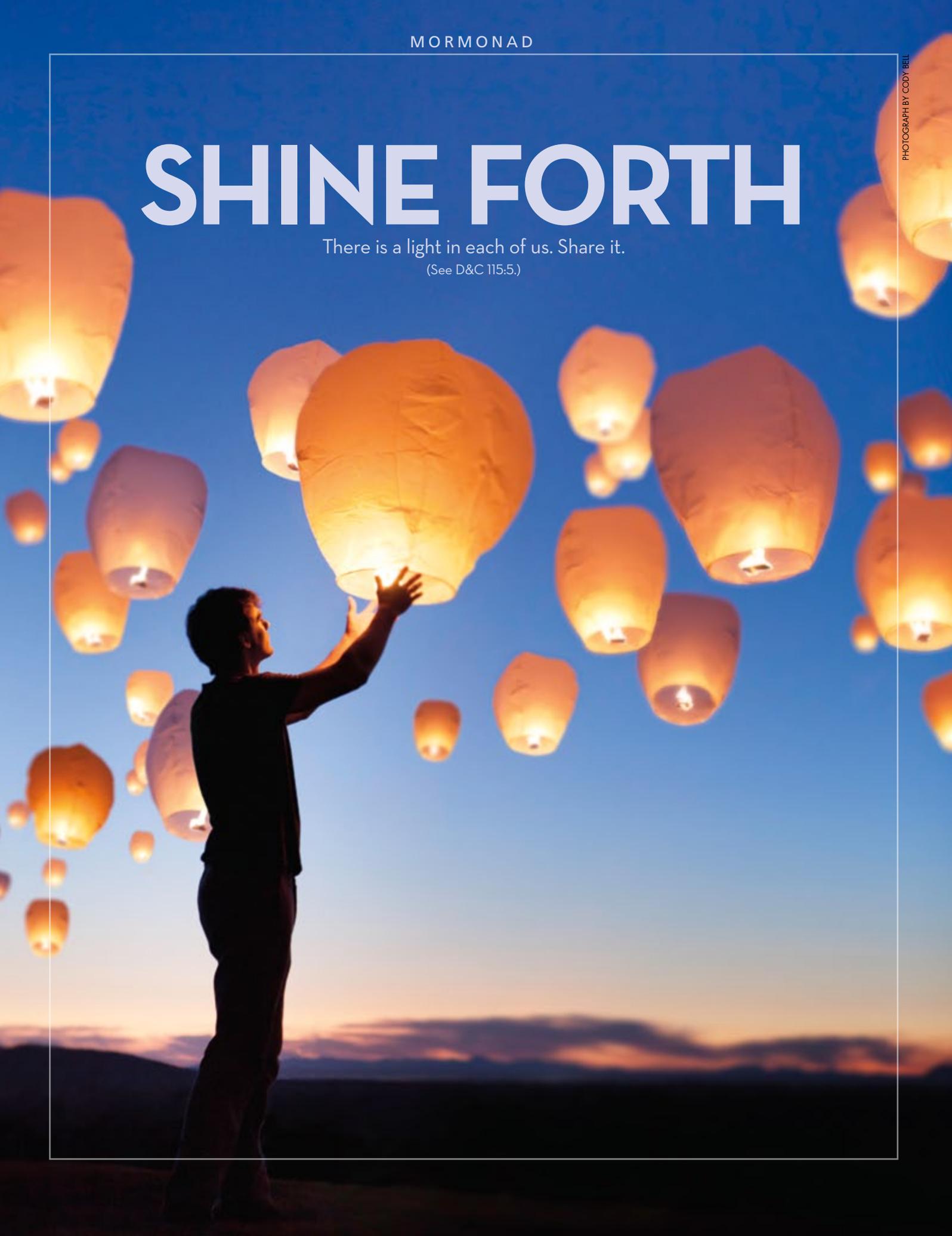
MORMONAD

SHINE FORTH

There is a light in each of us. Share it.

(See D&C 115:5.)

PHOTOGRAPH BY CODY BELL



*My dad taught us a
valuable lesson in a house
that didn't exist yet.*

A SURE FOUNDATION

ILLUSTRATIONS BY PAT GERBER

By Afton Nelson

As I stepped over the concrete and rebar jutting out of the ground, I thought this had to be the strangest family home evening ever. Mom and Dad had loaded all five of us kids into the van and driven us to where our future home was being built. We were excited about our new house and often visited the site to see the progress.

At this stage, however, the progress wasn't very exciting—just long rows of poured cement that looked more like buried walls with iron rebar running through them.

"Sit down," Dad said, and we all looked around to find a comfortable spot to sit. "This is the foundation of our house," he explained. "Our home will be supported by all of this concrete and metal. This foundation will keep our house safe during storms. It will even keep our house standing strong during an earthquake."

This got my attention. Living in California, we were all used to earthquakes, both big and small. We'd seen what earthquakes could do to homes.

"Normally, builders don't make foundations go this deep into the ground for a house this size," my dad gestured into the trench holding the underground concrete. "And once the house is built, we won't even see it. Some people told me I was wasting money to build a deep foundation for our home, but I wanted to make sure our home was as safe as I could make it."

The building of our home was a big part of our lives, but my dad had taken to talking about it at every opportunity. Now he was giving us a family home evening lesson on overbuilt slabs of concrete and iron that no one would ever see after a few more weeks.

Of course, Dad wasn't done with his lesson.

"There is another kind of foundation we need to build as well." We all looked at him expectantly. "Each of us needs as his or her own foundation a testimony of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Just like our home's foundation will keep us physically safe during storms and earthquakes, a testimony will keep us spiritually safe when we face trials and challenges."

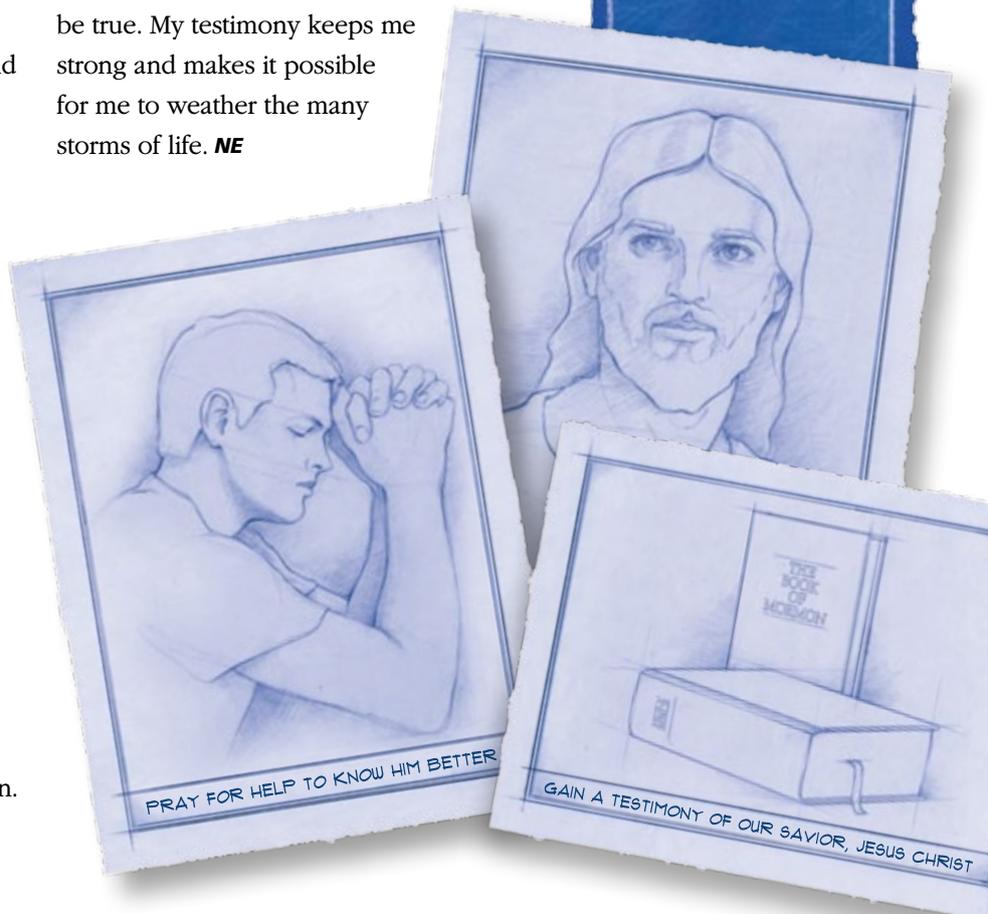
Dad continued, "I challenge each of you to build strong foundations by learning about our Savior and praying for help and ways to know Him better. Follow His example and keep His commandments, and you will be blessed with a strong testimony of Him."

Since that family home evening lesson, set amid the crucial beginnings of our new home, I have learned just how important it is to have a strong, deep testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as my own personal foundation. When adversity comes, I can always rely on what I know to be true. My testimony keeps me strong and makes it possible for me to weather the many storms of life. **NE**

BUILD ON THE ROCK

"Remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall."

Helaman 5:12



“At school, a lot of people curse and talk about immorality.

I want to avoid this bad language,

but it’s everywhere.

What can I do?”

It is difficult to be placed in a situation, such as school, where you have to overhear the bad language used in the halls or the vulgar conversations in the locker rooms. In many ways, it does seem to be everywhere. But there are a few things you can do about it.

First, and perhaps most important, make a real effort not to participate in such talk. Even if you are among friends and you know that they don’t know any better, set the example regarding what type of language is acceptable. Even if you are teased because you refuse to use vulgar words or swear, the only way to make a difference is to simply never give in.

Second, if you are among friends, let them know that the kind of language being used bothers you and that you would prefer they not talk like that around you. If they are truly your friends, they will usually make some effort to do as you ask. Selecting friends with similar standards in the first place is also a big help.

Third, there are times when you simply have to walk away or remove yourself from a conversation or area where the language is objectionable. It will take courage, but it may be the only way to get away from those things. As you continue to make good choices in your own speech, it will get easier to keep unacceptable words from popping into your mind or out of your mouth.

You will also need to replace any bad thoughts with wholesome and uplifting ones. Listen to good music; read and study the scriptures; attend seminary; listen to general conference. Doing these things will allow less room for unworthy thoughts to find place in your mind. **NE**

Choose Friends with the Same Standards



I usually choose friends who have the same standards I have. I just continue to use language that is clean and uplifts. Then I encourage others to do the same. Just stand in holy places and know that Satan cannot tell us what we can and cannot do.

Carl John T., 17, Saipan, North Marshall Islands

Stand Up for What You Believe



The best thing to do is to stay true to your standards and stand up for what you believe in. Explain to your peers that you can’t tolerate that sort of language. I did something similar with my friends, and they stopped the language. They respect me more for standing up for what I believe.

Thomas L., 19, Colchester, England

Keep Your Cool



People have noticed that I don’t curse, and they usually don’t do it around me. When they don’t stop, I just keep my cool and walk away.

Erica B., 16, Texas, USA

Replace the Language

You should tell your friends to watch what they say and replace the bad language with some good language.

Cameron F., 15, Washington, USA

Sing a Song



Every time I feel uncomfortable or hear things I don't want to think about, I'll sing songs in my head like "I Am a Child of God"

(*Hymns*, no. 301) or "Lead, Kindly Light" (*Hymns*, no. 97), which uplift me.

Katelyn N., 14, Pennsylvania, USA

Remember the Prophet Joseph Smith



Whenever I hear bad language, I remember when Joseph Smith was in jail and the guards were cursing and using vulgar language. Joseph told them that if they did not stop either they or he would die. They immediately stopped.

Liliana L., 18, California, USA

Editor's note: Read about Joseph Smith's experience at lds.org/go/122.

Ask Friends to Avoid Bad Language



When I first went into high school, some of the friends I made would swear or make inappropriate jokes. I politely let all of them

know that I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and would appreciate it if they would not use that language around me. They all respected my values, and if they ever let a bad word slip out, they would quickly apologize for what they said.

Brooke O., 16, New Hampshire, USA

Leave if Needed



At lunch, my friends started using bad language and talking about bad things. I did not like to hear that kind of stuff, so I just left.

Now my friends are careful to watch their language around me. If your friends truly are your friends, they will watch their language around you.

Caleb H., 14, Texas, USA

Don't Hang around Those Who Use Bad Language



There are two things you can do. The first thing is to just not listen. Pay attention to your work, and don't hang around the people

who use bad language. Another thing you can do is ask them to stop. Most every time they will respect you and stop. It actually works.

Delaney E., 13, Texas, USA

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



ELIMINATE THESE WORDS

"As a normal part of everyday language, many people take the name of God in vain. Among our youth,

vulgar and crude terms seem to come easily as they describe their feelings. My young friends, now is the time to stand tall in eliminating these words from your vocabulary. You know the words to which I refer. Unfortunately, you hear them used over and over again in your schools, music, and sports. Will it take courage to stand tall? Of course it will. Can you muster the courage? Of course you can. Seek strength from your Heavenly Father to overcome it."

Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop, "Standing Tall," *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 65–66.



The "No Cussing Club"

One young man's crusade to encourage clean language at school has spread to over 20,000 people. See a *Mormon Messages for Youth* video about his example at lds.org/go/123.

NEXT QUESTION

"Is having a boyfriend or girlfriend okay before age 16 as long as you are **not dating?**"

Send your answer and photo by February 15, 2012.

Go to newera.lds.org, click "Submit Material," and then select "Questions and Answers."

You can also write to us at newera@ldschurch.org

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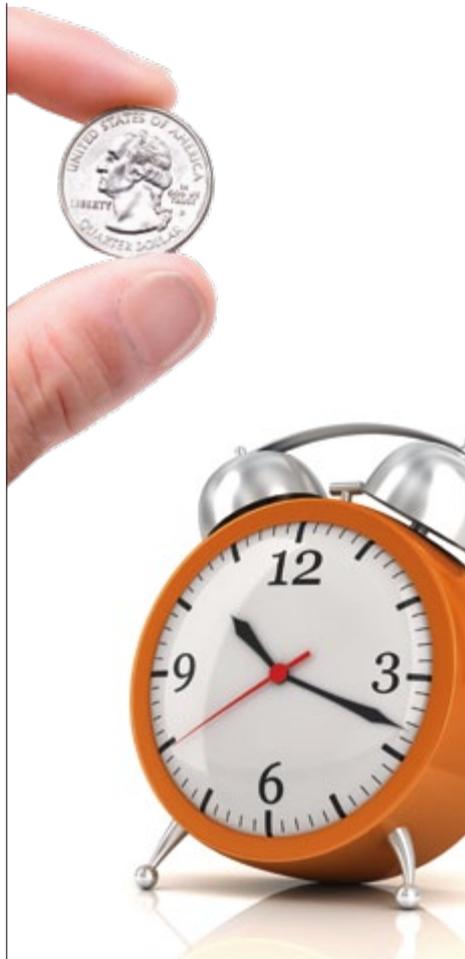
MAKING SENSE OF *Dollars* and *Cents*

Nine tips on how to earn, save, and manage money.

By Hillary Holbrook

Did you ever have an uncle, dad, or grandpa who entertained you by pulling quarters out of his ear? And would you watch the magic trick in amazement, thinking, “How did he do that?” Well, by now you’ve figured out that money doesn’t appear mysteriously—or grow on trees.

Money isn’t just a magic trick—it has to be earned and taken care of. Forming good money-management skills now, while you’re young, will enable you to find peace and security, and it will help you when you go on a mission, get a job, or go to school. Here are nine tips to get you started as a wise money manager.



Be a responsible, honest worker.

If you’re too young to have a regular job that pays a wage, think of other ways to earn money. See the list of money-making ideas on page 17 to help you get started. Once you have a job lined up, be responsible. If you’re reliable, then your clients will remember you and may hire you again.

One way to make a good impression is by being on time or even a few minutes early to a job. And always be an honest worker by doing a thorough, complete job. If your family’s friend is going to pay you to wash a car, then wash the *entire* car, including the tires. Nobody wants to pay the whole price for a job that was done just halfway.

2

Involve your parents.

Never accept a job from someone until you have permission and approval from your parents, who can ensure your safety. They can also help you keep your school and Church priorities organized so that you're not overwhelmed.

3

Have a good attitude.

Elder Stephen B. Oveson, formerly of the Seventy, said that one important aspect of working is having a good attitude. He related an experience from his youth when he had a job he didn't like:

"One afternoon I was hoeing weeds with a friend named Arlen Jenkins. I was complaining and moaning and groaning about the hard work, but he looked at me and said, 'You know, you really need to consider that if we weren't doing this, we might be doing something worse.' That was his attitude. He was always happy doing any type of work because he knew he could be doing something worse. I have tried to reflect that attitude in every job I have had since that time" ("Good Work," *New Era*, Jan. 2007, 38–39).



4

Pay your tithing as soon as you earn the money.

Whenever you receive money, pay your tithing first. Tithing is 10 percent of the money you're paid. If you wait a while to pay tithing on money you've earned, then paying it may be harder because the amount of money continues to add up.

The *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet says: "Paying tithing shows your gratitude for all that God has given you. . . . Your attitude is important in paying tithing. Pay it because you love the Lord and have faith in Him. Pay it willingly with a thankful heart. Pay it first, even when you think you don't have enough money to meet your other needs. Doing so will help you overcome selfishness and be more receptive to the Spirit" ([2001], 34). You can read about the blessings promised to those who pay tithing in Malachi 3:10–12.

KEEP WANTS IN CHECK

“We must not allow our yearnings to exceed our earnings.”

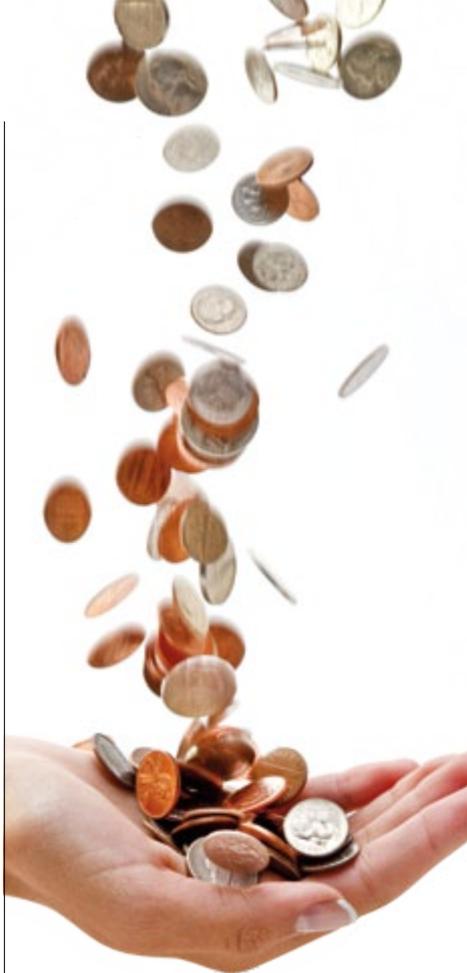
President Thomas S. Monson, "Peace, Be Still," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 54.

5

Just because you have it doesn't mean you have to spend it.

What can be more satisfying than receiving pay for a job well done? While you might be tempted to spend all earnings (minus tithing, of course) on a new pair of jeans or a video game, stop to think. Jeans fade and a video game becomes ordinary, right? One idea is to pay 10 percent in tithing, save 80 percent, and spend only 10 percent. If you make \$10, for example, you could put \$1 toward tithing, save \$8, and spend \$1 on something fun.

President Brigham Young said: "If you wish to get rich, save what you get. A fool can earn money; but it takes a wise man to save and dispose of it to his own advantage" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* [1997], 229).

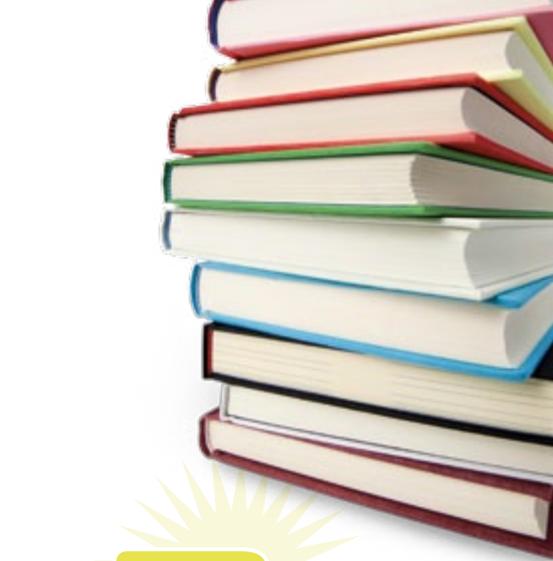


6

Savings accounts aren't just for grown-ups!

With the help of your parents, you could open a savings account at a local bank or credit union. When you have money, consider taking it to the bank instead of collecting the cash in a sock drawer. Putting your money into a savings account could help you save it instead of spending it, because then it's not just lying around.

Many banks and credit unions offer interest on savings accounts. That means your money will actually *increase* by a small percentage over time.



7

Have a goal in mind.

It's good to have a reason for saving money. Decide what you're saving for. If you want to save for a full-time mission, ask your bishop how much a mission costs. If you want to go to college, go online to find the typical price of tuition and books at your desired school.

Don't be worried if the price of your goals seems out of range. Have faith that you can save the money! You'll be surprised at the blessings that come from paying tithing, praying, working hard, and saving. Remind yourself of your financial goal(s) by posting a note or picture in your bedroom to remind you what you're saving your money for.

YOU DON'T NEED IT

“Avoid the philosophy that yesterday's luxuries have become today's necessities. They aren't necessities unless we make them so. . . . I urge you to live within your means.”

President Thomas S. Monson, "True to the Faith," *Ensign*, May 2006, 19.

FIVE WAYS TO EARN MONEY

1. **Babysit.** In your ward or your family's circle of friends, there are probably many parents who need babysitters. If you babysit for a sister in the ward, she might tell her friends you're available and that you did a good job. This is called "word of mouth." I have a friend who started babysitting when she was 12 years old. The more she babysat, the more jobs she got. She did this job, which she enjoyed, until she graduated from high school.
2. **Care for yards.** People with large yards may need help raking leaves, trimming bushes, mowing, weeding, and cleaning out gutters. Make sure you know how to do those things in your own yard before you work in someone else's. And never let the work you do for someone else replace the chores your parents ask you to do.
3. **Give a helping hand.** Although most companies don't hire young people until they're at least 16 years old, you might be able to help a small business. Talk to your parents. Ask if they know anyone who owns a small business, and work with your parents to establish a connection with the business owner. Depending on the kind of business it is, you could offer to help stuff envelopes, input data on a computer, organize files, or assist in general cleanup. Keep in mind, though, that some businesses require a work permit and minimum age. Be in compliance with the law.
4. **Wash cars.** With your parents' help, advertise to friends and family. Practice on your own parents' car several times before you charge others to wash their cars.
5. **Be persistent!** If Sister Smith says she'd love you to babysit her children next Friday night and you don't hear from her for a few days, then call her on Wednesday to make sure she's still planning to have you babysit. The same idea works with any job. When it comes to making money, you can't wait for people to call you. You may need to advertise or talk to people you know who can give you a referral. Developing this quality will be valuable when you're older and have to find a job that pays a wage or salary.



Remember the "garlic clove" lesson.

Although you can save money by purchasing items at a reduced price, don't buy something *just because* it's on sale. Keep in mind the strategies that many stores use to encourage you to buy their products. I learned this lesson when my aunt sent me to the grocery store to buy garlic. When I got there, I found it was on sale: buy three for \$5. So what did I do? I bought three. When I returned, though, I found that my aunt needed only *one* small clove. "You don't have to buy three just because they're on sale," she told me.

Your favorite clothing or gadget store may offer a second item at half price if you buy the first item at the regular price, but that doesn't mean you have to buy both items.

If you learn how to earn, save, and manage money now, your life will be easier in the future when you have more responsibilities. So work your magic and get to work! **NE**



Read More

To read more about the topics in this article, visit LDS.org. In the **Search** field, type in any of the following words: *job, money, work, college, dollar, tithing, mission, finances*. You can read several articles written by youth and Church leaders on each topic.

8

Treat yourself.

No, I'm not just talking about an ice-cream sundae smothered in chocolate sauce! Don't be afraid to spend *some* money. Remember that 10 percent that could go toward having fun (see tip 5)? Consider spending it! One friend of mine said she wished she had spent some money on fun things as a teenager, like going out to eat with her friends or buying a dress for a school dance. Reward yourself for working, but set limits on what you spend.



PEOPLE NOTICED

By Laura A. Austin

My mission companion left her camera sitting on the table next to me. I was delighted. Whenever she got hold of my camera, she would take random, funny pictures for me to find later. Now it was my turn.

I was a young missionary. I was in a new area but serving with a companion I knew well from the missionary

training center. We were attending a branch family home evening with some investigators. Lots of people had been taking pictures of the games, including my companion. I picked up her camera and turned it on. I was sitting by a whiteboard, so I decided to write my companion a note and take a picture of it. Using our mission language of Czech, I was about to write “Jsi bláznivá!” meaning, “You’re crazy!” I knew she would take it as a joke. But something stopped me. I was a representative of Jesus Christ. I didn’t want anyone to misinterpret my actions. So I wrote instead, “Jsi úžasná!” meaning, “You’re amazing!” I took a picture, erased the message, and set the camera back down.

As I turned back to the game, I caught the eye of one of our investigators. He had been watching me the whole time. He smiled his approval.

Throughout my mission, I tried to be aware of my actions and act as a representative of

Christ. I often gave up my seat on public transportation. One companion taught me to notice mothers with strollers in the Prague subway. None of them ever refused help in

carrying a stroller up the stairs and out of the subway. I made a conscious effort to thank others for little things they did to serve, and I avoided negative remarks.

WHEN I TRIED TO BE MORE CHRISTLIKE, IT AFFECTED PEOPLE.

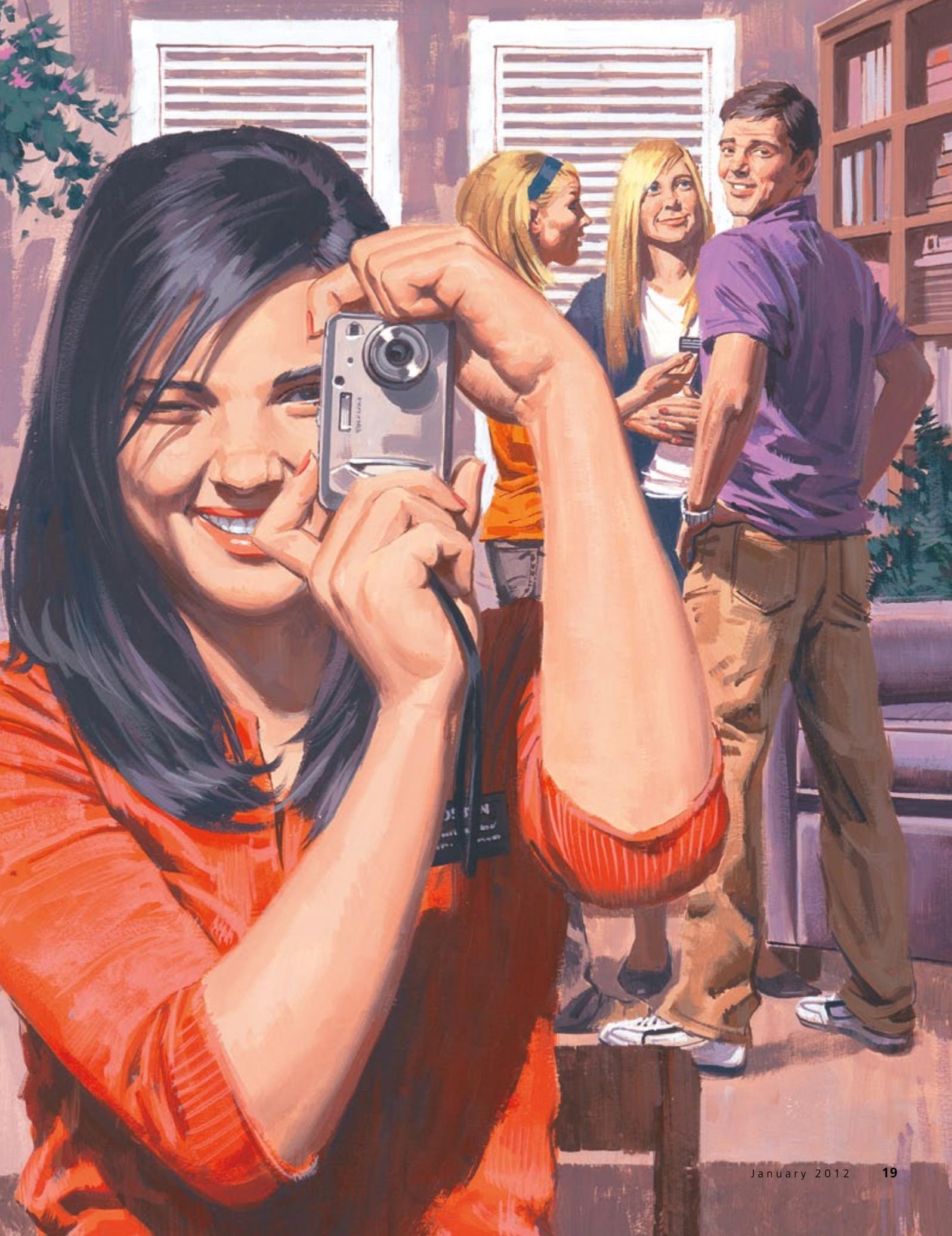
In my last area on my mission, I had another experience that caught me off guard. My companion and I were speaking to a man on the street when a lady tripped on the cobblestone and fell nearby. Without thinking, we both turned to her and took a step forward to see if she needed help. She quickly stood up and walked away unhurt, so we turned back to the man and continued our conversation. He asked a question that surprised me. “As soon as that young woman fell down,” he said, “you both turned to help her. It was your natural reaction. A lot of people don’t do that. Why do you? And why don’t we?”

These experiences taught me about being a disciple of Christ and serving others in love. On my mission, I spent a year and a half focusing on being more Christlike. And it changed me. What started as conscious choices became second nature. I started out trying to act more like Christ. In the end, I was becoming more like Christ. **NE**

THE SAVIOR’S EXAMPLE

“Jesus loved all and He served all. Centering our lives on Jesus Christ will help us acquire this attribute of benevolence. For us to develop these same Christlike attributes, we must learn about the Savior and ‘follow in His ways.’”

Mary N. Cook, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency, “Remember This: Kindness Begins with Me,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 118–19.



Learning to Be a LEADER



Leadership can be an important part of your everyday life.

When the Savior was on the earth, He taught His Apostles about leadership and service:

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

“These things I command you, that ye love one another” (John 15:16–17).

After His ascension into heaven, His disciples became great leaders and built up the Church in their day.

In our day we are called on to be leaders and to beckon others to follow Jesus’s teachings. You may be a leader in your ward or branch or among your group of friends. Young men and young women in a Washington stake recently learned to refine their leadership skills by planning a week-long camp for priests and Laurels. Their stake leaders first taught them about commitment, integrity, and what it means to be a leader. Then they stepped back and let the youth take charge.

The youth lived up to the responsibility and learned important principles in the

process—principles *you* can use in your wards and communities. For example, Neal M. says, “I learned to not just pay attention to how things are done but to go to individuals and help them in whatever way they need.”

Ali S. says she learned to trust in the Lord. “There were so many times when I didn’t know what to do. I would open up the scriptures and find comfort. Two scriptures that really helped were Doctrine and Covenants 64, verses 29 and 33:

“Wherefore, as ye are agents, ye are on the Lord’s errand; and whatever ye do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord’s business. . . .

“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.”

Listening to the Spirit

Leadership involves delegation, or including others. One of the responsibilities for the youth committee in Washington was to choose “tent leaders” to lead small groups at the camp. Ali remembers this experience as a powerful one: “We had a meeting, and we



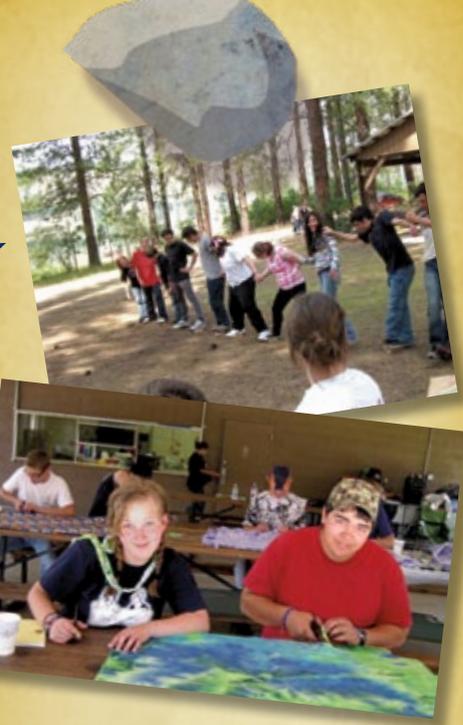
did a lot of praying together and thinking, and we really tried to invite the Spirit to be with us and to guide us.”

Kramer G., one of the tent leaders, says, “The young men in my tent taught me to persevere and to lead by example. I learned I really could be a leader.” That lesson can come to you when you’re willing to be a leader, even if you don’t think you can do it. Ashley S., who was also a tent leader, says she and a coleader learned that they could rely on each other. “I learned it is important to connect with others in order to earn their trust.”

Giving Service

The youth planned camp to include service projects, a testimony meeting, and activities designed to build spiritual strength and group unity—important things for leading any group, class, or quorum. For example, the youth replaced worn-out picnic tables at the camp so the young men and young women could work and serve together. Stephanie T. learned that leadership includes helping others use and develop their talents: “We put together new tables without power tools. We learned to let the ones with know-how lead and to





BUILD LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership takes place in day-to-day life in addition to Church callings. You'll find opportunities to lead in your family, group of friends, school, community, and ward or branch. So how do you learn to lead with confidence? A good place to start is with the teachings in the scriptures.

- Prepare yourself through study, prayer, and faith (see D&C 88:118–19).
- Seek the will of the Lord. When Jesus was on earth, He sought to know what His Father in Heaven wanted, and then He did as He was asked (see John 7:16–18).
- Love those you lead (see John 15:10–12).
- True leadership is about service. Remember the example of King Benjamin in the Book of Mormon (see Mosiah 2:11–19).
- Review the traits of leadership found in Doctrine and Covenants 121:39–45.
- Remember Paul's counsel to Timothy (see 1 Timothy 4:12–16). President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, explains: "Paul gave good counsel for all of us. Don't worry about how inexperienced you are or think you are, but think about what, with the Lord's help, you can become" ("Preparation in the Priesthood: 'I Need Your Help,'" *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 58).

include the others by having them measure and then stain the tables. It was a humbling experience and changed me for the better.”

Christlike leadership includes helping everyone feel welcome. “A few kids were unhappy about being grouped with people they didn’t know,” Neal says. “When we had them participate in the games and projects, they became involved. Now we see each other at stake activities and enjoy being together.” Stephanie agrees: “We go to different high schools, but because of the camp, we now know and interact with others whom we hadn’t met before.”

Building Bonds of Unity and Friendship

The youth also used camp activities to let the participants share meaningful experiences with one another. Ariel says, “I think we all understood better the challenges others are going through. So it’s not ‘Poor me—I’m all alone’ anymore. We gained strength from the friendships we made there.”

Dominic tells of the unity that developed as he helped lead bonding experiences at the camp: “On the first night, we were supposed to have a testimony meeting in our small groups. I had to convince the young men in my group to come. We did some fun getting-acquainted activities first. None of us knew one another. But when we began bearing our testimonies, we started realizing that every one of us had things in common. Sharing testimonies made us stronger individually and as a group. The next day we walked together, laughing and talking, and we are still close to each other.”

Stephanie says she learned to put faith in the Lord. “I had three girls in my tent whom I didn’t know very well, and I had to dig deep to find ways to reach them. One of the girls was just coming back to activity in the Church, so I adjusted our spiritual thoughts to meet her needs. The experience helped her decide to continue going to church. Another girl didn’t want to be there at first, so I had her help me and made her feel welcome. At the end of the

week she thanked me. That made it all worth it.” As you lead, you can work to help others feel needed and important.

Lessons Learned

The lessons from the camp have stayed with the youth and influenced their lives.

Ariel says, “I learned a lot about patience and encouraging others to have fun and be involved. At that time I was feeling impatient with others, so encouraging them was challenging. I learned so much, and it worked out well.”

Dominic appreciates his youth leaders more because of the experience. “They do everything they can to build a bond between us. They are there to help. You know that they genuinely care about you.” As a youth leader, you can look to your leaders for help and direction.

Ali puts it this way: “Every moment of trouble and worry was so worth it as long as the others got something out of it. I wanted them to grow and have the best time with that foundation that we are going to need. One reason why Heavenly Father can love us all so much is because He serves us all so much.” These youth in Washington learned that leadership does involve service and love—just as Jesus taught through His ministry and service. **NE**

THOUGHTS ON LEADERSHIP AND UNITY

Here are several lessons the youth learned about leadership and unity:

“Trust in the Lord. I learned that He is in charge, and I can trust Him. He won’t let me down if I’m doing my best to do His will.” —Ali



“Trust leaders. Know who they are and why they do what they do to lead us on the right path.” —Ashley



“Don’t give up. Keep encouraging others, persevere, and lead by example.” —Kramer



“We all have different talents, and when we work together we can accomplish amazing things.” —Stephanie



“We gain strength in dealing with challenges when we share experiences and build friendships with others.” —Ariel



“I learned a lot about responsibility—not just about how things are done but about helping individuals. The individual touch is an important part of leadership.” —Neal



“You have to have a structure to hold you up, and that’s a function of the family. Quorum members can also give much-needed support during hard times.” —Dominic





Feast Like a

FLAMINGO

By Whitney Hinckley

These funny birds taught me a lesson about being a recognizable member of the Church.

The first time I saw flamingos in real life, I loved their beautiful, rich pink color—it was very different from the bubblegum pink of the plastic lawn ornaments I'd seen.

I was at an aquarium and learned that flamingos' bright pink color comes from the food they eat, which contains high amounts of beta carotene—a pigment that causes an orange, pink, or yellow color. That means that if flamingos don't feast on the algae

and brine shrimp they usually eat, their feathers will eventually become white—and we might not even recognize the white birds as flamingos!

After that day, I started to think about those flamingos in a way I never would have expected.

I thought about what *I* feast on and if it changes how others identify *me*. In 2 Nephi 31:20, we are encouraged to “press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ.” I thought



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN HARVEY / PETER ARNOLD / GETTY IMAGES

about the stories of how people not of our faith describe the members they know as having a “glow” around them or a light in their eyes. Could it be that by our feasting, instead of turning pink like a flamingo, we receive that light from Christ? We receive the Lord’s image in our countenances when we are born of the Spirit (see Alma 5:14). We are recognized as disciples of Christ because of that identifying factor.

If pink flamingos are any indication of good feasting, the opposite is also true. When a flamingo stops eating the nutrient-rich food he needs, he becomes ill and pale. When we stop feasting on the word of Christ, we also slowly become spiritually ill and lose our bright, godly countenances. Eventually, we

would no longer be recognized as faithful followers of Christ.

The more I thought about this, the more applicable the flamingos in the aquarium became to me. They were pink because they were doing everything right. They were not ashamed to be pink—they are supposed to be pink, and because they feasted they were pink. They were beautiful. They were identifiable.

As children of our Heavenly Father, we can all be beautiful too! It’s a beauty that comes from inside, by feasting on the right things. We should want to have Christ’s image in our countenances. We can be just as identifiable as members of the Church as a flamingo is for being a flamingo. **NE**



AN APPETITE FOR THE GOSPEL

“For The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to fulfill its divine mission to assist in bringing ‘to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’ [Moses 1:39], *all* members need to generate an appetite for gospel sustenance. We must ‘hunger and thirst after righteousness’ [Matt. 5:6] before we can be filled. We need to cultivate spiritual strength within ourselves before we can ever hope to engender it in others. . . . We must have personal, spiritual experiences to anchor us. These come through seeking them in the same intense, single-minded way that a hungry person seeks food.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Feasting at the Lord’s Table,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 80.

Become acquainted with the scriptures.

Successful

SCRIPTURE STUDY

How can you study the scriptures? Let me count the ways.

By Paul VanDenBerghe
Church Magazines

STUDY DILIGENTLY

"Crash courses are not nearly so effective as the day-to-day reading and application of the scriptures in our lives. Become acquainted with the lessons the scriptures teach. Learn the background and setting of the Master's parables and the prophets' admonitions. Study them as though they were speaking to you, for such is the truth."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Be Your Best Self,"
Ensign, May 2009, 68.

que en este, ^aofrendas y tus sacramentos al Altísimo, ^bconfesando tus pecados a tus hermanos, y ante el Señor.

13 Y en este día no harás ninguna otra cosa sino preparar tus alimentos con sencillez de corazón, **a fin de que tus "ayunos sean perfectos, o en otras palabras, que tu gozo sea** bal.

14 De cierto, esto es ayunar y orar, o en otras palabras, regocijarse y orar.

Y si hacéis estas cosas con acción de gracias, con ^bcorazón y semblantes ^calegres, no mucha ^drisa, porque esto es ayunar, sino con corazones felices y semblantes alegres, de cierto os digo, que si hacéis esto, la abundancia de la vida será vuestra, las bestias del campo y las aves del cielo, y

talentos o de los bienes de una persona al servicio de Dios y del prójimo.

37; ^aGEE Sacrificios.
^bGEE Confesar, confesión.

13a GEE Ayunar, ayuno.
^bGEE Gozo.

15a GEE Acción de gracias; Agradecido, agradecimiento.
^bProv. 17:22





So you've committed to study the scriptures every day because you really want to learn—you want to gain a testimony of the gospel. You may start with the Book of Mormon. After all, so many prophets both modern and ancient have reminded us that a testimony of the Book of Mormon is essential for each of us to have. You open to 1 Nephi 1:1 and start reading: "I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents . . ."

Every day (hopefully) you read a few more verses or even a few chapters until several months later you reach Moroni 10:34 and read Moroni's parting words, "And now I bid unto all, farewell. . . ." But reading the scriptures from the first verse to the last is only one of the ways to study. By putting a little variety into your approach to scripture study, you just might bring some new life and excitement into your daily reading.

Just remember that no matter which approach you use to study the scriptures, if you always begin with prayer, you'll have a much easier time understanding and finding answers as you read. As you make daily scripture study a habit, be sure to have prayer become a consistent part of your pattern.

Choose a few of the following study suggestions that strike your fancy, or modify them to help you take a fresh look at the scriptures as you study the gospel every day.



Learn about a Topic

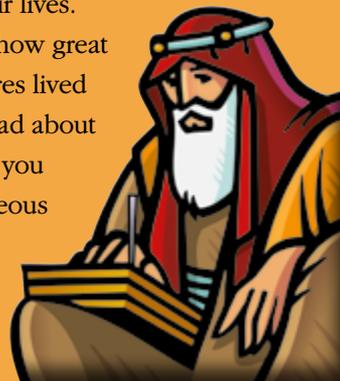
One great way to read the scriptures is to study a specific topic. Maybe your seminary class had a lesson on honesty or in family home evening you talked about prayer, and now you want to learn more. Why not use your personal scripture reading time to learn on your own? The Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures offer some great study helps both online at scriptures.lds.org and in print, including the Guide to the Scriptures,



Bible Dictionary, Topical Guide, Index, and Joseph Smith Translation. Look up "Honesty" or "Prayer" in the study helps, follow the references, and start learning.

Study a Person or Prophet

Choose a particular person or prophet you'd like to understand better, and let that quest guide your scripture study. Maybe you'd like to know more about Mary the mother of Jesus, Haggai, or Ammon. You can use the scripture study helps to find references to learn more about these people and their lives. You'll begin to learn how great people in the scriptures lived the gospel. As you read about others, think of ways you can follow their righteous examples to become more like them.



Seek Answers to Your Questions

Ask questions as you read. If you've been wondering why Sunday is a day of rest, approach your scripture study with that question in mind. You could start by looking up "Sabbath" in the study helps and see where it leads you, or continue reading in a section you're already studying. When you are reading a particular scripture story, ask yourself, "What in my life is like this story?" Try to understand and apply the scriptures in such a way that they will apply to your life and to your current



situations, challenges, and questions. As you pray and read to find answers to a specific question, you'll find that you often discover answers in verses you'd never realized related to your topic.

Look for the Savior and His Teachings

What was the first thing the Savior taught to the people of Nephi when He appeared to them in the land Bountiful? Read in 3 Nephi 11 to find out. What did Christ teach in His Sermon on the Mount? You can read about it in Matthew 5-7 and

Luke 6. What can you learn from the parable Jesus told about the good Samaritan? Study the parable in Luke 10, and decide who is your neighbor.



Make a List of Scriptures

Create a list of scriptures that have special meaning to you. You could start with scripture mastery verses or some of your personal favorites that have inspired you in the past. Maybe you want to work on memorizing a few verses. As you read these special scriptures, try following the cross-references given at the bottom of the page and see where they lead you in your study.

Start today!

However you choose to study the scriptures, your study will help strengthen your testimony and increase your understanding of the gospel. In other words, there is no one correct way to study the scriptures. So don't be afraid to branch out and try some new approaches to the way you read.

You will be richly rewarded for the time you spend studying the scriptures: "For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come" (1 Nephi 10:19). **NE**

Trust in the LORD

Making this scripture my personal theme helped me when trials came.

By Lisa Marie Clayson

When I was 17, my oldest brother, John, passed away. He was only 27 and left behind a wife and young son. I could not have endured through this tragedy without the scriptures to lead and guide my life.

If you have ever had anyone close to you pass away, then you know the pain that strikes in every part of your being. It hurts for a long time. Even though we learn to be happy again and move on, no matter how much time passes, there's still a pain.

When my brother passed away, I learned that it was OK to let myself hurt. It was OK to be sad. I didn't need to be so strong all

of the time. Sometimes there are challenges where we have to rely on others. And I learned I had to rely on the Lord.

About nine months before my brother passed away, I had prayed to my Heavenly Father to find a scripture I could use as a theme in my life that year. I was reading my scriptures and came across Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."

This scripture struck me with such force that I knew this was supposed to be my theme scripture for that year. For the next nine months, I tried to "trust in the Lord." In every experience I went through, those words would echo in my mind.

About a week after John's death, the words in Proverbs echoed in my mind again, and I realized why the Lord wanted me to practice trusting in Him. When my brother passed away, I could have asked my Heavenly Father, "Why? Why did this have to happen to us?" But that question never crossed my mind, because for nine months the Lord had been preparing me to trust in Him. Instead, I was ready to bring comfort to other family members around me who needed it. I felt the peace that comes from the knowledge that family is eternal, and I knew that I hadn't seen John for the last time. Although at times I feel that pain that comes from losing someone you love, I know that my family can be together again after this life. This scripture in Proverbs brought me hope, peace, and guidance in a time of great need. **NE**

lean not
UNTO THINE own
understanding

YOUR FRIENDS'

QUESTIONS

ANSWERING



Questions about the gospel can be intimidating, but you can find the answers.

When people ask you questions about the gospel, you may find yourself thinking something like:

- “I know what I believe, but are my thoughts enough for the answer?”
- “My friends aren’t going to like the answer, because it doesn’t fit with their way of life. I don’t want to offend them, but I want to share the gospel truths.”
- “I know the basic answer, but what if they ask me for more details? I won’t know how to respond.”

These types of thoughts are natural, but they shouldn’t keep you from answering people’s questions. After all, if your friends or coworkers have questions about the Church and its teachings, then it’s best that they receive answers from Church members instead of others.

So, how can you make your answers to your friends’ questions more meaningful? The following example gives some ideas of how Julie may respond to her friend Zach.

*Julie,
my preacher talked
about the Trinity last Sunday.
He said that God, Jesus Christ, and
the Holy Spirit are one. But when you’ve
talked about God before,
you seemed to believe differently.
Can you explain it
to me?*

“While others talk to you, avoid the tendency to think about what you are going to say. Make sure you are really concentrating on the person speaking rather than planning your response.”

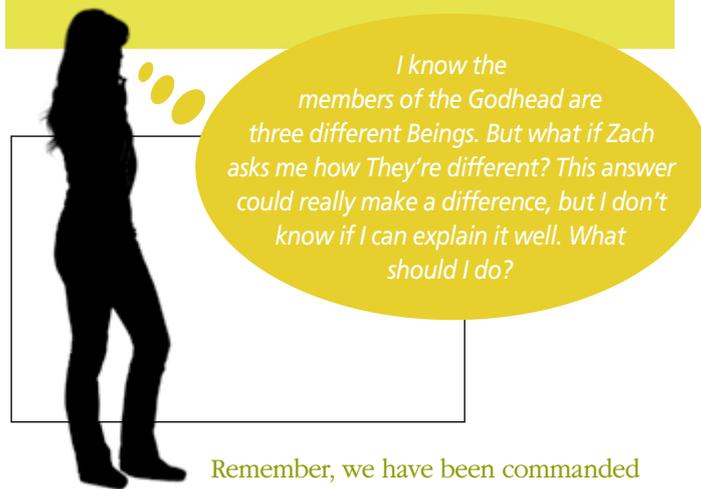
Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service (2004), 184.



KEY ITEMS

Sharing the gospel can actually be simple if you remember the main things you should do:

1. Figure out which gospel doctrine best answers your friends’ questions.
2. Explain the doctrine simply and clearly so the Holy Ghost can testify it is true.
3. Bear your testimony of the doctrine.



I know the members of the Godhead are three different Beings. But what if Zach asks me how They’re different? This answer could really make a difference, but I don’t know if I can explain it well. What should I do?

Remember, we have been commanded to pray always. When someone asks you a question about the gospel, invite the Spirit into the discussion by offering a silent prayer for help. (See 2 Nephi 32:9 and D&C 19:37–38.)

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 100:5–8

“I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men;

“For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say.

“But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things.

“And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say.”

THE BEST PREPARATION

The best preparation for answering gospel questions in the future is to study the gospel now. As you study, keep track of the main principles you learn about gospel topics, including topics people may ask you about. Jot down scripture verses or helpful conference talks you read about the subjects so you can easily find them in the future when you want to use them to answer questions.

You can sometimes even study by topic rather than sequentially. Pick a topic and study it. Then once you feel like you have a good understanding of it, move to a different topic.

As you study, write down things that come to mind. *Preach My Gospel* suggests keeping a study journal so you can better understand and remember what you're learning. Elder Richard G. Scott has taught, "Knowledge carefully recorded is knowledge available in a time of need" ("Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge," *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 86).

Well, Zach,
They are three different Beings. We refer to Them as the Godhead, and They each have different roles. We know God the Father is literally the Father of our spirits—a loving Father—and we are His children. . . .
But there's more to it than that. I don't have time to explain it all before the bell rings, but if you'd like, we can talk about it at lunch tomorrow.

Sure. I'd like to know what you believe.

Where should I begin? I want to follow the Spirit as I find my answers. I'll start with a prayer to ask Heavenly Father for help.



When possible, answer questions and bear testimony on the spot. Listen to the guidance of the Spirit, and use the opportunities you are given to share the gospel. Then if you think there's more to say but you don't know how, you can study a gospel topic in greater depth and ask parents, Church leaders, and friends for help.

"Sometimes the best answers that young people can give to the questions of life are found there upon their knees calling upon our Heavenly Father. If they will remember that the Lord is mindful of them and will answer their prayers, they will be able to meet every challenge that comes to them."

President Thomas S. Monson, "16th President Fields Questions from Media," *Church News*, Feb. 9, 2008, 15.



TIPS

FOR FINDING ANSWERS AT LDS.ORG

LDS.org is filled with resources to help you find answers to gospel questions. Here are some tips to get the most from your time online.

- A. Use the **Search** function to find helpful information throughout **LDS.org**. After you've searched a topic, you can narrow the search to just quotes from general conference, stories from Church magazines, and more.
- B. To search only in the scriptures or in conference talks, go to their direct URLs—**scriptures.lds.org** and **conference.lds.org**—and use the search field in the middle of the page (*not* the **Search** box at the top).
- C. Multimedia resources are available for many gospel subjects. Find them at **LDS.org > Menu > Study > Search by Topic**.
- D. The book *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* has been designed to provide the essentials about gospel topics. Read it at **LDS.org > Menu > Study > Manuals > Aaronic Priesthood or Young Women > True to the Faith**.
- E. Find a collection of resources for

all of the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, including links with videos, articles, questions and answers, and more. Visit **youth.lds.org > For the Strength of Youth**.

I guess I should start with what I know:

- I remember my Young Women teacher talked about the roles of the Godhead. She said . . .
- The First Vision shows that the Father and Son are separate Beings.
- Dad shared a quote from Joseph Smith about this once. I should ask him about it.



When you begin looking for answers to questions, think first about what you already know. Write it down. And then list questions you still have or questions your friends may ask so you can focus your study.

I remember some conference talks lately about each member of the Godhead. I'll have to look them up. . . . I wonder what else I'll find at LDS.org. . . . Hey, this talk looks helpful, too! And True to the Faith even has a section on the Godhead.



Did you know that the scriptures teach about the power of multiple “witnesses” when bearing testimony? (See Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1; D&C 6:28; 128:3.) You can use quotes from Church leaders to be an additional witness to the testimony you bear as you answer questions from friends.

I should see what the scriptures say about it. I'm sure the Topical Guide lists some verses about the roles of the Godhead. And there may be scripture mastery verses too.



“I see you sometimes reading a few verses, stopping to ponder them, carefully reading the verses again, and as you think about what they mean, praying for understanding, asking questions in your mind, waiting for

spiritual impressions, and writing down the impressions and insights that come so you can remember and learn more.”



Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “When Thou Art Converted,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 11.



OTHER IDEAS

If you need extra support as you search for answers to talk about gospel principles, consider these ideas:

- Talk to a parent, Church leader, or seminary teacher about the gospel principle. They may have ideas you hadn't thought about.
- If other Church members attend your school or work, ask your friends if it's OK to have them join you to share their insights as well.
- Look for a *Mormon Messages for Youth* video about the topic, and send the link to your friends while you're studying the topic. You can find them in the "Videos" section of youth.lds.org.
- Receive a blessing from your father or priesthood leader to give you extra help if you need it.
- Fast for direction and strength as you study and then share the gospel.

This article reminds me of the time I first knew Heavenly Father was aware of me as His child. I really felt the Spirit testify that God is my Father. I could share those feelings with Zach.



Wow—I've learned a lot. I'm so grateful for the help from the Spirit. I'll pray again before talking to Zach.



"Relating personal experiences can have a powerful influence. . . . When you tell about what you have experienced yourself, you act as a living witness of gospel truths. If you speak truthfully and with pure intent, the Spirit will confirm the truth of your message in the hearts of those you teach."

Teaching, No Greater Call (1999), 185.

Remember to "pray always" (see D&C 90:24) and follow promptings of the Spirit both as you study and as you talk about the gospel with friends. Pray for help with what to say from the things you've studied and if there's anything else you should read or do before talking with your friends. Heavenly Father knows you and your friends, and He has given you the Holy Ghost to help you know what to say. **NE**

Hey, Zach! I've thought a lot about your question from yesterday. I'd love to talk about it a little more if you'd like to.

Yeah, sure. That would be great.



Well, in our Church, we believe . . .

"Remember, brothers and sisters, we're not marketing a product. We're not selling anything. . . . We are members of the restored Church of Jesus Christ, empowered and sent forth by the Lord



Himself to find [and] nourish . . . those who are seeking to know the truth."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Essential Role of Member Missionary Work," *Ensign*, May 2003, 38.

WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH ABOUT HOW TO FIND ANSWERS?

- Search with all your heart (Jeremiah 19:13).
- Ask, seek, and knock (Matthew 7:7–8).
- Repentance, faith, good works, and continual prayer invite revelation (Alma 26:22).
- Study it out in your mind, and then pray for confirmation (D&C 9:7–9).
- Be humble, and let God lead you (D&C 112:10).



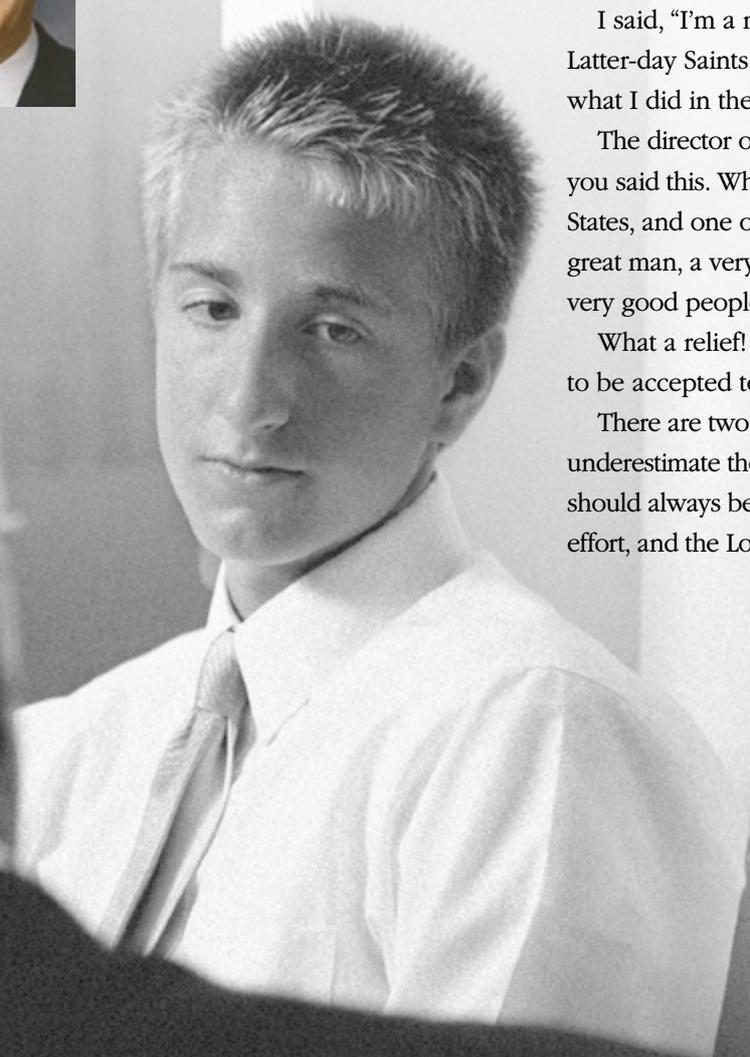
BE FAITHFUL

By Elder Gérald Caussé

Of the Seventy



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID STOKER



When I was in my 20s, I had to take a very hard exam to get into a prominent business school in France. I had been studying long hours every day for two years. But I always went to church and institute and fulfilled my Church responsibilities.

The most important part of the exam was the interview. I had an interview with one school, and when they found out I was a member of the Church, it didn't go well.

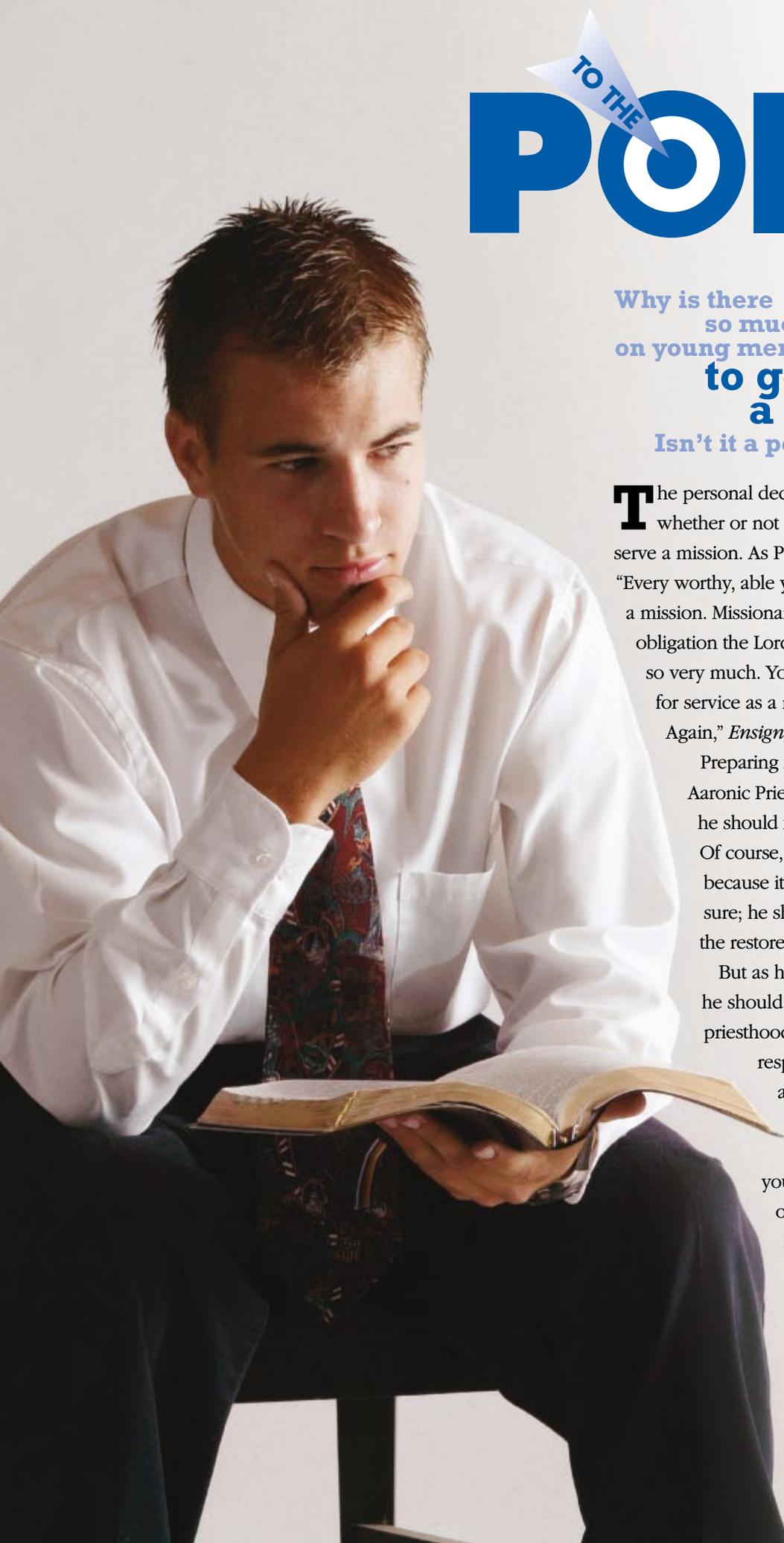
Then I took the exam with the school I wanted to go to most. After some time in the interview, the interviewers started asking questions about what I did outside my studying hours. I knew that it was a go/no-go question for me. But I decided in a second I would be faithful to my principles.

I said, "I'm a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," and then I spent 15 minutes explaining what I did in the Church.

The director of the school said, "You know, I'm glad you said this. When I was a student, I studied in the United States, and one of my best friends was a Mormon. He was a great man, a very kind person. I consider the Mormons to be very good people."

What a relief! I was one of the first candidates that year to be accepted to this school.

There are two lessons out of this story. First, we shouldn't underestimate the influence we have on others. Second, we should always be faithful to our principles. Make your best effort, and the Lord will help you with the rest. **NE**



TO THE POINT

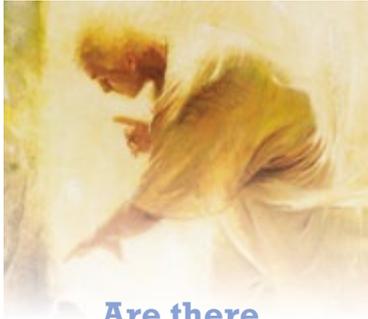
Why is there
so much **pressure**
on young men
to go on
a mission?

Isn't it a personal decision?

The personal decision each young man must make is whether or not he will fulfill his priesthood duty to serve a mission. As President Thomas S. Monson has said: “Every worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much. Young men, I admonish you to prepare for service as a missionary” (“As We Meet Together Again,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 5–6).

Preparing for a mission is part of a young man's Aaronic Priesthood experience. It is his duty, and he should feel the appropriate weight of that duty. Of course, he should not serve a mission simply because it is expected or because he feels pressure; he should serve because he desires to share the restored gospel of Jesus Christ with others.

But as he prays about serving a mission, he should also remember that by receiving the priesthood, he has already accepted the sacred responsibility to “warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59), including by serving as a full-time missionary. If young men are not able to serve because of poor health or a disability, they are honorably excused. **NE**



Are there
**guardian
angels?**
Do I have one
assigned to me?

The term “guardian angel” is not used in the scriptures; instead, angels are spoken of as “ministering” (see Omni 1:25; Moroni 7:22–29). “Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost” (2 Nephi 32:3) and often share in the Holy Ghost’s mission to comfort, guide, protect the faithful, and reveal or confirm truth. Thus, the Holy Ghost Himself can be considered a guardian angel.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “From the beginning down through the dispensations, God has used angels . . . in conveying love and concern for His children. . . . Seen or unseen they are *always* near” (“The Ministry of Angels,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 29).

The Lord has not revealed whether one specific angel is assigned to watch over each person, but you can be assured that divine protection and comfort are available. If you exercise faith, you will have God’s help, including angels sent to strengthen and comfort you and give you courage to do what is right. **NE**

What is the Church’s
position on
homosexuality?
Is it OK to be
friends
with people
**who have
homosexual
feelings?**

The Church opposes homosexual behavior, and we reach out with understanding and respect to people with same-gender attraction.

If you know people who have a same-gender attraction, follow the same principles you do in your other friendships: “Choose your friends carefully. They will greatly influence how you think and act, and even help determine the person you will become. Choose friends who share your values so you can strengthen and encourage each other in living high standards. A true friend will encourage you to be your best self. . . . Treat everyone with kindness and respect” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2001], 12).

The Church teaches that human sexuality has a purpose in Heavenly Father’s plan. In order for us to be happy and to fulfill that purpose, we are commanded to live the law of chastity. Homosexual behavior is contrary to that purpose and violates God’s commandments.

However, if someone is attracted to people of the same gender and does not act on those feelings, he or she has not sinned. The Church’s standard for morality is the same for everyone, no matter which gender one feels attracted to. Neither the Lord nor His Church can condone any behavior that violates His laws. Again, we condemn the immoral behavior, not the person. **NE**

For more on this topic, read Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Helping Those Who Struggle with Same-Gender Attraction,” Ensign, Oct. 2007, 42.

WHAT WE REALLY THINK OF YOUTH

"You who serve as deacons, teachers, and priests are as willing, reliable, and capable in doing your duty as we expect you to be. We admire you. Your vitality is infectious, your abilities astounding, your association invigorating."

Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, "The Power of the Atonic Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 47.

INTERNATIONAL ART COMPETITION: CALL FOR ENTRIES

In Doctrine and Covenants 115:4–6, the Lord invites us to "arise and shine forth" so that our "light may be a standard for the nations." He asks us to join together to support one another and become a "refuge from the storm."

The Church History Museum invites you, the youth of the worldwide Church, to create original works of art that express what the 2012 Mutual theme—"arise and shine forth"—means to you. You might consider these questions as you prepare your art:

- What does it mean for Latter-day Saint youth to "arise and shine forth"?
- How can the light of Latter-day Saints be "a standard for the nations"?
- What kinds of storms (or trials) do youth face, and how does the gospel provide refuge?

So pick up a brush, a pencil or pen, some paint, a camera, some clay—whatever you use to let your inner artist shine—and begin creating.

For more information or to enter the competition online, go to lds.org/youthartcomp. You may begin submitting entries on Monday, January 2, 2012. All entries must be submitted by Friday, June 1, 2012.

A YEAR FULL OF SERVICE

The youth of one ward in Washington state came up with a plan to focus on service for an entire year. Throughout the year, each hour of service was marked by a white address label that was then attached to a large cardboard cutout of the temple. These young men and women came up with an amazing variety of ways to serve: babysitting, doing yard work, community coaching, doing baptisms for the dead, mentoring, helping at a community center, splitting wood, visiting a nursing home, tutoring, serving at school camp, and more. Many of the youth even turned down payment for their work, opting instead for the service stickers they could add to the temple cutouts. One of the main projects of the year was completely redoing the yard of a Young Women leader going through chemotherapy. At their ward conference in January, these youth presented their stake presidency with two huge temple cutouts covered with their service bricks representing the 2,070 hours given that year.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF VIKKI DRIVER



MUTUAL THEME: D&C 115:5 SUDOKU

arise		thy		be				shine
			nations	shine	D&C 115:5			
	shine	nations		arise		standard	light	
		light				thy		
nations			arise		forth			
		forth				nations		
	standard	be		nations		forth	arise	
			standard	light	be			nations
shine				forth				light

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ISTOCK.COM, © STOCK.CAM, AND © MARK THOMPSON

MY TESTIMONY OF PRAYER

When living the gospel, the first thing you should do is pray. Start the day off with a prayer and end your day with a prayer. Also, reading the scriptures and reading the talks in the *Ensign* helps us to live the gospel. When we pray and read the scriptures, being a good example to others will happen. Being a good example to others is another way to live the gospel and to teach others about the Church.



Amber D., 14,
Tennessee, USA

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AMBER D.

YOU'RE INVITED TO DO FAMILY HISTORY

In last October's general conference, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles invited you—and all the youth of the Church—to learn about and experience the Spirit of Elijah in your life by participating in family history work.

To start learning about ways you can get involved right now, go online to lds.org/familyhistoryyouth and watch the video tutorials about FamilySearch and indexing. To get started, you'll need an LDS Account, which requires you to find out your membership record number from your ward or branch clerk.

Elder Bednar promised wonderful blessings to those who respond in faith to this invitation: "Your love and gratitude for your ancestors will increase. Your testimony of and conversion to the Savior will become deep and abiding. And I promise you will be protected against the intensifying influence of the adversary.

As you participate in and love this holy work, you will be safeguarded in your youth and throughout your lives" ("The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn," *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 26–27).



The objective of a regular Sudoku is to fill the 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes (also called *blocks* or *regions*) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time. For this puzzle, instead of numbers, use the scripture reference and the eight words in bold to complete the puzzle.

D&C 115:5

"Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations."



To me this means don't fear. Heavenly Father is with you.
Emily F., 13,
California, USA

Tell us about your favorite scripture in a paragraph or two. Send it to us, along with a photo, at newera.lds.org (click on "Submit Material").

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF EMILY F.

QUOTES FROM CONFERENCE

“To hope and trust in the Lord requires faith, patience, humility, meekness, long-suffering, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Waiting upon the Lord: Thy Will Be Done,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 72.

BY THE NUMBERS



Number of subscribers who have joined the *New Era* e-mail group.

If you'd like to join our e-mail list and get regular newsletters, usually sent monthly, just say so in an e-mail to newera@ldschurch.org.



WE'VE GOT MAIL

Swimming Lessons

I was really uplifted when I came across the article “What Swimming Taught Me” (June 2011). The story was about a girl learning how to swim and how embarrassed she felt when her friend was a better swimmer. What really caught my eye was how she overcame her fear of swimming by not giving up but believing that through trial and error she could excel at it. In fact, no matter what type of peer pressure it is, you can always read your scriptures, seek answers from your prayers, and ask a friend, Church leader, or your bishop for support. I know that as a member of the Church and a former swimmer, I will remember this message.

Corri G., Arizona, USA

Dating Q&A

When I read the May 2011 issue of the *New Era*, I came across the “Questions & Answers” article on dating before the age of 16. I was shocked, because I had recently had a boyfriend, even though I am not yet 16. When I read through the answers given, I felt the Spirit with me. I realized that by ending the relationship I was keeping the standards. I'm so glad the *New Era* was there for me.

Felisha L., Vermont, USA

Rereading “Role Models”

I reread an article from the August 2009 issue called “Role Models” by Elder Benson E.

Misalucha. Thank you for putting this article in the magazine; it was an answer to my prayer. I had just met someone who is very strong in the gospel. She has been through many trials and is still going strong. She is a role model for me, and I have learned so much from her about forgiveness and enduring through trials.

Mason M., Utah, USA

We love hearing from you. Write to us by going online to newera.lds.org and clicking “Submit Material.”

Or you can e-mail us at newera@ldschurch.org or write to *New Era*, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024.



ON OUR HONOR

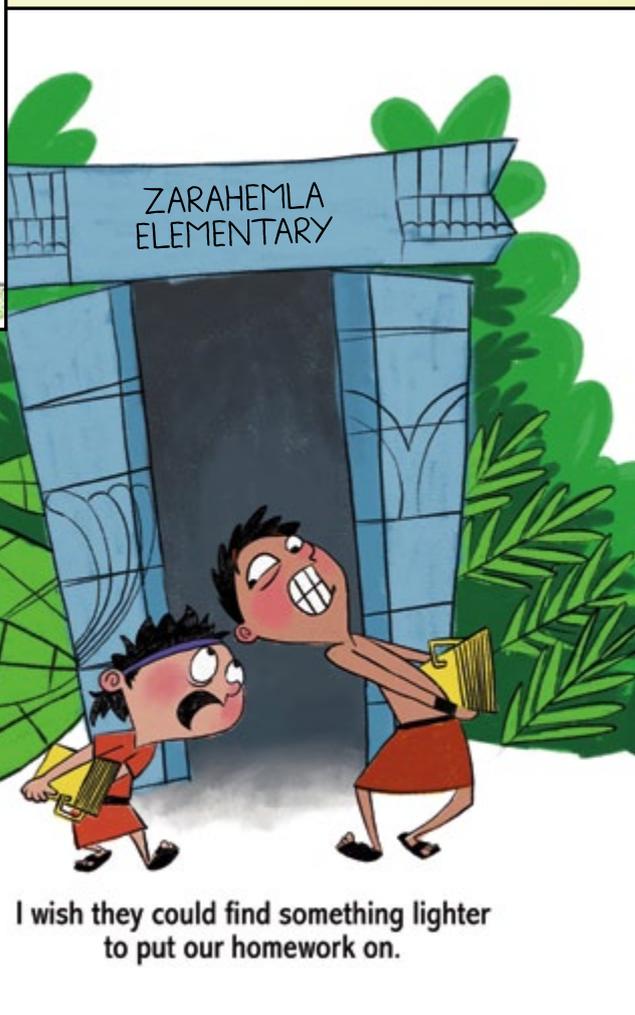
In early 2011, New Mexico—usually a mild desert state—felt record low temperatures. The freezing caused pipes all over the state to burst, including some in the stake center where the Scouts of Troop 211 meet. Within hours volunteers, including many of these Scouts, were at the building to help clean up. But serving together is nothing new for the boys of the troop. Just days after helping clear out the building, parents and Scouts gathered to hold a court of honor for the 10 boys from the ward who would be receiving Eagle awards. These young men had performed a host of service projects in their community, including organizing a blood drive; cleaning up a baseball field; working on the landscaping, classrooms, and libraries of local schools; and assisting with research for eye diseases in Peru. In recognition of the boys' collective service, the city's mayor attended their court of honor and pronounced February 9, 2011, as “Troop 211 Eagle Scouts Day.”

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AMANDA CHERRY

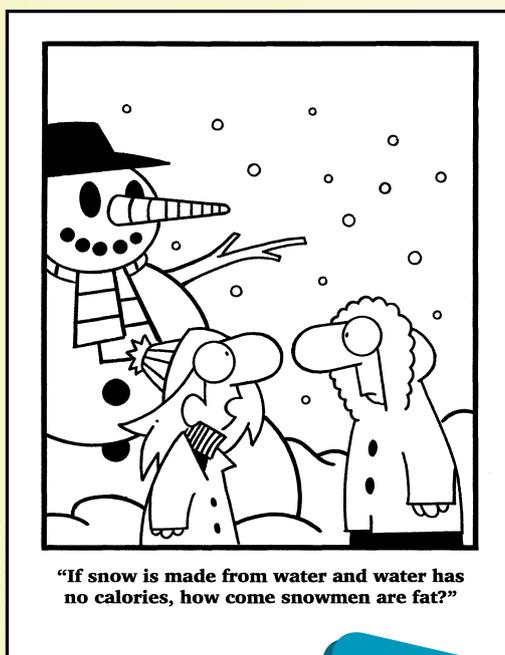




RYAN STOKER



RICK + RYAN GOLDSBERRY



RANDY GLASBERGEN



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

A photograph of President Thomas S. Monson, an older man with thinning hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a striped tie. He is smiling and looking towards the right. The background is blurred, showing other people in a crowd.

Stand for TRUTH

In the October 2011 general conference, President Thomas S. Monson encouraged us to keep the commandments, even if they might not be popular with the world. This counsel can apply to many aspects of your life. Here are two experiences from youth that illustrate what President Monson taught.

STAYING STRONG IN THE CLASSROOM

Even though it was a cold, hard piece of plastic, at that moment my chair was my only friend. Our English teacher had asked us to express our opinions about controversial statements. If you supported a statement, you were to move to the left side of the room. If you didn't support it, you were to stay to the right. "First statement: Coed sleepovers should be allowed," she said. There was a brief pause, then a giddy stampede to the left side of the room. I was the only one left sitting.

In my mind it wasn't an option to go to the left side of the room. I knew what I believed. So I stood up, faced my friends, and told them I didn't think coed sleepovers were appropriate. As I did so, I said a silent

prayer that my words would make sense and testify of truth. Then the bell rang, and the students scrambled to collect their backpacks. A girl from my class stopped me in the hall. "I just wanted to say that was really brave of you," she said. "I don't think

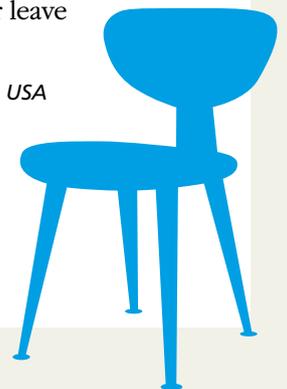
“It may appear to you at times that those out in the world are having much more fun than you are. Some of you may feel restricted by the code of conduct to which we in the Church adhere. My brothers and sisters, I declare to you, however, that there is *nothing* which can bring more joy into our lives or more peace to our souls than the Spirit which can come to us as we follow the Savior and keep the commandments. That Spirit cannot be present at the kinds of activities in which so much of the world participates.”

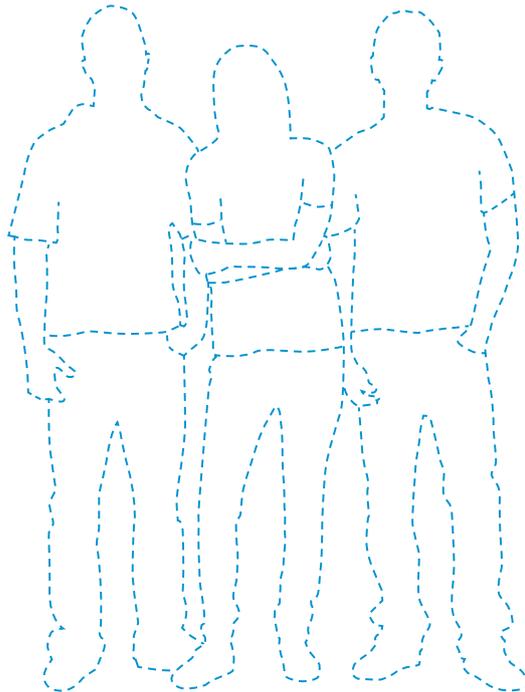
President Thomas S. Monson, "Stand in Holy Places," *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 83.

I would be able to do that." I smiled and said a silent prayer of thanks to Heavenly Father for showing me that I was able to touch someone.

Although that was a difficult experience, I was able to define myself. Because I had the gospel in my life, I knew where I stood and I knew nothing could shake me. I eventually found friends who really cared about me and respected my beliefs. I am a much happier person because I understand that when I stand up for my beliefs, the Lord is with me and He will never leave me alone.

Heather C., Virginia, USA





IT'S BETTER TO STAND ALONE

I went to a party one night with a group of my closest friends. As we sat laughing, the conversation turned. My friends started to gossip about a young man we all knew who was my friend. The conversation went on for a while with everyone except me agreeing with what was being said. Eventually I had enough. I expressed my feelings that it was wrong for them to belittle this young man.

The room went silent, and no one stood by me. I had never felt so alone in my life than at that moment. Eventually the conversations moved on, but everyone ignored me. I decided to call my mom to come pick me up. Then I announced that I was going home. No one asked questions, and small good-byes were said as I left.

It was hard for me to go against my friends, but I knew that it was the right thing to do. This experience

changed my life, and I feel good about my decision to stick up for this young man. I learned that even if you stand alone, you should always do what's right. Your crowd may not be the crowd you're meant to be with. It's better to stand alone and do what's right than to stand with others doing wrong.

Lauren M., Utah, USA

“We have been and continue to be taught God’s laws. Despite what you may see or hear elsewhere, these laws are unchanging.

“As we go about living from day to day, it is almost inevitable that our faith will be challenged. We may at times find ourselves surrounded by others and yet standing in the minority or even standing alone concerning what is acceptable and what is not. Do we have the moral courage to stand firm for our beliefs, even if by so doing we must stand alone? . . . It is essential that we are able to face—with courage—whatever challenges come our way.”

*President Thomas S. Monson, “Dare to Stand Alone,” **Ensign**, Nov. 2011, 60.*

TAKE A STAND TODAY

Think of some situations where you may need to stand for truth in the future. Decide *now* what you’ll do in those situations so you’ll be prepared, ready, and committed to stand up for your beliefs.

- When inappropriate music comes on at a dance, I will _____

_____.
- When someone asks me to cheat in school, I will _____

_____.
- When I see trendy clothes that are not appropriate, I will _____

_____.
- When _____, I will _____

_____.
- When _____, I will _____

_____.



More on President Monson’s Conference Messages

To read, watch, or listen to President Monson’s full addresses, go to lds.org/go/124 and lds.org/go/125. You can also find all of the conference messages at conference.lds.org.



MY HEAVENLY FATHER LOVES ME

I am Hannah. I am 18. And I am a cancer survivor.

I took a walk recently and was reminded of just how infinite our Savior's love is. Even if I gave Him everything, it would never compare to His love for me.

I passed by people who smiled and waved.

I came to a park, where I swung on the swings.

I sat on a bench and watched a bird gather grass clippings for a nest, a butterfly land at my feet and

flutter its wings, the cotton fall from the trees and be caught in the breeze, and a spiderweb glisten in the sunlight.

I listened to the wind rustle the leaves on the trees, the birds sing, the water from the lake wash up on the sand, and a bee buzz its way through the grass.

I felt the sun's warm rays on my face, arms, and legs. I felt the wind brush against me, cooling my skin and rushing through my hair. Then I thought of what a miracle that was. *I have hair.* I felt my heart pump and my pulse slow down as I rested.

Then I just thought. I thought of what has happened and what may happen. I pictured myself years from now with the ones I love most laughing and playing in a similar park. I don't remember everything I thought, but it doesn't really matter, because in the end the song "My Heavenly Father Loves Me" (*Children's Songbook*, 228–29) consumed my thoughts. I repeated it over and over, and I felt one last thing: peaceful, true, eternal, and amazing love.

And that is what it all comes down to—love.

Hannah P., Minnesota, USA

REMEMBER YOUR WORTH

I was recently working on a project about body image and the media. I visited a local mall to interview dressing room attendants, who frequently see how people view their body image, to discuss my project. However, when I got there I started to feel self-conscious. I lost courage and felt like I could approach them only if I were prettier

I COULD GO TO THE TEMPLE

When I was a new convert, I attended a class where a missionary couple taught about the temple. As the elder taught, he mentioned that in order to receive exaltation, you needed to attend the temple to receive temple ordinances. I did not even allow him to finish before I asked, "Do you mean those of us who live many miles away from the temple will never receive exaltation?"

In an instant, the teacher walked toward me. He placed both his hands on my shoulders and, looking straight into my eyes, declared, "If you live the gospel, you will enter the temple."

I wondered how true his words could be. If all the belongings of my family were sold, the money would not be enough to buy the ticket to the temple and back, so I did not take him seriously.

A few years later I was called on a mission. Guess where? Cape Town, South Africa. I would have the opportunity to go through the Johannesburg South Africa Temple before and after my mission. I couldn't believe it!

I was humbled to recall the words of the elder. I learned never to doubt that "with God all things are possible" (see Mark 10:27).

Simon K., Uganda



or skinnier. So instead, I thought I'd take some pictures of advertisements throughout the mall. But then I started feeling too self-conscious for that, too. I felt like people would judge me or think I was weird.

When I left the mall, I had made no progress on my project. The car ride home was long and miserable because the whole time I was just wishing I looked different. Suddenly I realized that the visit was completely related to my project. Even though I didn't talk to anyone or take any pictures, I left the mall feeling worthless. I could see how I had allowed the media's overbearing influence to overwhelm me.

But it doesn't need to be that way.

I want you to know that you are beautiful. You are you for a reason. God made you the way you are because He has a special purpose for you in life. Don't get discouraged by the way the world may look at you. Don't let worldly images affect the way you see yourself.

I encourage you to be happy with yourself and try to become the person you want to be—not someone the world thinks you should be. Please believe me when I say that you are beautiful. Remember that when God sees you—He sees your worth.

Brittany J., Indiana, USA

A FAMILY NOT FORGOTTEN

One Sunday in July, I could feel the Spirit in the room as I passed the sacrament. After passing to the people in the back, I checked to make sure everyone had a chance to receive it. I then reverently walked over to the line of the other young men who had finished passing the sacrament.

As the other young men lined up, I looked around and saw a family on the far side of the chapel. I realized that they had not received the sacrament yet. It seemed too late, because the priests stood up and the line started to move. As the young men in front of me took the sacrament, all I could think about was that family and how they didn't receive the sacrament.

I felt a great urge to break from the line and pass to that family. I knew it was the Holy Ghost telling me to do it, so I left the line and walked down the aisle toward the family near the back. As I grew closer, I felt warmth overcome me. I looked up and saw the family smiling at me. I could feel their appreciation for not forgetting them.

I passed the sacrament to the family even though I felt like everyone in the congregation was looking at me. I could almost sense the Holy Ghost whispering, "Good job." You don't need words to know that someone truly cares and appreciates your love and respect for them. All you need to do is a good deed.

Jack H., Utah, USA



GOD

ANSWERED BOTH PRAYERS

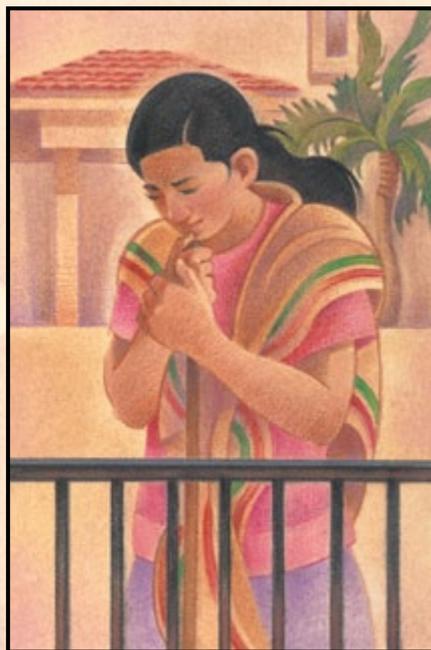
By Carlos Iván Garmendía Pacheco

While I was serving as a missionary in Durango, Mexico, our mission president challenged our mission to try a “week of sacrifice.” He asked us to put forth more effort than usual by working hard and setting specific goals during the week. My companion and I had faith that if we sacrificed this way, the Lord would bless us and we would find many people to teach.

However, during the week of sacrifice, we didn’t have much success. We did not find any families to teach, and we were disappointed.

One morning following that week, my companion and I looked at a map of our area. Our area was very large, but we felt we needed to go to the part that was farthest away.

After we got there, we prayed and asked Heavenly Father which street and which house to go to. When we finished, we turned around to look at all the streets. We saw a railing nearby and peeked over the top. We saw a



woman sitting with her eyes closed, with a broom in her hands.

My companion said, “Hello!” and when the woman heard us, she stood up and went on sweeping as if nothing had happened. Then we told her that we were missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that we had a message for her. She let us into her home, and we had a very spiritual discussion. We told her about Joseph Smith and how he went into a grove of trees to pray to find the truth, and in answer to his prayer, he was visited by God the Father and Jesus Christ.

She interrupted us and said, “That

is true. I know that God answers our prayers. When you spoke to me, I was praying and asking the Lord to send someone who could lead me to His path, and you came immediately.”

We felt the Spirit, and we testified that God had sent us to her and that we too had been praying right then to know which of His children needed our help. Soon Sister Rufina was baptized. In the weeks following, her children, grandchildren, and even some of her neighbors were baptized—a total of 20 converts in that part of our area. The Lord guided us to Sister Rufina, and she was the door to sharing the gospel with her family and neighbors.

I know that Heavenly Father blesses us if we ask Him, but not until after He has tried our faith. I am grateful that my companion and I could be instruments in the Lord’s hands and find people who were ready to listen to the gospel message. I know that God loves us and will guide us if we ask. **NE**

HOW TO SHOW FAITH IN CHRIST



By Elder M. Russell Ballard

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?

"I show faith in Christ by being consistent and doing the little things that matter most. By reading my scriptures, praying, and trying to love others as Christ would, my faith grows."
Kelsey F.

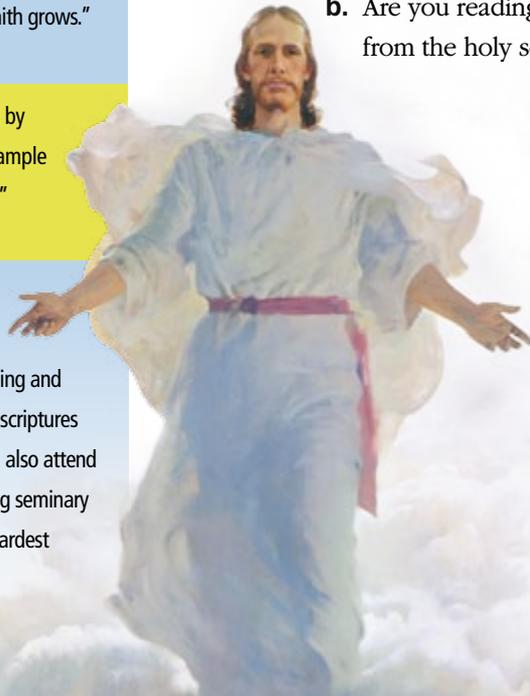
"I show faith by being an example to my peers."
Sara A.

"I show faith in Christ daily by reading and studying my scriptures every night. I also attend early-morning seminary and try my hardest not to miss."
Afton P.

"When we have faith in Christ, we accept and apply His Atonement and His teachings. We trust Him and what He says. . . . We believe in Christ, and we believe that He wants us to keep all His commandments. We want to show our faith by obeying Him" (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], 61–62).

My dear young friends, take a minute and concentrate on your own faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as I ask you a few questions:

1. Are you happy with the direction of your life and the depth of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?
2. Do you love God with all of your heart, soul, strength, and mind? (See Luke 10:27.)
3. Are you doing the simple things in your everyday life?
 - a. Are you saying your prayers every morning and every night?
 - b. Are you reading every day from the holy scriptures?



- c. Are you using appropriate language?
- d. Are you being honest?
- e. Are you living the Word of Wisdom?

4. Are you being kind and thoughtful of the needs of those around you?
5. Are you following the counsel of the Brethren . . . to avoid completely *any kind* of pornography?
6. Are you living worthy of a temple recommend?
7. Are you actively participating in your Sunday meetings, especially sacrament meeting—partaking of the sacrament worthily and renewing your covenants with the Lord?

There are other things, of course, that I could add to this list. However, if you are seriously striving to do your best to follow Christ, then you can answer questions like these with a resounding Yes!

As you have thought about your personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is there anything in your life now that you know is not what you want it to be? By sincere repentance the gospel of Jesus Christ provides an escape from mistakes we may make.

Every day of your life the Lord will help you if you trust in Him and keep His commandments. Do what is necessary to build a real relationship with your Heavenly Father. Your divine parents love you with all Their hearts, as does the Lord Jesus Christ. They want you to follow the great plan of happiness that will lead you safely back home to Their presence. **NE**

From the Church Educational System fireside "Follow the Doctrine and Gospel of Christ," given November 7, 2010.

Share Your Experiences

Share *your* experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other youth by going to lds.org/go/126.



Moon and the Stars

By Valerie Nishiguchi

Topaz stars
stud a
silky black sky,
their glowing
warmth comforting
the lonely
night sky.
The moon,
a dazzling
illumination bringing
joy to the dark.
Shadows lurk
down below,
but the shimmering
light is a
constant reminder
to share the light
in our lives.

WHAT'S ONLINE

2012 Mutual Theme

Start the year with inspiration from this year's Mutual theme: "Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations" (D&C 115:5). After reading messages from the Young Men and Young Women general presidencies (see pages 6–7), you can head online to download songs, watch videos, and more related to the theme. It's all part of the *Strength of Youth Media 2012* DVD, and you can view its content at lds.org/go/127.



Personal Progress Online

Have you seen all you can do at PersonalProgress.lds.org? With Personal Progress online, you can view the value experiences, link directly to the scriptures mentioned, and track your progress on the values you complete. You can even record your thoughts in an online journal just for you.



Duty to God Online

As you make plans for Duty to God, consider going online to DutyToGod.lds.org, where you can record and track your plans online. You'll also be able to watch videos about Duty to God and read about the experiences of other Aaronic Priesthood holders who are fulfilling their duty to God.

Audio Podcasts of the New Era

Looking for inspiration on the go? Listen to *New Era* articles in MP3 files that are easy to download to an electronic device. Visit lds.org/go/128 and choose the *New Era* issues you want to download. You'll even find other resources like the scriptures, general conference addresses, *Preach My Gospel*, and hymns available as MP3 files.

