



# FOR THE STRENGTH OF ALL: THE LAW OF • Chastity

*Two mid-single adults talk about how the clearly stated principles in For the Strength of Youth about chastity have blessed their lives.*

## Timeless Standards

By Mark Wangsgaard

As a teenager I learned what a blessing it was to have *For the Strength of Youth* as a guide, especially as I watched some of my friends make choices not in keeping with the standards this booklet teaches—choices they later regretted. Now, some 20 years later, I serve as the priests quorum adviser in my ward and regularly use this resource in teaching the young men I work with. I have seen, repeatedly, that *For the Strength of Youth* helps the young men in my quorum stay on the right path just as it helped me.

As a mid-single adult, I have come to appreciate that the principles found in *For the Strength of Youth* can guide us—regardless of age—in making the right decisions, decisions that will affect the course of the rest of our mortal lives as well as our eternal destiny.

### The Temptation to Relax Standards

Single adults are sometimes tempted to relax their standards. Here are examples of faulty reasoning I have heard:

- “We are adults, so we can engage in overnight outings with men and women in the same sleeping quarters.”
- “It doesn’t hurt to indulge myself in a few small pleasures that might be on the edge of Church standards.”
- “Even though I’ve tried to live as righteously as possible, I still have not been blessed to find my companion. In fact, even some of my friends who haven’t been as valiant as I’ve tried to be are now married with children. It just isn’t fair.”

Sadly, this way of thinking causes some singles to abandon standards they know to be of God, especially with regard to the law of chastity.

Sometimes single adults attend an activity expecting to meet other singles who share their standards, only to find that standards of modest dress and morality are not upheld by some. They can wonder if holding to their standards is worth it, or if they’ll ever find someone who is trying to live the way they live. They may wonder if the teachings they learned to follow in *For the Strength of Youth* are still applicable or if, as adults, they’ve somehow “outgrown” them. Ultimately, such experiences and the questions they raise can damage hope and make it more difficult for some singles to hold to their seemingly unpopular standards. Many single adults I have known, in order to avoid these situations where some may relax their standards, simply stop going to all singles events, limiting their opportunities to make friends.

### Obedience Brings the Spirit

With all of this in mind, some Latter-day Saint single friends and I, all in our 30s and 40s, decided to hold an activity that would be fun and also invite the Spirit. We planned a trip to a lake where we could boat, water-ski, swim, and dance. We reserved a place for the men to sleep and a separate one for the women. We asked everyone to wear modest swimsuits. We hoped to ensure that the singles would appreciate each other for who they were and that any relationships that resulted would be built upon the principles and standards of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We concluded with a fireside and testimony meeting, asking the singles to testify of ways Heavenly Father had blessed them for living the standards of the gospel. We felt the Spirit, and our hearts were “knit together in unity” (Mosiah 18:21).

We learned through this experience that obedience brings the Spirit. Many of the single adults developed strong friendships, and some of those who had previously been less active expressed desires to return to church. Perhaps the best part was that many participants have since married righteous companions in the temple, and those who are still single continue to promote gospel standards at other events.

### The Lord Fulfills His Promises

I know that the Lord fulfills His promises, as He says in Doctrine and Covenants 58:31: “Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and have not fulfilled?”

However, we must have the faith to obey His laws:

“I give unto you directions how you may act before me, that it may turn to you for your salvation.

“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 82:9–10).

I am still in the process of seeking an eternal companion, and choosing to follow the guidelines I learned in my youth as outlined in *For the Strength of Youth* has blessed me with a profound peace. I know that as I put forth my best efforts to find an eternal companion through appropriate dating and participation in single adult events where others also hold to these standards, I can be worthy of the Lord’s help throughout the process. And this allows me to take to heart the following scriptural counsel: “Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed” (D&C 123:17). ■

*The author, who since writing this article has married, lives in Utah, USA.*



## “A Gem for Any Age Group”

By Holly Coutts

About six years ago, I found myself in an unexpected position. My marriage ended in divorce, and I was single again. As I struggled with the loneliness and challenges of single motherhood, I found peace in clinging to my covenants and the principles of the gospel. These principles have provided and continue to provide me with the comfort and strength I so desperately need as I move forward in my single life. One of the things that have been a great strength to me has been maintaining my moral standards.

### Specific Instruction and Promised Blessings

As I came to know other Latter-day Saint mid-single adults, I was sad to discover a pervasive feeling of loss and loneliness among some of my new friends. Some good and well-meaning individuals had slipped into compromising their standards and temple covenants as they dealt with the loneliness and disillusionment that resulted from their

broken homes and marriages. The results of these compromises left them feeling even more lost and broken.

As I became aware of the challenges some of my single friends faced, I reviewed Church standards as they relate to sexual purity and found clear and specific instruction in the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet. The youth are promised that as they live these standards, they will be blessed with the companionship of the Holy Ghost and increased faith and happiness. This also applies to adults. As President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has said, “This little booklet is a gem for any age group. It contains standards which are sacred symbols representing our membership in the Church.”<sup>1</sup>

### Spiritual Protection

Although loneliness and deep desires for companionship can seem overwhelming, we single adults must never step away from the Lord’s standards of morality and our covenants. Our covenants provide spiritual protections and are very much a part of the “armour of God” described in the scriptures (see Ephesians 6:11–17; D&C 27:15–18). Neglecting our covenants during this difficult time is much like removing armor in the middle of a dangerous battle. We are left unprotected and vulnerable to the “fiery darts” of the adversary.

I’m incredibly grateful for clear and well-defined Church standards. As a single woman, they have provided me with safety and protection. In addition, by living the standards set forth in *For the Strength of Youth*, we can develop and maintain the kind of countenance and beauty of character

that will help us attract others who share our standards and values. Elaine S. Dalton, former Young Women general president, described what she calls “deep beauty,” a beauty “that shines from the *inside* out. . . . Deep beauty springs from virtue. It is the beauty of being chaste and morally clean. . . . It is a beauty that is earned through faith, repentance, and honoring covenants.”<sup>2</sup>

I could not imagine traveling through this time as a single mother without the gospel in my life, and I am deeply grateful for the strength, understanding, and guidance it provides as I am able to move forward with peace and joy. More than anything else, I recognize my reliance on the Savior, who is truly my “light which shineth in darkness” (D&C 34:2). ■

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#### NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “See the End from the Beginning,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 44.
2. Elaine S. Dalton, “Remember Who You Are!” *Ensign*, May 2010, 122.

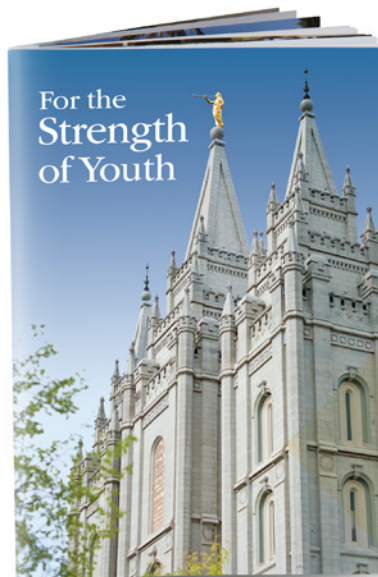


### THE LORD’S STANDARD OF MORALITY

“God’s moral standards . . . are positive, uplifting, and liberating. They build relationships of trust, they enhance self-esteem, they foster a clear conscience, and they invite the Spirit of the Lord to bless [us]. . . .

“The blessings of living a clean and moral life are overwhelming. Such a life will bring self-confidence and self-esteem. It will result in a clear conscience. It will make us eligible for a spouse of like purity.”

**Tad R. Callister, Sunday School general president, “The Lord’s Standard of Morality,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2014, 45, 49.**



### SECTIONS TO STUDY

Sections in *For the Strength of Youth* (booklet, 2011) that contain material related to chastity include:

- “Dating” (p.4)
- “Dress and Appearance” (p.6)
- “Entertainment and Media” (p.11)
- “Language” (p.20)
- “Music and Dancing” (p.22)
- “Sexual Purity” (p.35)