

THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • OCTOBER 2019

Ensign



**Children Encountering
Pornography—How
Love Can Help, page 22**

The Clarity of the
Gospel Lens, page 16

Letter to a Single
Sister, page 38

Celebrating 100 Years
of Temple Blessings in
the Pacific, page 56

THE
CHURCH
IS HERE

Antananarivo Madagascar



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Here are a few facts about Madagascar and the Church there:



1986 First Malagasy member baptized, in Bordeaux, France

1990 Five people baptized and confirmed

1998 First mission created

2000 First stake created



Learn more about the Church in various locations at history.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/GlobalHistories.

PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES

Standing Strong against Pornography

President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said:

“In our day the dreadful influence of pornography is like unto a plague sweeping across the world, . . . relentlessly trying to invade every home. . . .

“Pornography will always repel the Spirit of Christ and will interrupt the communications between our Heavenly Father and His children” (“Cleansing the Inner Vessel,” Ensign, Nov. 2010, 75).

As we strive to love and protect our children, pornography must be recognized for the threat that it is. Loving relationships and open communication are essential to strengthen and fortify our families. We can help children learn how to recognize pornography, how to avoid it, and what to do if they should encounter it.

In addition to my article on protecting children and helping them heal from pornography exposure or compulsion (page 22), I'd encourage you to read “Four Ways to Protect Your Family from Pornography” on page 60, as well as a special article for young adults titled “Dating and Pornography” on page 68. As parents, leaders, and Latter-day Saints, we must stand strong and intentional against pornography. The peace and happiness and well-being of our loved ones are at stake, and every effort on our part to strengthen our homes, with the Lord's help, will bring blessings.

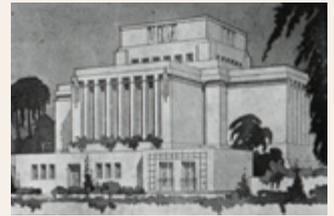
Joy D. Jones

Primary General President



Blessings of a Gospel Perspective
Elder Gary E. Stevenson

16



The Laie Hawaii Temple: A Century of Gathering
Clinton D. and Angela R. Christensen

56



To Be or to Have Been: That Is the Question
Elder Joni L. Koch

50



Addressing Pornography: Protect, Respond, and Heal
Joy D. Jones

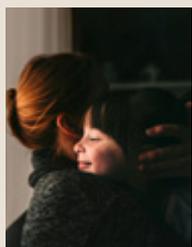
22



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY CULTURA RM EXCLUSIVE/ERIN LESTER/GETTY IMAGES, USED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES, POSED BY MODELS

Contents

- 5 Protecting Children from Pornography** 🕒
- 6 Portraits of Faith** 🕒
Wilson Di Paula—San José, Uruguay
- 8 Ministering Principles**
Are You Missing This Vital Part of Ministering?
- 12 Come, Follow Me: New Testament (Oct.)** 🕒
Family Study Fun
- 14 Come, Follow Me: New Testament (Sept. 30–Oct. 13)** 🕒
The Armor of God
- 16 Blessings of a Gospel Perspective**
By Elder Gary E. Stevenson
As we maintain a spiritual balance, we will have a better gospel perspective.
- 22 Addressing Pornography: Protect, Respond, and Heal**
By Joy D. Jones
Children are affected by and exposed to pornography, but your love can help them avoid and overcome its harmful influence.
- 28 Ministering to Children and Youth**
By Brittany Beattie
Here's how you can support and encourage the youth and children around you to fulfill their potential.
- 32 Preparing Youth for the Temple: Seven Simple Steps**
By Aaron Johnston
- 36 Turning Hearts** 🕒
Eight Funtastic Ways to Jump-Start Your Personal History
- 38 A Letter to a Single Sister (and anyone else who is longing to belong)**
By Sharon Eubank
If you've ever had the feeling of being on the "outside" of the "regular" Church, this article is for you.



On the Cover
Photograph from Getty Images, used for illustrative purposes, posed by models.

🕒 Quick Reads

Young Adults

66

This month tackles **what to do** if you are **dating someone who struggles with pornography**, and it shares **stories of hope** from others who have faced pornography in their dating relationships.



- 42 Women in the New Testament** 🕒
Lessons Learned from Unnamed Women
By Onnastasia Cole
- 44 Come, Follow Me: New Testament (Sept. 30–Oct. 13)**
Safe from Satan's Sting
By Barbara A. Lewis
Keeping the commandments can serve as a protection—a breastplate of righteousness—against Satan's influence.
- 48 Gospel Library App: A Digital Multi-Tool for Righteous Living** 🕒
- 50 To Be or to Have Been: That Is the Question**
By Elder Joni L. Koch
It is easy to judge others, but we must be careful to judge righteously and to see others as God sees them.
- 54 They Know, Just as I Know**
By Elder Randy D. Funk
No matter where we are, we can have a testimony that there are living prophets to guide us in our day.
- 56 The Laie Hawaii Temple: A Century of Gathering**
By Clinton D. and Angela R. Christensen
For 100 years, the temple in Hawaii has allowed Saints all around the Pacific to receive temple blessings.
- 60 Teaching Teens and Younger Children** 🕒
Four Ways to Protect Your Family from Pornography
- 62 Latter-day Saint Voices** 🕒
Two sisters are guided to serve; the missionaries' message made a difference; a bishop decides what to do with his bonus; a letter helps repair a damaged relationship.

October Digital-Only Articles

Available in the Gospel Library app or at ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org



Come, Follow Me

Support Articles and Activities

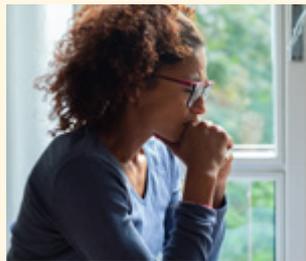
To discover articles, videos, and other resources that coincide with your family's study of the New Testament this month, see the digital version of this issue in the Gospel Library app or at ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.



Moving Forward after Learning of My Fiancé's Pornography Use

Name withheld

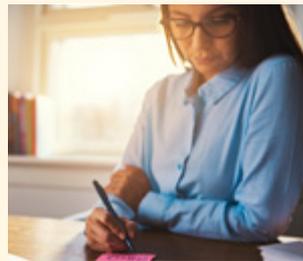
A young adult in Tahiti shares her insights on how pornography affected her



My Conversion: Refining Intentions

By Iyrah Tzanis

True conversion comes as a result of our behavior, desires, and intentions.



After Five Years of Inactivity, I Received an Unexpected Prompting

By Alyona Vanner

Heavenly Father brought me back in a way only He knew would work for me.

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PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM PORNOGRAPHY

Sister Joy D. Jones, Primary General President, expresses that love is the greatest weapon against pornography: “As the popular catchphrase says, ‘porn kills love,’ but let’s also remember that love kills porn.” Here are three ways that expressing love safeguards children against the influences of pornography.

PROTECTION:

“I Love You”

Create a relationship where your children feel safe and loved.

RESPONSE:

“I Still Love You”

Talk to your children about pornography and invite them to come to you with their questions.

HEALING:

“I Will Always Love You”

Reassure your children that even if they struggle with pornography, your love does not change.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Get comfortable talking with your children about sexuality and how to protect them from pornography.
- Help children understand the *why*.
- Every smartphone, tablet, and computer should have safeguards, even teens’ and adults’.
- Never leave anyone alone in a room on a media device. 
- Do not condemn children who express a struggle with pornography.



Sister Jones explains more about each of these ideas in her article on page 22.



“We safeguard our children until the time they can safeguard themselves.”

Jason S. Carroll, professor of family life at Brigham Young University



Wilson Di Paula

San José, Uruguay



A motorcycle accident left Wilson paralyzed. A year later his wife passed away. As a widower with two little girls, Wilson did not know what to do. He didn't know if there was a purpose in life. Wilson could have become bitter. Instead, he began searching for truth.

CODY BELL, PHOTOGRAPHER

I had many questions. Why do bad things happen? I was going along trying to do the right things, and my wife was taken from me and I was left in a wheelchair. Then doctors had to operate on my daughter's head to remove a tumor. I began to think that there was no purpose in life.

I realized that I needed to find the truth. I investigated various religions and found The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I felt that it was the truth.

I now know that there is a purpose for being on earth. We are here as part of Heavenly Father's eternal plan. We have a Savior who overcame death and was resurrected. Knowing this gives me strength. Now, I strive to persevere and continue forward. I have a purpose and I know that as I try to live a worthy life, I can have an eternal family.

DISCOVER MORE

See more about Wilson's journey of faith, including additional photos, in the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E10196](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E10196).

HOW TO SUBMIT A PORTRAIT OF FAITH

At [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org), you can send in a brief description and high-resolution photo of someone whose faith inspires you.



Ministering Principles

Are You Missing This *Vital Part* of Ministering?

Ministering is to “rejoice with them that do rejoice” just as much as it is to “weep with them that weep” (Romans 12:15).

When we think about ministering, it’s easy to think about helping those in need. We talk about gardening for the widow, bringing dinner to the sick, or giving to those who are struggling. We remember Paul’s counsel to “weep with them that weep,” but do we focus enough on the *first* part of that verse—to “rejoice with them that do rejoice”? (Romans 12:15). Rejoicing with those we minister to—whether that means celebrating their success or helping them find joy in difficult times—is an important part of ministering as the Savior would.

Here are three ideas that can help (and one to avoid) as we look to focus on the good God puts in our lives.

1. Be Aware

Bonnie H. Cordon, Young Women General President, helps us understand that we need to *see* those we minister to—see not only their burdens and struggles but also their strengths,



ILLUSTRATIONS BY AUGUSTO ZAMBONATO

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

Send us your experiences as you have ministered to others or have been ministered to. Go to [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.churchofjesuschrist.org) and click “Submit an Article or Feedback.”

talents, and successes. She said that we need to be “a champion and a confidant—someone who is aware of their circumstances and supports them in their hopes and aspirations.”¹

In the parable of the sheep and the goats, the Savior said those who would be found on His right hand would ask: “Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

“When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in?” (Matthew 25:37–38).

“Brothers and sisters, the key word is *saw*,” Sister Cordon said. “The righteous saw those in need because they were watching and noticing. We too can be a watchful eye to aid and comfort, to celebrate and even dream.”²

2. Find Reasons to Celebrate

Celebrate successes large or small. It could be getting through cancer or getting through a breakup, finding a new job or finding a lost shoe, surviving a month after the loss of a loved one or surviving a week without sugar.

Call to congratulate, drop off a card, or go out for lunch. By sharing in our blessings together, living with gratitude, and celebrating the blessings and successes of others, we “have rejoicings in the joy of our brethren” (Alma 30:34).



THE SAVIOR'S EXAMPLE

Jesus Christ often rejoiced in the happiness of others. He attended the marriage in Cana, where He not only celebrated the happy occasion but turned water into wine (see John 2:1–11). We can also make an effort to attend special events in the lives of those we minister to.

We also see the Savior rejoicing over the righteousness of others. When He visited the Nephites, He told them, “Blessed are ye because of your faith. And now behold, my joy is full” (3 Nephi 17:20).

3. See the Hand of the Lord

Sometimes rejoicing with others means helping them see reasons to rejoice—no matter what difficulties or delights enter our lives. The simple truth that Heavenly Father is aware of us and ready to uplift us can be an incredible source of joy.

You can help others see the hand of the Lord in their lives by sharing how you have seen it in your own. Be vulnerable enough to share how Heavenly Father has helped you through your challenges. This testimony can help others recognize and acknowledge how He has helped them (see Mosiah 24:14).

4. Don't Limit Your Ability to Rejoice

Unfortunately, we can sometimes limit our own ability to rejoice with others, particularly when we feel insecure about what we have to offer or where we are in life. Instead of finding joy in another's happiness, we fall into the trap of comparison. And as Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “Comparing blessings is almost certain to drive out joy. We cannot be grateful and envious at the same time.”³



“How can we overcome such a tendency so common in almost everyone?” asked Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “. . . We can count our many blessings and we can applaud the accomplishments of others. Best of all, we can serve others, the finest exercise for the heart ever prescribed.”⁴ Instead of comparing, we can compliment those we minister to. Freely share what you appreciate about them or their family members.

As Paul reminds us, we are all members of the body of Christ, and when “one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it” (1 Corinthians 12:26). With Heavenly Father’s help, we can be aware of others’ experiences, celebrate successes large and small, help them recognize the hand of the Lord, and overcome jealousy so that we may truly rejoice together in the blessings, talents, and happiness of others. ■

NOTES

1. Bonnie H. Cordon, “Becoming a Shepherd,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 75.
2. Bonnie H. Cordon, “Becoming a Shepherd,” 75.
3. Quentin L. Cook, “Rejoice!” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 30.
4. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Other Prodigal,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 64.

INVITATION TO ACT

Consider those you minister to. What talents and strengths do they have? What opportunities or successes have they had? How can you rejoice with them, compliment them, or encourage them?

f Family Study fun

Consider these activities during family scripture study or home evening.



United We Stand!

September 30–October 13 (Ephesians 5:31, 33)

Loving relationships are critical in a family, particularly between husband and wife, who should be “one flesh,” meaning equal and united.

- 1 Pair up two people of relatively equal size.
- 2 Have them sit on the floor back to back, arms linked.
- 3 Have them stand up by pushing off each other.
- 4 Repeat, but this time have only one person push.

Discussion: Why is having two people work together easier? Read “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (see *Ensign*, May 2017, 145). What roles do fathers and mothers have? How do they work together?



Frowny Face Challenge

October 14–20 (Philippians 4:4)

Everybody has bad days, but when we follow Paul’s counsel and “rejoice in the Lord alway[s]” (Philippians 4:4), we think of Christ and allow His grace to keep us as happy, optimistic, and positive as possible.

- 1 Have someone put on a frowny face.
- 2 Have each family member try, without touching the person, to turn that frown into a smile. (Extra points for getting a laugh.)

Discussion: How do we rejoice in the Lord? How can we help others find happiness in Christ? What are some examples from the scriptures of rejoicing in Christ?

FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Find more home evening ideas in this month's *Friend*.



Second Coming Surprise

October 21–27 (1 Thessalonians 5:2)

Jesus Christ will come again “as a thief in the night” (1 Thessalonians 5:2), meaning unexpectedly and at an unknown time. Are we preparing each day for that event?

- 1 On small, individual slips of paper, have family members write down what they did yesterday (soccer practice, school, and so on).
- 2 Put the slips into a hat (or bag). Parents secretly add another slip that reads: “Second Coming.”
- 3 Take turns drawing an activity from the hat and reading it aloud.
- 4 When someone draws “Second Coming,” the game’s over.

Discussion: Which of the activities drawn from the hat helped prepare our family for Christ’s return? What should we add to our daily routines to prepare us more?



Scripture Treasure Hunt

October 28–November 3 (2 Timothy 3:15–17)

Paul taught that scriptures bless us with wisdom, doctrine, correction, instruction, and faith.

- 1 On separate pieces of paper, write “wisdom (Acts 18:28)”; “doctrine (Titus 1:9)”; “correction (Matthew 4:3–10)”; “instruction (Acts 17:2–3)”; and “faith (Romans 10:17).”
- 2 Send everyone out of the room.
- 3 Hide the five papers in the following locations: table, window, door, pillow, book.
- 4 Invite everyone back. Have them read these scriptures to identify the keyword clue to find each hidden paper. (John 18:16=door; Mark 4:38=pillow; Revelation 22:7=book; Acts 20:9=window; Luke 22:21=table.)
- 5 Read aloud the scripture on each found paper and discuss how it’s an example of that blessing.

Discussion: What can we do to improve our personal and family scripture study?

Selected activity ideas contributed by Maddison Brown and Joan Saunders Orchard

September 30–October 13 (Ephesians 6:10–18)

The Armor of God

Paul’s military metaphor helps us see how to protect ourselves spiritually.

BIBLE FACTS

- The ancient Greek word for “whole armour” (*panoplia*) meant all of the equipment needed to be fully armed to wage effective warfare, including both defensive shielding and offensive weaponry (see Ephesians 6:11, 13; see also Luke 11:22).
- Paul was a Roman citizen, and Roman soldiers had a visible military presence in occupied lands. In addition, Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians while in captivity in Rome and was likely guarded by Roman soldiers. So the Roman “whole armour” was likely what Paul had in mind.
- The prophet Isaiah described the Messiah as having a breastplate of righteousness and a helmet of salvation when He would come to intercede for His people and save them (see Isaiah 59:17).

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Ephesians 6:11



Shield—A large piece of solid material carried on one arm.

Loins girt—*Loins* means the area between the hips and abdomen. *Girt* means tied around firmly. Girt loins don't have any loose clothing flowing around them that could trip up the legs and feet. Generally, to “gird your loins” means to prepare for action.

Feet shod—*Shod* means wearing shoes.

ARMOR



Helmet—A solid covering for the head.

Breastplate—A solid covering for the chest.

Sword—A weapon that can slice and stab.

"The putting off of the natural man makes possible the putting on of the whole armor of God, which would not fully fit before!"

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Plow in Hope," *Ensign*, May 2001, 60.

What We Can Learn

Loins girt: When we have our "loins girt about with truth" (Ephesians 6:14), we are prepared to move against evil. We prepare ourselves through personal worthiness, scripture study, and prayer.

Breastplate: A breastplate protects vital organs such as the heart and lungs. Our righteous thoughts and deeds help keep up our spiritual vitality. "He who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come" (Doctrine and Covenants 59:23).

Feet shod: Our feet should be shod with the "preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15). "Your feet . . . represent your goals or objectives in life. . . . Preparedness is the way to victory. . . . The tide of victory rests with him who is prepared" (Harold B. Lee, in "Message from the First Presidency," *Ensign*, Jan. 1971, 2).

Shield: With "the shield of faith," we can "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6:16). Those flaming arrows rain down from all directions, and we need the faith and trust in the Lord that will keep us from the spiritual harm the adversary's temptations would inflict.

Helmet: "The 'helmet of salvation' [Ephesians 6:17] guards our reasoning, intellect, and thoughts" (Robert D. Hales, "Modesty: Reverence for the Lord," *Ensign*, Aug. 2008, 39). If we focus our minds on Jesus Christ and His gospel, our thoughts can be kept pure and our eyes single to the glory of God.

Sword: "The sword of the Spirit . . . is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17). The word of God is "sharper than any twoedged sword" (Hebrews 4:12), and the Spirit can "pierce even to the very soul" (Helaman 5:30). With our testimony and the power and peace of God's Spirit, we can strike against error and conquer the enemy of all righteousness. ■



**By Elder Gary E.
Stevenson**
Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles



Blessings of a Gospel Perspective

A gospel perspective will give you greater clarity regarding how you think about your life priorities, solve problems, and face personal temptations.

What a great blessing it is to be members of the Church of Jesus Christ in the dispensation when a restoration of the keys of the kingdom and the fulfillment of prophecy allow us to witness firsthand “the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth” (Doctrine and Covenants 65:2).

This prophecy, given by Daniel of the Old Testament and subsequently repeated in this dispensation, seems to be in the midst of its fulfillment as we observe over 3,300 organized stakes in the Church today. In the past 50 years, membership in the Church has grown from 2.1 million to more than 16 million.¹

As impressive to me as is this prolific growth and change is the fact that the principles and practices of the gospel remain the same, including the divine-governance model revealed for the Church of Jesus Christ. This model allows the organization of stakes, designed to provide “for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth” (Doctrine and Covenants 115:6).

One of the greatest miracles of your mortal existence will be your ability to find balance between your spirituality and other important life roles.

Brothers and sisters, the Lord is generous in the blessings He grants to us. Understanding that blessings are a function of our obedience to commandments and that keeping commandments is a demonstration of our love of the Lord are valuable precepts to learn. Gospel principles such as these provide an important perspective for us.

This leads to two points I would like to emphasize. I note that President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, previously shared these two points with young single adults in 2015.

Maintain a Gospel Perspective

President Oaks has said that “*perspective* means to see all the facts in a meaningful relationship, the whole view.”² Here are some things you understand when you see from a gospel perspective:

- You are a child of a loving Heavenly Father (see Doctrine and Covenants 76:24).
- You are here on earth for a purpose, with the ability to make choices (see 2 Nephi 2:27; 10:23).
- “For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11).
- Jesus Christ is our Savior and advocate with the Father (see 1 John 2:1; Doctrine and Covenants 110:4).

Consider what happens if your gospel perspective becomes the lens you look through in every aspect of your life. A gospel perspective will give you greater clarity regarding how you think about your life priorities, solve problems, and face personal temptations. This can truly affect your overall approach to your entire life and the various decisions you will make along the way.

With this outlook, we know that the Lord desires that we partake of the sacrament each week and that we study the scriptures and pray to Him daily. In addition, we know that Satan will tempt us not to follow our Savior or listen to the Holy Ghost’s quiet promptings. We can then be more aware that the adversary strives to take away our agency and ability to withstand his efforts through addiction, including drugs and pornography.

In stark contrast, the lens of the gospel gives us a clear vision of the importance of creating families—choosing to marry and raising children in righteousness. This view also opens our eyes to see that the adversary would like to destroy the family unit altogether and confuse gender roles, thus leading to a decrease in the value society places on the formation and building of families.

Maintain a Spiritual Balance

President Oaks stated: “When young adults have the perspective—the overall view—it is vital for them to maintain spiritual *balance* in their lives. To do this, you must abstain from some of the attractions of the world and also do the things necessary to draw closer to the Savior.”³

On one hand, you have many pressing issues and life priorities of all sizes and varieties, all needing attention, focus,

and direction. The list for each of you may be quite different based upon your personal circumstances, but within them you will certainly find education, employment, marriage, and both emotional and physical wellness. Of course, your challenge is to balance these important life roles against your spirituality.

President Oaks also counseled that you must be careful as you “allocate your time so that you will not starve yourself spiritually during the time when your primary-programmed activities are on other things. That principle explains why it is especially important for young adults . . . to follow the counsel to attend their Church meetings, serve in the Church, have daily scripture study, have daily kneeling family prayer, and serve in Church callings.”⁴

In the midst of your personal and diverse needs, to balance life’s pursuits and challenges with your spirituality, you will come to realize that balance is achievable. The Lord does not require you to do something you cannot accomplish. I heard President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) on numerous occasions counsel that “whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies.”⁵ I think this especially applies to members of the Church.

As daunting as keeping this balance may seem, I promise that one of the greatest miracles of your mortal existence will be your ability to find balance between your spirituality and other important life roles. This can take place in a way that will allow you not just to maintain your spirituality and life’s important roles at status quo but also to grow and develop in both of these important areas.

The main reason this is possible is that the Lord is the fulcrum. He is the absolute center point of balance. And He has divine interest in you personally as one of His children.

But this outcome is predicated on your appropriate focus and effort to find balance.

From my observation and personal experience, it seems that we have a tendency throughout our life to tip more heavily one way or the other. To remain balanced in our lives requires our constant effort and care. Actively choose to stay steady.

Interestingly, it can go both ways. There may be times when you find that you need to exercise care to keep clearly focused on your school or professional work, with “Church service done in Church-service time.”⁶ However, remember to keep the Lord as your fulcrum so you can find your appropriate spiritual equilibrium.

The Lord Will Help You

When we keep a gospel perspective, it is easy to understand the fundamental truth that the Lord will help us. A basic gospel principle is that we are children of loving Heavenly Parents. It is only natural for Them to help us in every way to return to our heavenly home.

I would like to share an example of how the Lord can help you. One of my youth leaders, Thad Carlson, shared it with me many years ago. Thad, who recently passed away, had an enormous impact on me while I was growing up. He was raised during the Great Depression, the ninth of 14 children. His family made a living by farming and raising cattle. It was a difficult time financially, and their greatest asset was their herd of cattle.

In Thad’s youth, one of his responsibilities was to care for and, when necessary, herd the cattle to assure that they found the best feed—a big job for a young boy. He was able to do this with the aid of a smart cow pony who knew exactly what to do with little direction. The pony was named Old Smoky.

Remember to maintain a gospel perspective. Look at the world around you through the lens of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But Old Smoky had one fault: he never wanted to be caught. Whenever anyone approached him, he would run away, knowing that he was going to be put to work.

One day, after Old Smoky was caught, bridled, and saddled, young Thad rode out to the pasture where the cattle were grazing. The ground was dry, and so was the pasture, but Thad noticed that the grass outside the pasture along the sides of some railroad tracks was longer and greener. So he thought he would herd the cows outside the fenced pasture and let them enjoy some of the good feed along the railroad tracks.

With the help of Old Smoky, Thad herded the cattle out of the pasture, where they began to move back and forth along the railroad tracks feeding on the better, greener grass. The contented cows seemed to be taking care of themselves, so Thad got off his horse and sat on the reins of the bridle, enjoying the surroundings around him, playing and amusing himself. Looking to graze in the green grass himself, however, Old Smoky eventually drifted away, his reins slipping out from under Thad.

This idyllic and peaceful moment came to a crashing and abrupt halt when Thad suddenly heard a loud noise from far away. It was the whistle of an oncoming locomotive barreling down the very rail tracks where his cattle herd was lazily scattered right in front of him! He recognized that the consequences could be devastating to the herd and also to his family if he did not act quickly to get the cattle back into the pasture and away from the oncoming train. He felt that he would never be able to forgive himself for not fulfilling his trusted responsibility.

Thad swiftly jumped to his feet and ran to grab the reins of Old Smoky. Old Smoky saw Thad coming and quickly danced away from him, not wanting to be caught. Breathless

and desperate, with images of dead cows and family tragedy flashing through his mind, Thad knew he had to act fast.

He later recorded what happened: “My Primary teacher had taught us to pray and reinforced teachings learned from my mother. With no other recourse, I dropped to my knees and started to pray for help to clear the cows off the tracks.”

Thad didn’t hear a voice, but a clear thought came to him: “Notice how the cows can walk by Old Smoky and he doesn’t move. So . . . now that you are on your knees, also get on your hands. Play like you’re a cow and crawl over to Old Smoky.”

Thad said: “I did. He didn’t move. I grabbed his reins, led him to the fence, hopped on his back, and we raced like the wind to get the cows back into the pasture. Old Smoky was unusually brilliant at every twist and turn.”

Later, when Thad was in high school, it fully dawned on him that he had received a clear answer to his prayer in a critical time of need. He observed, “Angels administered to Old Smoky beyond my ability, and our family was spared a tragedy.” Later he said: “This was the first of many promptings that [were] to come to me. ‘And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you’ (3 Nephi 18:20).”⁷

We all have our cattle to clear off the railroad tracks before the train arrives. Our perils come in many different shapes and sizes. Some are even as serious as Thad’s dangerous situation, with life-threatening or soul-threatening consequences for us or our loved ones.

Other situations we face may not have such serious consequences but nevertheless weigh heavily on our minds and hearts. One thing is certain—each of us will have adversity and affliction in our lives because they are part of our mortal experience. But remember, the Lord will help us!

I love these words found in the Book of Mormon: “We see that God is mindful of every people, whatsoever land they may be in; yea, he numbereth his people, and his bowels of mercy are over all the earth” (Alma 26:37).

That means each of us. What a great comfort to know that the Lord will help us.

Faith, Hope, and a Gospel Perspective

By way of summary, I encourage you to remember to maintain a gospel perspective. Look at the world around you through the lens of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Maintain a spiritual balance. We all face challenges and opportunities in our various life roles, and they are best served when we balance them with our faith in Jesus Christ and in His Atonement.

Finally, have faith and hope that the Lord will help you. This knowledge is what helps you confidently face the challenges that are an inevitable part of your mortal mission. ■

From a devotional address, "A Gospel Perspective," given at Brigham Young University–Hawaii on September 19, 2017.

NOTES

1. See "Statistical Report, 2018," *Ensign*, May 2019, 112.
2. Dallin H. Oaks, young single adult fireside, Feb. 8, 2015, Salt Lake City, Utah (unpublished).
3. Dallin H. Oaks, young single adult fireside, Feb. 8, 2015.
4. Dallin H. Oaks, young single adult fireside, Feb. 8, 2015.
5. Thomas S. Monson, "Duty Calls," *Ensign*, May 1996, 44.
6. Dallin H. Oaks, young single adult fireside, Feb. 8, 2015.
7. Thad Carlson, personal correspondence.





ADDRESSING PORNOGRAPHY:

Protect, Respond, & Heal



By Joy D. Jones
Primary General
President

These three applications of love can help our children in the encounters they may face with pornography.

I am painfully aware of the influence of pornography upon even the youngest in our society—our children. A plague of epic proportions, pornography can cause shame, deceit, distorted feelings, loss of self-control, overwhelming addiction, and total consumption of time, thought, and energy. There is great need for all of us—parents, families, teachers, leaders—to really see, value, and protect our children and youth.

Love is among the greatest of God’s gifts. Loving God and loving one’s neighbor are the two greatest commandments given to us from Jesus Christ Himself. Love, I believe, is also our greatest weapon in fighting against pornography.

Indeed, as the popular catchphrase says, “porn kills love,” but let’s also remember that love kills porn. That doesn’t mean that our love for someone else can change their addiction or even their behavior. But love can motivate us—how we prepare, how we respond, how we listen—particularly with our children. If we are going to have any hope of eradicating this plague from the world, love must be both at the forefront and the foundation of all our efforts.

I wish to suggest three applications of love that I hope we will focus on, embrace, and enact. These three applications are tied to three phases of encounters with pornography our children may face.

First, we say “I love you” by truly protecting them. Second, we say “I still love you” by the way we respond to their exposure to pornography, whether intentional or not. And third, we say “I will always love you” by providing loving support for them as they work on healing if they’ve experienced compulsive use or addiction. In each phase, love is the key.

This problem is affecting our boys and our girls, and we're not talking about it enough.



1 PROTECTION: “I LOVE YOU”

Picture in your mind a child you love. When you tell this child, “I love you,” what does it mean? At its core, it means that we provide protection so that we can help those we love to become their best selves and face life’s challenges. Part of protection is creating strong, trusting, consistent relationships. These types of relationships help to draw our children close. As we build strong relationships of trust and protect our children and grandchildren—or any child—we give them a safe place to turn. This protection helps them understand who they are and helps them comprehend their relationship with God. Feeling valued and loved helps children envision and rely upon a caring Heavenly Father who gives instructions for their happiness.

I am concerned that many parents may not yet realize how dangerous pornography really is or may think it’s only a problem for the boy next door. The reality is that this problem is affecting

our boys and our girls, and we’re not talking about it enough.

Many years ago, my husband and I heard a meaningful story that we have repeated often to our children. The story is about an old rattlesnake who asked a passing young boy to carry him to the mountaintop to see one last sunset before the snake died. The boy was hesitant, but the rattlesnake promised not to bite him in exchange for the ride. After that concession, the boy kindly carried the snake to the top of the mountain where they watched the sunset together.

After carrying the snake back down to the valley floor, the boy prepared a meal for himself and a bed for the night. In the morning, the snake asked, “Please, little boy, will you take me back to my home? It is now time for me to leave this world, and I would like to return to my home.” The little boy felt he had been safe and

the snake had kept his word, so he decided he would take the snake home as requested.

He carefully picked up the snake, held it close to his chest, and carried him back into the desert to his home to die. Just before he laid the rattlesnake down, the rattlesnake turned and bit him in the chest. The little boy cried out and threw the snake upon the ground. “Mr. Snake, why did you do that? Now I will surely die!” The rattlesnake looked up at him and grinned: “You knew what I was when you picked me up.”

In today’s world, I see many parents handing their child a snake. I am speaking of smartphones. We cannot put cell phones with internet access into the hands of young children who aren’t old enough to have been sufficiently taught, do not yet have necessary reasoning and decision-making abilities, and who don’t have parental controls and other tools to help protect them. Jason S. Carroll, a professor of family life at Brigham Young University, stated, “We safeguard our children until the time they can safeguard themselves.” The brain stem, which houses the pleasure centers of the brain, develops first. Only later do the reasoning and decision-making abilities in the frontal cortex fully develop. “So kids have the gas pedal without the full brake.”¹

Every phone should have safeguards, even teens’. This is also good counsel for adults. No one is immune to the bite of a poisonous snake. Some parents opt for flip phones for their children to limit usage to calling and texting.

Beyond the smartphones are countless other devices that can access unwanted media via the internet. A recent study showed that 79 percent of unwanted pornography exposures take place in the home.² Children can be exposed to it on tablets, smartphones, game consoles, portable DVD players, and smart TVs, just to name a few devices. I know families who have designated

a single, high-traffic area in their home where electronic devices are used. These families call it a “media room,” and all their devices are kept in open view, in the light. Never is any one person alone in the room on a media device.

Other families have opted for rules like no phones in bedrooms or bathrooms. Some simply say, “Never alone with a phone.” Still others gradually add access to apps their children can use with software that allows the child’s phone to be configured by the parent. This way they teach that trust is earned and that phone safety is important.

Whatever the needs are for our individual families, let’s teach each family member to use technology wisely and positively from the start—to develop a moral mindset. Let’s educate children in constructive ways to use technology for good. We can teach them to evaluate by asking themselves, “Will using this serve a good purpose?” Our choices in how we teach our families now will influence future generations.

As parents, I hope we will consider the importance of our relationships with our children and the specific efforts we are making to protect them. As we strengthen these loving relationships, children will better understand why God warns against the evils of pornography, they will recognize how to avoid it, and they will be prepared if they do encounter it.

2 RESPONSE: “I STILL LOVE YOU”

Creating welcoming, open, inviting conversations that encourage children to share their thoughts, experiences, and questions with their parents is not easy. We can invite children of all ages to come forward if or when they develop any level of pornography problem—from early, inadvertent exposures to occasional use, to intensive use, and on down to compulsive use. Earlier discussions are better, and children will come forward more readily when they know they are loved and nothing they say or do can change that love.

Very rarely, however, does a child come forward voluntarily. It usually happens when an observant parent prompts a child with, “Is something wrong?” or “You don’t seem quite yourself.” The more love the child feels, the easier it is for him or her to open up.

This assurance of love is established in their minds from small experiences that take place over and over. Minor troubles talked about in a loving way create a foundation of a healthy response so that when big troubles come, communication is still open. Most importantly, children

know that your response will be, “I still love you. I don’t stop loving you because something happened. I always love you.”

For some reason, we don’t talk very much to youth and children about one of the strongest urges and biggest temptations they will face. Our reluctance sets them up to be taught primarily by the internet, other children or teenagers, or even popular media. Some of us may be hesitant to even use the word *pornography* around children in an effort to protect their innocence. It feels so awkward. Maybe our parents never talked that openly with us. What if our conversation encourages curiosity? What if they want to know more? How can we expect our children to talk about pornography with us if we never talk about it with them?

Parents, we must start the conversation and not wait for children to come to us. I love the suggestion of having regular, frequent, comfortable conversations instead of a one-time event. The benefits of caring conversations are that parents and trusted leaders are the experts, not Google; talking can occur in a safe environment; and talking increases the trust of the child. We want children to feel prepared and empowered, not scared. We want to talk with them and not at them.

As parents and teachers, we can’t help children if we aren’t educated ourselves. Teaching the *what* and the *why* is essential. We can learn for ourselves and help children understand why pornography is wrong, why it is so dangerous, why we don’t want it to hurt them, and what to do if they encounter it.

Are we giving our children a sufficient *why* in age-appropriate ways? If the only reason we give them to avoid pornography is “It’s bad,” that may end up being an inadequate reason. Instead, we must present as many whys as we can to establish a moral imperative that is motivating for our youth.

There are ample reasons to avoid pornography, but here are just a few motivations from the organization Fight the New Drug that might catch the interest of our young people:

- Porn can change and rewire your brain, and studies show that it can even make your brain smaller and less active.
- Porn can be addictive.
- Porn will destroy your self-confidence.
- Porn can leave you lonely.
- Porn can hurt those you love.
- Porn can ruin healthy sexuality.
- Porn is connected to violence.
- Porn causes people to eventually become dishonest.
- Porn will rob you of your time and energy.
- Porn causes depression, anxiety, and shame.

I would add that pornography is against the commandments of God. With these and a multitude of other reasons, we are building the case against pornography, but knowledge without implementation leads to frustration. We must set reasonable and helpful boundaries, limits, and expectations. Helping children create their own internal reasoning for wanting to stay away from porn is essential. If a child does not decide for him or herself where to stand on this issue, he or she will likely become part of the current staggering statistics.

3 HEALING: “I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU”

When children are exposed to pornography and entrapped by it, they struggle to react, to recover, and to heal. Sincere, earnest, constant, firm, and patient support is needed as children assume responsibility for their own recovery and make their way forward. No one can provide this kind of support like a parent can. After we have carefully and personally taught the truth, after we have gently built trust and encouraged conversations, then children need to know that despite their mistakes and choices, our assurance will be, “I will always love you no matter what.”

I recall a simple incident that occurred in our family years ago. My husband and I were away from home, and our oldest son was babysitting the other children. We received a call from a concerned neighbor alerting us that a fire truck was at our house. We raced home and found that our 10-year-old son had been playing in the backyard next to a six-acre field of



Find more resources
online at [addressing
pornography.Churchof
JesusChrist.org](http://addressingpornography.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

tall, dry grass. He was trying to see if he could start a fire with sparks.

Obviously, he did! By the time we arrived, the small fire had been extinguished by the fire department, the firemen had lectured our son, and the neighbors were beginning to disperse. Our son was embarrassed, frightened, tearful, and knew he was surely in trouble.

We all went into the house. Our son was so afraid that, even though the situation was serious, all we could do was wrap our arms around this sweet boy and reassure him of our love and our relief that he wasn't hurt.

When children are exposed to pornography and especially when they get caught in its web, they will be embarrassed, frightened, and tearful too. It's difficult to take something that has been in the dark and expose it to light. It feels shameful and vulnerable. They may have failures and challenges along the way as they recover and heal. Their need for constant love is critical. However, parents need to be aware that their love will always help but not be all that is needed.

In healing, you will need to channel some of that love you have for your child into finding the right resources to help. Your love is a foundation for what needs to happen, but if someone you love is entrapped, you will likely need to seek out professionals who can help your loved one and also help you.

As you and your loved one seek healing, I hope that you will find strength in the One who has the power to heal all wounds, bind people together, and create relationships, quite beyond our present capacity to imagine. Our Savior, the gentle Healer, has the power to save. We can be parents to our children and point them to Him, but He alone can be their Savior. And the amazing thing is that He loves our children even more perfectly than we do—no matter what. ■

From a keynote address given at the 2018 Utah Coalition Against Pornography conference in Salt Lake City, Utah.

NOTES

1. Jason S. Carroll, in Lisa Ann Thomson, "Eight Strategies to Help Children Reject Pornography," *Ensign*, Aug. 2017, 55.
2. "The Facts about Online Threats," *Parents Television Council Watchdog* (blog), June 21, 2017, w2.parentstv.org/blog.



Ministering to Children and Youth

All adults, no matter their calling, can support the development of children and youth in their ward.

By Brittany Beattie

Priesthood and Family Department

A loving Heavenly Father has given each of us unique talents, gifts, passions, and interests. These talents allow us to minister to those around us as we seek to become “of one heart and one mind” in following Jesus Christ (Moses 7:18). This includes our ministering efforts to children and youth.

Whether you’re a Primary teacher, a youth leader, or a ministering brother or sister, or you simply interact with children and youth at church, you have the capacity to inspire, encourage, uplift, and help children and youth become all that Heavenly Father intends them to be.

Your encouragement and ministering can be part of Church-supported aspects of home-centered efforts, remembering that parents have the sacred, primary role for guiding and supporting their children’s growth. That’s true even if the parents aren’t members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or if they aren’t active in the Church. So, what can that Church support look like, and how can each of us contribute?

These four ideas can help:

1. Get to know the children and youth.

It’s difficult to support others until you know what support they need. Do you know the children and youth around you well enough to know what goals they’re working toward,

what help they may need, or what matters to them? On the flip side, do you also know their strengths and interests so that you can help individuals connect when an opportunity for them to support each other arises?

For example, Jessica Ocampo from Guatemala offered to watch her friend Lisbett’s son David while Lisbett served at Young Women camp. Jessica asked if there was anything she could do to help David during that time, and Lisbett said that David had never learned to ride a bike. Jessica invited her sons to help, and they taught David to ride a bike. They also knew that David was playing on the ward’s basketball team and preparing for a tournament, so they spent the day helping him prepare. David may not have gotten better at basketball in that one day, but, he said, “they showed me they really care.” He also added, “I still have the video on my phone when I learned to ride a bike.”

Other Ideas

- Make sure you have parents’ permission for any interaction with their children outside of a Church class or activity. Avoid one-on-one situations with children and youth. Having one of the child’s parents present as you support their child is ideal. Care should also be taken to promote safety measures.



- Greet children and youth and their parents at church. Learn their names and ask them about their week.
- Ask those you minister to and their families about what they're most excited about, nervous about, or interested in. Know what things they are preparing for. Then talk with them and also pray to know if there's anything you can do to support them.

2. Share your talents and look for connections that could involve others.

You've spent a lifetime developing skills and talents. You've had unique experiences that give you insights and knowledge about a variety of topics. Can you share your talents and wisdom with children or youth to help them in their development plans? Can you help them recognize opportunities that will help them with their desired growth?

For instance, Olalekan Babatunde from Osun, Nigeria, practices law. His stake participated in early testing for Children and Youth. When he heard that it had inspired one young man in his ward to become a lawyer, Olalekan reached

out to him to offer support. Olalekan is helping him learn what to do to prepare for law school.

Maria Vashchenko from Kyiv, Ukraine, noticed the impact of a woman who became aware of her 13-year-old son's music abilities. The woman invited him to play the piano for the cultural celebration before the dedication of the Kyiv Ukraine Temple. He had been strongly considering quitting music at the time, but he agreed to accept her invitation.

"This was a turning point in my son's life," said Maria. "The concert was great! Afterward, we told our son that he could now quit music, but he replied that he would not. He graduated from music school with excellent grades, mastered several more musical instruments, began to write music and songs, and created a music group. When he went on a mission, he organized musical activities, played hymns at sacrament meeting, conducted a missionary choir, and taught investigators to play the guitar and piano. We will always be grateful for the sister who helped our son develop his talents." The influential sister made a difference simply by knowing the young man's skills and inviting him to use them to bless others.

Other Ideas

- Offer to teach children and youth your skills in one of their activities, or have them share their talents with the Relief Society or elders quorum.
- Review your patriarchal blessing to reflect on your talents and gifts of the Spirit that could support others in their development—even gifts that may not be as visible as others, like being a good listener.
- Create a list of individuals' strengths—yours and others'—so you're ready to support others who could benefit from another's knowledge. This may be especially helpful for families, ward councils, and youth class and quorum presidencies to do together.

3. Be interested and give encouragement.

Remember when children or youth have something big coming up; then follow up. Send a note of encouragement. Ask how things went with their plans that week. Be excited for their growth and encourage them to keep going even in disappointments. You don't need to know details to let them know you're supportive.

Once, when I was trying to develop a habit of getting to bed early, a ward member heard me talk one Sunday about my hope to get more sleep that week. He asked me what I was going to do to make it happen. I committed to go to bed by my desired time at least one night that week. "I'll ask you about it next week," he said. I believed he would, so I kept my commitment.

Sure enough, the next week at church he asked if I had met my goal (I had!), and he asked if I would do it again the next week. I knew he would follow up, so I did it. The next week, he encouraged me to meet my goal twice that week. And the next week? He committed me to three nights. He kept encouraging me each week until my plan was a real habit.

Years later, I told that story to another friend at church because I had fallen out of my good habit and knew I needed to start again. "I'll help you be accountable," she said. So each week she followed up with me until I developed a habit of good sleep again. Over the years, family and close friends have helped me with goals to get enough sleep, but the two times it has been most effective were when ward members—with whom I wasn't especially close—helped me set and keep a goal and then followed up with me in an encouraging way.

Other Ideas

- If an individual is sharing their skill during a performance or game, attend and cheer them on.
- Notice growth in others and praise them for their efforts, such as with a Church talk or lesson, an activity they helped plan, a service project they participated in, or a school achievement you heard about. Your words can provide an important motivation for them to keep pursuing their goals on the difficult days.
- If you plan family activities to help your children learn new skills, consider inviting others to join, especially if it relates to their goals.

4. Follow the Holy Ghost.

Above all, seek the Holy Ghost. Heavenly Father and the Savior know your strengths and others' needs. They know your capacity to bless the children and youth in your life. Pray to know how you can support and bless those individuals. Then act in faith. The Spirit will guide you in your small and simple efforts to bring about miracles (see Alma 37:6).

The Savior's call to be "of one heart and one mind" (Moses 7:18) invites us—young and old—to be united in our efforts to become like the Savior and follow in His ways. As we minister to children and youth and seek to help them grow, we might find that we grow just as much in return.

Other Ideas

- Live worthy of the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost.
- Set aside time weekly to ponder how to support the growth of your children or children and youth in your extended family, ward, or community.
- Rely on the Spirit in working on your own personal development. Learn from and keep progressing through failure, seeking the Holy Ghost to help you as you grow. ■



Preparing Youth for the Temple:

Seven Simple Steps

By Aaron Johnston
Church Magazines

On a Monday morning, long before sunrise, I walked into the baptistry at the Provo Utah Temple to find the waiting area jam-packed with youth, all of them dressed in white jumpsuits and eager to get to work. As a temple ordinance worker, I had seen my share of large youth groups, but this was by far the biggest.

And on a school day, no less!

Part of the Greatest Work

I knew at once why they were there. The night before, President Russell M. Nelson had addressed the youth of the Church and told them they had an important work to do in helping to gather scattered Israel, both among the living and beyond the veil. He said, “My question tonight to every one of you between the ages of 12 and 18 is this: Would you like to be a big part of *the greatest* challenge, *the greatest* cause, and *the greatest* work on earth today?”¹

Judging by the size of the group in the baptistry that morning, the answer was a resounding yes!

As I watched the youth file into the baptistry that morning, eager to accept the prophet’s invitation, a thought struck me: “The youth are clearly willing, but are we, as parents and leaders, doing all we can to prepare them?”

Here are seven steps to help us rise to the challenge.

Now that youth as young as 11 can enter the temple, parents and leaders have an even greater responsibility to prepare them early for temple service.

1. Instill a love for the temple.

When I was a child, I lived with my family in Germany. My parents often made the long, arduous, and expensive journey to the temple in Bern, Switzerland, far to the south. To make the most of these trips, my parents would spend several days at the temple, while my sister and I stayed with neighbors and friends.

My parents’ commitment to attend the temple, despite the sacrifices required, taught me more about the special and sacred nature of the temple than any sermon ever could. They returned from the temple all aglow, fortified in the Spirit and grateful to the Lord. How could I not notice the spirit of the temple as it filled our home?

As parents and leaders, our love for the temple can be contagious. When we attend regularly, our children and youth notice. As we hang a picture of the temple in our home, testify of the temple during home evening and gospel study, sing “I Love to See the Temple” with our children, and share the feelings of gratitude and peace we experience in the temple, we plant a seed of faith in their hearts. If nourished, that seed will grow into their own love for the house of the Lord (see Alma 32:28–43).

As President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) counseled parents, “Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple.”²

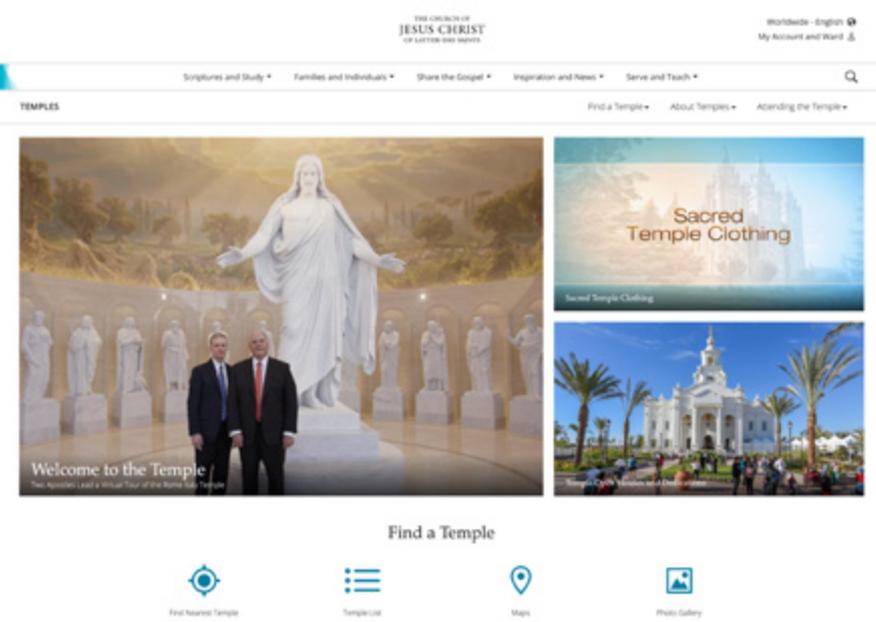


2. Teach the commandments.

During the interview for a limited-use temple recommend, bishops ask youth if they live the law of chastity and keep the Word of Wisdom. When I was a bishop and asked these questions to new deacons and Beehives, I was surprised to discover that some of them didn't know what the law of chastity or Word of Wisdom were.

Parents need not wait until youth are in their teenage years to teach them the laws of God (see Proverbs 22:6; Alma 37:35). The booklet *For the Strength of Youth* may have the word *youth* in the title, but that doesn't mean we wait until our children are teenagers to teach them those standards. We must teach children the commandments when they are young, explaining God's laws in a way that's appropriate to their age. This "sacred duty"³ is a responsibility that we can't delegate to anyone else (see Doctrine and Covenants 68:25–28).

But duty is not our only motivation. We teach because we love. We understand that youth who knowingly and willingly obey God's laws gain a testimony of their truthfulness (see John 7:17). They more readily recognize the blessings of obedience (see Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21) and take an active role in their own temple preparation.



3. Teach temple prep in the home.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught that “temple preparation is most effective in our homes” and that “all Church members should become familiar with the excellent materials available at temples.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.”⁴ Here parents will find a wealth of resources to share with their children, including videos, general conference addresses, photo galleries, and instructions on how to prepare for the temple.

Plan a special home evening or, even better, a series of family meetings or councils to share, view, and discuss together all this content. In these temple-prep lessons, consider discussing the symbolism found in temple baptistries. The twelve oxen that encircle many baptismal fonts, for example, represent the twelve tribes of Israel and the strength of the Saints when they gather together to engage in God’s work.⁵ As youth understand such symbols, they can more fully appreciate the beauty, ordinances, and spirit of the temple.

4. Help youth find temple names.

Speaking to the youth, Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “You are a special generation. . . . You, more than any other generation before you, are turning your hearts to your fathers [see Malachi 4:6].” He then invited the youth to “prepare as many names for the temple as baptisms you perform in the temple, and help someone else to do the same.”⁶

Elder Andersen promised that as youth find and prepare these names, they will receive incredible blessings: “You will feel purpose and strength that will help you to avoid the temptations that surround you. . . . The gift of the Holy Ghost will be a stronger influence upon you. Your belief in and appreciation for the Savior will increase. You will better understand the power of His Atonement, and you will be safeguarded from the distractions that can so easily pull you from His commandments.”⁷

5. Attend the Temple and Priesthood Preparation meeting.

Each year, under the direction of the bishopric, the ward Primary presidency holds a special meeting for those who will turn 12 years old during the coming year and thus will be eligible for a limited-use temple recommend beginning in January. The purpose of this meeting is to help children understand the blessings of temple service, including making and keeping sacred covenants. As parents attend this special meeting with their children, parents can help children strengthen their commitment to prepare for temple service.



6. Prepare youth for the limited-use temple recommend interview.

Youth who have never experienced an interview to obtain a limited-use temple recommend may feel some anxiety about it. Is this a test? What if I don't know the answers? Help!

Many times when I was a bishop, youth entered my office wide-eyed and worried, unsure of what to expect. I quickly reassured them that the interview was nothing to be afraid of. It was, more than anything, an opportunity for the youth to evaluate their own testimony and declare their obedience to certain commandments.

In fact, youth need not be surprised by any of the interview questions. Parents can explain in advance what the interview entails. Youth may also benefit from hearing parents' positive experiences with their own recommend interviews.

And remember, parents can attend the interview and support their youth if they wish. It should be a joyous and Spirit-filled experience.



7. Ready youth for the ordinances.

It may be reassuring to review some procedures with youth before they go to the temple. For example, go over what happens during a baptism and confirmation: "Here's where you place your right hand. Here's where you place your left. Here's how you bend your knees after the baptismal prayer to help the priesthood holder easily immerse you in the water and raise you up again," and so forth.

Explain to young men who are priests: "Here's how you baptize someone. Here's how you serve as a witness."

Even though we don't discuss the special symbols of the temple endowment outside the temple, it is appropriate, as Elder Bednar has taught, for families to "discuss the basic purposes of and the doctrine and principles associated with temple ordinances and covenants."⁸ This will help youth feel confident and comfortable when they enter the font or participate in confirmations.

Prepared for the House of the Lord

As we take these steps and others to prepare our youth for temple service, the Lord will bless our efforts and our youth. Every action we take will give the Holy Ghost an opportunity to touch the hearts of youth, give youth the courage to answer the prophet's invitation, and help youth prepare themselves to worthily enter the house of the Lord. ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, "Hope of Israel" (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter* (2015), 184.
3. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, May 2017, 145.
4. David A. Bednar, "Prepared to Obtain Every Needful Thing," *Ensign*, May 2019, 103–4.
5. See Edward J. Brandt, "Why are oxen used in the design of our temples' baptismal fonts?" *Ensign*, March 1993, 54–55.
6. Neil L. Andersen, "Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?" (address at RootsTech conference, Feb. 14, 2015), [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/family-history](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/family-history).
7. Neil L. Andersen, "Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?"
8. See David A. Bednar, "Prepared to Obtain Every Needful Thing," 103.

Eight Funtastic Ways to Jump-Start Your Personal History

Putting together your personal history can be more enjoyable than you may think.

You're raring to do some family history, so you think, "Hey, I'll write my own personal history! That'll be easy!" So you sit down, crack your knuckles, put your fingers on the keyboard, and . . . you're stumped. Because where to begin? At birth? That doesn't seem right. Start there and suddenly this feels like you're writing a novel of Tolstoy proportions.

Well, fret not. You don't have to write a mammoth autobiography. With a little creativity, and a bit of technology, you can create a personal history that your family—present and future—will enjoy. Here are some ideas to consider:

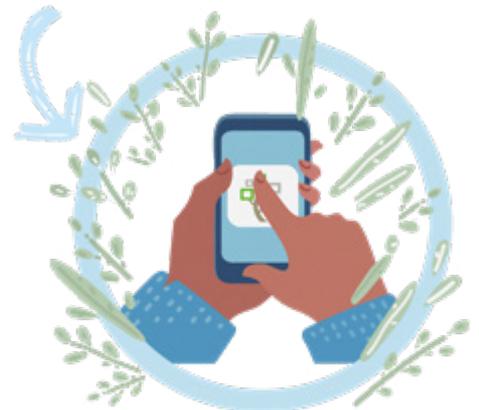
Top-10 Lists

Create top-10 lists from your life experiences: Top-10 Favorite Breakfast Cereals as a Kid. Top-10 Mission Experiences. Top-10 Favorite Scriptures. Each of these is a window into your mind.



Upload Photos to FamilySearch

Scan your old photos. Then log on to FamilySearch and upload them to your "My Memories" gallery. Or migrate photos from your Google Photos or Instagram accounts. Then write a bunch of captions.



A SOURCE OF GREAT INSPIRATION

"People often use the excuse that their lives are uneventful and nobody would be interested in what they have done. But I promise you that if you will keep your journals and records they will indeed be a source of great inspiration to your families, to your children, your grandchildren, and others, on through the generations."

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), "Hold Fast to the Iron Rod," *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 4.



Collect Your Sacrament Talks

They're all there on your hard drive. Put them together. Your testimony will bless your posterity.



Lip Sync/Karaoke/Dance Party

What five songs have influenced you the most? Film yourself singing them. Or lip-syncing them. Or just cutting a rug to them. Rest assured—this will be an instant family treasure. Wouldn't you love to have video of your great-great-grandmother dancing?



Favorite Recipes

Collecting your favorite meals will let posterity make them too and experience firsthand what it was like around your table. ■

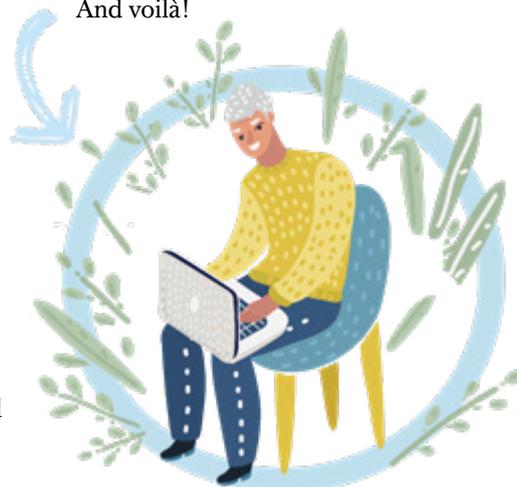
Smartphone Stories

Download a recording app on your smartphone, then ask each member of your family to record themselves telling a funny memory of you.



Make a "Day in the Life" Video

Use your smartphone to record a 10-second video of yourself at the top of every hour for a whole day. Then edit the clips together. You may not win an Oscar, but your grandkids will love it.



Download Your Facebook Data

Go to [Facebook.com/settings](https://www.facebook.com/settings). On the left, choose "Your Facebook Information." Then choose "Download Your Information." And voilà!



By Sharon Eubank

First Counselor
in the Relief
Society General
Presidency

A Letter to a Single Sister

(and anyone else who is longing to belong)

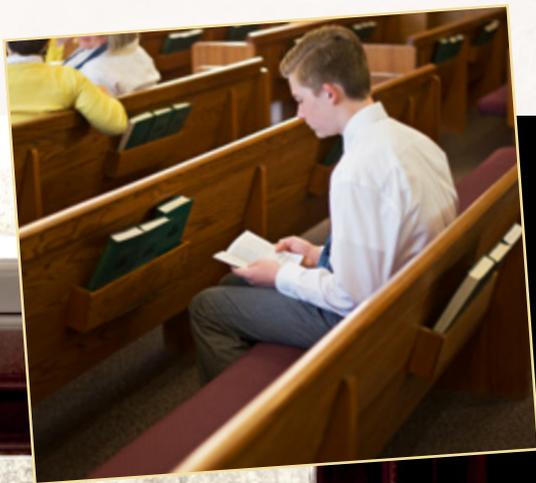
I receive hundreds of letters in my office, and many of them describe the heartache that results from the categories we sometimes create for each other. Below is a letter describing the pain of being single in a Church focused on family:

“I’m 48 years old and have never been married; I’ve really struggled with this reality. I’ve had a difficult time knowing what my purpose in this life is as a single person with no family or posterity. Family is such a big focus in the Church (as it should be), but when that blessing isn’t given to you, it can be challenging to know where you fit in. How do I get past feelings of emptiness and feel more purpose in life?”

Other letters describe different issues, but the authors all share a feeling of being on the “outside” of the “regular” Church.

I have found that the things we have in common as disciples of Christ are much more compelling and important than the labels that keep us segregated. The Church of Jesus Christ, focused as it is on creating the conditions for Zion, can be a church without categories—a place without -ites, as the Book of Mormon says (see 4 Nephi 1:17).

The following seven ideas are my response to this sister’s letter. Your situation may be different, but if you have felt pigeonholed, I hope there is something here for you.



1. Our Blessings Come in Different Order, but They Still Come

During mortality, people label us and divide us into categories—single, Nigerian, returned missionary, Hyundai driver. The variety is almost funny—but these categories mean very little from the eternal viewpoint. President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, recently taught us that only one label matters: “Each of us is a child of God with a potential destiny of eternal life. Every other label, even including occupation, race, physical characteristics, or honors, is temporary or trivial in eternal terms.”¹ God is truly “no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34; see also Alma 1:30).

Knowing this truth helps me understand my eternal purpose. I came to the earth with eons of experience and talent. I also came with certain responsibilities personal to me. My macro-mission is the same as anyone else’s: have experiences, repent and forgive, gain ordinances, serve others. My micro-mission, however, is specific and part of a divine plan for me. If I’m doing my best to keep my covenants, the life I’m living now is part of that plan. I want to respect the life the Lord has given me; it isn’t a punishment I’ve been given because somehow I wasn’t good enough.

Blessings come in different order, but to those who strive to be faithful, the blessings all come. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said it best: “Some blessings come soon, some come late, and some don’t come until heaven; but for those who embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ, *they come*.”²

2. Eternal Now

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “God lives in an eternal now where the past, present, and future are constantly before Him.”³ I believe that my Heavenly Parents don’t view me for who I am now but instead see the person I will be in eternity. Knowing this helps me focus on my holistic being rather than who I am at this exact moment.



3. Wards Can Be Family Too

Since many of us don't live in an ideal two-parent family, wards or branches can function as an extended family. For children who don't have an ideal home life, there are caring adults who can be an example and teach them. For adults who don't have the children they desire, there are other children who need nurturing. Wards can be socially safe places with people disposed to care for us and forgive us, just as we do for them. A ward family gives us a chance to interact and bond with people we otherwise may not understand.

"Ah," you say, "but my ward isn't like this."

Maybe. But consider this: You have no idea the power you yourself have over the tone and example of your own ward. This may be part of your mission.

4. Fitting into Family and a Family-Oriented Church

Being single myself, I get how this feels. You have no wingman; sitting at church is awkward; parties can be torture; relatives feel they can comment when no one should be saying a word.

For me, Christmas morning emphasizes my singleness like no other time. The temptation is to allow my "category" to be an excuse to be sad or to never take initiative. Once I started hosting Christmas and planning family events, it made a difference in how I felt and how I was viewed in my family. The change reminded me that family isn't only being a spouse and a parent. There are things I can do as an aunt that a parent cannot do, and I try to be aware and perform those well. Being a good sibling, daughter, granddaughter, and aunt are not throwaway roles. They are sacred. You and I have much to contribute; and we will be held accountable.

Fitting into a Church focused on family can also be challenging.

But the reality is that a majority of Church members do not live in perfect family situations. I'm not sure *anyone* lives in that perfect, ideal family. So why keep the emphasis? Because family is our destiny, and we are on this earth to learn the skills of strong family relationships, no matter what our own situation is.

5. Feeling Lonely, Dealing with Pain

My own experiences have sometimes brought me bright pain and concentrated loneliness. It's easy to blame that pain on the category of my life circumstances, but I've come to see that everyone is dealing with pain. My sister is divorced; my other sister can't conceive; a 38-year-old is lost to cancer; kids cause heartache; terrible accidents



happen; spouses leave the Church; health breaks down. It's the state of mortality. The best we can do is try to help bear each other's pain. I can be vulnerable and share my reality; I can find empathy when other people share theirs. Somehow knowing that we're all carrying various loads of pain makes me "less special" and it's easier to bear up. Of course, when the pain is unbearable—as it sometimes gets—we can turn to Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. They know this burden. They have promised to give us respite and rest. And I testify that They do.

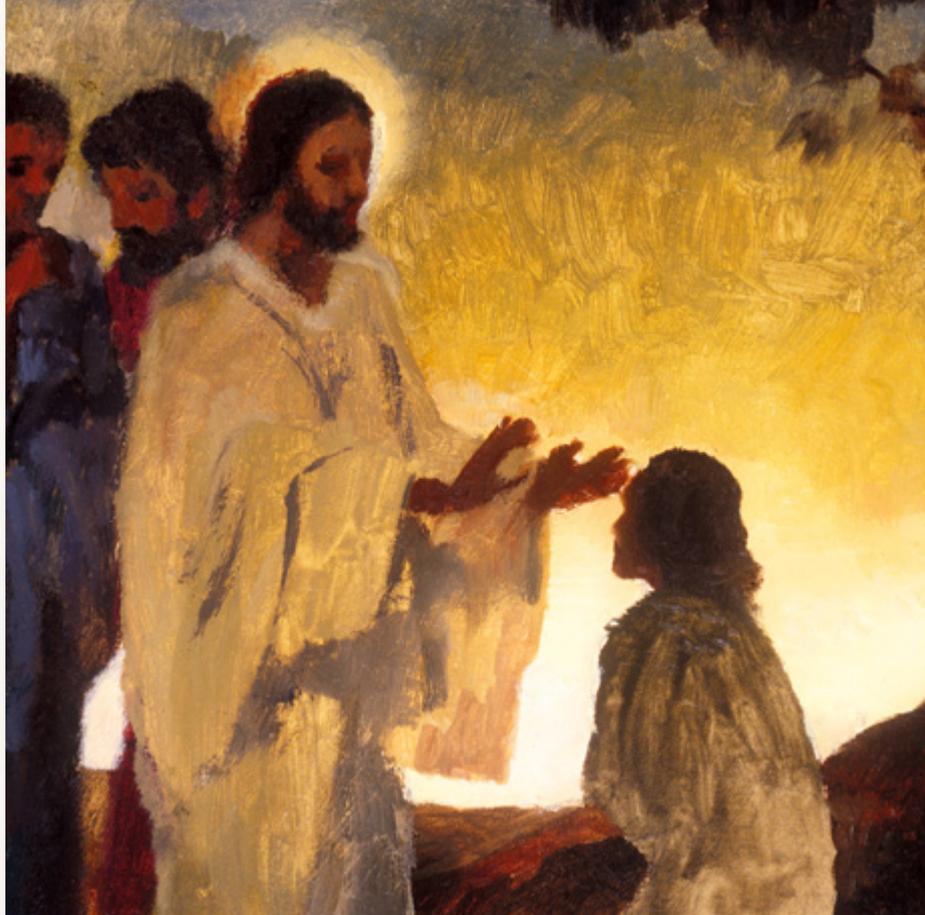
6. Opportunities in New Directions

I often meet people who aren't Latter-day Saints who are tremendous examples of integrity and devotion; they sacrifice for others and try their best to love God by loving His children. The Lord is obviously with them. Many are searching for friendship and bridges to a caring, moral community. We can do the same. In addition to sharing our faith and learning about theirs, there are many things we can do together to build friendships and improve our communities. Our neighbors, colleagues, acquaintances, and slightly dysfunctional families are all part of God's plan for us. You and I have much to do to build up the places where we live, and the Lord is surely guiding us.

7. Emotional Support

If I'm honest, my single life only works because I've stumbled into a deep network of emotional support. It removes some sting and gives me people who tell me the truth. I believe in praying to receive friends. Heavenly Father knows we need close friends, and those He sends are gifts. Being a good friend attracts other friends.

But sometimes even our good friends cannot fully understand our pain and desires. In those



HEALING, BY J. KIRK RICHARDS © 2015, MAY NOT BE COPIED

instances, attending the temple can strengthen us like nothing else. If we feel weak and powerless, participating in ordinances brings "the power of godliness" into our lives (Doctrine and Covenants 84:20), including emotional health and stamina.

Sister Chieko Okazaki, former First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, expressed it this way: "Strengthen yourselves by seeking the source of true strength—the Savior. Come unto him. He loves you. He desires your happiness and exults in your desires for righteousness. Make him your strength, your daily companion, your rod and your staff. Let him comfort you. There is no burden we need bear alone."⁴

Perhaps there's nothing here you didn't already know, but I hope it gives the Spirit a chance to buzz inside you that these are truths. There's nobody exactly like you, and if you're bold enough to inquire, I believe you'll be swamped with impressions about your purpose—more than you ever thought possible.

Most of all, I hope you know there is no category that can hold you except that of being a child of the eternal God. The Lord sees you. You're not invisible to Him. He loves your efforts that no one else may see. You're valuable, and He treasures you in all your quirks and individuality. If you trust your life to Him, His hand will guide you every step of the way until you are happy and at peace with all the desires of your heart. ■

NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, "Where Will This Lead?" *Ensign*, May 2019, 62.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, "An High Priest of Good Things to Come," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 38.
3. Neal A. Maxwell, "Care for the Life of the Soul," *Ensign*, May 2003, 70.
4. Chieko N. Okazaki, "Strength in the Savior," *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 96.

Lessons Learned from Unnamed Women

By Onnastasia Cole
Church Magazines

Through their examples, these women show us how to become devoted disciples of the Savior.

Women played an integral part in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Through their small acts of service, sacrifice, and faith, they gave the Savior what little they could and showed us all how to follow Him.

The Woman with an Issue of Blood

Although no physician had brought her relief in 12 years, the woman with an issue of blood knew that Christ had the power to heal her (see Mark 5:28). When she reached out in faith and touched His garment, “virtue [went] out of him” (see Mark 5:30), and the woman immediately “felt in her body that she was healed” (Mark 5:29).

Had she merely watched as Christ passed her in the street, the woman would have remained afflicted. Instead, we learn from her experience that when we exercise faith and reach out to the Savior, He can provide us the healing and peace we seek.

The Woman at the Well

Upon realizing Christ’s calling, the woman at the well abandoned her

waterpot and rushed back to the city to share her testimony and witness of Him. Because of her willingness to share her experience with others, “many . . . believed on him” (John 4:39) and left the city to find Him (see John 4:30).

By asking, “Is not this the Christ?” (John 4:29), the woman both testified of Christ’s glory and invited others to come unto Him. From her example, we gain a powerful witness of missionary work and learn that sharing our personal testimony of Him can inspire others to come and learn for themselves that Jesus “is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world” (John 4:42).

The Poor Widow

The poor widow at the treasury desired to give all she had to the Lord. Christ noticed her humble donation of two mites and pointed out to His disciples her contribution. In contrast to the rich, who “did cast in of their abundance,” the poor widow “*of her want* did cast in all that she had, even all her living” (Mark 12:44; emphasis added).

Today, the widow’s mites would have equaled less than a half cent, but Christ taught that she had cast in more “than all they which [had] cast into the treasury” (Mark 12:43).

Sister Cristina B. Franco, Second Counselor in the Primary General Presidency, taught that even though the widow did not seem to hold a notable position in society, “she actually held something more important: her intentions were pure, and she gave all she had to give.”¹ Through her example, we learn that the Lord knows the desires of our hearts and recognizes and appreciates our humble contributions.

The Sinner with Ointment

Upon learning that Christ dined with a Pharisee, “a woman in the city, which was a sinner, . . . brought an alabaster box of ointment” (Luke 7:37) and bravely entered the home. She stood behind the Savior weeping, then washed His feet with her tears, and “did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed . . . and anointed them with the ointment” (Luke 7:38).



These two unnamed women provide powerful examples for us today: the woman at the well (left) inspired others through her personal testimony; the woman with an issue of blood (above) experienced healing by reaching out to the Savior in faith.

To the Pharisee, the very fact that the Savior allowed the woman to touch Him discredited His divine calling. “This man,” the Pharisee said to himself, “if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is” (Luke 7:39). However, in a subtle act of recognition and reprimand, the Savior highlighted the significance of the woman’s actions by comparing them to the host’s:

“Thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears. . . .

“Thou gavest me no kiss: but [she] . . . hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

“My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but [she] hath anointed my feet with ointment” (Luke 7:44–46).

Although her sins were many, Christ

forgave her and told her to go in peace, “for she loved much” (Luke 7:47). From her example, we learn that no matter how small or large our sins may be, we are never beyond the reach of the Savior. As we come unto Him and show Him our love, He will grant us the forgiveness we seek.

The Savior Knows Us

Though often unappreciated by the people of their time, these unnamed women did not go unnoticed by the Savior. Not only did He acknowledge them for their love, personal sacrifice, and faith, but He also taught us through them how to follow Him—no matter who we are or where we may be. ■

NOTE

1. Cristina B. Franco, “The Joy of Unselfish Service,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 56.

September 30–October 13 (Ephesians 6:14)

Safe from Satan's Sting

Obedience to the commandments forges a protective breastplate of righteousness.

By Barbara A. Lewis

The box jellyfish glides through the ocean water with a dancer's gentle grace. Pale blue and almost transparent, it could slip by a swimmer unnoticed.

However, the box jellyfish, despite its alluring beauty, is one of the most venomous marine animals in the world. At the slightest touch, thousands of stinging cells on its long tentacles can paralyze its prey and cause heart failure.

So how do people stay safe from these dangerous creatures? It is easy to avoid them by heeding the warnings and staying out of the waters where the box jellyfish swims.

Commandments Keep Us Safe

Paul understood that there are many dangerous waters in the world where Satan, like the infamous box jellyfish, attempts to sting us with his fiery darts (see Ephesians 6:16). For protection, Paul invites us to put on the armor of God, which includes “the breastplate of righteousness” (Ephesians 6:14). The meaning is clear: if we choose righteousness—if we're obedient to the Lord's voice and to His prophets and leaders—we will be protected from Satan's influence and the choices that would rob us of our happiness.

Consider the many laws and rules that guide and protect

us in daily life. Traffic signs protect us from accidents. Laws of good health protect us from disease. Laws against fraud protect our finances.

Heavenly Father's laws are no different. He operates in a universe of order governed by laws. When we submit our will to His laws, we are protected from the painful consequences of disobedience.

This is not to say that misfortune can't befall those who obey. All of us have trials and experience tragedy. But those who obey are protected spiritually and qualify for the Lord's help, peace, and strength amid such difficulties.

Nephi is a good example. His trek from Jerusalem to the promised land was fraught with hardship, pain, and near-death experiences. He was chased, beaten, and tied to the mast of the ship he had painstakingly built.

And yet the Lord—because of Nephi's faith and obedience—gave him the courage and confidence to “go and do” seemingly impossible tasks (1 Nephi 3:7), as well as the strength to break the cords that bound Nephi's hands and feet (see 1 Nephi 7:17–18).

That same obedience protected Nephi from the sorrow, regret, and literal shocking that Laman and Lemuel endured because of their disobedience.



There are many dangerous waters in the world where Satan, like the box jellyfish, attempts to sting us.

The Consequences of Disobedience

Sometimes people think that commandments interfere with their freedom, when in fact the opposite is true. When we disobey, we must suffer the consequences, which often restrict our freedom. Alcohol and illegal drugs, for example, impair our judgment and can lead to debilitating addiction. Breaking civil laws can result in incarceration. Other sins might deny us of temple attendance. It's no wonder that the scriptures describe Satan's tactics as chains or strong cords that bind us (see 2 Nephi 1:23; 26:22).

Righteousness, on the other hand, brings peace and protects us from those restrictive consequences.

Eight-year-old Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018), later the 16th President of the Church, learned through hard experience that we can't control the consequences of our unwise actions. Thomas and his friend wanted to clear an area in Provo Canyon in Utah so that they could have a gathering place for their friends. To young Thomas, the obvious solution was to burn a circle in the weeds. Thomas knew the rules: "Don't play with matches." He fetched the forbidden matches from the family cabin anyway.

He struck one match and watched with excitement as the dry June grass burst into brilliant orange flames. His elation soon turned to panic when he saw that the flames wouldn't stop at the end of his intended circle. The boys ran for help, and after several hours of effort from a group of men and women, the fire was finally smothered. The cabins were saved.¹

Like young Thomas, we can't always foresee the painful consequences that might result from disobeying the commandments. However, we show our love and trust in the Lord by obeying His greater wisdom.

We Forge Our Own Breastplate

God is eager to shower us with blessings, but we must act to set blessings in motion.

As the scriptures teach us:

"Men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;



"For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves" (Doctrine and Covenants 58:27–28).

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, "As sons and daughters of God we are *agents* with the inherent capacity to act and to learn—and not *objects* that primarily are acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:26)."² Our Father gave us a supreme gift. We have the right to choose whether or not to follow His path. With this great freedom comes the responsibility to be accountable for our choices.

A Higher Motivation

Protecting ourselves from Satan's influence is reason enough to don the breastplate of righteousness, but is there a higher motivation to obey?

LOOKING INSIDE: HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY OBEDIENCE?

- Choose a family rule that you have trouble following (such as fulfilling chores). Practice and improve.
- Write down the possible consequences of not following commandments that challenge you.
- Practice being obedient to the Spirit's small voice.
- Ask for a priesthood blessing.
- Develop a habit of daily scripture feasting.
- Make the sacrament a sanctifying experience in your life.



- Do we obey out of fear of punishment? It is probably better to be obedient out of fear than to *not* be obedient. A child might stop hitting his sister for fear of a scolding from his parents. Later, his reason should rise to the higher motive of being kind.
- Do we obey in order to be rewarded? Wanting to be saved and receive blessings are good motivations. However, they still focus on *receiving* rather than *giving*.
- Do we obey because we love God and Jesus Christ and want to serve Them? “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). When we serve and obey willingly out of love and a desire to serve, we more closely approach the example of our Savior. We begin carving our character to be more like His.

LOOKING OUTSIDE: HOW CAN I HELP OTHERS WITH OBEDIENCE?

- Make positive rules in your family or group and be obedient to them. Discuss the possible consequences and benefits of obedience.
- As a family or group, choose to follow one of the Ten Commandments more faithfully, such as “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8).
- Obey God’s laws when you are in groups of friends or associates (in speech and behavior).
- Lovingly defend God’s commandments on social media and in public places.



Strengthening Our Breastplate

Just as rust will weaken metal and leave a breastplate vulnerable to attack, so will sin weaken our breastplate of righteousness and leave us vulnerable to Satan’s influence. To keep our breastplate impenetrable against fiery darts, consider the following:



1. Repent daily. If we mistakenly swim in dangerous waters, we can swim back to safety. Our Father is very forgiving when we repent and try again. President Russell M. Nelson taught, “Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance.” He then reminded us:

“The battle with sin is real. The adversary is quadrupling his efforts. . . . He is arming his minions with potent weapons to keep us from partaking of the joy and love of the Lord.

“Repentance is the key to avoiding misery inflicted by traps of the adversary.”³

2. Listen to the Spirit. Elder L. Tom Perry (1922–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles learned this lesson as a child. His grandfather told Tom that horses must always know who is in charge. You train horses to follow commands with a harness and a bit. When you have obedient horses, they only need a tug from the driver to know what to do. The gentle tug—like the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost—guides us, helping our spirit and body to work together to stay on the covenant path.⁴

3. Follow the Savior. Jesus Christ is the greatest example of obedience. “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Hebrews 5:8). Amid the agony of Gethsemane, He declared, “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). Through this obedience, the Savior finished the work that our Father sent Him to do. If we follow His path and obey even when it’s difficult, we can all return to our heavenly home. ■

NOTES

1. See Thomas S. Monson, “Obedience Brings Blessings,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 89–90.
2. David A. Bednar, *Act in Doctrine* (2012), 38.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “We Can Do Better and Be Better,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 67, 68.
4. See L. Tom Perry, “Obedience through Our Faithfulness,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 100–101.

Gospel Library App

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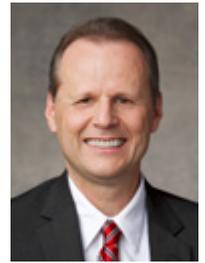
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By Elder
Joni L. Koch
Of the Seventy

To Be or to Have Been: That Is the Question

We are expected to judge. We must. But we must *not* stereotype or label anyone.

Several years ago my wife and I were visiting Kronborg Castle in Helsingør, Denmark. This castle was made famous by William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. As we visited the castle, our minds flooded with scenes and dialogue from the play, especially Hamlet's famous inquiry, "To be, or not to be: that is the question."

But then I thought of a much more relevant question to ask ourselves: "To be or to *have been*: that is the question."

Allow Improvement

Unfortunately, we often use labels when speaking of others. For example, we might say things such as:

- "Elder Brown is a lazy missionary." Instead, we should say, "Elder Brown hasn't been working hard lately, but I believe he can improve."
- "Mary is not a religious person." In contrast, we could say, "Mary has not been interested in religion, but she might feel the Spirit if I bear my testimony to her."

When we say someone *is* something, we can end up labeling or stereotyping, judging without giving space for the possibility of change and improvement. But when we say *has been*, we indicate that we believe growth and progress are possible.

Is It Wrong to Judge?

Most Bible translations provide the following version of a teaching from the Savior: “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matthew 7:1). But the Joseph Smith Translation provides clarification: “Judge not *unrighteously* . . . , *but judge righteous judgment*” (in Matthew 7:1, footnote *a*; emphasis added).

It is indeed acceptable—and even expected—that we exercise judgment as we assess, evaluate, and discern situations and make decisions. And it is particularly important that we exercise righteous judgment as we interact with people.

For example, we should evaluate carefully whom we’re going to marry, use discernment to understand someone’s intentions, or assess one’s capabilities to fulfill a professional assignment.

We should always evaluate peoples’ actions or characteristics by the Lord’s standards, as contained in the holy scriptures and the words of the prophets. Above all, we should be sure that our judgments don’t attempt to unkindly define, quickly stereotype, or unjustly label anyone.

Able to Change

We exercise unrighteous judgment when we inaccurately portray others, particularly if by doing so we imply that they cannot change. In all of our interactions with others, we should remember that because of the Lord’s atoning

sacrifice, each of us has the capacity to improve. Consider these examples from the Savior:

- He said to the woman taken in adultery, “Go, and sin no more” (John 8:11).
- He told one of the men being crucified beside Him, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43).
- As a resurrected being, He continued to see Peter’s potential and to mentor him, even though Peter had denied Him three times (see Matthew 26:34 and John 21:15–17).
- He told Saul, who had persecuted the Saints, to repent. Saul, who became Paul, obeyed and became righteous. (See Acts 9:3–6.)

The Lord Jesus Christ is a champion of second chances—and third and fourth chances too. He taught us to forgive “until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:22). He is the only individual who lived a perfect life on this earth, but because of His life, His teachings, His atoning sacrifice, and His Resurrection, and through the ordinances of His gospel, we can also become perfect one day. Referring to our brothers and sisters in a way that conveys disbelief in their capacity to change would also convey disbelief in the power of the Savior and His Atonement.

Outward and Inward

It is a fact of life that we often judge (and are judged) by first appearances. We are in danger of judging unrighteously, however, when we judge based only on first appearances and fail to evaluate a person’s true character.

“The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). Jesus referred to the hypocrites in His day as “whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of . . . all uncleanness” (Matthew 23:27).

The Savior was not teaching that a positive and decent outward appearance is not a good thing but that a man’s or woman’s inner character (moral and spiritual condition) is significantly more important. Think of our majestic temples: the grounds are beautiful, but much more important are the ordinances that are performed inside.

Missionaries too are required to maintain dress and grooming standards. By being clean, dressing modestly, and using proper language, they set a good example for those whose introduction to the gospel of Jesus Christ will come through what they see and hear from the missionaries.

Exercising Discernment

As we attempt to make righteous judgments, it’s important to

use discernment. The Guide to the Scriptures says discernment is “to understand or know something through the power of the Spirit. . . . It includes perceiving the true character of people and the source and meaning of spiritual manifestations” (“Discernment, Gift of,” scriptures.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

Sometimes people who are evil inside use worldly appearance to try to trick us into thinking they are worthy of emulation. They are “wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight” (Isaiah 5:21; 2 Nephi 15:21). The Savior was able to see beyond this charade, and He was able to discern strength of character and honest intent of heart among even the most humble and downtrodden.

Alma exercised such discernment when he spoke to those who were “despised of all men because of their poverty” yet blessed because they had become humble and “lowly in heart” (see Alma 32:5–8).

We should remember that “the things of the Spirit of God . . . are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14). When we see others as our Father in Heaven sees them, discernment allows us to exercise righteous judgment.

Righteous Judgment

Every day of our lives we judge by assessing, evaluating, and discerning. However, the Lord expects us to do it righteously. As disciples of the Lord

Jesus Christ, our words and actions should show that we are merciful, loving, and willing to help.

As righteous judges, we need to make sure we pay more attention to the character of a person rather than their appearance. At the same time, we should remember that every day we create first impressions by the way we look and the words we use. Most people will

be drawn to find out more about our character and the message of the gospel if our appearance reflects the high value of our message.

Our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, has shown us the perfect model to follow as we strive to judge righteously. We should—as He does—balance what we see on the surface with what goes on inside each person. ■





By Elder
Randy D. Funk
Of the Seventy

They Know, Just as I Know

During general conference, I remember friends far away who testify that through the prophet we hear the word of the Lord.



President
David O. McKay

When I was about eight years old, I attended general conference for the first time. At that time the meetings were held in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.

At the conclusion of the session, my father and I hurried outside to the west side of the Tabernacle. A few minutes later, President David O. McKay (1873–1970) came out of the Tabernacle. He helped Sister McKay into the waiting car, then smiled and waved as he got into the vehicle. It was a memorable experience for me, to be so close to a prophet of God and to feel of his goodness and love.

Since then, I have been blessed to be in the presence of every subsequent President of the Church and have had the

opportunity to attend general conference in the Tabernacle or Conference Center many times. I love to be near the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and to learn from them.

While I served as a mission president in India, however, I didn't attend general conference in the Conference Center. And as my wife and I met with the members in India—beginning on the first Sunday we were there—I noticed something very meaningful about the testimonies they shared in fast and testimony meetings and on other occasions.

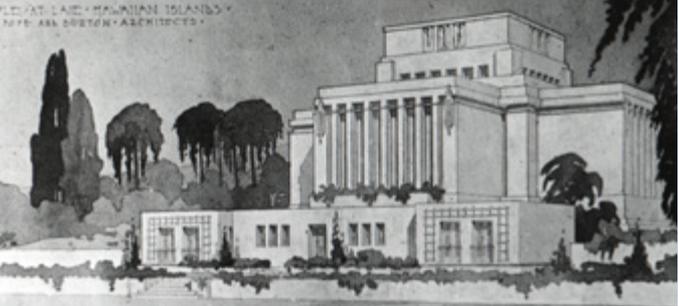
Many faithful members expressed their love and gratitude for the President of the Church and shared powerful, spiritual testimonies that they knew he was the Lord's prophet. Most

had never been to Salt Lake City or been in the presence of a President of the Church. But as I listened to them, I knew that they knew, in the same way I knew, that there are living prophets to guide us in our day. Later, as I served in the Asia Area Presidency and traveled throughout Asia, I heard similarly strong and sincere testimonies.

As general conference approaches, I am grateful for the opportunity I will have once again to be in the Conference Center with prophets and apostles. But as I sit close to them, I will remember my faithful friends far away who know just as surely as I do, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that what we hear is the word of the Lord as “spoken by the mouth of [His] holy prophets” (3 Nephi 1:13). ■



RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY WENDY GIBBS KEELER



Architectural rendering by architects Hyrum Pope and Harold W. Burton. Right: One of the four friezes around the temple representing four dispensations of the gospel.



A decorative plate featuring the first eight temples of the Church. Laie is bottom center.

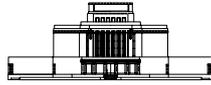


Middle: President Heber J. Grant in Laie for the temple dedication. Above: President Joseph F. Smith (far left) in Laie. He dedicated the site for the temple in June 1915.



Maternity frieze sculpted by Avard Fairbanks. Left: Members gather at the temple (1920).





The Laie Hawaii Temple

A CENTURY OF GATHERING

Dedicated 100 years ago,
the Laie Hawaii Temple
has allowed Saints to
gather to receive temple
blessings as the gospel
began to spread through-
out the world.

By Clinton D. and Angela R. Christensen

The authors live in Utah, USA. Brother Christensen works for the Church History Department.

One of the great missions of the Church of Jesus Christ in the latter days is to provide temple blessings to the people of the world, both the living and the dead. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “the object of gathering the . . . people of God in any age of the world . . . was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house.”¹

At the dawn of the 20th century, only four operating temples were found on the earth, all located in Utah. Thus, physical gathering to Utah was the primary means of receiving access to temple blessings. In 1919, that changed. On November 27, 1919, President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) dedicated the Laie Hawaii Temple. This marked a historic turning point in the Restoration as temple blessings became available to many nations.

In many respects, the Laie Hawaii Temple was the first international temple. It immediately served members from Hawaii, New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, Japan, and Australia. As the Church continued to grow throughout the Pacific and Asia, the number of countries blessed by this temple continued to increase.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of this important milestone in the gathering of Israel on both sides of the veil.

Gathering from Samoa

The islands of Samoa lie about 2,500 miles (4,023 km) from Hawaii. In 1919, John Q. Adams, the mission president in Samoa, said, “Upon the completion of the temple at Laie, our people seemed to be seized with an intense desire to accumulate enough of this world’s goods to go to the temple.” Aulelio Anae, for example, had served as a missionary without pay for 20 years. Because of his years of sacrifice, he didn’t have enough money to travel to Hawaii. So Brother Anae sold everything he owned and managed to scrape together U.S.\$600 or \$700.² Brother Anae and other

Samoans sacrificed all they could to move to Laie during the 1920s.

One family, the Leotas, arrived in Hawaii on New Year's Day 1923. Seven-year-old Vailine Leota remembered, "Our first [view] of the temple . . . was the most beautiful sight."³ Just two weeks later, Vailine's parents, Aivao and Matala, received their endowments and were sealed as a couple, and their children were sealed to them. The Leotas served faithfully in the house of the Lord for 50 years and were buried "near the temple they loved so much."⁴ Today, hundreds of their faithful descendants live throughout Hawaii.

An Impossible Task

While many members in the Pacific left their homelands and immigrated to Hawaii, many wards and branches from various nations organized group trips, called excursions, to the temple. This spiritual form of gathering provided a way for Church members to travel to receive temple ordinances and then return home to build the Church in their own nations.

At the dedication, President Grant prayed for the Lord to open the way for Saints in New Zealand and all the Pacific Islands and to secure their genealogies so they could come to the temple and become saviors to their ancestors.

Temple excursions began with a group of Maori Saints in New Zealand just six months after the dedication. Though 5,000 miles (8,045 km) away from Hawaii, these Saints rejoiced at the news of the dedication.

Waimate and Heeni Anaru yearned to be part of the first group to travel to the temple. Yet the task seemed impossible because of the family's poverty and the required cost of 1,200 New Zealand pounds for the trip—a hefty sum. They would need a miracle.

For years, the Anaru family followed the prophet's counsel and gathered their genealogical records. Those records then sat in stacks while the

Anarus waited for a miracle to occur. Their son, Wiwini, knew of his parents' faith: "Mother never ever despaired that she would [not] someday kneel with Father at a temple altar."

A miracle did occur. Waimate won a contract from the New Zealand government for a large land-development project. His income from this project provided sufficient cash paid in advance to cover the cost of the trip to Hawaii. Waimate and Heeni overcame their fear of ocean travel and journeyed to Hawaii with a group of 14 Saints in May 1920. They received their endowments and were sealed. The impossible had happened.

The Anarus' story is just one among thousands about Latter-day Saints who traveled to the Laie Hawaii Temple to receive ordinances and claim the promises offered by the Lord in His house. This required great sacrifice, but it produced stronger Saints who returned to their homelands prepared to lead the Church.⁵

Spiritual Gathering from Asia

Following the Second World War and the reestablishment of the Church in Japan, Saints there organized the first Asian temple excursion. In 1965 a plane full of 165 devoted Saints traveled from Tokyo to Hawaii to receive temple ordinances. This trip produced incredible strength

1850

1850: Missionaries arrive in the Kingdom of Hawaii to preach the restored gospel.

1855: Joseph F. Smith serves his first mission in Hawaii.

1875



1865: The Church purchases land in Laie where a meetinghouse is built. This building is moved in 1916 to make way for the temple.

1900

1915: Laie Hawaii Temple announced by President Joseph F. Smith.



November 27, 1919: Temple is dedicated by President Heber J. Grant (seen above, in center).

1920: Waimate Anaru travels to the temple from New Zealand.

1925

1923: The Leota family (below) moves to Laie from Samoa.



for the Church in Japan. Ninety-five percent of these members remained active in the Church. Five later became temple presidents in their homeland, including Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi, the first General Authority from Japan.⁶

In 1970 a group of Korean members traveled to Laie. Choi Wook Whan, a branch president, said, “We went to the temple and it opened our minds and awakened to us how we can receive salvation. The eternal plan became real; our testimonies have been strengthened so much it is hard to explain. What a great blessing it is for the people of Korea to have the opportunity of attending the temple.”⁷

Gathering Our Kindred Dead

When temple ordinances become available to a nation, they bring the Lord’s blessings not only to those living in that country but also to those from that nation now on the other side of the veil. This blessing has been felt by members in Asian countries, where their culture has meticulously recorded genealogy for centuries.

Kwai Shoon Lung’s parents migrated from China to Hawaii. He was born in Kauai in 1894 and baptized in 1944 on his 50th birthday. Brother Lung taught family history at church and told his class, “I had a vision one night in which I

saw many of my dead kindred beckoning me to work for them.” Three days later he received his genealogy from his aunt in China: 22 pages in Chinese script revealing his ancestry back to AD 1221. Together with his son Glenn and daughter-in-law Julina, they have completed thousands of ordinances in the temple for their family. Glenn and Julina Lung later served faithfully as president and matron of the Laie Temple from 2001 to 2004.⁸

The Gathering Continues

Situated in the crossroads of the Pacific between the Americas and Asia, the Laie Hawaii Temple has opened the door of temple blessings to many nations. Thus, the gathering of Israel became primarily a spiritual gathering as members are able to receive temple blessings and then return to build the Church in their native lands. This opportunity has aided the expansion of the restored gospel to many cultures and peoples on both sides of the veil.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Laie Hawaii Temple, we are privileged to witness a milestone in the Restoration and a fulfillment of the prophecy of the prophet Jacob in the Book of Mormon: “Great are the promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the isles of the sea” (2 Nephi 10:21). ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 416.
2. See James Adams Argyle, comp., “The Writings of John Q. Adams,” 14, FamilySearch.org.
3. Vailine Leota Niko, in Clinton D. Christensen, comp. *Stories of the Temple in Lā‘ie, Hawai‘i* (2019), 70–71.
4. Aivao Frank Leota (1878–1966), FamilySearch.org.
5. See Christensen, *Stories of the Temple in Lā‘ie, Hawai‘i*, 64–65.
6. See Christensen, *Stories of the Temple in Lā‘ie, Hawai‘i*, 114–17.
7. Choi Wook Whan, in “Going to the Temple Is Greatest Blessing,” *Church News*, Apr. 17, 1971, 10.
8. See Christensen, *Stories of the Temple in Lā‘ie, Hawai‘i*, 166.

1950



1965: For the first Asian temple excursion, 165 Japanese Saints arrive in Hawaii.

1970: Saints from Korea join Japanese Saints on a temple excursion.

1975



June 13, 1978: President Spencer W. Kimball rededicates the temple after significant expansion. He and President N. Eldon Tanner (above) also visit the Polynesian Cultural Center.

2000

November 21, 2010: Following seismic upgrades and remodeling, President Thomas S. Monson rededicates the temple.



2015



Four Ways to *Protect Your Family* from Pornography



Remember the young shepherd boy who faced an overwhelming foe armed with just his faith, his sling, and a few small stones? (see 1 Samuel 17:32–50). We might feel a bit like David as we try to protect ourselves and our loved ones from

the destructive influence of pornography. But we’re not facing this Goliath alone. Consider sharing these empowering ideas in home evenings, family councils, and other family talks.



1 Recognizing what pornography is and what it does is a first step to avoiding it.

Our bodies are a sacred gift from God, and our sexual feelings are normal and good when used in harmony with their divine purpose. Pornography is designed to arouse and exploit sexual feelings. It portrays people not as children of God but as objects to use for selfish desires. Even young children can learn to recognize

it in a simple way: “You might accidentally see a picture or video of someone with their clothes off. That’s called pornography. When you see it, you might feel an ‘uh-oh’ feeling inside. That’s the Holy Ghost telling you, ‘That’s pornography. Stay away.’”

Discussion: How can you know if something you see or read is pornography? How does pornography hurt people and show disrespect for them as children of God? What questions do you have about pornography?



2 The home should be a safe place to talk and get help.

Children who see pornography by accident can feel curious, confused, guilty, or disturbed. The home needs to be a safe place where children can ask questions about pornography, sex, and their bodies. Children who see their parents as allies are more likely to turn to them rather than face fears and confusion alone. If a family member admits that he or she has a habit

of viewing pornography, respond with compassion and understanding. Tell them that you're proud of them for telling you and that you love them and are on their side. Your bishop and resources from the Church's addiction recovery program can be helpful to them (see addictionrecovery.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

Discussion: How can we help each other when we see pornography? How can we make our home a safe place to share and get help? What resources can we use to overcome a pornography habit or addiction?



3 Make a plan to safeguard and empower family members.

A family safety plan could include internet filters on all computers, parental controls enabled on all devices, child-friendly streaming services, a family rule to not erase internet browsing histories, regular check-ins with a parent, and practicing what to do if someone sends you a sext and then threatens you if you don't keep it secret. Make sure everyone knows what to do when they

see pornography: (1) turn it off, (2) walk away, (3) tell someone, and (4) do something active to distract yourself.

Discussion: How can we protect ourselves from pornography at home? at school? at work? when we're with friends?



4 We don't face this foe alone.

Filters, rules, and family plans can do a lot to protect us from pornography. But God is our ultimate champion. The Holy Ghost is the only filter that never fails. And Jesus Christ, through the power of His Atonement, is the one source of complete healing.

Discussion: Why do we need the Holy Ghost to help us protect ourselves from pornography? How does God feel about us when we are hurt by pornography? How can Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice help us when we need to repent and turn away from pornography? ■



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

With Children

- "What's on Your Mind? I came across a picture of a person with no clothes on. I'm not sure what to do. Help!" *Friend*, Oct. 2019, 34.
- "Gary and Goliath," *Friend*, Feb. 2019, 36.
- "The Bad Picture," *Friend*, Aug. 2017, 8.
- "Finding Help," *Friend*, Feb. 2014, 44.
- "Oh No! Now What?" *Friend*, Feb. 2014, 46.
- "Crash and Tell," *Friend*, June 2011, 8.

For other resources, visit

lessonhelps.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

With Teens

- Dallin H. Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," *New Era*, Oct. 2015, 2.
- "Personal Progress Helped Me Overcome Pornography," *New Era*, Aug. 2017, 22.
- "Pornography's Innocent Victims," *New Era*, Feb. 2017, 36.
- "Anguish for My Father," *New Era*, Feb. 2017, 38.
- "To the Point: If I've stopped viewing pornography on my own, do I still have to talk to the bishop?" *New Era*, July 2017, 41.

For other resources, visit youth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and addictionrecovery.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Guided to Monica

When I lived in São Paulo, Brazil, I got to know a special woman named Graça. She was a lovely and kind woman and a friend to all.

Graça was my visiting teaching companion. She was a mother of three, worked part-time, and didn't have a car or telephone, but none of this stopped her from serving.

From my balcony, I could see a single window of her house. When she was available, Graça would put a red piece of fabric in that window to signal that she was ready to go visiting. She never found an excuse not to serve. I have



Graça would put a red piece of fabric in her window to signal that she was ready to go visiting.

often thought about Graça's signal and her wonderful example of faithful and simple service.

One experience stands out in my mind. We prepared and prayed before going to visit one of our sisters. As we approached her house, we realized we had actually driven to a different sister's house! We were assigned to visit this sister, a less-active mother of two young children, but had not planned to visit her that day. Because we were there, we knocked, but nobody answered.

We decided to be persistent and wait. The sister, Monica, eventually came and told us she was busy. We noticed she was tired and almost in tears. When we said we were there to help, she allowed us to enter. Her baby was crying, so we told her to take care of her baby and we would wait. When Monica went upstairs with the baby, we got to work, cleaning several rooms and folding all the clothes we could see.

When Monica saw how nice her house looked, she started crying, opened her heart to us, and shared some of her challenges. We promised to help her, and we talked to the Relief Society president about her challenges. The following Sunday, Monica was in church.

Monica became an active, happy sister, and we continued to minister to her with love and care. She still had the same challenges, but she was able to deal with them with more faith and courage because of her activity in the Church.

I'm so grateful for Graça's example as we served together. We had prayed for guidance, and God had led us to Monica. ■

Rosana Soares, Utah, USA

BONUS ARTICLE

Read an additional "Latter-day Saint Voices" article in the digital version of this issue in the Gospel Library app or at ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.





They Planted a Seed in My Heart

Where did I come from? What am I doing here? Where do I go after this life?

When I was 29, these questions kept coming back to me. My parents had passed away. I grieved for the loss of my firstborn infant son. I had three other children to raise and a life full of challenges.

The Lord began to answer my questions when He guided two young missionaries to my home. When I welcomed them inside, they asked if there was anything I felt was missing in my life. I told them about my parents and my son. I told them I thought it would be unfair to have children and to form families if everything just ended with death. I asked if I would ever see my parents and my son again.

“Marta,” they said, “you can have your family forever.”

Joy filled my heart. I wanted to know

more. At their next visit, they taught me more about the gospel of Jesus Christ. They gave me a Book of Mormon and challenged me to read it and ask God if it is His word. I accepted their challenge. When I prayed, God’s answer came clear as sunshine. I knew in my heart it was true.

Unfortunately, when I took a new job, I lost contact with the missionaries. In the months that followed, my marriage ended and I tried to start a new life with my children.

Eventually, I remarried. One day my husband said he missed having God in his life. We decided to attend the church he once attended. When we entered the building, I saw a Book of Mormon on a table in the foyer. This was the same church I had been introduced to before! I loved the Spirit I felt there. When we left, I asked my husband how I could be baptized.

I felt that I should tell the sisters who first taught me that I had joined the Church and that they had planted the seed of the restored gospel in my heart.

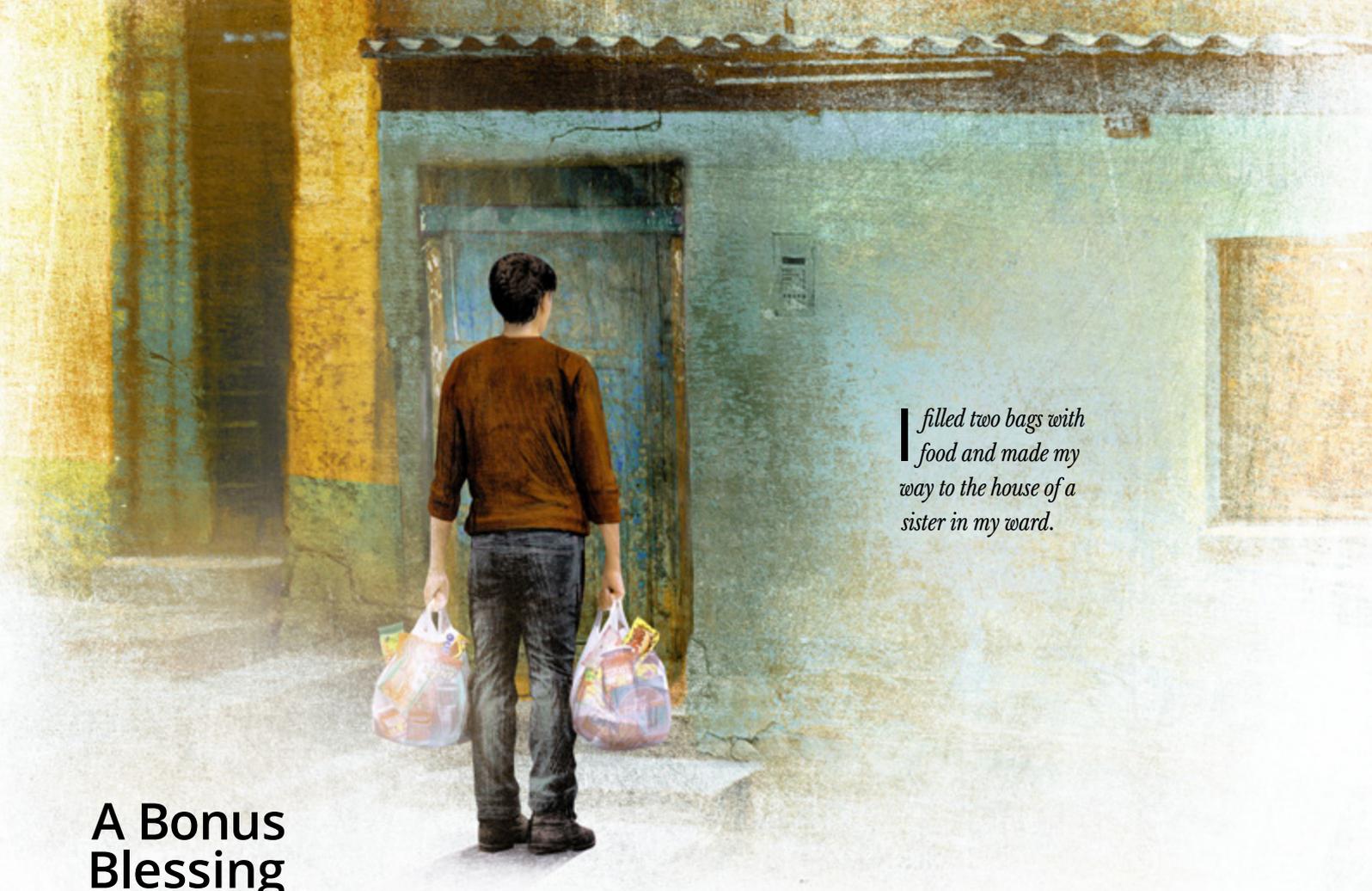
“You need to be taught by the missionaries,” he said.

“I was taught five years ago!” I replied.

My children and I were taught the lessons. Our baptism day was the happiest day of our lives.

Several years later, I felt that I should tell the sisters who first taught me that I had joined the Church. On Facebook, I found a group of returned missionaries from the Brazil Santa Maria Mission. It included one of the sisters who had taught me. I sent her a friend request and told her who I was, how I became a member of the Church, that our family was sealed in the temple, and that my son was serving a full-time mission. I told her all this was possible because she and her companion had planted the seed of the restored gospel in my heart. ■

Marta Algarve, Santa Catarina, Brazil



I filled two bags with food and made my way to the house of a sister in my ward.

A Bonus Blessing

My wife, Carmen, and I just had our first child when I was called to be the bishop of our ward. At the time, we struggled financially. It became stressful for me to provide for my family and at the same time watch over and care for the members of our ward.

One Sunday, I noticed a single mother with her four little children in sacrament meeting. She sat on the last bench in the chapel and tried her best to keep her children quiet. I knew she was struggling financially as well, but she never asked for help. Weeks passed, and every Sunday she came to church with her children.

One day, I received my paycheck. Blessed to receive a bonus, I decided to use the extra money to purchase supplies for much-needed repairs on

my house. But while I was heading to the market, this sister and her children came to my mind. I felt I should use the extra money to buy food for them. I called Carmen and told her what I felt I needed to do. She agreed.

As I shopped, my eyes fell on some cookies. I thought that maybe the children would like some sweets. I filled two bags with food and made my way to this sister's house.

I knocked on the worn wooden door several times. When I was about to leave, the door finally opened. "Bishop," the sister said, "I am surprised to see you here." Instantly, her children ran out from behind her.

"I brought you some food," I said.

One of her daughters found the cookies and shouted, "Cookies!" Her brothers and sisters excitedly gathered

around. A seven-year-old daughter hugged me. "Thank you, Bishop!" she said.

I looked inside their home and saw that this sister had been washing clothes in a pan on the floor. The family had no table and slept on a mattress on the floor. I realized how much they were in need. I made arrangements to make sure they would have a table and that each would have a bed.

This experience helped me to recognize that the Lord guides and blesses His servants. We do not need a special calling in order to help our brothers and sisters. We just need to be in tune with the Spirit, recognize who needs our help, and be willing to be instruments in the Lord's hands. ■

Roberto Atúncar Nieto, Lima, Peru

Two Pages Full of Gratitude

My father suffered all his life from low self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness. He was raised by an alcoholic father who often told him how worthless he thought he was. Thankfully, my father never became an alcoholic himself, but he never told me and my siblings that he was proud of us or praised us for things we had done well. Growing up, I tried to please him, but I always felt I couldn't quite make the mark. This caused us to have a strained relationship.

One year, I mentioned this to my wise bishop. He counseled me to write my father a letter telling him all the reasons I was thankful for him. This would be no small feat for me. My wounds were deep, and I didn't want my letter of gratitude to become one of resentment. So I prayed. With the Spirit guiding me, the reasons that I was grateful for my father began to flow. It took time, but when I finished, I had filled two full pages.

I delivered my letter, not knowing how my father would respond. But I knew that I didn't get to choose his response. I just needed to look into my own heart and remember why I had written the letter.

The next morning, I received a phone call from my stepmother. She was crying. She told me my father had read the letter over and over and over. She said he couldn't talk to me because he was crying too hard.

"Thank you!" she said. "Your father needed this."

Later that day, my father called to thank me. He called me every day for several days to express how much the letter meant to him.

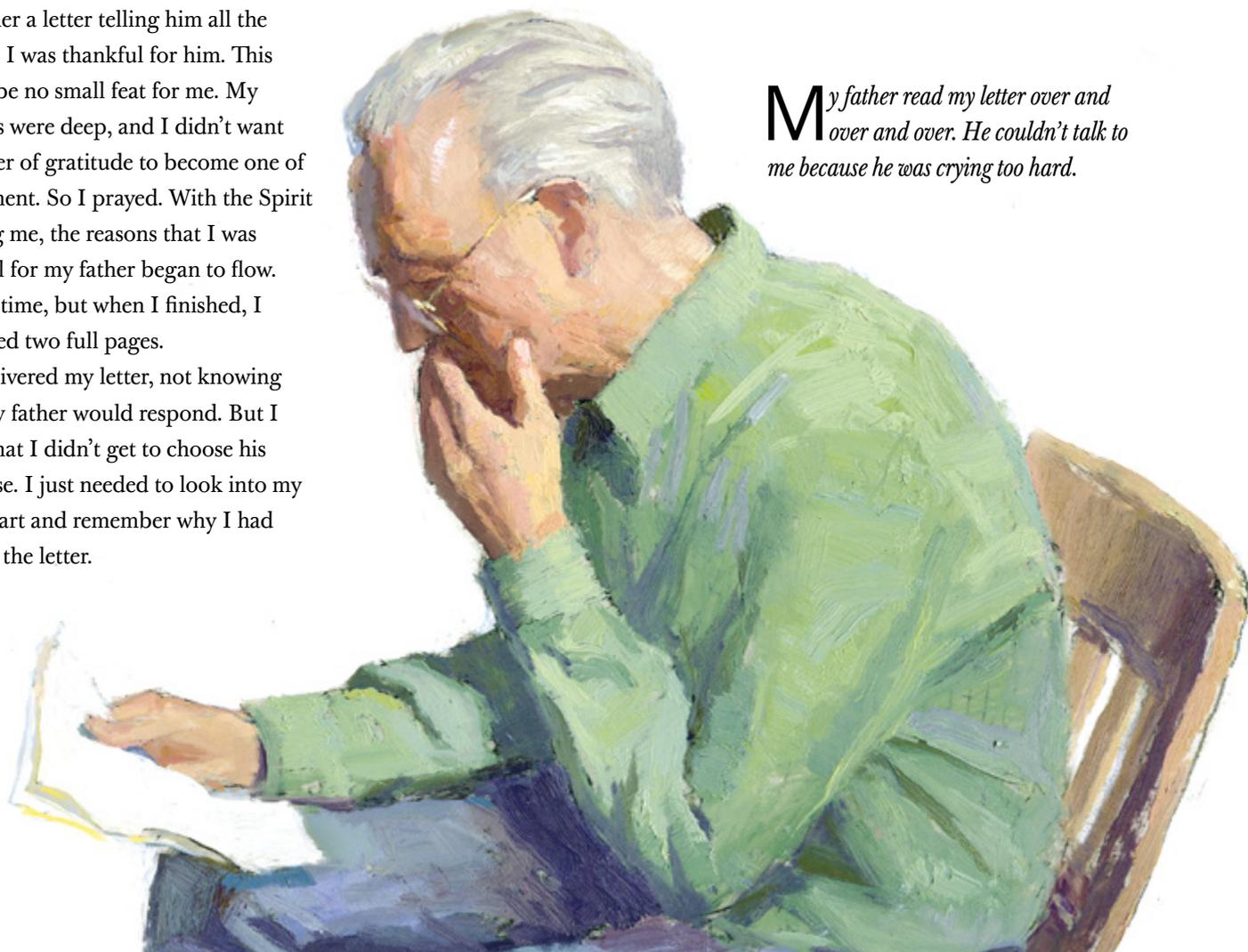
I wish I could say that our relationship was miraculously healed, but we still had much work to do. Over time,

my heart began to heal, and our relationship improved. Eventually, I was able to forgive him.

A few years later, after a tremendous battle with cancer, my father died. I am sure he is now experiencing great joy as the Savior helps him heal from years of abuse. I know that I have experienced healing through the power of Jesus Christ's Atonement. The Savior understands our needs and can help us remove the poison of hurt and resentment from our souls. I know that gratitude, forgiveness, and love are powerful cures. ■

Elise Dahlen, Utah, USA

My father read my letter over and over and over. He couldn't talk to me because he was crying too hard.



Young Adults

In This Section

- 68 **Dating and Pornography**
By *Ensign* staff and Family Services
- 74 **Finding True Recovery: Talking with My Girlfriend about My Pornography Use**
Name withheld
- 78 **Six Truths to Remember If Your Dating Relationship Is Affected by Pornography**
- 80 **Advice from Young Adults**

Digital Only

How I Learned to React When Someone Admits They Struggle with Pornography

Name withheld, Utah, USA

Moving Forward after Learning of My Fiancé's Pornography Use

Name withheld, French Polynesia

I Had Fought to Overcome Pornography. Why Wouldn't He?

Name withheld, Guatemala

Four Things to Do When You're Dating Someone Who Struggles with Pornography

Name withheld, Utah, USA

I Decided to Marry a Recovering Pornography Addict

By Corrine Stokoe

Seeking Christ over the Darkness of Pornography

In planning articles for young adults, we spend a lot of time thinking about the many issues they are facing now. But as we were brainstorming for this month, we were led to a topic that has affected us, our friends, and countless others: dating and pornography. We knew that planning this section was going to be tough. Pornography affects so many people in heartbreaking, sometimes life-shattering, ways. And for young single adults, it can make the future seem even more uncertain than it already does, especially in preparing for marriage.

But our perspective changed. We truly saw Heavenly Father's hand guiding our work as we started receiving stories from young adults whose relationships have been affected by pornography. And we see now that there is more than just a glimmer of hope for happy, pornography-free eternal marriages. Why? Because every single story testifies of the healing power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement.

So we invite you to read this month's articles, shared vulnerably by others who know that the struggle against pornography is real. You will learn how to bring up pornography when you're dating and how to address it (page 68). You can read one man's story of how he and his girlfriend found true healing (page 74), as well as six truths to remember when pornography affects your dating relationship (page 78). You can read Corrine's story of why she chose to marry a recovering pornography addict (digital only). And in more digital articles, you can read about forgiveness, healing, changed hearts, how the Spirit can guide you, and more.

We know that if you rely on the Savior and invite the Spirit into your life as you seek answers, Heavenly Father will lead you in the right direction for your unique situation. The darkness of pornography may be prominent in the world, but the Savior's healing light outshines any darkness. All we have to do is seek Him.

Sincerely,

Chakell Wardleigh and Mindy Selu

Find these articles and more at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) or in **YA Weekly** (under the Young Adults section in the Gospel Library app).

Share Your Story

Do you have a story to share? Or do you want to see articles about certain topics? You can submit your article or your feedback at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).



PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES, USED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES, POSED BY MODELS

YOUNG ADULTS



Dating and Pornography

By *Ensign* staff and Family Services

As young adults, we all know that dating can be exciting, scary, fulfilling, and nerve-racking all at the same time. As we start opening up to each other, we naturally want to know more about one another, and increasing vulnerability is important in building and deepening relationships. What are our dreams, fears, and beliefs? How do we feel about marriage and family? What challenges have we faced in our past or currently that we should share with one another?

As scary as talking (or asking) about problems with pornography may be, *not* talking about it can lead to devastating problems later. Each individual

pornography problem is unique and challenging, and you may not even know if it's an issue or how to bring it up with the person you're dating, so it's important that you seek guidance from the Spirit. There's no single solution for every situation, but in this article, we offer some suggestions for those of you who might be wondering:

- How can I approach the subject of pornography with the person I am dating? And when is it appropriate to ask/tell?
- How can I know if I should move forward in a relationship with someone who has a history of pornography use?
- How can we work together to overcome pornography?

Help and hope in confronting pornography in dating relationships.

Editors' note: Because "dating" means different things in different cultures, for the purposes of this article, we mean going on dates, within the standards of the gospel, in order to get to know someone, and developing a relationship with them that could potentially lead to marriage.



For Those Who Have Struggled or Are Struggling

If you have struggled with pornography in the past or if you are currently struggling, the thought of dating may bring you a sense of hopelessness or anxiety. But if you have a sincere desire to remove pornography from your life (or have already removed it), know that with your own efforts and help from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, a healthy, lasting relationship is possible for you. Consider the following questions as you pursue a relationship.

1. Do We Really Need to Talk about It?

A common question is, “Do I really need to share my history of pornography use with the person I’m dating, even if I’ve repented of it?” Or “Do I need to talk about current problems

with pornography with the person I’m dating?” Generally, it *does* need to be discussed—at the right time and in a sensitive way. As you have this conversation, keep in mind a few important principles:

- **Timing**—The conversation should take place when the relationship progresses to a state of seriousness that would naturally require it.
- **Honesty**—Relationships should be based on trust and honesty. Although the person you are dating might choose to end the relationship, they need to understand the nature of the problem, your current progress in addressing it, and your plan for dealing with it if it comes up again in the future.
- **Forgiveness**—Being honest about your pornography use with the person you’re dating doesn’t mean you need to go into graphic detail when discussing it. If you’ve repented and feel you’ve been forgiven, you shouldn’t feel guilty about it anymore. The Lord doesn’t remember our sins once we’ve repented of them (see Doctrine and Covenants 58:42), so your discussion with the person you’re dating is less about “confessing” and more about building trust, sharing your plans for ongoing recovery, and gaining their support.
- **Healing**— Even if you have repented, prolonged or intensive use of pornography can have long-lasting biological, psychological, social, and spiritual effects. The healing process can be hard work and take a long time, but full recovery and real healing are possible. Through that process, you will need appropriate help and support, which should include your potential spouse.

2. Am I Ready for a Serious Relationship?



One of the biggest differences between someone who is ready for a serious relationship and someone who is not is their willingness to be transparent with the person they are dating. If you struggle with pornography, you can either let fear take your relationship to a place of distrust or use faith to tackle challenges together.

Although it can be uncomfortable and scary to share your history with pornography, avoiding it may only deepen your feelings of fear and shame. Your fear of losing that person might even cause you to deny or



For Those Who Are Dating Someone Who Has Struggled

Because the average age of first exposure to pornography is around 11 and it is so easy to access, most young people have been exposed to pornography in some way by age 18. This can be concerning as far as dating goes. But exposure is not the same as addiction, and there are different levels of involvement with pornography (see Dallin H. Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," *New Era*, Oct. 2015, 2-7; *Liahona*, Oct. 2015, 50-55). The good news is that the Atonement of Jesus Christ can provide strength and healing to all who seek it. Here are some questions to consider as your relationship progresses.

avoid sharing the whole story, which can break trust and damage your relationship later on.

On the other hand, when you respect the agency of the person you are dating, you will honor their choice to remain in the relationship knowing both *the good and the bad*. You might still be afraid of the outcome, but it's important to recognize that, given all of the information, the other person can also help you in your efforts and desire to remove pornography from your life. But whether or not the relationship works out, with God's help, you can continue on the path to recovery.

1. When and How Should I Ask about Pornography?

Deciding when and how to bring this up with the person you are dating may be something to discuss with your parents, older siblings, Church leaders, or anyone else you trust to give good advice. Find a way that feels right for you and then have that conversation at the appropriate time, as you become exclusive or more serious in your relationship.

That doesn't mean you need to start a first date with an interrogation into their past, but as your relationship progresses, you can seek the inspiration of the Spirit to help you know how and when to ask about their history with pornography.

2. How Should I Respond?

When you and the person you are dating start sharing your honest feelings, it can bring healing. It's important to be aware of your own thoughts and feelings as pornography use is disclosed—it might cause you to become critical, angry, numb, or feel deceived. But at the same time, their disclosure can also increase trust, compassion, love, and empathy between you. Consider their feelings and your own as you respond.



3. How Do I Move Forward?

Discovering that the person you are dating is struggling with pornography should be a cause for concern, but don't betray their trust by sharing their personal struggles with other people. Speaking in confidence with a bishop or therapist, or, with the permission of the person you are dating, with a friend or trusted leader may also be helpful.

When deciding whether or not to continue the relationship, you should continually seek guidance from the Spirit. But the following suggestions could also be helpful:

- Ask them how much pornography has impacted their life and where they are in the process of healing. They need to have shown their desire to eliminate pornography from their life by taking any appropriate actions necessary.
- Recognize that some forms of pornography use (for example, child pornography) are a major indicator that the person needs professional help and may be unsafe.
- Realize that the power of the Savior's Atonement is real. You can forgive, and they can be healed.
- Decide that you will settle for nothing less than complete honesty in your relationship and worthiness to marry in the temple.



- Understand that healing and recovery will take time. Relapses can happen, and those who are trying to recover will need support. This includes understanding their triggers (things that might cause them to turn to pornography) and supporting or helping establish appropriate safeguards.
- If your relationship is progressing toward marriage, be sure that you both agree that pornography is unacceptable and does not reflect a healthy marital sexual relationship.

The most important part of moving forward is relying on what the Holy Ghost prompts you to do, which could be anything from continuing the relationship with an understanding that the pornography use must stop to ending the relationship but continuing to support their efforts to change. Whatever you decide, the person you are dating should understand that things can change depending on their progress or lack of progress in overcoming pornography.

Working Together to Overcome Pornography

Overcoming pornography can take time and hard work, but it's possible. And ultimately, working on overcoming it together can strengthen your relationship as you both gain a deeper understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and learn to support each other through adversity. Consider the following as you work to overcome it together:

- The Church's web page **addressingpornography.ChurchofJesusChrist.org** offers many resources (including information on the Church's addiction recovery program) that can help both of you navigate this healing process.
- Consider having a specific place and time to discuss pornography so that it doesn't become the focus of your relationship. When you do talk about it, don't be belittling or condescending. Your relationship should be a safe place where you can both feel loved and supported, not interrogated or demeaned.
- Spiritual practices can help provide a defense against temptation. Encourage each other to maintain and strengthen regular spiritual habits—including meaningful scripture study and temple worship (when possible), Sabbath day observance, serving others, consistent fasting, and sincere prayer—with an increased desire to strengthen your relationship with the Savior and Heavenly Father. That relationship can help lessen pornography's hold over your lives. Discipleship is

a lifelong pursuit, and the strength we gain as followers of Christ will help us overcome all our challenges in life, not just pornography.

- If your own efforts aren't proving successful, don't be afraid or ashamed to seek out the help of a trained mental health professional in the area of sexual addiction. They may be able to help you get more insight into treating pornography use and resolving its underlying causes.
- Remember that we are surrounded by inappropriate media that tempts us to sin. If the person you are dating relapses, how quickly they get back on track is a good indicator of their commitment to rid pornography from their life. But if you begin to feel like you are more motivated to see change than they are, you should reconsider continuing your dating relationship.
- Your influence on the person you are dating can be very strong, but it should not be the primary reason for their change in behavior. Their desire to change has to come from within, not from you.

Above all, seek guidance from Heavenly Father and remember that there is always hope through the Savior. His grace is sufficient to heal and change us. His Atonement is available to both of you to give you strength and help you forgive. However, the person struggling with pornography needs to be actively seeking the Savior's help to overcome it. No one else can do it for them. Have faith, and trust Heavenly Father. He will guide you in your unique situation. ■



Finding True Recovery

Talking with My Girlfriend about My Pornography Use

Knowing what we know now, there are a few things we would have done differently before we got married.

Name withheld

The more committed Megan (name has been changed) and I became to our growing relationship, the clearer it was to both of us that we were not only falling in love but possibly heading toward marriage.

Part of me wanted to open up and share everything about my past with her—including my pornography use. Another part of me was terrified! I had learned that secrecy, isolation, and lies were the seedbed of pornography problems. I didn't want a relationship where we kept things from one another. But I was also filled with all kinds of fears and doubts. "What if she chooses to dump me? Can I cope with rejection?"

And yet I didn't want an eternal companion who was unable to understand what I'd been through spiritually and appreciate where I am now.

No, she had to know. But I wanted to do it the right way. I just didn't know how to bring it up. I also wondered: How much does she need to know? How far into the relationship should we be before I tell her? How long should a person be free from pornography before marrying?

The questions were overwhelming.

But Megan was a few steps ahead of me. One night, she bluntly asked, "Have you ever had a problem with pornography?"

"Yeah, I have," I said.

I watched her recoil and look away.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I've been trying to figure out the right way and time to tell you. I'm willing to answer any questions you have."



Megan was surprised but said she appreciated my openness and willingness to tell her about it. She said she needed some space to process what I had told her. Since I understood that pornography is a big, scary thing and something to take seriously, I respected her wishes.

Over the next few days I worried and prayed—a lot. My thoughts raced back to when I had been dating another girl seriously, and my struggle with pornography was one of the reasons that relationship had fallen apart. That led me to pray even harder that Megan would have the ability to handle this.

I soon realized, however, that I needed to allow Megan to make whatever decision was right for her, and I needed to accept her decision. In that moment, the Spirit comforted me. My prayers thereafter moved away from what I wanted and shifted to submitting myself to the Lord's will. Because of the power of the Savior's Atonement, I knew I could own the consequences of my prior decisions. I had walked with Him through my journey of repentance long enough to know that, regardless of the outcome, He would have my back.

AN HONEST DISCUSSION

When Megan felt ready, we continued our conversation a few days later. She told me that she was battling mixed feelings

toward me but also wishing she could forget about her feelings and just walk away. She explained that she had been through some traumatic experiences because of people who had used pornography and that she'd be lying if she said she didn't look at me differently now.

After a long pause, she said, "So, are you still using pornography?" "No, I'm in a good place now."

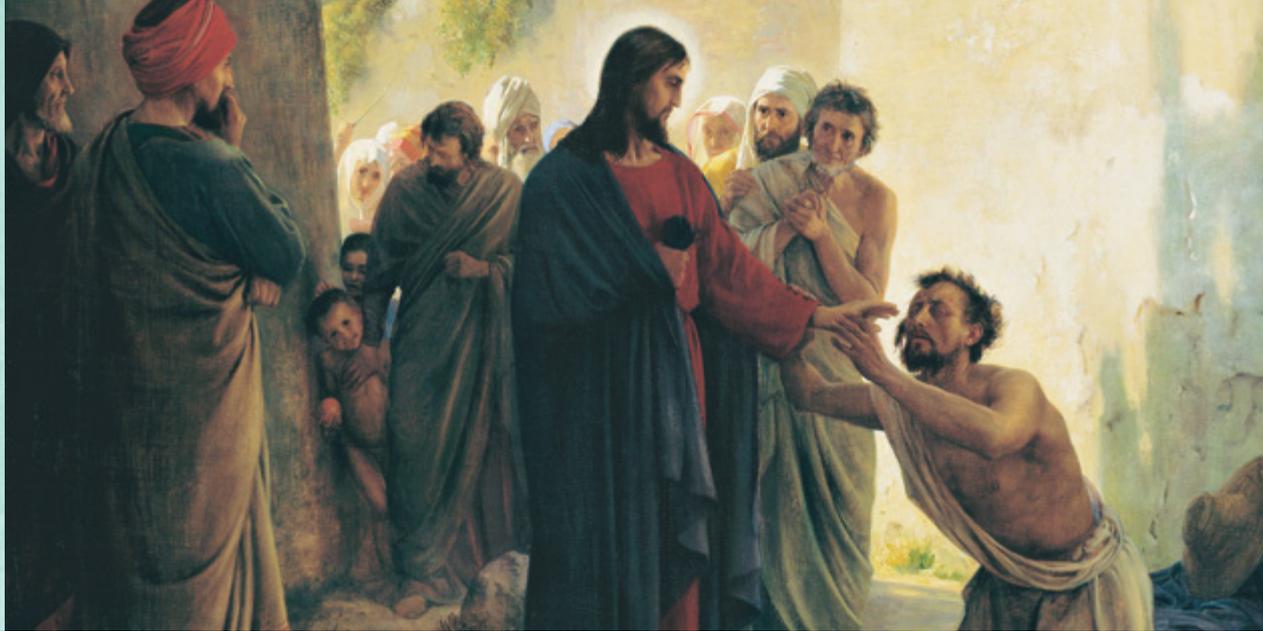
"How bad was your problem?" she continued.

I responded, openly, "It was serious. I battled with it for years and worked with a therapist to get where I am now."

I reassured her that I *had* made progress and was in one of the longest periods of sobriety I had experienced. I felt confident I would never go back to it—although I would later find that I wasn't as strong, or prepared, as I thought.

I felt sincere sorrow for my past decisions and felt compassion for her. I assured her that while I wanted us to be together, I understood her feelings and would support whatever choice she made. Our discussion was frank, honest, and, at times, awkward.

She concluded that my heart was in the right place and that she trusted me enough to move forward with the relationship. Although I was honest with her about my experience, I was not as far along in my healing as I thought. There were more lessons to be learned.



SOME LESSONS LEARNED

Through these and subsequent conversations and experiences, Megan and I learned a great deal. Here are eight points from our experience that we hope can help you in your conversations.

1. Pornography Needs to Be Talked About

Not only was it helpful for us to have this kind of conversation, but it was also essential. In my view, it's essential for *any* couple whose relationship and commitment to each other are progressing toward marriage.

2. Timing Is Important

The more love and compassion between the couple, the more effective these conversations will be. If the relationship is not developed, your motivation to be open and the ability of the person you're dating to receive any honest disclosure may be limited. I would recommend that the conversation be held as soon as either dating partner feels the relationship has developed to the point of exclusivity and mutual commitment.

3. Be Open; Resist Becoming Defensive

It's also important not to be defensive. For years I lied about my pornography problem, distanced myself from loved ones, became defensive and grumpy with my family, and thought I would get over it on my own. But opening up about it is what made all the difference.

Being open provides an opportunity for the Spirit to help increase your gratitude for Christ's atoning sacrifice and strengthen your testimony—experiences that will help you bless others in the future.

4. Prepare to Ask the Right Questions

All of Megan's questions and all my answers were about abstaining—not *real* recovery. We both needed to understand how serious my problem with pornography had actually been and what it would take to reach a point of actual healing. We didn't realize the additional work we would need to do together, and individually, to prepare for a strong marriage.

Questions we'd encourage you to ask include:

- What are you currently doing to respond in healthy ways to your triggers and deeper, underlying needs?
- What has motivated you to change and what motivates you currently?
- What has the repentance (change) and healing process been like for you?
- How has counseling with your bishop helped?
- Did you ever feel the need to seek professional help?
- What have you learned about the underlying biological, psychological, social, and spiritual factors that have contributed to your pornography use?
- What will we do to ensure that we keep the lines of communication open in our marriage and maintain a connection in spite of any future relapses? How will we handle any relapses?

5. Make It an Ongoing Conversation

What we shared and learned together could never be handled adequately in one discussion. This is true no matter how long you talk or how much you want to just handle it and move on. For us, working together to safeguard our relationship and to continue growing and healing has become an ongoing exploration, discovery, and response.

6. Let Faith and Faithfulness Be a Factor

I would encourage both people in the relationship to trust in the power of Jesus Christ's Atonement to not only help heal the effects of pornography but also help both of them grow and change as they work together on improving themselves and their relationship.

Exercising faith requires surrendering everything you have to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ with the belief that They have the desire, power, and ability to create a better version of you.

7. Get All the Help You Can

Months after Megan's conclusion to trust me, I relapsed. Coming forward with this confession to both Megan and my bishop was humiliating for me and extremely painful for Megan, who thought this meant that I was unable to ever overcome my pornography problem.

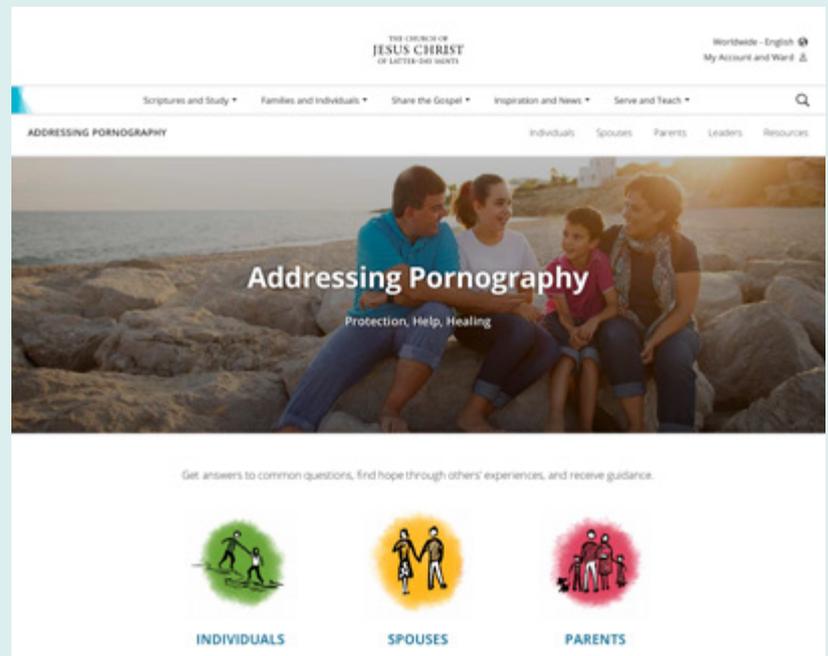
We were counseled to look for guidance on addressingpornography.ChurchofJesusChrist.org. Listening to prophetic guidance and stories of healing gave us hope. I learned more about what real recovery entails. Megan learned that the emotions she was experiencing were normal, that she needed her own healing, and that it was necessary to set boundaries to restore stability and trust.

We were also counseled to seek therapy. This was immensely helpful. I had always clung to the belief that pornography was something I could overcome on my own. It wasn't. I needed my bishop, a therapist, the support of my family and closest

friends, and, most of all, a deeper understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which I gained by developing a pattern of relying on His merits to both forgive and change me. Real recovery requires a complete change of heart that only Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost can provide.

8. Remember Who You Are

Pornography doesn't define you. Your identity as a son or daughter of God defines you. Megan and I eventually married in the temple. Your circumstance may end differently. But whether the relationship proceeds or not, it's important to remember that the impact of pornography on your own life and on the lives of others can be devastating. Any effort to get help will draw you closer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and lasting healing. Your Father in Heaven wants you to achieve every blessing and experience happiness. With help from others and through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, healing is possible. ■



Home page of addressingpornography.ChurchofJesusChrist.org



Six Truths

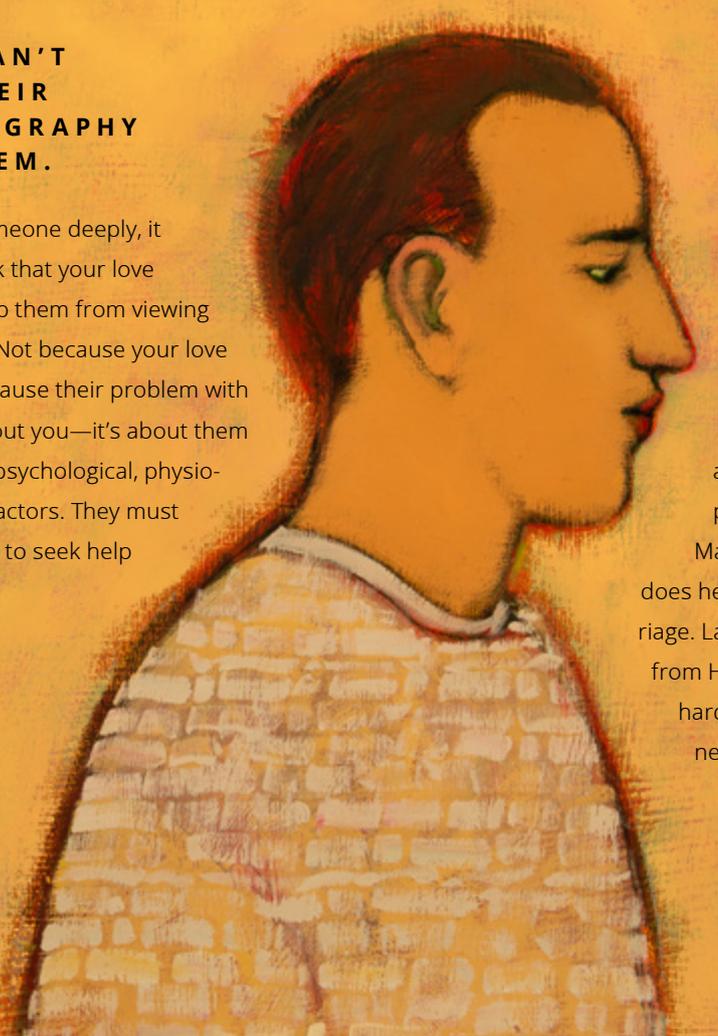
to Remember If Your Dating Relationship Is Affected by Pornography

1 YOU CAN'T FIX THEIR PORNOGRAPHY PROBLEM.

When you love someone deeply, it might be easy to think that your love can be enough to stop them from viewing pornography. It isn't. Not because your love is inadequate but because their problem with pornography isn't about you—it's about them and many biological, psychological, physiological, and spiritual factors. They must have their own desire to seek help and to change.

2 MARRIAGE DOESN'T SOLVE A PORNOGRAPHY PROBLEM.

Many falsely believe that getting married and having a spouse will solve a pornography issue. It doesn't. Those who struggle will still be tempted and influenced by triggers. Heavy pornography use rewires the brain. Matrimony doesn't heal that. Nor does healthy sexual activity within a marriage. Lasting healing only occurs with help from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, hard work from the user, and, when needed, professional counseling.



3

NOT ALL FEELINGS COME FROM THE HOLY GHOST.

It can sometimes be difficult to distinguish between our emotional attachment to an individual and the promptings from the Holy Ghost (see Galatians 5:22). Or, put differently, our longing for companionship and our attraction to someone can become so powerful that we may ignore, dismiss, or minimize cautions or guidance from the Holy Ghost regarding the relationship. A humble willingness to “study it out in your mind” (Doctrine and Covenants 9:8) as well as your heart and to do the Lord’s will—however hard that may be—will better attune you to the Spirit.

4

A BROKEN HEART AND A CONTRITE SPIRIT ARE REQUIRED.

The scriptures teach that we must have a broken heart and a contrite spirit to receive the enabling and cleansing power of the Savior’s Atonement and that “unto none else can the ends of the law be answered” (2 Nephi 2:7). Most people in recovery, after humbling themselves, abandon attempts to overcome pornography on their own and turn to others for help. This includes turning in faith to our Savior for the kind of help available only through Him and His Atonement.

On the other hand, signs that a person lacks a broken heart and a contrite spirit can include:

- Denial that pornography is or has ever been a problem.
- Defensiveness about their past or present pornography use.
- Deflection or blaming others for pornography use.
- An inability to build an emotionally intimate relationship.
- An indifference toward covenants, the Church, or spiritual matters.
- An unwillingness to get help from a bishop or speak with a professional.

5

ABSTINENCE, THOUGH IMPORTANT, IS NOT THE SAME AS RECOVERY.

It’s critical that you both understand that abstinence is not the same thing as recovery. Although abstaining from pornography is the goal, it’s not the same as true recovery from pornography use. Often, progress is better measured in how a person’s heart is changing rather than how long they have gone without viewing pornography. Recovery involves their taking full responsibility for their actions, constantly seeking to improve themselves, turning to Heavenly Father and the Savior in moments of weakness, and focusing on becoming closer to Them through the journey to recovery. Because of how pornography changes the brain, true recovery requires a change in your heart *and* your brain. And that journey takes time, consistency, and patience.

6

THERE ARE RESOURCES TO HELP.

Heavenly Father has provided many tools for overcoming pornography. For some people, depending on the severity and length of their pornography use and on their personal characteristics, it might be enough to work with their bishop to both repent and experience a lasting change of heart and mind through sincere prayer, scripture study, church and temple worship, and daily repentance. Others might need the additional help of mental health professionals, support groups, or other support system in order to truly overcome their struggle with pornography.

In addition, the site addressingpornography.ChurchofJesusChrist.org can help. There you’ll find counsel from Church leaders, a link to the Church’s Addiction Recovery Program, videos, testimonials, and other resources that will draw anyone affected by pornography closer to the Savior and His infinite grace. ■

ADVICE

from YOUNG ADULTS

on dating someone who once struggled with pornography



“Most pornography users don’t want to be in a position of looking at it. They hate it, but it’s addictive. Ask the person to open up to you. If it’s a strong relationship, they will open up and talk to you about it. **Be that friend who will help them.**”

—Elise, Queensland, Australia

“**Be supportive in their recovery.** It’s not something that is overcome overnight. It takes time.”

—Name withheld, Idaho, USA

“**Speak up and ask** the person about the issue. It is oftentimes deemed an awkward and uncomfortable topic, but you should know to what extent the individual battled with pornography. By finding this out, you and the Holy Ghost may be the conduit to helping this person find the avenue of freedom from persistent pornography struggles.”

—Eryn, Utah, USA

from CHURCH LEADERS

“Only you can decide, with the Lord’s help, how to proceed in a relationship in which pornography plays a role in the life of a potential future companion. If you choose to remain in a relationship with someone struggling with this temptation, help him or her turn to God in prayer, in fasting, and in regular scripture study. Additionally, encourage visits with parents, family members, priesthood leaders, and professional counselors to get additional help and support.”

President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Questions and Answers” (Brigham Young University devotional, Nov. 14, 2017), 4, speeches.byu.edu.

Read President Ballard’s full response in the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.churchofjesuschrist.org).

SHARE YOUR ADVICE

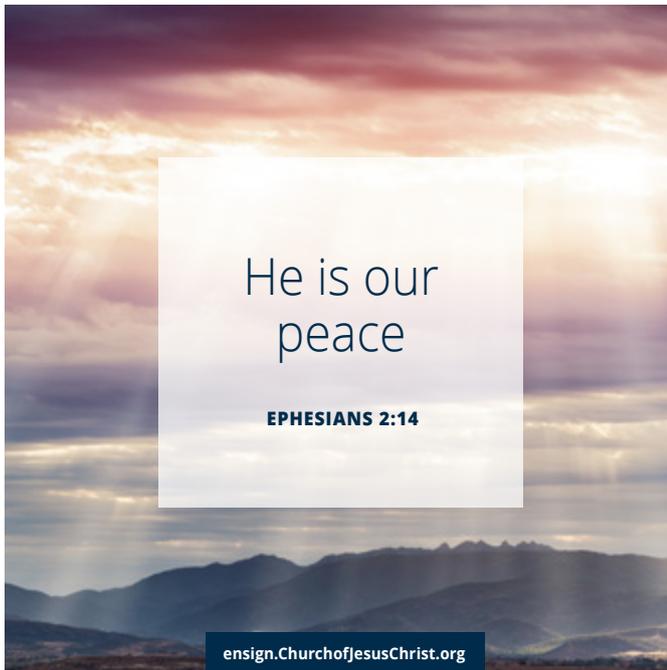
What advice would you give to someone who is wondering **how to plan for the future?**

Send us your response at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.churchofjesuschrist.org) by October 31, 2019.

Come, Follow Me Shareable Scriptures

Download these picture quotes (from October's *Come, Follow Me* readings) and share them on social media—or send them to those you minister to, your Sunday School class, or your family: ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/101981.

SEPTEMBER 30–OCTOBER 13



OCTOBER 14–20



OCTOBER 21–27



OCTOBER 28–NOVEMBER 3



YOUNG ADULTS

**DOES YOUR POTENTIAL
SPOUSE HAVE A
PORNOGRAPHY PROBLEM?**

*There is hope and help. Here's how
you can move forward in faith.*

66



COME, FOLLOW ME

**PUTTING ON THE
ARMOR OF GOD**

14, 44

TEACHERS AND LEADERS

**FOUR IDEAS FOR
MINISTERING TO
CHILDREN AND
YOUTH**

28

PARENTS

**PREPARING YOUTH
FOR THE TEMPLE**

32

