

BY CHAD E. PHARES

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(Based on a true story)

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles (Proverbs 21:23).

Can Christopher come out and play?" Christopher heard his friend's cheerful voice at the front door. He sprinted to the living room. Before his mother could say a word, Christopher had already reached the front door to greet his friend Ben.

Ben and Christopher weren't only good friends—they were best friends. Nearly every day the boys enjoyed playing basketball, digging holes in the backyard, catching fireflies, or doing some other fun activity. Christopher was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Ben wasn't. But the two boys still had a lot of fun together.

"What do you want to do today?" Christopher asked. He bent over to tie his shoes, still caked with mud from his



at Christopher. His eyebrows were scrunched down. He looked confused.

"What do you mean you don't say that word at your house?" Ben asked.

"It's just not a nice word, so we don't say it," Christopher replied.

"I don't believe you," Ben said. "Everybody says it. You *have* to say it."

Christopher didn't want to argue. He liked playing with Ben, but he knew that he needed to stand up for what he believed in.

"I've never said it, and I never will," Christopher said. "You don't *have* to say those kinds of words."

"Whatever," Ben said as he grabbed his bike and turned toward his house. "I'm going home," he muttered as he trudged down the road.

Christopher felt bad that Ben was mad. He didn't want to hurt Ben's feelings. As he turned around to walk back into his



BEST FRIENDS?

puddle-jumping competition with Ben the day before.

"Let's go ride bikes," Ben said.

The boys raced down the creaky porch steps and grabbed their bikes. When Ben discovered that the chain on his bike had come loose, he yelled out a bad word that sent a chill up Christopher's neck.

Christopher had a bad feeling inside. He knew Heavenly Father didn't want people to say words like the word Ben just said.

"I don't really like that word," Christopher told Ben. "We don't say it at my house."

Ben slowly lifted his head to look

house, he was surprised to see his mother standing in the doorway with a half-smile on her face.

As Christopher walked up the porch steps, Mom knelt down on one knee so she could look him in the eyes. "I'm very proud of you, Christopher," she said. "It took a lot of courage for you to say what you said."

"I believe I made Heavenly Father happy," Christopher said. "But I think Ben is angry."

"Everything will be fine," Mom said. "Heavenly Father blesses us when we are obedient. You'll see."

The next morning, Christopher heard a knock on his



front door. He hoped it was Ben. Several questions ran through Christopher's head as he turned the doorknob. Would Ben still be mad? Would he call him names? Could they still be friends?

Christopher opened the door and prepared for the worst.

"Hi, Chris," Ben said. "Do you want to play?" Ben's eyebrows weren't scrunched down like they

were the day before. He had a smile on his face. He wasn't mad anymore. Christopher was happy.

"Sure, let's go," Christopher answered as he jumped outside.

Christopher never heard Ben use another bad word again. He knew his mother was right—Heavenly Father *does* bless us when we have the courage to stand up for the right. ●

