

# The Lookout Tower

*Building a tree fort was a lot harder than David and his friends expected.*

**By David Dickson**

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(Based on a true story)

*"I'm glad that I live in this beautiful world Heavenly Father created for me" (Children's Songbook, 229).*

**T**welve-year-old David gripped his video game controller. He was going to do it! He was finally going to beat this level!

And then it all came crashing down. He missed the last tricky turn on the racetrack. His car fell behind. He lost. Again.

"Nooo!" he said. The opening screen of the video game flashed in front of him. He'd been so close! And all his friends said the next level was the coolest in the whole game too.

*I bet I could do it. Just a few more tries.* He reached for the start button on his controller.

Then he glanced out the window. Did he really want to spend his whole Saturday morning playing video games?

Not really. But he just *knew* he could beat the level.

He reached again for the controller. And then David remembered the pile of boards waiting in the backyard. He glanced back at the sun shining through the window. Today would be the perfect day to start on the tree fort he and his friends had planned.

He turned off the game and walked outside. A soft breeze blew through his hair. Sunlight warmed his face.

He filled the red wagon with spare boards Dad had given him. He told Mom where he was going and then tossed a hammer and nails into the wagon before heading to Sam's house.

"What's up?" Sam said, opening the door. He noticed the wagon and tools. "Great idea!"

Sam and David stopped by Ty's house. Soon the three of them were taking turns hauling the wagon up the steep hill in the woods behind their neighborhood.

"This is heavy!" Sam said.

"And it's hot today," Ty said.

David nodded. Pulling those boards up the dirt trail wasn't easy. Every so often the wagon wheels caught on a big rock or fell into a crack.

"But it's gonna be awesome," Sam said as he yanked the wagon out of a deep crack.

David pushed from behind. "Yup. Our very own tree fort."

"With a rope swing," Ty added. "And a lookout tower!"

Talking about their plans got them excited again. Before long they finished the steep climb to the tree they'd already chosen. It had the perfect tangle of big limbs and smaller branches.

"First we need to build the ladder," Ty said. David and Sam nodded. They had already drawn plans. They would nail some short two-by-four pieces of wood sideways onto the tree for the ladder.

The only problem was, building a ladder was harder than they'd thought. The nails kept bending. One board split in half. Their arms got tired.

After they had nailed only three steps in place, David checked his watch. They'd been there over two hours! It was already time to go home and help pull weeds in the garden.

They looked at the big pile of boards remaining.

"This is going to take a long time," Ty said.

David thought about how long it might take. But he wasn't worried. And then he realized he hadn't thought about his video game at all while they'd worked. He hadn't even missed it! This fort might be a lot of work, but those ladder steps were going to last forever.

"Yeah," David agreed. "But I'll bet we'll be able to see all the way to the river once we finish the lookout tower."

The three friends headed home. They talked about how great their fort would be and decided to get an earlier start next Saturday.

The video games could wait. ◆



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**“It is refreshing to put aside our electronic devices for a while and instead turn the pages of the scriptures or take time to converse with family and friends.”**

Elder José A. Teixeira of the Seventy

“Seeking the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 98.