



# BE A REAL ACTION HERO

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**T**hink of your favorite action hero. Ready, go! Did you think of some swashbuckling daredevil fighting insurmountable odds? Or maybe a suave adventurer with perfect hair? Did you think of anyone from the scriptures?

What about Nephi, Noah, Abish, or Peter? They didn't fight off armies with just their fists and a witty catchphrase, but they're what you might call *real* action heroes. They exercised faith, trusted God, and got going. They took action.

Do you ever avoid getting started because you haven't received obvious, step-by-step directions? Maybe there's someone in your class or quorum who hasn't been coming to



## Pressing forward is not a spectator sport. Get up and get going!

church. Do you hesitate to reach out to them because you're not sure exactly how to do it? Inspiration is important, and we should always be seeking it. But that doesn't mean sitting and waiting for a text message from an angel before we go about doing good. Heavenly Father would want you to befriend that person. He wants us to step up and take action!

What if Nephi, Noah, Abish, and Peter had waited? They all had hard things to do. Suppose they chose to sit down with a drink and a cookie until they got further instructions. Things would have turned out a lot differently . . .

### Wait and See?

*"I will wait to do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them, so I won't do anything until I know exactly what that way is" (non-existent version of 1 Nephi 3:7).*

Soon after Lehi's family left their home in Jerusalem, the Lord commanded Lehi's sons to go back and get the plates from Laban. But as far as we know, He didn't give them any hints on how to do that. All Nephi and his brothers knew was that the Lord had commanded them to get the plates. Do you ever feel like you have no idea how to do the things you're supposed to do? (Maybe that's one reason Laman and Lemuel complained!) It was up to

Nephi to use his brain and exercise faith and to go and do. But what if he had stayed and dawdled? What if Nephi had refused to budge until God gave him a plan? Getting the plates was hard! He and his brothers tried twice and failed! What if Nephi had just plopped down against the walls of Jerusalem and waited for God to tell him what to do?

The plates might still be in Laban's treasury. Good thing Nephi didn't wait.

Instead, he followed the Spirit, "not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. *Nevertheless I went forth*" (1 Nephi 4:6–7; emphasis added). He didn't wait around; he didn't let the things he didn't know stop him. He knew God would provide a way, and he was right. Once Nephi was moving, taking action, and pressing forward, the Lord guided and helped him.

### But Why?

*"And Noah questioned all that the Lord commanded him" (non-existent version of Genesis 7:5).*

Sometimes God does give exact instructions. Take Noah for example. When God commanded Noah to build an ark, God provided measurements, explained what materials to use, and even gave Noah a passenger list. Maybe you've received specific promptings like that, and we've all received specific commandments such as the principles in the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet. But even



when you know exactly what you should do, do you ever *still* hesitate? Are you ever tempted to question the Lord instead of obeying Him?

What if Noah had heard the Lord and then said, “But why? I don’t get it.” What if he’d stretched out on the couch and refused to move until he understood exactly *why* the Lord was sending a flood, wondering all the while if the instructions were really from God?

There would have been a flood, but would there have been an ark? And what about the human race? It’s a *really* good thing Noah didn’t sit back and question everything.

Instead he “did according unto all that the Lord commanded him” (Genesis 7:5). He didn’t question; he acted in faith. If asked in the right spirit, questions are a good thing. They can help us grow and lead us to more truth. But when we refuse to do anything until we receive the answers we want, questioning can hold us back. Noah may have had questions, but he didn’t let them stop him. Even if it seemed odd, he built the boat on dry land, gathered all the animals, and shut his family into the ark. And when it started raining, he was probably very glad he had done so. Noah acted in faith, and God blessed him and his entire family.

### Stand Back and Watch?

*“When she saw that all the servants of Lamoni had fallen to the earth, . . . she knew that it was the power of God; and supposing that . . . beholding this scene . . . would cause [others] to believe in the power of God, therefore she stood back and hoped someone else would gather the people”* (non-existent version of Alma 19:17).

Abish was a Lamanite woman. She had been converted to the Lord for many years, but because she lived among disbelieving Lamanites, she kept her faith secret. When Ammon taught King Lamoni the gospel, the king and his household were overcome by the power of the Lord. Abish recognized this as an opportunity for her friends and neighbors to finally see and believe in the power of God. It was up to her to gather the people to witness the miracle.

But what if she hadn’t? After years of hiding her faith, running from house to house to tell everybody was probably a little scary! Have you ever been prompted to speak up but then felt nervous about it? Sharing your beliefs can be hard! What if Abish had just stood back and hoped that people would wander in on their own? Or that somebody else would say something?

Well, then no one would have gathered to see King Lamoni and his household lying around like they were dead or their miraculous recovery. They wouldn’t have been there to hear King Lamoni, the queen, and Ammon teach the gospel.

Good thing she didn’t just stand back. Instead she “*ran forth* from house to house, making it known unto the people” (Alma 19:17; emphasis added). She had a testimony of the Lord, and she didn’t let fear stop her. She didn’t wait for someone else to say something. When she had a chance, she didn’t hesitate—she ran! Abish acted, and the Lord blessed her to see many of her countrymen converted to the gospel (see Alma 19).

### Listen to the World?

*“And [Jesus] said, Come. And when Peter sat down in the ship, he didn’t walk on the water, to go to Jesus”* (non-existent version of Matthew 14:29).

As a fisherman, Peter knew a lot about boats. For example, Peter knew that when there is a raging storm at sea, you stay in the boat. He knew that people who stepped onto water sank right through. Can you imagine what he must have thought when he saw Christ walking on the water?

But what if he had stayed in the boat? Everyone knows that people can’t walk on water. What if Peter only focused on what the world “knew”? Sometimes the teachings of Christ and His prophets seem to go against what the world is saying. And the world is persuasive and easy to listen to. What if Peter had told Christ that walking on water was unscientific or illogical? What if Peter had been too scared to step out and walk to Christ?

He would've missed sharing an incredible experience with the Master. He would've missed a chance to strengthen his faith, and he may have wondered about his faith in the future when he needed resolve. It's a good thing Peter didn't stay in the boat. In spite of the waves, the storm, and his experience at sea, Peter wanted to climb out of the boat and walk to Christ. In spite of everything the world "knew," Peter walked on water. Even when he faltered, Christ was there to catch him (see Matthew 14:28–31).

### Me? An Action Hero?

You were sent here to be the action hero of your action-packed life! That doesn't mean leaping from exploding buildings or driving escape cars every day. It means making choices, taking action, and pressing forward.

The Lord teaches that we "should be anxiously engaged in a good cause." He doesn't say exactly what that good cause should be but instead wants us to "do many things of [our] own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness" (D&C 58:27). That means He trusts you to make your own decisions and decide how you will bring about righteousness. Oftentimes, help comes after we've exercised faith and taken those first steps.

The Lord is always there to guide us when we need it, but if you refuse to act and to press forward on your own and expect God to tell you every little thing to do, you will be a "slothful and not a wise servant" (see D&C 58:26). And who wants to be a slothful servant when you can be an action hero? ■

