



IF A **Bug** FLIES INTO YOUR MOUTH

Spiritual bugs can be more than annoying. They can be downright dangerous if we don't spit them out right away.

BY AARON L. WEST

When I went outside that Saturday morning, I didn't say to myself, "I hope a bug flies into my mouth today." But as I was jogging, it happened. A bug flew right into my mouth! It wasn't my fault. I wasn't doing anything wrong. I didn't even see it coming.

What do you think I did when that insect zipped between my teeth? Well, I didn't swish it around and savor it. I didn't leave it there just to see what would happen. I didn't swallow it. I didn't even take time to think about it. I just spit it out and kept running, sputtering along the way.

Have you ever had a "bug" fly into your mouth? Have you ever innocently come across an inappropriate picture

or song or word or idea? You probably have. Evil influences are all around us, and while we can do much to avoid them, we will probably be exposed to them through no fault of our own. These spiritual bugs are deadly—much more harmful to our spirits than that little insect was to my body.

What should you do if a spiritual bug flies into your mouth? You should give it the same treatment I gave the bug that flew into mine: Spit it out! Don't hesitate. Walk away. Run away if you have to. Turn off the TV. Turn off the radio. Turn off the computer. Throw that book or magazine in the garbage can where it belongs.

Exercise what President Brigham Young (1801–77) called “the mental force of faith.” He said: “By and by the world will be overturned according to the words of the prophet, and we will see the reign of righteousness enter in, and sin and iniquity will have to walk off. But the power and principles of evil, if they can be called principles, will never yield one particle to the righteous march of the Savior, [unless] they are beaten back inch by inch, and we have got to take the ground by force. Yes, by the mental force of faith, and by good works, the march forth of the Gospel will increase, spread, grow and prosper.”¹

President Young was speaking about our efforts to fill the world with the gospel, but his words also apply to our efforts to fill our lives with goodness. Force that evil thought or image out of your mind by singing a hymn, reciting a scripture, saying a prayer. “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21).

Remember what President Gordon B. Hinckley has

taught us over and over again about pornography:

“Of course you are tempted. It seems as if the whole world has become obsessed with sex. In a very beguiling and alluring way, it is thrown at you constantly. You are exposed to it on television, in magazines and books, in videos, even in music. Turn your back on it. Shun it. I know that is easy to say, and difficult to do. But each time that you do so, it will be so much the easier the next time.

What a wonderful thing it will be if someday you can stand before the Lord and say, ‘I am clean.’

“The Lord has given a commandment in our time that applies to each of us. He has said, ‘Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly.’ And with this He has given a promise, ‘Then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God’ (D&C 121:45). I believe He is saying that if we are clean in mind and body, the time will come when we can stand confidently before the Lord. . . . There will be a feeling of confidence and there will also be smiles of approval.”²

Remember: if a bug flies into your mouth, spit it out! ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 332–33.
2. “Be Ye Clean,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 4.

