

“How can I have clean thoughts when I see so much immodesty around me?”

It may seem like you can't go anywhere today without seeing people immodestly dressed, whether in person or in the media. You may not always be able to control your surroundings, but you can control your thoughts.

If you see an immodestly dressed person, you can quickly look away or remove yourself from the situation. If an unclean thought comes to mind, choose not to dwell on it, but rather crowd it out with clean thoughts. “Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then . . . the Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion” (D&C 121:45–46). Having clean thoughts will help you be happier and have the influence of the Spirit with you.

Make it a habit always to have clean thoughts. Try to be around people who dress modestly, and avoid situations where you might see immodest dress. Pray for Heavenly Father to help you. Memorize hymns or scriptures so you have good things to think of when you are tempted. Read the scriptures regularly, and attend the temple if possible. Then when you see someone dressed immodestly, you can think of something positive. **NE**

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

We Are Not of the World

We should remember that we are in the world but not of the world. We are special sons and daughters of our beloved Heavenly Father. For this reason, the adversary tempts us even more, but we must be stronger than the temptation. Worldly persons may dress immodestly, not knowing that the body is a sacred temple. But Latter-day Saints have this knowledge. Therefore, we should keep ourselves virtuous and pure. If bad thoughts invade our minds, we should immediately seek the help of our Heavenly Father through prayer, for there is no one better to help us than He.

Dayana H., age 19, São Paulo, Brazil

Ask Your Friends to Help



As the only Latter-day Saint sixth grader in my school, I am faced with vulgar language, immodesty, and pressure to follow the crowd.

But at the start of the year, I explained to my friends my standards and that I stick to them no matter what. They have learned through the months about my Church values. Your friends will help you if you explain your values and your standards to them. My friends' attitudes, clothing, and language have changed for the better. I have learned that if they are truly your friends, they will help you think clean thoughts and will help you stay on the strait and narrow path.

Celia N., age 12, Virginia, USA

Prayer Helps

I found that as I struggled to maintain pure thoughts, prayer was my real answer to keeping a clean mind and allowing the influence of the Spirit to be with me wherever I went. Praying every morning for Heavenly Father to help me have clean thoughts and to give me guidance throughout the day and thanking Him in the evening gave me a better relationship with Him and helped me steer away from immodesty and keep my standards.

A prayer each morning and night can help you invite the Spirit to be with you as you face worldly adversaries. “Be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works” (Mosiah 5:15).

Gunnar R., age 16, Wisconsin, USA

We Are Temples



When people around you dress immodestly, don't criticize them, for you need to have good thoughts. Set an example to them by showing that you follow Church standards. And help people by loving them and telling them our Heavenly Father loves them and wants them to be morally clean both in actions and thoughts. Purity is essential to our salvation, because we are the temples of our God.

Maricris B., age 19, Quezon, Philippines

Live the Gospel Teachings

I know that we can have pure thoughts by studying the scriptures and putting their teachings into practice. When we put into practice all the values that are taught in church, when we read *For the Strength of Youth*, and when we go to the temple, we can obtain pure thoughts.

Jossi O., age 16, Antioquia, Colombia

The Mind Is Like a Stage



Preach My Gospel has a section that speaks about virtue. It says our mind is like a stage in a theater.

On this stage, only one person can act at a time. When we think pure, virtuous thoughts, our mind will remain focused on these thoughts, and the stage of our minds cannot be taken

over by unwholesome thoughts. Virtue is an attribute of Jesus Christ that we have been told to develop. At church we learn that we must always think of clean things, but when something impure tempts us, we can sing our favorite hymn or think of our favorite scripture. The greatest form of help can be found in 2 Nephi 32:9:

“Pray always, and not faint.”

*Elder McEachron, age 21,
Brazil João Pessoa Mission*

Think of Others as Children of God

You control how you respond to what you see. Just because something is there, you do not have to promote it to the stage of your mind. You choose your thoughts; choose to keep them clean. Avoid seeing immodesty as much as you can, and always dress modestly. Then think of those you come in contact with as children of God, with divine potential, loved personally by our Father in Heaven. When I view others as children of God, it is hard to be anything but saddened by the immodesty I encounter.

Amy S., age 19, Utah, USA

NEXT QUESTION

“Why does my family have problems even though we go to church, have family home evening, and try to live the gospel? What more can we do?”



THINK OF SOMETHING GOOD

Some bad thoughts come by themselves. Others come because we invite them by what we look at. . . . These things surround you, but you must not participate in them. Work at keeping your thoughts clean by thinking of something good. The mind can think of only one thing at a time. Use that fact to crowd out ugly thoughts.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Making the Right Choices,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 37.

Send your answer and photo by May 15, 2010.

Go to newera.lds.org, click Submit Your Material, and then select Questions and Answers.

You can also write to us at:

newera@ldschurch.org

or

New Era, Q&A, family

50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA