

APRIL 2017

THE

# New Era



## TESTIFY of the RESTORATION

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### EASTER:

ART OF THE  
RESURRECTION

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*Learn to Relax*

AND

**5** OTHER MISSION-  
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**FACE**  
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**COME  
FOLLOW ME**  
THEME  
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## SNIPPETS FROM THIS ISSUE

Remain steadfast in bearing that testimony, and your sins will be forgiven you. —page 5 •

Several weeks later, four of my classmates joined me at church.

—page 11 • This time I was going to learn about the Church for the right reasons.

—page 16 • The frustration I felt from my chemistry report seemed instantly insignificant. —page 20 •

One day she slept for 22 hours. —page 30 •

Dating is a form of preparing for a mission. —page 36 • I've learned that an anxiety disorder doesn't mean I lack character or I'm weak. —page 39 • Then the boy started break dancing! —page 46

**OOOPS!** Last month a few words of computer glitch text appeared in a quote by Elder Renlund (page 25). The correct sentence should read, "We can be freed from feelings of despair and the bondage of sin."



**Cover:** The Restoration, pp. 2, 8

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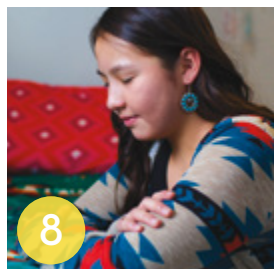
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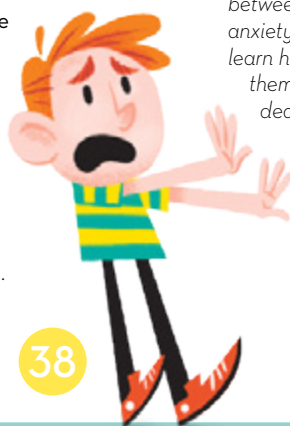
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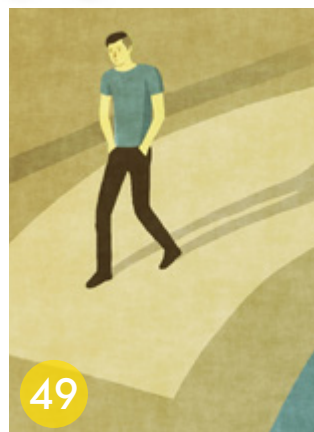
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By Elder  
**Jeffrey R. Holland**  
 Of the Quorum of the  
 Twelve Apostles

# TESTIFY *of the* RESTORATION

*Joseph Smith is our apostolic link to that  
 Son of God whose Church this is.*

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**T**he greatest event and the most important accomplishment in the course of all human history is the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and the eternal triumph that provided over physical and spiritual death for everyone who has lived, now lives, or ever will live upon the earth.

The greatest event since that divine sacrifice and the next greatest accomplishment in making that Atonement fully efficacious in the great plan of salvation was the appearance of the Father and the Son to the boy prophet Joseph Smith in the New York springtime of 1820. Had we never had what we have come to call “the Restoration,” the great plan of salvation would have been forever thwarted, and the full blessings of the Atonement would not have reached most of God’s children, past, present, and future.

## **This Is Our Message to the World**

Yes, our message is most certainly the Atonement of Jesus Christ and all that it stands for, but we have no way to make that unspeakable gift accessible or redemptive or effective in the lives of people unless we declare the latter-day Restoration of divine truth and heavenly priesthood. Take away Joseph Smith and the First Vision, take away the events which followed, take away a direct restoration from heaven, and what do we have? We don’t have much—at least not enough to distinguish





us from a thousand other good groups of people.

Believe it or not, other people have happy families. Other people have health codes. Other people give welfare assistance. Some people even do missionary service of one kind or another. Other people claim the Bible to be the word of God. Other people declare Jesus to be the Christ.

Careful and sensitive and kind as we must be in how we say it, we declare that we are dramatically different in quite a few particulars.

And, because those particulars were missing from the earth, the Lord said: “I . . . called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

“And also gave commandments to others”—that’s you and me—“that they should proclaim these things unto the world” (D&C 1:17–18).

To a world that had lost its footing and direction, God restored the way. To a world consumed by falsehood and error, God restored the truth. To

a world strangled in sin and death, God restored the life. (See John 14:6.)

### **Bear Testimony of Today’s Message**

We have to testify of such a restoration, or we have no testimony at all! In the scriptures is this sobering directive:

“And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin. . . .

“And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief,

---

TO A WORLD THAT HAD LOST ITS FOOTING AND DIRECTION, GOD RESTORED THE WAY. TO  
A WORLD CONSUMED BY FALSEHOOD AND ERROR, GOD RESTORED THE TRUTH. TO A WORLD  
STRANGLED IN SIN AND DEATH, GOD RESTORED THE LIFE. (SEE JOHN 14:6.)

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and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

“Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole Church under condemnation. . . .

“And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and *remember the new covenant*, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them. . . .

“For *I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain steadfast . . . in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you*” (D&C 84:49, 54–57, 61; emphasis added).

“*Are communicated*”—present tense: revelation, living prophets, now, this generation, this set of commandments, this dispensation. In short—the Restoration. Remain steadfast in bearing that testimony, and your sins will be forgiven you.

You see, the world—and apparently even the members of the Church—are always tempted to look back, look too far, look too early, look “beyond the mark” (Jacob 4:14), thereby failing to receive the greater truth, which is presented to them and to us *in our own time*.

The rock upon which the latter-day Church of Jesus Christ rests is not solely the revelation of Christ to Peter or to Adam or to Enoch or Moses or Abraham. It is the revelation of Christ to the Prophet Joseph Smith coupled with the revelation of Christ to Joseph Smith’s successor prophets and apostles and indeed the revelation of Christ in the heart of each individual member of this Church.

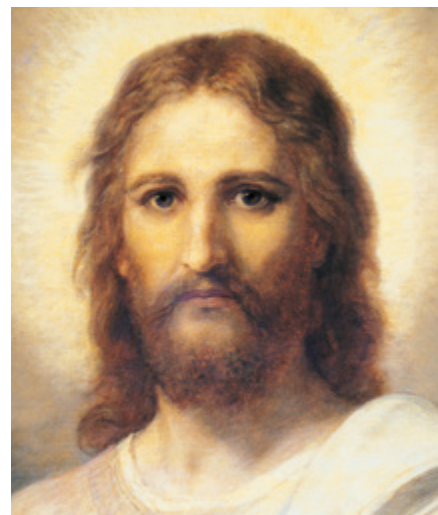
WE CANNOT REJECT JOSEPH SMITH . . . NOR TRY TO TELL  
OUR MESSAGE WITHOUT HIM WITHOUT ALSO REJECTING THE  
MESSAGE AND DISMISSING THE POWERS THAT HE BROUGHT.

### Testify of Joseph Smith’s Prophetic Calling

We cannot reject Joseph Smith, nor forget him, nor omit him, nor try to tell our message without him without also rejecting the message and dismissing the powers that he brought. He stands at the head of the greatest of all gospel dispensations, and every valid testimony must be a witness borne of the Spirit that Joseph Smith saw the Father and the Son, received Their







I TESTIFY THAT MANY PLAIN AND PRECIOUS TRUTHS OF  
THE GOSPEL AND ALL OF THE PRIESTHOOD KEYS OF THAT GOSPEL  
HAD BEEN LOST FROM THE EARTH AND HAD TO BE RESTORED.

❧ I BEAR SOLEMN WITNESS THAT THEY WERE RESTORED. ❧

revelations, and was the conduit to us of that restored authority which alone can legitimize an ordinance of salvation under the great atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our faith is in Christ, and salvation is in Him only. But in this the last of all dispensations, Joseph Smith is our apostolic link to that Son of God whose Church this is.

We cannot testify of the Living Father and the Living Son without testifying that we know They have appeared in our day. And we cannot testify of Their great introductory appearance in our day without testifying of the divine calling of the young prophet, Joseph Smith Jr., who saw Them. Others have seen Them since and will continue to see Them until Christ comes in His glory.

### My Testimony

I testify that many plain and precious truths of the gospel and all of the priesthood keys of that gospel had been lost from the earth and had to be restored. I bear solemn witness that they were restored. I testify that God is our Father and has not left us, His children, without hope or happiness or a dream and chance for heaven.

I testify that Jesus Christ is God's Son in the flesh as well as in the Spirit, Himself a God and the Son of a God—the Only Begotten of the Father and the Savior of all mankind. I testify that They chose young Joseph Smith before the foundation of the world to be a prophet, a seer, a revelator, the bearer of the keys of the kingdom for this last time in the mortal plan for our salvation.

I testify that Joseph beheld the Father and the Son in vision, and that vision was but a preface to the remarkable sequence of events that would restore saving principles and authoritative priesthood to the earth, principles and priesthood absolutely essential for the salvation of humankind.

I testify that the Book of Mormon is the word of God and the keystone of our religion. I testify that it is a new witness, another witness, another testament of the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel, and “the most correct of any book on earth” (see Book of Mormon, Introduction).

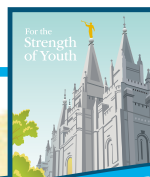
I testify that 15 men have succeeded Joseph Smith as prophets and Presidents of this Church, leading in this hour to our own beloved Thomas S. Monson.

I declare that this, my personal witness, is the truth and that it has not come from man, but it has come from heaven.

That is the message we deliver to all the world. **NE**

*From an address given at a seminar for new mission presidents on June 27, 2002.*





HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

# BEING HONEST WITH MYSELF

*I was lying to myself and the Lord about my struggles.*



By Matthew Hansen

Last year during school I didn't have the most pleasant experience. I started to feel overwhelmed with all of my schoolwork, and I started to get depressed. I stopped caring, I didn't go to class, and I didn't do my homework or use my time wisely to get back on track. I didn't want to face my problems by admitting that I was struggling.

It was at a youth conference that I finally decided to address my issues. For the first time in months, I was finally able to feel the Spirit again. That was because each morning and night I took the time to be completely honest with both myself and my Father in Heaven about how I was really doing, through personal prayer and scripture study. This helped me to narrow down all the issues in my life that I could change.

Whether it was spending too much time on my phone or binge-watching the latest popular streaming TV series, I identified my biggest distractions and was able to truly focus on what matters most in life. As I

continued to truthfully speak with Heavenly Father about my hardships, I felt like my honesty with God and myself gradually helped me develop more integrity. I began to act in faith and put forth the effort to work through my struggles.

I have since been able to better focus my time and efforts on worthy causes, and this has made such a big difference in my life. My struggles with depression and motivation have not ceased, but now I find peace and solace during them as I continue to read my scriptures and pray daily with real intent. I'm starting to see my issues with more of an eternal perspective. I can now say that my weaknesses have started to become strengths (see Ether 12:27).

As I've acted fervently upon promptings and stayed honest with myself, my Heavenly Father, and my Savior, I have seen the blessings of integrity manifested greatly in my life. **NE**

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

## HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

"Be honest with yourself, others, and God at all times. . . . When you have integrity, you are willing to live by your standards and beliefs even when no one is watching."

*For the Strength of Youth (2011), 19*





# LESSONS from the FIRST VISION

*What can I learn  
about personal revelation  
from Joseph Smith's  
First Vision?*

**By Michael Madsen**

Priesthood and Family Department

**D**o any of these questions sound familiar: “Why can’t I get answers to my prayers?” “How do I know if the thoughts I’m having are coming from me or from the Holy Ghost?” If you’ve had questions like these, you’re not alone. Learning to receive personal revelation is a challenge for many of us.

Joseph Smith had big questions too. Remember, he was just 14 years old when he wanted to know what church to join. His honest seeking had amazing results: the First Vision, the Restoration of the gospel, and so much more.

Joseph’s experience may be extraordinary, but the way he sought answers teaches some great patterns for how we can receive revelation ourselves. Here are five questions you can ask yourself that can help you hear, understand, and respond to heaven’s voice.





### ***Have I “studied it out” (see D&C 9:8)? Have I done my homework?***

When young Joseph wanted to know which church was true, he did more than simply ask. He put significant effort into seeking an answer. He speaks of “serious reflection,” of attending “several meetings” of various churches “as often as an occasion would permit,” and of “laboring under the extreme difficulties” of his dilemma (Joseph Smith—History 1:8, 11).

So many times we want revelation on important questions without putting much effort into the revelatory process. A youth might ask, “Which college should I go to?” without researching the school or visiting the campus. Or a young single adult might ask if he or she should marry a certain person after—or even during—the first date.

In most cases, the Lord wants us to make decisions based on righteous principles and *then* ask Him if

our decision is right. Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles put it this way: “Persons who try to shift all decision making to the Lord and plead for revelation in every choice will soon find circumstances in which they pray for guidance and don’t receive it” (“Our Strengths Can Become Our Downfall,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 13).

### ***Have I looked to see if the Lord already provided the answer?***

As part of “studying it out,” Joseph did his best to find out if there was clear counsel from the Lord on what Church he should join. There just wasn’t a whole lot available, and after exhausting all his resources, he realized “it was impossible” for him “to come to any certain conclusion” on his own (Joseph Smith—History 1:8). It was after these efforts that Joseph went to pray in the Sacred Grove.

When we’re seeking guidance, we

too can look for what the Lord has revealed on the matter. All too often, we ask to receive revelation on things the Lord has already made clear. We’re blessed today to have so much that Joseph didn’t have in his time—for instance, modern-day scripture, prophets’ teachings, general conference, priesthood blessings, and guidelines in Church resources such as *For the Strength of Youth*.

When we have questions, we can always pray. But it just may be that the Lord has already placed an answer out there for you to find—you just have to be open to receive it.

### ***Have I searched the scriptures?***

Many answers to some of life’s greatest questions come as we are searching the scriptures. “One day” Joseph was “reading the Epistle of James, first chapter and fifth verse.” It was in this sacred, private moment,





## Take President Eyring's Challenge

At a Face to Face event in March, President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, challenged **you** to gain a testimony of the Restoration. Watch or read what he said at [youth.lds.org](http://youth.lds.org).



Portrayal of Joseph Smith from the video "Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration."

with the scriptures open, that the words entered his heart "with great force" (Joseph Smith—History 1:11–12).

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: "When we want to speak to God, we pray. And when we want Him to speak to us, we search the scriptures; for His words are spoken through His prophets" (Oct. 2006 general conference).

### ***Have I sought the Lord's answer in a humble, reverent way?***

When Joseph finally decided to ask of God, he did so in a way that showed his humility and reverence for the sacred experience he wanted to have. He went to the woods, to a place he had planned in advance, where he could be alone. There he "kneeled down" and offered up "the desires of [his] heart" (Joseph

Smith—History 1:14–15).

We don't need to be alone in a grove of trees, but we can do simple things to show how important the prayer is to us. Kneeling, pondering before and after our prayer, and expressing gratitude all help.

### ***Am I willing to act upon the revelation I receive—even if it is not the answer I was expecting?***

The answer that Joseph received surprised him—"it had never entered into [his] heart" that all of the churches could be wrong (Joseph Smith—History 1:18). However, he accepted that answer and lived by it, even when opposition and persecution arose—almost from the moment he stepped out of the Sacred Grove—and did not cease until his death.

In some cases, *learning* the will of God is the easy part—*following* it can be more challenging. If you

feel you cannot receive revelation, here's one simple question to ask in prayer that can help: "What do I need to change in my life to get closer to Thee?" Try it. You might be surprised by how revelation seems to flow. The battle then becomes changing our lives based on the revelation the Lord sends.

### ***Answers Will Come***

As a result of Joseph's experience, he was able to say, "I have learned for myself" (Joseph Smith—History 1:20). This can be our goal too. Revelation may not come right away, and sometimes God may require us to make a decision and act before the answers come. But we can be assured that He will guide us when we need it. **NE**



#### **Experience the First Vision**

Check out a new video about the First Vision at [lds.org/go/FirstVisionNE417](http://lds.org/go/FirstVisionNE417). What other lessons can you find from Joseph Smith's experience? Share your ideas and read those of other youth at [youth.lds.org](http://youth.lds.org).



# Forgotten Books, *Remembered Testimony*

*All eyes were on me. Could I defend the Church with just my simple testimony?*

By Abegail D. Ferrer

One year I had a goal to improve my spiritual learning. I would bring Church books, pamphlets, manuals, and scriptures everywhere, including to school, as I hungered for the words of God. But my efforts slowed when I became busy studying for an upcoming quiz.

One day our teacher led a discussion in which she asked all the non-Catholic students in the room to stand. I was the only Latter-day Saint in the class. Six other students also stood.

Then we were questioned: What church do you belong to? Who was the founder? How was your church established?

I was the last to answer. I was nervous when I realized I hadn't brought my Church books, but I tried to remember the things I had studied. A Bible verse came to mind:

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5–6).

I stood in front of the class with boldness and forgot my fears.

I stated that I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I shared the story of a young boy, Joseph Smith, who saw God. I felt a burning in my bosom, and tears fell from my eyes. I shared that the Church had been organized on April 6, 1830, and I testified that a prophet of God had been called and the priesthood restored. I testified that I knew all this was true.

The many hours of gospel study had been worth it. It had helped me defend my faith and share the gospel. I was proud when, several weeks later, four of my classmates joined me at church.

That experience taught me the importance of a testimony. At first I wondered why the Lord hadn't prompted me to bring my books that day. They would have helped me perfectly answer the questions being asked. But then I realized that we need not memorize everything about the Church or rely on references—we should study, live, and share the gospel, relying on the Holy Ghost. I may not have had my books, but I had my testimony. **NE**

*The author lives in Cagayan, Philippines.*





# PERSONALIZE YOUR GOSPEL STUDY

*Check out these tips for studying the gospel and finding answers to your spiritual questions.*

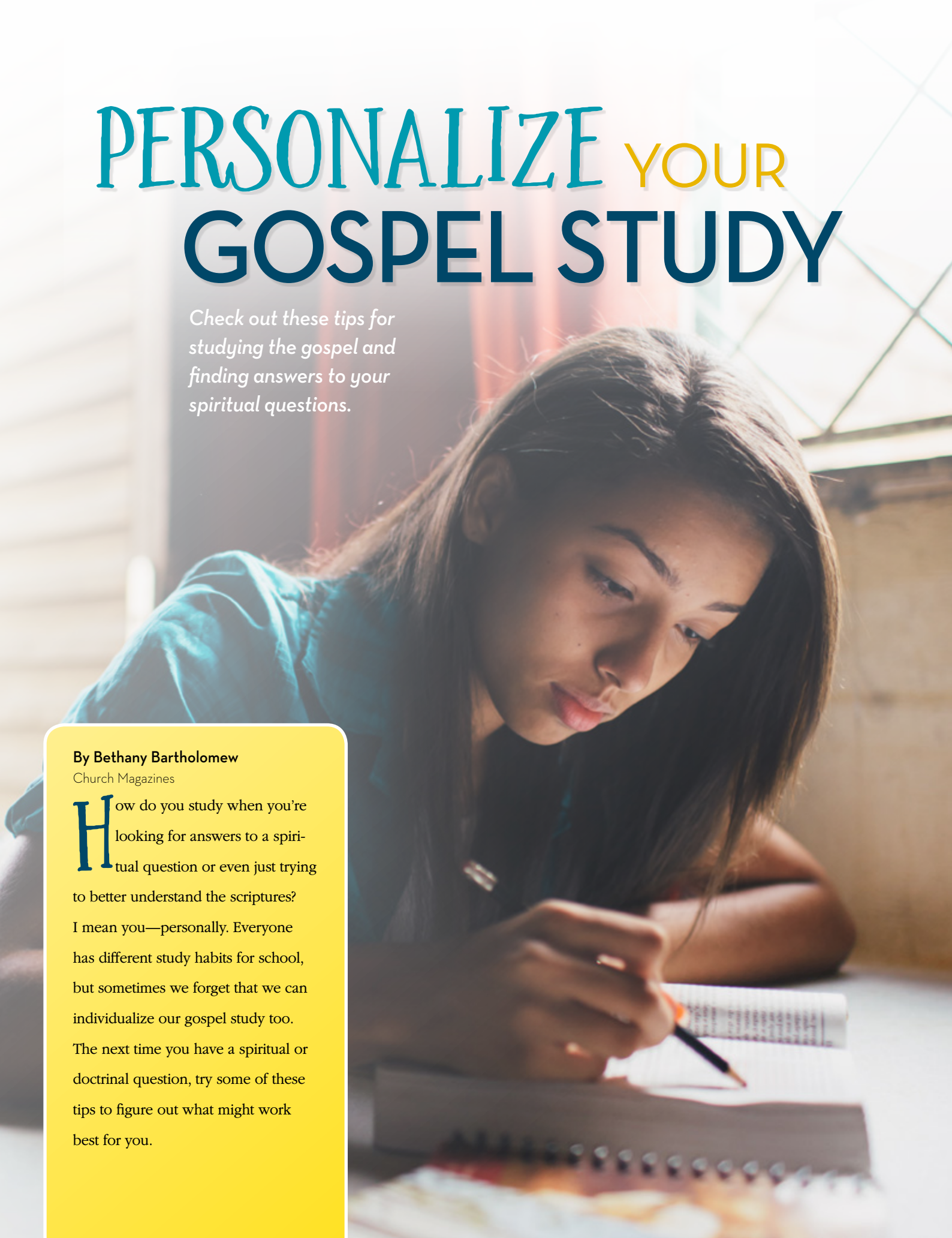
**By Bethany Bartholomew**

Church Magazines

**H**ow do you study when you're looking for answers to a spiritual question or even just trying to better understand the scriptures?

I mean you—personally. Everyone has different study habits for school, but sometimes we forget that we can individualize our gospel study too.

The next time you have a spiritual or doctrinal question, try some of these tips to figure out what might work best for you.





## 1. CREATE

Make a list, a chart, or a map.  
(See below for an example.)

Make a study web. Write down words and ideas and then connect them with lines and bubbles to show how they're related.



### CREATE A LIST, CHART, OR MAP

Sometimes it's helpful to visually organize your thoughts during gospel study by putting them into a list, chart, or map of some kind. Here is an example of the sort of chart someone could create when studying the epistles of Paul in the New Testament. You can create a list, chart, or map of your own using any format that helps you most. Get creative! Find fun ways to organize your gospel study.

PAUL'S EPISTLES			
EPISTLE	WITH A COMPANION?	WRITING FROM...?	MAIN TOPICS OF EPISTLE
Example: 1 Timothy	Not mentioned	Laodicea (see note at the end of 1 Timothy 6)	True doctrine, the Savior, prayer, faith and charity, leadership qualities, apostasy, caring for the poor, staying faithful, avoiding worldly riches

## 2. WRITE

Record thoughts and impressions you receive during your scripture study in a study journal and review those thoughts often.

Write down your thoughts and impressions after your prayers, even if the impressions aren't directly related to the topic you're studying. See what the Spirit is teaching you over time.

Jot down your questions in a notebook, on your phone, or on a notepad by your bed to remind you and to help you keep thinking about what you're learning every day.





### 3. LISTEN AND DISCUSS

Talk to a parent or trusted leader. Work it out together. It might take a while, but you'll both grow in the process.

Teach someone else. Take turns sharing what you *do* know. Discuss what you learned from each other.

Listen to scriptures or other LDS stories and resources out loud.

### 4. RESEARCH

Search study helps in the scriptures and online (see below for a list of helpful LDS resources).

Search on [LDS.org](https://www.lds.org) for videos and songs about what you're studying.

Study context. Research the history or the chapters surrounding the topic or scripture you're studying.



#### ON LDS.ORG

- Scriptures ([scriptures.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/scriptures))
- General conference ([conference.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/conference))
- Gospel Topics ([topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics))
- Magazines ([newera.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/newera))
- Church history ([history.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/history))
- Study helps ([scriptures.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/scriptures))
- Lessons and teaching resources ([lds.org/go/resourcesNE417](https://www.lds.org/go/resourcesNE417))
- LDS Media Library ([lds.org/media-library](https://www.lds.org/media-library))
- Help with challenges ([lds.org/go/challengesNE417](https://www.lds.org/go/challengesNE417))

#### LET STUDY HELPS HELP YOU

There are a lot of valuable resources available in the scriptures and online to help you as you study important topics. Here's a list of some of the resources available to you and where to find them:



#### IN THE SCRIPTURES

- Guide to the Scriptures
- Bible Chronology (events from the Old and New Testaments put into chronological order with approximate dates)
- Harmony of the Gospels (stories about the Savior from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John organized by events, places, and approximate dates)
- Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible
- Maps and photographs
- Abbreviations guide



#### OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

- Family history ([familysearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org))
- Mormon Channel ([mormonchannel.org](https://www.mormonchannel.org))
- Scriptures cited in general conference ([scriptures.byu.edu](https://www.lds.org/scriptures.byu.edu))
- Mormon Newsroom ([mormonnewsroom.org](https://www.mormonnewsroom.org))
- Missionary work and gospel sharing ([mormon.org](https://www.mormon.org))
- Joseph Smith Papers Project ([josephsmithpapers.org](https://www.josephsmithpapers.org))



## 5. DO

Act out stories from the scriptures or other resources. How does putting yourself in that person's shoes help you better understand what you're studying? What would similar situations look like in your life?

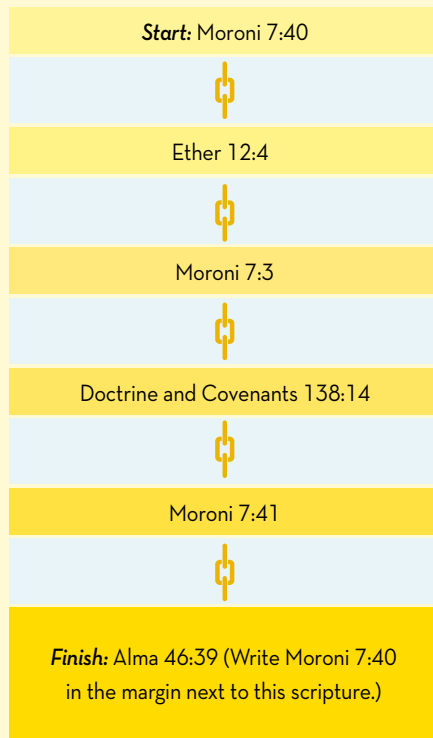
Make a scripture chain that connects answers you find in the scriptures. (See right for an example.)

### MAKE A SCRIPTURE STUDY CHAIN

Sometimes it's helpful to make a note of several scriptures that cover the same topic. Check the Guide to the Scriptures for scriptures that relate to the topic you are studying. Then use footnotes and context to link to scriptures with more information on the same subject. Write the scripture that comes next in the chain in the margin of the previous scripture and so on. You can also search for conference talks about a specific topic to help you in your research (see the topics list at [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org)). The scripture study chain on the topic of hope is an example.

### SCRIPTURE STUDY CHAIN

*Scriptures about hope:*



*Talks about hope:*

- Bishop Dean M. Davies, "The Blessings of Worship," Oct. 2016 general conference.
- Elder Paul V. Johnson, "And There Shall Be No More Death," Apr. 2016 general conference.
- President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "He Will Place You on His Shoulders and Carry You Home," Apr. 2016 general conference.
- Elder L. Whitney Clayton, "Choose to Believe," Apr. 2015 general conference.
- President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), "The Reason for Our Hope," Oct. 2014 general conference.
- President Henry B. Eyring, "A Priceless Heritage of Hope," Apr. 2014 general conference. **NE**





# Seminary Changed My Life

By Taylor Smith

I can still picture them. Those unforgettable, incredibly quiet Sundays spent outside in a neighborhood filled primarily with Latter-day Saints—and I wasn't one of them.

I used to imagine a tumbleweed rolling slowly down my street as they did in old Western films, indicating that no one was around. I knew where my neighbors were (at church), I understood why my friends couldn't play on Sundays, and I knew why only my family would be outside doing yard work on a blistering Sunday afternoon. At least, I thought I knew. Little did I realize that seminary and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would give me true insight and change my life for the better.

Fast-forward a few years from those childhood days: I was baptized when I was 11 years old. I'm not sure if an 11-year-old can choose to be baptized for the wrong reasons, but I believe I did. I didn't fully understand the role of the Holy Ghost, and all I remember about my baptism was thinking, "I will finally be like my friends."

To my dismay, I was still nothing like them. I assumed that once I was a member of the Church, my family would automatically attend church with me. When I realized my family

was not going to attend church, I wondered if my friends knew how lucky they were. They would talk about how they didn't like going to church or how they seemed to dread saying family prayers. I wanted so badly to tell them they shouldn't be wishing away something so precious. I knew they had something special.

## EXTEND AN INVITATION

Seminary is a great blessing, and it also provides a wonderful missionary opportunity when you ask your friends to come. Consider praying to find out if there's someone you could invite to seminary, and then listen for gentle promptings from the Spirit. Remember, it never hurts to invite people to attend with you! It's often as simple as asking. Some people may not be interested, but you never know until you try.

Yet I also didn't fully embrace all that the gospel and the Church had to offer, even though I was baptized.

Then one day when I was a freshman in high school, something happened that changed everything: I ran into Brother Esplin.

"Excuse me," he said as I tried to walk past him.

"Yes?" I replied.

"I'm Devin Esplin, Melissa Esplin's husband. My wife talks about your volleyball potential all the time, and I just wanted to formally introduce myself."

I stood there silently until a lightbulb finally went off in my head.

"Oh! Right, I love Coach Esplin!"

"Me too!" he said. "Anyway, I'm the seminary teacher here, and I was wondering if you would like to transfer into my class."

"Well, I would, but I can't," I replied. "But I promise that next year I will!"

"I sure hope you do. It will be a great experience."

"I will! I promise," I said as I walked away. As I walked back to class, I couldn't hide the smile on my face. This was my opportunity to find out for myself what the Church had to offer. This time I was going to learn about the Church for the right reasons. I was given a second chance, and I wasn't going to pass it up.

My sophomore year was incredible. I was so excited to go to seminary and learn! The first few weeks were pretty crazy. I felt like a little child—I had a lot to learn. People would use words like *repentance* and *the Atonement*, and I felt ashamed because I had no idea what those terms meant. Mercifully, my class



I'd joined the Church years before, but attending seminary led to my true conversion.

helped me learn and never made me feel like an outsider.

As the year progressed, I found myself craving more knowledge. I was amazed by the things that my peers would discuss. I learned that I wasn't the only one who suffered trials. I was saddened that I had made it so far in life without focusing on the Savior and the gospel. As I began to understand what being a Latter-day Saint is all about, I knew I never wanted to give it up.

My junior year was the major

turning point of my life. Because of seminary, I read the Book of Mormon for the first time. As I studied daily, my testimony grew, and I grew closer to my Heavenly Father. I learned that I can strengthen my testimony every day. I understood that I'm never alone.

Seminary is a blessing that has altered the course of my life forever. Every day, I now think about how grateful I am that I have my Savior to get me through trials and temptations. **NE**

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*



#### SEMINARY WILL BLESS YOU

"Do not squander these years of seminary instruction. Take advantage

of the great blessing you have to learn the doctrines of the Church and the teachings of the prophets. Learn that which is of most worth. It will bless you and your posterity for many generations to come."

President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "How to Survive in Enemy Territory," *New Era*, Apr. 2012, 5.



*We asked youth to read  
President Russell M.  
Nelson's October 2016  
conference talk on joy and  
practice the principles.  
Here's what they learned.*

# CAN I FEEL JOY DURING A BAD DAY?

### New Era Staff

**D**o you want more joy in your life? Sometimes we think of ourselves as too busy or too sad or too mature to feel joy—but that thinking is just wrong! Don't believe us? Then check out this awesome quote from President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "Saints can be happy under every circumstance. We can feel joy even while having a bad day, a bad week, or even a bad year! . . . The joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives. When the focus of our lives is on God's plan of salvation . . . and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy" (Oct. 2016 general conference).

We asked youth from all over the world to read President Nelson's talk and practice the principles in it for one month, then share with us their experiences. Here's what three of them had to say!

## JOY DURING A BUSY YEAR

"This year was a really hard year for me. Pretty much all of my waking hours were taken up with my schoolwork, upcoming piano exam, and seminary homework and reading assignments. It was hard to cope with, and I struggled and cried a lot in the beginning. I also fasted and prayed a lot for the Lord's strength to help me cope and to be cheerful while I did.

"Then, in general conference, I was deeply touched by President Nelson's talk—it was as if he was speaking directly to me. It gave me so much courage to hold on to my faith and endure to the end. When my school finals ended a few weeks later, it was tempting to dedicate all my time to practicing music for my piano exam, but I remembered what President Nelson said about how focusing on Christ will bring you joy, and I chose to work on finishing my seminary work first. After that, I focused on my music and took my piano exam.

"In the end, I passed everything! I did well in my schoolwork, in seminary, and on my music exam. Most important, my faith in the Lord was strengthened, because during the struggle I was able to feel joyful. And now I feel joyful because I endured it well."

Victoria H., 16, Selangor, Malaysia





## FOCUSING ON THE GOOD THINGS

“When I started the challenge to focus on the joy in my life for a month, I honestly wasn’t expecting much to change. However, when I actually studied the talk by President Nelson and tried doing as he instructed, I noticed something: focusing on the joy and good things in my life (even ‘worldly’ things) really helped put it in perspective.

“One Saturday I was stuck inside working on a big chemistry lab report that was due on Monday. I was annoyed that I had to do homework at all on the weekends, and I felt like I was wasting my Saturday. Then my mom came into my room and told me that we would be going to visit my older brother and sister at their college. I could have stayed upset at the chemistry report and let it overshadow the good thing that had just come into my life. But instead, because I had decided to focus on joy, the frustration I felt from my chemistry report seemed instantly insignificant next to the happiness I felt thinking about hugging my older siblings again.

“When I focused on joy, I started to notice the things that I have and should be grateful for. When I don’t focus on the bad, and I see all the good in my life, the bad things pale in comparison.”

Luke G., 17, Arizona, USA

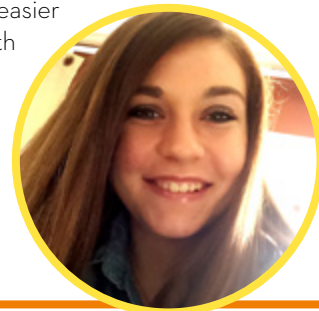


## THE SAVIOR’S ATONEMENT MAKES ME JOYFUL

“As soon as I heard President Nelson’s talk, I loved it. I especially love that he says, ‘Of all the words he could have used to describe the nature and purpose of our lives here in mortality, he chose the word *joy*!’ It changed the way that I thought about and focused on life—I focused a lot more on the joys of life rather than the hardships.

“There were multiple things that happened this month that I could’ve easily been upset about, and it’s easy a lot of the time to focus on those things. But because I chose to focus on Christ and joy, it was easier to make it through those trials. It was also a great month because in seminary we’ve been focusing a lot on the Atonement of Jesus Christ and how it can make us joyful. I’ve been thinking a lot about how our Savior truly did do more for us than we realize, and I’m so thankful for Him. That makes me joyful.”

Aurora D., 14, Alaska, USA



DOUBT NOT, THOMAS, BY J. KIRK RICHARDS

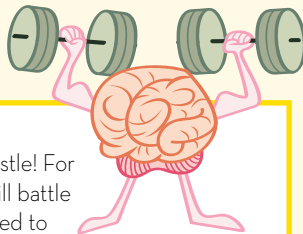


### Submit Your Own

To read more experiences of youth who have felt joy during tough times, and to share your own experience, find this article at [youth.lds.org](https://youth.lds.org).

# FUN STOP

## Brain Wrestle!



Forget arm wrestling, it's time for a brain wrestle! For this exercise two different parts of your brain will battle to solve the problem on their own, but you'll need to make them work together. As fast as you can, **try speaking out loud the COLOR of each word**, not the word itself. (Example: for the first one, you would say "orange.")

<b>YELLOW</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>ORANGE</b>
<b>BLACK</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>PURPLE</b>	<b>BLACK</b>	<b>RED</b>
<b>ORANGE</b>	<b>PURPLE</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
<b>BLUE</b>	<b>ORANGE</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>YELLOW</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
<b>BLUE</b>	<b>BLACK</b>	<b>RED</b>
<b>RED</b>	<b>PURPLE</b>	<b>YELLOW</b>
<b>YELLOW</b>	<b>ORANGE</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>BLUE</b>	<b>RED</b>
<b>RED</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>BLUE</b>

**BONUS:** Try this activity with a friend. Time yourselves to see who can do it the fastest. For an added challenge, try alternating words.

## An Ambush of ... What?

You know "a herd of cattle" and "a pride of lions"—but do you know what a group of stingrays is called? See if you can match the animals below with their crazy group names! (Answers on page 45.)

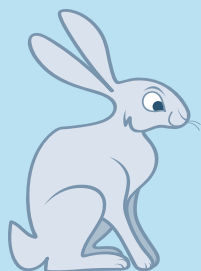
- |                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| 1 Wolves       | A Caravan  |
| 2 Bees         | B Tower    |
| 3 Giraffes     | C Murder   |
| 4 Wombats      | D Congress |
| 5 Crows        | E Ambush   |
| 6 Tigers       | F Wisdom   |
| 7 Stingrays    | G Pack     |
| 8 Ferrets      | H Fever    |
| 9 Spiders      | I Lounge   |
| 10 Camels      | J Swarm    |
| 11 Lizards     | K Cluster  |
| 12 Salamanders | L Business |



**OK**, so in the matching game you learned that a group of camels is a caravan. What's a group of cureloms called? Come up with your own word for a group of cureloms and send it to us at [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org).

And for all you artists out there, send us your best version of what you think a curelom might actually look like! (See Ether 9:19 for clues.) We might share your pictures and answers later.

## A Riddle of Curelom Proportions



A Jaredite farmer brings a curelom, a rabbit, and a bag of curelom feed to a river. He's in a real pickle! The raft is only big enough for him to bring one thing across at a time. He can't leave the curelom alone with the feed, because then the feed would vanish.

Also, as any Jaredite knows, cureloms are deathly afraid of rabbits (at least, they could be). So he can't leave those two alone together or the curelom would run away. Luckily, rabbits think curelom feed is gross, so those two can be left alone, no problem.

How does he carry all three across the river? (Answer on page 45).



MORMONAD

# ONWARD

## CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

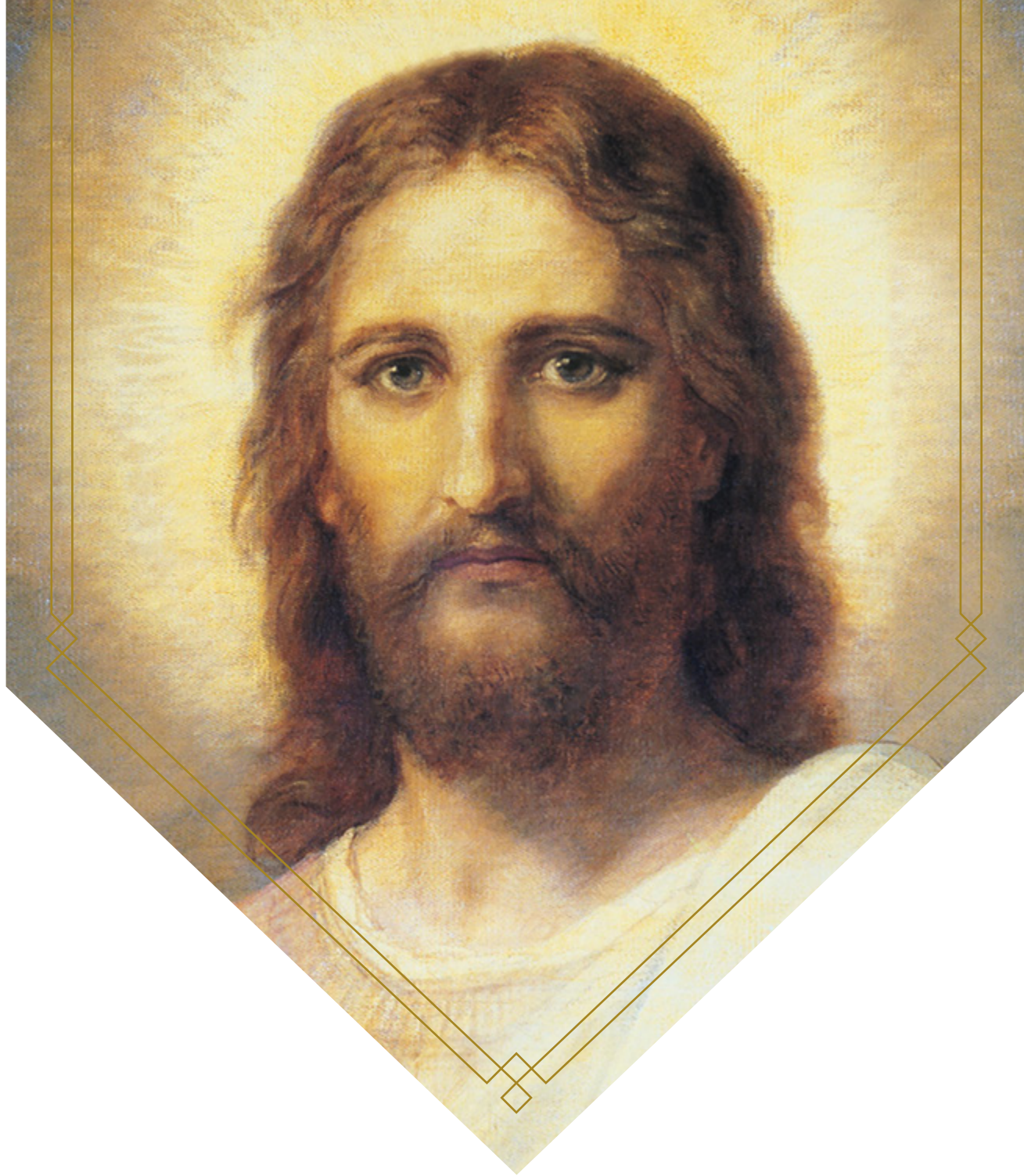
“The men and women, who desire to obtain seats in the celestial kingdom,  
will find that they must battle every day.”

*(Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young [1997], 294.)*



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID STOKER





Learn principles of peace from the  
# **PRINCE** *of* **PEACE**

[mormon.org](http://mormon.org)



# THEY SAW HIM

*These individuals actually saw  
the resurrected Savior, but you too  
can be a witness of Christ in  
your own way.*

## New Era Staff

What do you think it would be like to witness the resurrected Savior? For hundreds of people in Jesus's time, they didn't have to imagine it—they lived it. The scriptures tell of at least a dozen recorded instances in the New Testament and several others in the Book of Mormon when the resurrected Lord appeared to the people. These individuals witnessed one of the greatest miracles in history: Jesus Christ overcoming death and making it possible for each of us to live again. Pretty incredible, right?

So what does it exactly mean to be a witness of Christ? Let's check out a few of these moments in the scriptures and think how we, even without physically seeing Him, can also be witnesses of Christ.

### Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene was the first witness. The Sunday morning after the Crucifixion, she came to the sepulchre with a few other women to anoint the Lord's body. When Mary discovered an empty tomb, she wept. Someone approached her from behind. She turned, and the person asked, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Imagine her surprise when she discovered that it was Jesus, risen from the dead. (See John 20:1-18.)

HE IS RISEN BY GREG K. OLSEN. MAY NOT BE COPIED





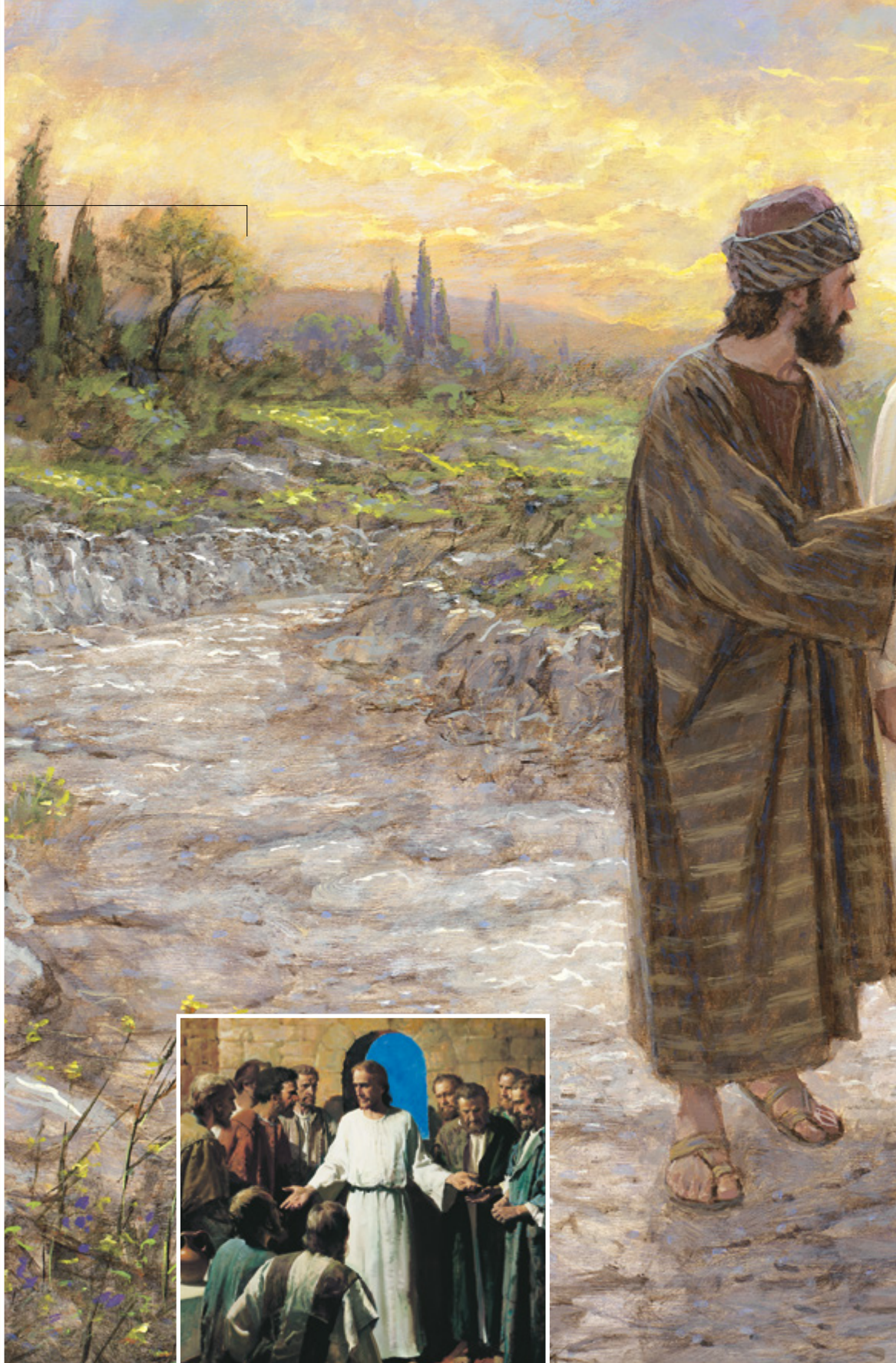


## Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

Cleopas and another disciple were walking on the road to Emmaus when they were joined by a stranger. They didn't recognize their new companion, but during their evening meal together, the stranger broke bread. Then their eyes were opened, and they realized that they had been traveling with the Savior all along. "Did not our heart burn within us...?" they asked each other, pondering the confirmation that they felt that He had truly been with them. (See Luke 24:13-34.)

## The Ten Apostles

The two disciples who had traveled to Emmaus with Christ returned to Jerusalem and told ten of the Apostles about their experience. While they were speaking, the Savior Himself appeared to them, saying, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (See Luke 24:36-41, 44-49.)



BEHOLD MY HANDS AND FEET, BY HARRY ANDERSON





ROAD TO EMMALUS, BY JON MCNAUGHTON



THOMAS, BY BRIAN CALL

### The Apostle Thomas

The Apostle Thomas wasn't present when the Savior first appeared to the other Apostles, so he didn't believe that Christ had been resurrected. One week later, Christ again appeared to the Apostles. This time Thomas was there, and because he saw Christ, he believed that He had risen. The Savior cautioned Thomas against believing only after seeing: "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (See John 20:24-29.)



### The Eleven Apostles at the Sea of Tiberias

One day not long after the Resurrection, several of the Apostles went fishing in the Sea of Tiberias but didn't have much luck. The next morning, the Savior appeared and advised them to cast the net on the right side of the boat. When they did, the net caught so many fish that

they could hardly pull it in! After feasting together, the Savior taught about the importance of ministering to others, saying, "Feed my sheep." The Apostles would spend the rest of their lives doing just that—teaching the people about Christ—and in some cases, they even gave up their lives for the cause. (See John 21:1–22.)





ONE SHEPHERD BY HOWARD LYON

## The Nephites in the Americas

During the Crucifixion, land in the Americas was ravaged by earthquakes, fires, other natural disasters, and three days of darkness to mark the Savior's death. Later, Christ descended from heaven and visited a multitude of 2,500 gathered near the temple at Bountiful. He invited the people to feel the wound marks in His hands and feet and side, offered a sermon, and blessed the children of the Nephites one by one. Even more people gathered the next day, and the Savior visited and taught them. The disciples eventually formed the Church of Christ, and the Nephites received such a powerful witness that they and the Lamanites too became converted unto the Lord. (See 3 Nephi 11–18; see also 3 Nephi 8–10; 4 Nephi 1.)



THE RESURRECTED CHRIST AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS BY DAVID LINDSLEY

## Witnesses Then and Now

Christ also appeared to many others, including several women who had come to the sepulchre to help Mary Magdalene anoint the body of Christ, a group of over 500 men, James, and Paul. (See Matthew 28:9; Acts 9:4–19; 1 Corinthians 15:6–7; see also 3 Nephi 19; 26:13.)

We may not have the opportunity to see the Savior as these witnesses did, but you can still be a witness of Christ. You can personally seek the Savior, like Mary did when she went to the tomb, by learning more about Him. Or you might exercise your faith in Him by keeping the commandments and following the counsel of the prophets. Or you could recognize the Savior's blessings in your life, as the two disciples walking to Emmaus did. This Easter season, think about what it means to be a witness of Christ. These people were literal witnesses who actually saw the resurrected Christ—but that's not the only way you can witness Him in your life. **NE**



### LEARN OF HIM

“As you feel the Holy Spirit's testimony of [Christ], confirmed and reconfirmed to your spirit in many different experiences and settings, as you strive to hold up the light of His example in your own life day by day, and as you bear testimony to others and help them learn of and follow Him, you are a witness of Jesus Christ.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Becoming a Witness of Christ,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2008, 63.



# GET BACK UP & KEEP

*By focusing on serving others, this young woman doesn't let obstacles like diabetes get her down.*

By Carlisa Cramer

For an entire week, Sydney G., 14, from Utah, USA, visibly carried a copy of the Book of Mormon everywhere she went—to school, to her extracurricular activities, and to church. She was prayerfully trying to find someone to share the gospel with, and keeping the Book of Mormon out with her was a constant reminder of that goal.

One day, she went to the office at school and accidentally left the book there. Without even opening the cover, the office secretary knew immediately whose it was. That week, Sydney had become known at her school for carrying that Book of Mormon with her. And

throughout her life, she's become known for many other things as well.

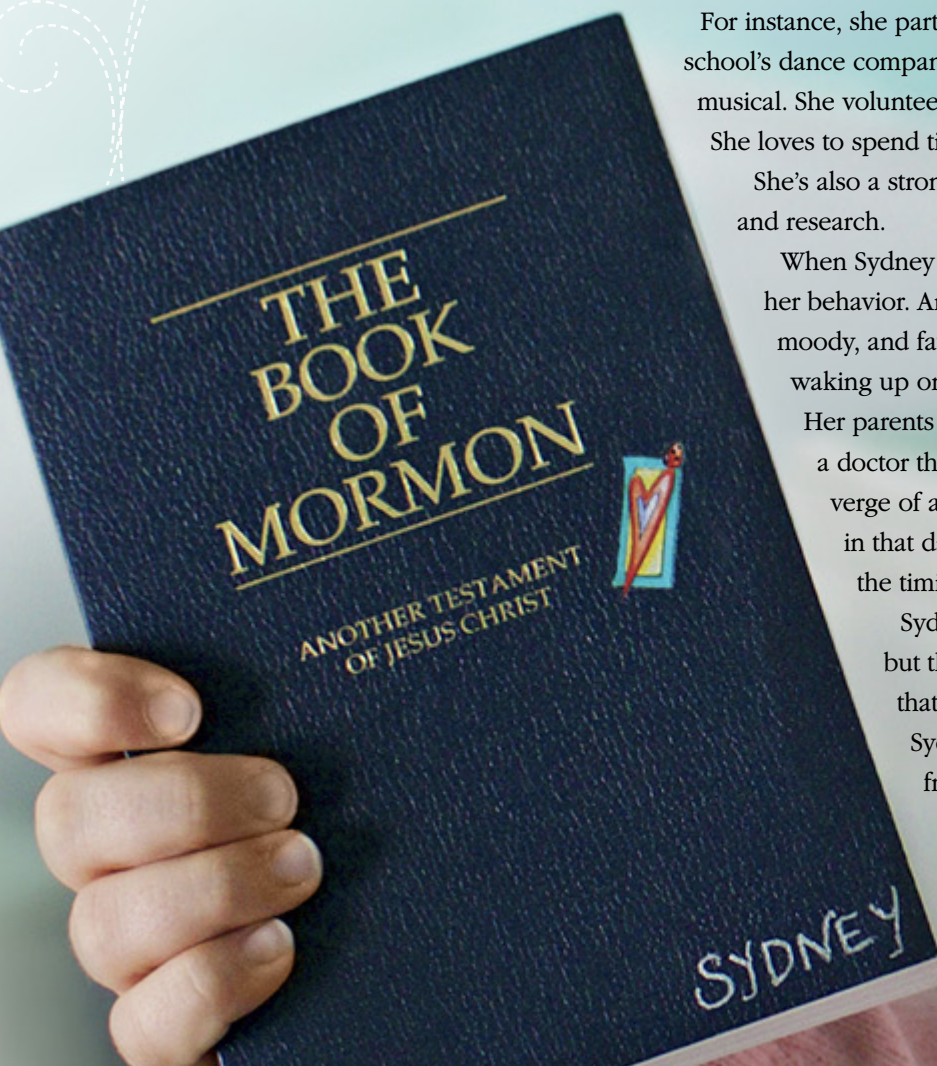
For instance, she participates in student council. She dances for her school's dance company. She was the lead in an *Alice in Wonderland* musical. She volunteers for a service group. She cheers. She crafts. She loves to spend time with her friends and family.

She's also a strong advocate of type 1 diabetes awareness and research.

When Sydney was three, her parents noticed changes in her behavior. Among other things, she was extremely thirsty, moody, and fatigued. One day she slept for 22 hours, waking up only for moments before falling back asleep.

Her parents knew something was wrong and took her to a doctor the next morning. The doctor said she was on the verge of a diabetic coma and was lucky she came in that day. Sydney and her parents now recognize that the timing was more than luck; it was a blessing.

Sydney's diagnosis flipped her life upside down, but that hasn't stopped her from living a life that gives back to others. Despite her age, Sydney is a leader, role model, and friend as she works to help promote diabetes awareness.





# GOING







(Above, top left) Sydney, when she was diagnosed. (Above, bottom left) Sydney (first row, far right) is a youth ambassador for the JDRF. (Above, right) Sydney loves participating in theater. (Below) For her twelfth birthday, Sydney invited her friends to do baptisms for the dead!



## WHAT IS TYPE 1 DIABETES?

Type 1 diabetes is a disease in which the pancreas produces little or no insulin, the hormone that converts glucose into energy. To treat this, people with type 1 diabetes take insulin every time they eat to help their bodies get the energy they need.

If left untreated, diabetes can have serious complications. It's important to recognize the symptoms and be treated as early as possible. Type 1 diabetes requires constant care and vigilance throughout a person's entire life.



## How She Got Started

In 2015, Sydney and her family participated in a fundraising walk managed by JDRF, an organization that helps fund research of type 1 diabetes. After the walk, Sydney wanted to keep helping. She says, "I was super excited to get out and do stuff, and I wanted to inform people of the symptoms of type 1 diabetes so they would know to get tested." To do this, she and her mom created a social media page to promote awareness.

Their first post included pictures of the walk, and they've continued with regular posts debunking myths about diabetes, promoting fundraisers, and showcasing diabetes-related events and activities Sydney participates in.

Sydney knows the impact youth can have in their communities, and she hopes to keep helping those around her. "Young people can make a huge difference," she says, "and it's good for them! They get to get out and help the community. It's just good for the soul."

## Making a Difference

She's already seen some positive results from her efforts. One day, soon after they started the page, Sydney's mom felt prompted to post Sydney's diagnosis story. A woman in their neighborhood read the post and then, two days later, recognized the symptoms in her own daughter. As a result of a prompting, this five-year-old girl was able to receive an early diagnosis and get the medical attention she needed.

## The Impact of Friendship

Sydney knows it's important to have friends during times of trial, and she always strives to be that friend for people in times of need. When she heard of another young girl in the community who was just diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, Sydney immediately reached out and met with her. The girl's mother later



told Sydney about the great influence she had on her daughter. The daughter had felt alone in her trial because no one else she knew had diabetes. But immediately after Sydney's visit, she had a friend, and that made all the difference.

Sydney also recognizes the importance of friendship in her own life and strives to include and love others. When she was about to turn 12, she was "probably more excited than anyone to go to the temple for the first time." So for her birthday party, she invited some friends over to eat a formal dinner and then go to the temple to do baptisms and confirmations on behalf of those who have died. One of her close friends, Lindsay,\* wasn't a member of the Church, but Sydney still wanted to include her. So Sydney invited Lindsay to the birthday dinner with them and explained why the temple was so important to her.

Remember that Book of Mormon that Sydney carried around with her? She felt prompted to give it to Lindsay with her testimony. Though Lindsay respectfully said she didn't believe in the book, Sydney didn't focus on the rejection. Instead, Sydney just appreciated the opportunity she had to share her testimony with someone she cares about.

## Staying Positive

Though she sometimes feels discouraged, Sydney tries to stay positive and move forward in her goal to help others. She says, "I think it's important to just keep going if you're having a trial. It helps to focus on something positive. Like, if you fall off your bike, you just get back up and keep going, and soon you'll forget you even fell off in the first place."

Every day, Sydney chooses to focus on the positive of her situation by striving to be a leader in her community and a friend to those who need one. She's learned that the smallest decisions—like deciding one day to go to a fundraiser walk with her family—can make a big difference. **NE**

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

\* Name has been changed.



(Above) Last year Sydney's JDRF team raised over \$5,000. (Below, top left) She has participated in her school's dance company. (Below, top right) At last year's walk, Sydney cut the starting ribbon! (Below, bottom) Because of Sydney's social media page, Gracie (left) was able to be diagnosed early.







By Elder  
Gregory A.  
Schwitzer  
Of the Seventy

# PREPARE *to* SERVE

WHEN YOU PLAN FOR A MISSION, IT IS IMPORTANT  
THAT YOU COME WELL PREPARED PHYSICALLY, SPIRITUALLY,  
AND EMOTIONALLY.

**W**hen I was growing up I had a real fear of standing up and talking in front of people. I was so frightened, I would get ill thinking about it.

During the time I was Primary and Young Men age, we had opening exercises in Sunday School, where we were asked to give two-and-a-half-minute talks in front of the whole congregation. One time when I was assigned a talk, my father had me memorize the story of the First Vision, and then he stood in the back of the chapel with the talk in his hands. I was at the pulpit, but I was so nervous that I froze up and couldn't remember what I had memorized. My father tried mouthing the words for me, but because I wasn't a very good lip reader I finally said, "What are you trying to say, Dad?" He marched up to the front of the chapel, put the paper on the pulpit, and I read my talk.

On another occasion my father told the missionary class he was teaching that anyone could give the first discussion that was about the Godhead. He said, "To prove it, I'm going to have my 10-year-old son give you the first lesson next week." All that week he gave me the opportunity to learn the lesson, and I successfully taught the discussion to his class. When I became a missionary I knew well the story of the First Vision and I knew how to talk about the Godhead.

Those little experiences and many others like them changed me, and I was gradually able to overcome my fears. I am grateful for my father, who gave me opportunities to grow and who helped me learn how to do hard things. When we overcome our fears and step outside of our comfort zones, we can progress and become what the Lord would have us be (see D&C 6:34, 36; 35:17; 38:15).

## SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW

There are things that you can do now that will help you prepare for a mission and for the rest of your life. For example, learning a foreign language can be a highly stressful activity that occurs in some missions. If you think that might be difficult for you, take a foreign language class in school. Doing so will help you as a missionary and all through your life.

Here are six more ideas to consider that will help you prepare for your future:

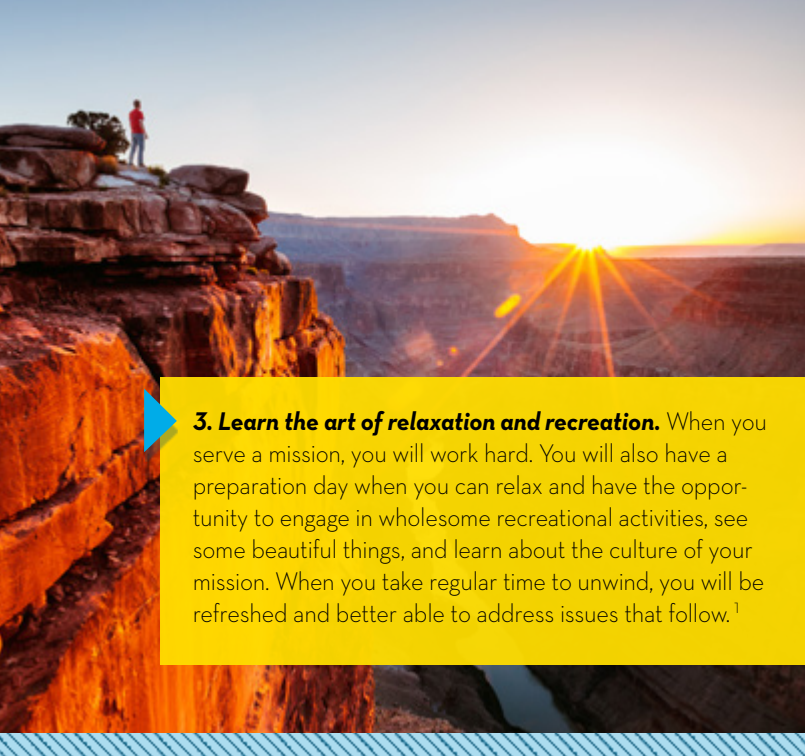


**1. Get a job.** Working for others will teach you valuable skills on how to interact with people. It will teach you lessons on time management, money management, and how to work effectively.



**2. Get away from home for short periods of time.** See what it's like to live on your own, or to live in a college setting with roommates. Youth activities such as camps and conferences will give you a taste of life away from home and will help you stretch yourself.



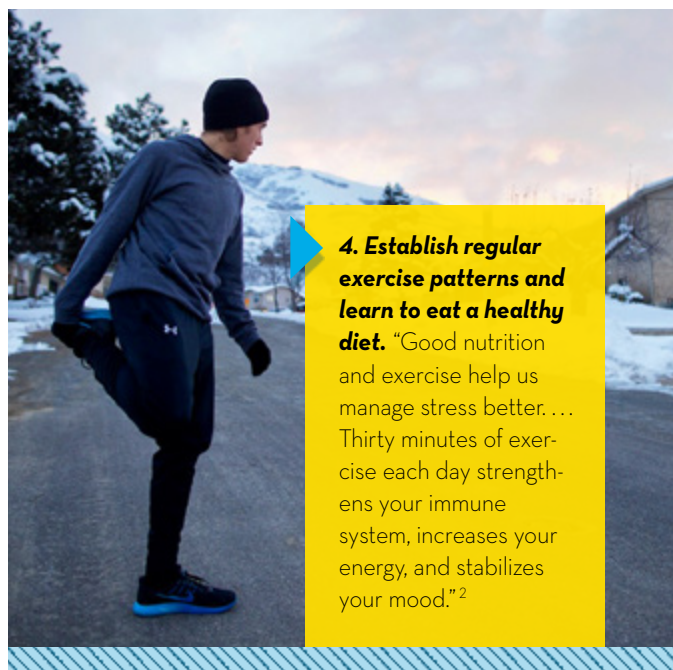


**3. Learn the art of relaxation and recreation.** When you serve a mission, you will work hard. You will also have a preparation day when you can relax and have the opportunity to engage in wholesome recreational activities, see some beautiful things, and learn about the culture of your mission. When you take regular time to unwind, you will be refreshed and better able to address issues that follow.<sup>1</sup>

## STRESS IS A NORMAL PART OF LIFE

Serving a mission can be very stressful; in fact, most changes in life are that way. Many of you have already experienced difficult situations in your lives and know what stresses you. When you plan for a mission, it is important that you come well prepared physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

The Church has prepared a resource booklet, *Adjusting to Missionary Life*, to help you learn how to understand and work through stress-related issues. It provides tools you can use before your mission to help you learn how to work through difficult situations. For example, a self-assessment chart is included to help you evaluate where you are, as well as some techniques to calm yourself when you feel tense.



**4. Establish regular exercise patterns and learn to eat a healthy diet.** “Good nutrition and exercise help us manage stress better. . . . Thirty minutes of exercise each day strengthens your immune system, increases your energy, and stabilizes your mood.”<sup>2</sup>

## CONSIDER A CHURCH-SERVICE MISSION

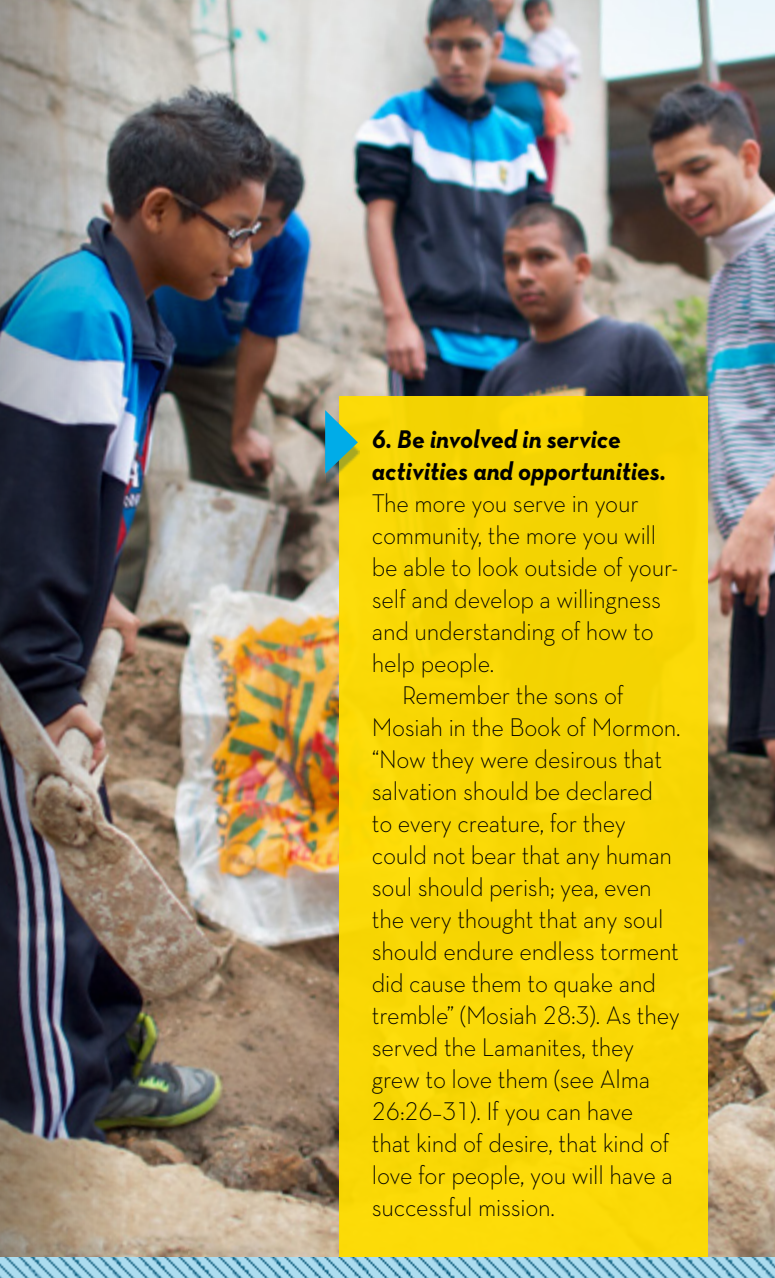
For a variety of reasons, some worthy young people are unable to serve full-time proselyting missions. For them, other service opportunities may be available, such as Church-service missions. They should counsel with parents and priesthood leaders about the possibility of such service. For more, go to [lds.org/callings/missionary/church-service-missionary](https://lds.org/callings/missionary/church-service-missionary).



## 5. Learn how to have a conversation.

Get away from digital media and learn how to talk to real people in real time. You can practice by talking with your parents: ask them questions about the past, about their jobs, about the strains in their lives. Dating is also a form of preparing for a mission as you learn people skills by talking to and getting along with others.

Learn how to listen to what others are saying, and be willing to share your story. Learn to listen to both the Holy Spirit and to what the other person is saying. People are much more willing to listen to the gospel message if they perceive that the missionary is interested in them.



#### 6. Be involved in service activities and opportunities.

The more you serve in your community, the more you will be able to look outside of yourself and develop a willingness and understanding of how to help people.

Remember the sons of Mosiah in the Book of Mormon. “Now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thought that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble” (Mosiah 28:3). As they served the Lamanites, they grew to love them (see Alma 26:26–31). If you can have that kind of desire, that kind of love for people, you will have a successful mission.

## IF YOU NEED TO RETURN HOME

Because your health is so important, if you develop symptoms that require medical treatment, be sure to get good professional help. In some cases, if your symptoms are severe, you’ll be honorably excused from your mission. And you’ll be blessed for having kept yourself worthy. If you return home early, please know that the Lord loves and appreciates every effort you made to serve Him. Anyone who goes on a mission and tries his or her best has had a successful mission.

The Lord wants you to get healthy again and move on with your life. If you are permanently released early, pursue your education and do what Heavenly Father wants you to do in finding an eternal companion. These things are really important parts of the big picture of your life.

## LEARN TO ADJUST TO NEW SITUATIONS

One of the challenges, as well as a great blessing, of serving a mission is learning how to adjust to new situations. I served in the North German Mission and was still learning the language when I arrived. The first night I was in Germany, right after I dropped my bags off, my wonderful companion said, “Are you ready to go? Let’s go tracting!” I watched him go to two or three doors and talk to people. Then he pushed the doorbell and said, “It’s your turn!”

I’ll never forget the woman who came to the door while I stood there with a Book of Mormon in my hand. All those feelings of anxiety and nervousness that I’d felt when I stood at the pulpit as a child came back again. But because I had worked hard to learn the language and had experience teaching about the First Vision, I knew what I could say. She didn’t accept the Book of Mormon, and she shut the door on me. My companion looked at me and said, “Nice job, Elder Schwitzer. Welcome to Germany.”

Over time, being a missionary became easier as I had the opportunity to meet people and share the gospel. That’s what is amazing about the gospel of Jesus Christ: the more you testify, the more you grow as a missionary. You don’t just go out to serve a mission; you go out to become a missionary, and in the process you become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I know that when we rely on the Savior we can build a strong foundation where we can overcome the difficulties of life and turn them into strengths. Sometimes I wonder what my life would have been like if I had stayed shy and not pushed myself to do my best. The gospel of Jesus Christ helped to change me into a different person than what my natural tendencies were. I am so grateful for it in my life. **NE**

### NOTES

1. See *Adjusting to Missionary Life* (2013), 19.
2. *Adjusting to Missionary Life*, 23, 24.



### Resources to Check Out

- *Adjusting to Missionary Life*, at [lds.org/manual/resource-booklet-adjusting-to-missionary-life](https://www.lds.org/manual/resource-booklet-adjusting-to-missionary-life), or get a copy from your bishop.
- Wendy Ulrich, “The Hardest Part of Being a Missionary,” *New Era*, June 2016, 36.
- Robert K. Wagstaff, “Preparing Emotionally for Missionary Service,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2011, 22.



# FACING ANXIETY

Worried all the time?  
So was I. Then I  
learned I didn't have  
to face it alone.



By Eric B. Murdock

Church Magazines

In my first week of junior high, my math teacher asked me to complete an equation in front of the class. Simple enough, right? Well, I couldn't do it. Frightening thoughts raced through my mind. My heart pounded, I started sweating, my muscles tensed up, and I had difficulty breathing. I wanted to run away, but I felt trapped and afraid. For most of the year, I felt this way the moment I stepped inside the school each morning.

These kinds of feelings lasted all through high school. I worried about *everything*. Taking tests, meeting new people, speaking in public, going on dates, and competing in sports all made me feel uneasy. I worried about the future, and I feared I would never be good enough to face life's challenges. I felt nervous and on edge much of the time, which made it hard for me to just get through a day.

## ANXIETY VS. ANXIETY DISORDERS

Everyone experiences feelings of anxiety from time to time. It's a normal reaction to new, unfamiliar, or challenging situations. If we never worried about anything, something would be wrong. A little anxiety can motivate us to take action and solve problems. But sometimes anxiety can be intense and persistent and can interfere with daily life. These can be signs of an anxiety disorder.

There are different types of anxiety disorders, but typically they include excessive feelings of fear and nervousness. Physical symptoms can include rapid heart-beat, tenseness, shortness of breath, dizziness, and a lack of ability to concentrate and relax. Fearful thinking, self-doubt, worry, and stress can trigger these symptoms. Genetics and an imbalance in brain chemistry can also contribute to anxiety disorders.

The anxiety I felt was intense, and when the feelings came, all I wanted to do was avoid them. After a while, I noticed I was avoiding situations at school, with my friends, and even at church. Anxiety was controlling my life. I began feeling weak and too fragile to handle life's ups and downs. I realized that I needed help with this challenge.

Sure enough, I was diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. I had a hard time dealing with it at first, but with the support of my family and others, I've learned a lot. I've learned that an anxiety disorder doesn't mean I lack character or I'm weak. It's like having high blood pressure or diabetes. It's treatable and something that needs to be worked on—not something to be ashamed of. Yes, I have an anxiety disorder, but I also have hope.



Here are some things I've learned that help me to **CALM ANXIETY:**



**1** When anxious thoughts and feelings come, **stop what you're doing for a while, sit still, close your eyes, and breathe deeply.** Fill your mind with calming and peaceful thoughts.



**2** **Good nutrition, rest, and exercise** really help our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.



**3** Pay close attention to what you're thinking. Fearful, negative, doubtful, unrealistic, or self-critical thoughts can trigger anxiety. Make a commitment to **focus on healthy, positive, and realistic thinking.**



4



**Talk to someone who can help,** such as a parent or another trusted adult. If anxiety is severe enough, it may need to be treated with medication and therapy, and that's OK. It's not a sign of weakness or personal failure to get the help you need.

5

Turn to actions that bring the Spirit into your life. Pray specifically for calm feelings. Count your blessings. Read scriptures that bring you peace, hope, and strength. Remember that Heavenly Father loves you and that “the worth of souls is great in the sight of God” (D&C 18:10). This means you have great worth. With this knowledge, believe in yourself and face your fears and challenges with faith. Move forward with confidence and do your best.



#### Learn More

For more on this subject, see Lyle J. Burrup, “Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2017, 54.

## THE LORD WILL BE WITH YOU

I thought at first that there would be this one thing I could do that would make my anxiety go away forever. I prayed, fasted, and read my scriptures daily. I hoped that I would find permanent relief, but it never came. The treatment and assistance I've received have helped me learn that it takes persistence and patience to learn how to manage and cope with anxiety. I'm still learning, and I still struggle with anxiety from time to time.

The Apostle Paul also had a problem that wouldn't go away. He described it as “a thorn in the flesh” (see 2 Corinthians 12:7). He asked the Lord several times to take it from him, but the Lord didn't. Through it all, Paul learned an important lesson. “My strength is made perfect

in weakness,” he said. “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Paul learned to rely on the Lord through his challenges. Like Paul, I needed to be willing to place my burdens on the Lord. He loves us and wants to help us. He said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). When we hand our fears and frustrations to Him, He will help us emotionally and spiritually. “I will not leave you comfortless,” the Savior said. “I will come to you” (John 14:18). Receiving His comfort in my hour of need is one thing I know I'll never have to worry about. **NE**

## How can I know which spiritual gifts I have?

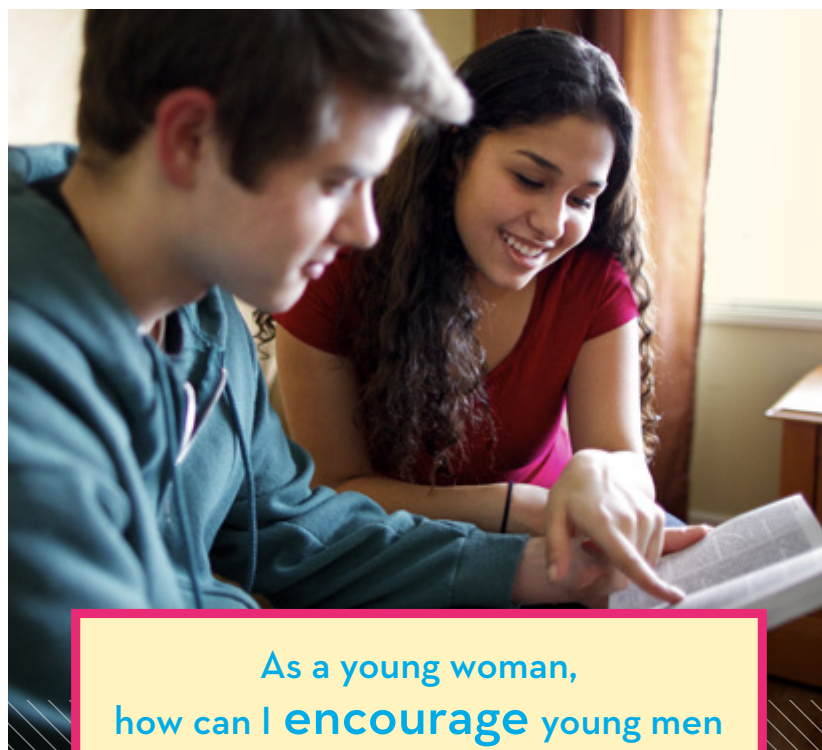
**T**he Lord has said that “to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God” (D&C 46:11), and He encourages us to “seek . . . earnestly the best gifts” (D&C 46:8). Regarding spiritual gifts, He has also said, “He that asketh in Spirit shall receive in Spirit” (D&C 46:28). So part of discovering your spiritual gifts is seeking and asking for them.

The scriptures list some gifts (see 1 Corinthians 12; Moroni 10:8–18; D&C 46). But these aren’t necessarily the only spiritual gifts and talents Heavenly Father has given or may give you. Search the scriptures, the words of prophets, and your patriarchal blessing and you’ll find many of them, some of which you may already possess.

As you seek spiritual gifts, “always [remember] for what they are given” (D&C 46:8), namely for the benefit of others (see D&C 46:9, 12). And remember that faith and obedience qualify you to receive them. **NE**

For more, see:

- Dallin H. Oaks, “Spiritual Gifts,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 68.
- Marvin J. Ashton, Oct. 1987 general conference.
- Mervyn B. Arnold, “Where Am I? How to Discover and Develop Your Spiritual Gifts and Talents,” *New Era*, Dec. 2014, 34.



## As a young woman, how can I encourage young men to talk, act, and dress more modestly?

**A**s a young woman, you can have a great and positive influence on the language, behavior, and dress of the young men you know. But of course you also don’t want to appear harshly critical of them. The secret lies in being consistent and encouraging.

Don’t compromise your standards; be an example of them. And be sure to send the same message about those standards in every context and to *all* young men you know. For instance, the boys who are trying to be good will notice if you’re flirting, dancing, or going on dates with guys who behave badly, and they may draw the wrong conclusions from that observation.

When young men are acting or talking crudely or dressing immodestly, try to send the right signals without condemning them or condoning what they’re doing. You can make a simple comment in a mild tone of voice, make a subtle change to your facial expression, shake your head, politely withdraw—whatever works for the person and the situation. As always, pray for the Spirit’s guidance to know what to do. **NE**



# “How can I know God is listening to my prayers?”

**P**rayer is a great blessing, and we’re promised that Heavenly Father is always listening, but often it takes some work to recognize His answers.<sup>1</sup>

Think about this: either God hears you or He doesn’t. If He doesn’t, then of course there’s no point in praying. But if He does (and He does!), we have to figure out how to *really* commune with Him in prayer, recognize answers, and faithfully move forward.

When we feel He’s not listening, maybe we need to experience some personal growth. You might ask yourself a few questions: Am I clean? Are my motives worthy? Am I willing to do what He asks?<sup>2</sup> If the answer to each of these is yes, you can trust that “the Lord thy God shall . . . give thee answer to thy prayers” (D&C 112:10). Remember, sometimes answers come in subtle or unexpected ways.

If you answered no to some of those questions, it’s never too late! Make the necessary changes in your life so you can have the Spirit. Be willing to act on promptings you receive.

And don’t forget that everyone receives answers differently. Pray that the Holy Ghost will teach you how *you* can recognize answers. It might not be easy to recognize them at first, but it’s like any other skill: practice makes perfect. Have faith and trust that Heavenly Father is *always* listening.

## NOTES

1. See Matthew 7:7; James 1:5–6; Alma 33:4–11; Doctrine and Covenants 8:1–2.
2. See Richard G. Scott, Oct. 1989 general conference.



## Listen to the Spirit

Try to listen to the Holy Ghost. People hear the Holy Ghost in different ways, so maybe you’re listening for a still, small voice when the prompting may come as a feeling. I know that the Holy Ghost will tell you all that you need to know—you just have to listen.

*Elise G., 13, Alberta, Canada*

## Answers in Church

Once I had a huge doubt about whether to go on a date with a non-member. One Sunday in sacrament meeting, a sister gave a talk that seemed to be directed personally to me. At that moment, I received an assurance that the Lord had answered my prayer. Before, I had been confused about what to do, but then I was comforted by the Holy Ghost, who filled my heart with joy and courage. God answers us through feelings, thoughts, the scriptures, and even speakers at church!

*Karen V., 19, Minas Gerais, Brazil*



## Remember Who You Are

I know God hears us because prayer produces a feeling of peace, relief, and love in my heart. I see that He frees me from many dangers from day to day and that He protects my family, and I feel loved by Him. Before I go to school, I always

say the Young Women theme; it helps me remember that I am a daughter of Heavenly Father, who loves me.

*Nicol M., 19, Lima, Peru*



### A Child's Prayer

I know Heavenly Father hears my prayers because of these words in the Primary song

“A Child's Prayer” (*Children's Songbook*, 12): “Heavenly Father, are you really there? And do you hear and answer ev'ry child's prayer? Some say that heaven is far away, but I feel it close around me as I pray.” When I remember that song, I know He is listening because I feel the Spirit and His infinite love for me. As I remember that He loves me, I feel comfort and know that He hears my prayers.

*Elaine B., 16, North Carolina, USA*

### Trust in Him

Heavenly Father always listens to our prayers, but sometimes it seems like He isn't answering our prayers because He may not answer us how or when we want Him to. We need to be willing to submit our will to His and have faith that He knows what's best for us. Heavenly Father loves us and will always try to help us learn and grow as He answers our prayers.

*Mosiah M., 17, Utah, USA*

### Ask and Ye Shall Receive

Through the scriptures, we are taught that God will always hear our prayers

and will answer them if we address Him with faith and real intent. In our hearts we will feel the confirmation that He does hear us, a feeling of peace and calm. We can also feel that everything will be fine when we follow the Father's will. If we doubt that He hears us, we ought to seek guidance in the scriptures and then ask if those things we read are true.

*Constanza L., 20, Bío Bío, Chile*

### Search It Out

I once wondered if God could hear my prayers, and then I felt the answer in my heart. I heard someone bear testimony about prayer, and I could feel the Holy Ghost. My other advice would be to ask your parents, bishop, or other members of your ward. You could even pray for help on this topic!

*Joshua S., 13, Oregon, USA*

### Pray Sincerely

After your prayer, you can listen to the feelings and intents that come



### DON'T GIVE UP

“Be obedient, remember the times when you have felt the Spirit in the past, and

ask in faith. Your answer will come, and you will feel the love and peace of the Savior. It may not come as quickly or in the format you desire, but the answer will come. Do not give up!”

**Elder James B. Martino of the Seventy,**  
Oct. 2015 general conference.

to your heart. One of them may be the answer to your prayer. When we pray with real intent and a sincere heart, our Heavenly Father responds according to the faith we have in Him. He doesn't respond just to satisfy our curiosity.

*Jean-Claude N., 16, Kasai-Central, Democratic Republic of the Congo*

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

## UPCOMING QUESTION

“How can I ask my friends not to talk unkindly or inappropriately about others?”

Send your answer and photo by May 15, 2017.

Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org). Click “Submit Your Work.” Sign in with your LDS Account and then select “New Era” under “Choose Magazine.” Click “Add File” to select your file and photos, and then click “Submit” to upload and send us your file.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.





## The Apostasy and the Restoration

Ever since Joseph Smith's First Vision, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have been sending down light to a world that had long been in darkness. In the October 2016 general conference we heard messages that help us see many blessings of the Restoration.

For instance:

- "Sharing the Restored Gospel," by Elder Dallin H. Oaks
- "To Whom Shall We Go?" by Elder M. Russell Ballard
- "Look to the Book, Look to the Lord," by Elder Gary E. Stevenson
- "A Choice Seer Will I Raise Up," by Elder Craig C. Christensen
- "There Is Power in the Book," by Elder LeGrand R. Curtis Jr.
- "For Our Spiritual Development and Learning," by Elder W. Mark Bassett

Find these and more at [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org).



### Share These Cards

Give yourself an easy reminder to think about this month's theme. Just place these cards in your scriptures, locker, or bedroom. You can also download or share them online at [youth.lds.org](http://youth.lds.org).

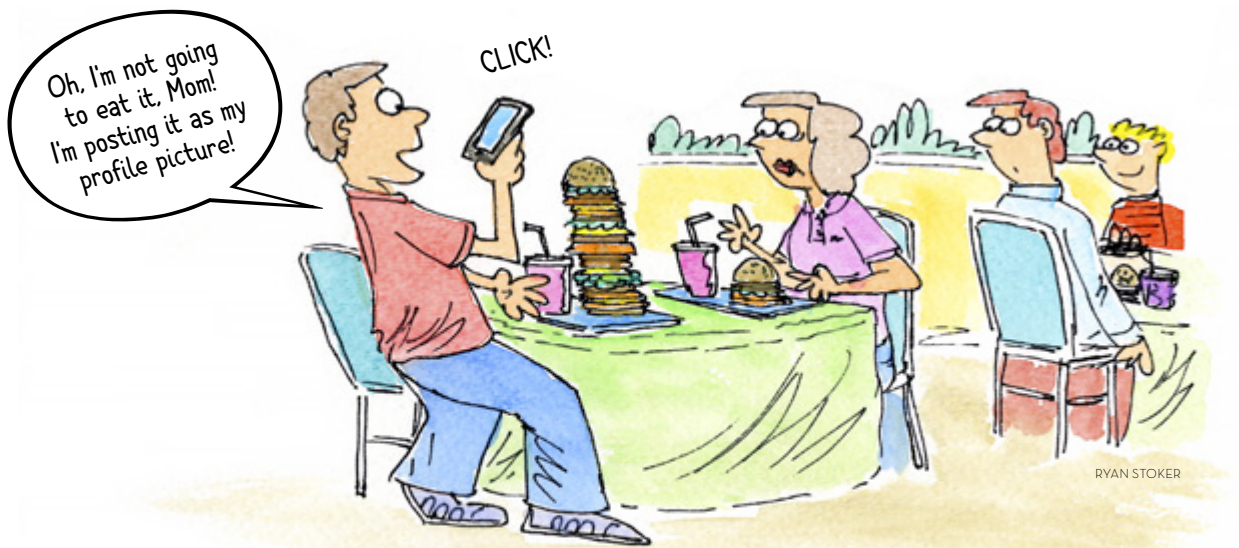
[THE TRUTHS IN  
THE BOOK OF MORMON]  
WILL STRENGTHEN  
YOUR FAITH,  
FILL YOUR SOUL  
WITH LIGHT,  
AND PREPARE YOU  
FOR A FUTURE  
YOU SCARCELY  
HAVE THE ABILITY  
TO COMPREHEND.

Elder Gary E. Stevenson  
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles  
October 2016 general conference

DISCOVER  
THE POWER  
OF THE  
BOOK OF  
MORMON.

Elder LeGrand  
R. Curtis Jr.  
Of the Seventy  
October 2016  
general conference









## THE SMALL AND SIMPLE INVITATION

**A**t my first school dance, I felt awkward and out of place until I joined a group of friends on the dance floor and started having fun. Then I noticed a boy I knew standing by himself in a corner. He was shy and a little different, so people avoided him. I felt prompted to invite him to dance with us, but I was shy too. Then I remembered how I'd felt at the beginning of the dance.

I asked one of my friends to come with me, and we went to ask the boy to dance with our group. He seemed unsure and said, "I don't know if I can really keep a beat." We replied with a laugh that we couldn't either. He slowly nodded and followed us.

For a few minutes, we were dancing while the boy just stood there. I was starting to doubt whether I'd done the right thing. But then a new song came on, and he smiled. "This is a good one," he said, starting to dance. He was really good! Other people began to notice. Then the boy started break dancing! It was amazing! Soon a whole circle of people stood around him, clapping and smiling. My friend leaned over to me and said, "Look what you started." I grinned and knew we did the right thing. Like Alma 37:6 says, "By small and simple things are great things brought to pass." I am grateful that I had the Holy Ghost as my companion that night.

**Kelly D., Maine, USA**

## FEELING ALONE

It was a cold spring in Denmark. I had just begun my full-time mission, and my testimony was struggling. I was a convert of only 19 months and full of insecurities about facing a foreign country, a language I couldn't speak, and a maze of streets I couldn't fathom navigating. My once gratitude-filled prayers soon became sour accusations: "God, why have you left me all alone?"

One morning I pled with Him in prayer. But instead of asking "why" with anger in my heart, I begged for a witness of the gospel's truth and suppression of my doubts.

After praying, I flipped my scriptures open. I landed on Deuteronomy 31:6: "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

My heart was full of joy as I realized the answer to my prayer: God had been there all along. He was simply waiting for sincere prayer rather than accusations of abandonment.

God will never leave me, even when all seems hopeless. And we can feel His sunshine through prayer and His scriptures.

**Clayton E., Texas, USA**



## GOD GIVES US TOOLS

My uncle is an artist who makes small wooden ships in glass bottles. It takes a lot of time, concentration, and effort to make them.

One day I saw all of his tools and noticed how each tool was used for a specific detail or molding on the ship. As I watched him work, I was surprised by how he would use the tools to make these ships. I was reminded of the story of Nephi building a ship (see 1 Nephi 17–18). He built it

according to the Lord's way, not man's way. God gives us tools to build our own ships in His way. The scriptures, faith, and the love of God are tools that I must use in my own life to carefully construct my own ship without any cracks. I am learning each day to be a disciple of the Lord.

**María Mercedes G., Monagas, Venezuela**





By Elder  
Quentin L. Cook  
Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

## HOW TO FIND REAL PEACE

**T**he heavenly aspiration of good people everywhere has and always will be for peace in the world. We must never give up on achieving this goal. But, President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) taught, “There never can come to the world that spirit of peace and love . . . until mankind will receive God’s truth and God’s message . . . , and acknowledge his power and authority which is divine” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* [1998], 400).

We earnestly hope and pray for universal peace, but it is as individuals and families that we achieve the kind of peace that is the promised **reward of righteousness**. This peace is a promised gift of the Savior’s mission and atoning sacrifice.

Peace is not just safety or lack of war, violence, conflict, and contention. Peace comes from **knowing that the Savior knows who we are** and knows that we **have faith in Him, love Him, and keep His commandments**, even and especially amid life’s devastating trials and

tragedies (see D&C 121:7–8).

“Where can I turn for peace? Where is my solace when other sources cease to make me whole?” (“Where Can I Turn for Peace?” *Hymns*, no. 129).

**The answer is the Savior**, who is the source and author of peace. He is the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

**Humbling ourselves** before God, **praying** always, **repenting** of sins, entering the waters of **baptism** with a **broken heart** and **contrite spirit**, and **becoming true disciples** of Jesus Christ are profound examples of the righteousness that is rewarded by abiding peace.

The Church is a refuge where followers of Christ attain peace. Some young people in the world say they are spiritual but not religious. Feeling spiritual is a good first step. However, it is in the Church that we are **fellowshipped, taught**, and **nourished by the good word** of God. More importantly, it is priesthood authority in the Church that provides for **sacred ordinances**



### Share Your Experiences

Share how you have found peace and read the experiences of other youth by finding this article at [youth.lds.org](https://youth.lds.org).

**and covenants** that bind families together and qualify each of us to return to God the Father and Jesus Christ in the celestial kingdom. These ordinances bring peace because they are covenants with the Lord.

Temples are where many of these sacred ordinances occur and are also a source of peaceful refuge from the world. Those who **visit temple grounds** or participate in temple open houses also feel this peace.

*The Savior is the source of true peace.* Even with the trials of life, because of the Savior’s Atonement and His grace, righteous living will be rewarded with personal peace (see John 14:26–27; 16:33). **NE**

*From an April 2013 general conference address.*



The restored  
**GOSPEL**  
of Jesus Christ has  
**ANSWERS**  
to the most complex  
**QUESTIONS**  
in life.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf  
Second Counselor in the First Presidency  
October 2016 general conference



# WANTED: YOU

Do you love drawing dragons, making scrambled eggs, or riding rails at the skate park? We want you to show us . . .

## SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU SMILE.

We want your photos, comments, selfies, paintings, poetry, illustrations, recipes, paper airplane schematics, FHE activity ideas—the sky's the limit!



EMAIL  
BY APRIL  
30<sup>th</sup>!



Send it to [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org), along with an explanation of how it makes you smile, by **April 30th**. And keep an eye out in the magazine to see the stuff you and other youth from all around the world sent in.