

WHAT WE REALLY THINK OF YOUTH

“You face your challenges with extraordinary strength and courage. I express my love to you and the confidence I have in you.

“You inspire the people around you more than you can imagine.”

David L. Beck, Young Men general president, “The Magnificent Aaronic Priesthood,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 54.

THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD



“Putting on the Whole Armor of God, Raft-Style” was the theme of a high adventure activity in which nearly 50 young women and 20 adults were divided into “raft families” and floated the Green River in southern Utah. In preparation for the rafting experience, safety lessons were presented as metaphors taken from Ephesians 6:10–18. Life vests represented the “breastplate of righteousness,” sunscreen represented the “shield of faith,” and the oars of the rafts represented the “sword of the Spirit” and reminded the youth of the direction we’re given by the scriptures and counsel from prophets.

During the second and final river run, the temperatures dropped and the river became shrouded in mist, much like the “mist of darkness” spoken of in Lehi’s dream (see 1 Nephi 8:23–24). The youth were reminded that protection comes as we hold fast to gospel truths and we are able to safely get to our destination. One Laurel said of that final run, “I have never been so cold and tired in my life, but I have never had so much fun.” One of the bishop’s counselors said, “Not only was this a great activity, but it was also so spiritual, even while we floated the river. This is an experience that the participants will never forget.”

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF TANYA BIRD

MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

1 Nephi 3:7 “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father: I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.”

This scripture strengthens my faith because Nephi shows during trials that he still obeys and does what the Lord wants him to do. And Heavenly Father blesses him for that.

Kaila T., 16, Philippines

Tell us about your favorite scripture in a paragraph or two. Send it to us, along with a photo, by going to

newera.lds.org and

clicking “Submit Material.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE



QUOTE FROM CONFERENCE

“Make every decision you contemplate pass this test: ‘What does it do to me? What does it do for me?’ And let your code of conduct emphasize not ‘What will others think?’ but rather ‘What will I think of myself?’ Be influenced by that still, small voice.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Believe, Obey, and Endure,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 129.

FINDING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

I was born into the Church, and I didn’t have much of a testimony until I started to read the scriptures with pure intent. Instead of just reading the words on the paper, I searched deep for their meaning. I read 3 Nephi 11:3, and I put myself in the people’s shoes. That scripture and the ones following it shook me. From then on I kept reading the scriptures and praying with sincerity, and my testimony grew.
Ryan R., Washington, USA

DUTY TO GOD

I’ve been working to complete my Duty to God goals, both when I lived in Venezuela and when I moved with my family to China.

Duty to God truly is inspired. A young man can learn marvelous things that will be applied throughout the rest of his life by completing his goals. He will learn spiritual things, temporal things, physical things, and much more.

It’s well worth the effort of dedicating yourself to complete these goals. I have learned to be a better man, I’ve grown in my testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and I have better prepared myself to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and to serve a mission. It’s gratifying to know that I will be able to be a good example to my future children one day.

Jonathan A., China

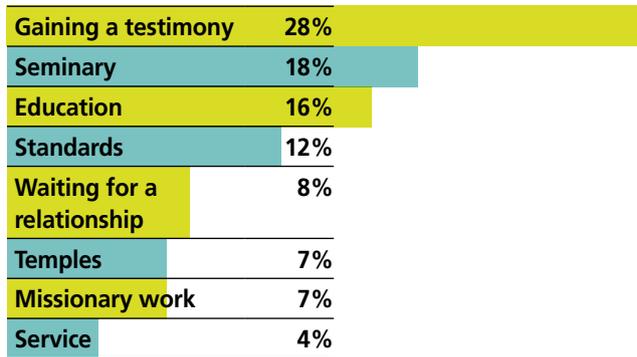
PERSONAL PROGRESS

On February 27, 2011, I received my Young Women Recognition. I am happy that I completed the Personal Progress program, that I kept myself pure and clean, and that I can wear my medallion with pride. I know that the Young Women organization helps us progress and prepare ourselves for marriage in the holy temple. I am grateful to my Heavenly Father for this organization. By earning my medallion, I have completed one of my goals, and I know that I can continue to do much good in the work of the Lord.

Katherine M., Venezuela

SURVEY RESULTS

Here are the results of a recent survey we posted on the *New Era* Facebook page. The survey asked, “Which of the following would you like to see the *New Era* use as a special theme for an upcoming issue?”



You Voted: Watch for a special section on gaining a testimony in the February 2013 issue of the *New Era*.

Choosing the Right

I look forward to the *New Era* every month. I like the jokes and the stories by other youth. It is good to know there are others trying to choose the right, like me, all over the world.

Sarah O., 14, Montana, USA

Answering Questions

The article “Answering Your Friends’ Questions” (Jan. 2012) about what to say to your friends when they ask about the Church really hit me. It’s nice to prepare in case something like that comes up. Thanks for the missionary advice!

Kelli G., 13, Utah, USA

Mission Papers (from youth.lds.org)

Awesome article! [See “A Message to Future Missionaries” at lds.org/go/82C.] I turn in my mission papers in March, and I can’t wait! I am thankful for covenants made receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood and the covenants I will soon make in the temple.

I love this work. I know it’s true!
Tyler C., 19, California, USA

We love hearing from you, whether it’s sending us a message or leaving a comment online. Write to us by going online to newera.lds.org and clicking “Submit Material.” Or leave a comment on any article at youth.lds.org.

You can also e-mail us at newera@ldschurch.org or write to *New Era*, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024.