

AUGUST 2016

THE

New Era

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Say It 30 Ways

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THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

August 2016 • Volume 45 • Number 8

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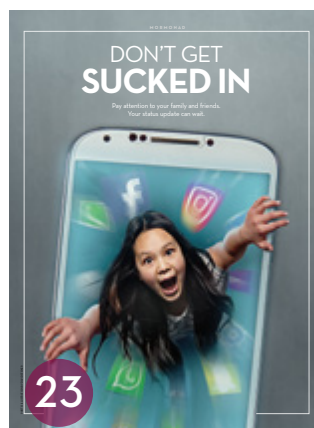


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You Asked—They Answered:

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

In recent Face-to-Face (see facetoface.lds.org) and other events, Church leaders answered young people's questions about marriage and family.

Is it really possible to have a happy marriage?

—Courtney from Louisiana, USA



Let me declare unequivocally, absolutely, and adamantly that not only is there such a thing as a happy marriage, but happy marriages are the rule, not the exception.

Sister Holland and I are living proof that you can not just be happy but that you can be ecstatically happy. You can be just movingly happy in all the right ways, for all the right reasons. So I want everybody to dismiss the idea that somehow this is a mountain that can't be climbed, it's a river that can't be crossed, that there are too many difficulties to address marriage in this day or any day. That is simply not true.

You have to work at a marriage. Every good thing that I know of in this world you have to work at.

God will help you. Of all the things in this world that He will help you with, He will help you with your marriages and your families, because it matters to Him at least as much as it matters to you.

—Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



How can I strengthen my family since I'm so young?

—Nancy from Paraguay



There can be no greater strengthening power in a home than members of a family who are striving to have the companionship of the Holy Ghost. It changes the feeling in the home. Even if you're the only member in your family, as you have the Holy Ghost as your companion, that is a powerful influence for good in your home. And it influences all of the members of your family. Keep the commandments and live worthily. Then you bring the power of the Spirit into your home. And it will bless and strengthen everyone in the home.

—Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Besides prayer, scripture study, and fasting, what can we do to best prepare for marriage?

—Jack from the Dominican Republic



Stay worthy. We live in a world that is confusing because the societal norms have changed significantly over not that many years.

If you start with what has been revealed by the Lord and through His apostles and prophets, you'll be on safe ground. Go to *For the Strength of Youth*; just look at the definition of the law of chastity there, and there's no fooling ourselves. It's clear; it's concise.

—Elder Donald L. Hallstrom of the Presidency of the Seventy

Study the life of the Savior; try to be more like Him. If you can develop those Christlike attributes in your life and seek to be more like the Savior, then you will be better prepared to be a husband or a wife.

—Sister Carole M. Stephens, First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

How can I help less-active members of my family come to church and let them know that they are loved?

—Ivan from Argentina



Love precedes everything. You think of Jesus Christ, you think of love. So when you have these somewhat difficult challenges in your family or in your school or with your friends, always remember—before you make a comment, before you draw a conclusion, before you become judgmental—how first you can love them. Once you have that foundation of love, you'll be amazed at how you're inspired to take the next step.

—Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

We can love family members. We can set a good example for them. We can influence them by serving them and being patient and loving with them.

Above and beyond that, people have their agency. But I think love overcomes a lot of things. And we're promised that as we exercise love like Jesus Christ had for others, that it will have an impact on them. I can't think of a better way to invite someone to come than just to love them and to set a good example yourself.

—Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women General President

Never give up. Just don't ever give up. And love them. I think it's so important that we remember we're a family and have an eternal perspective. If you just have an eternal perspective and understand that families go forever, it gives that desire to really want to reach out. And be patient. Have the long view. Don't be so shortsighted on things. It goes on for eternity.

—Brother Stephen W. Owen, Young Men General President

How can I establish a family based on faith in Jesus Christ and not be so fearful of the future and about raising a family?

—Flor from Argentina



It's precisely because you have faith in Christ that you can establish a family in a wicked world. There's only one place you can find joy that will last: in the gospel of Jesus Christ. People in the world often are fearful as they see events in the world. The gospel of Jesus Christ helps us see more than just this life, this mortal existence. We know that we are children of God and that we lived with Him before we were born. We know why we are here on the earth and we know what happens to us when we die. So in a world that grows increasingly dark, the only thing that will provide light is the gospel of Christ.

—Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

What can I do to help my family let go of contention and be happier around each other?

—Natalie from Utah, USA



When you find yourself in a situation that's full of contention, if you could think of yourself as a peaceable follower, it calms things. And it calms those around you. We can't change how others act, but we can change how we react to situations and how we act.

—Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women General President

The Savior is our greatest example. If we really want to get rid of contention, then we act like Christ. We learn of Him, who He is, and then we begin to walk. We have to listen to His words, and then we do as He had done.

—Brother Stephen W. Owen, Young Men General President



What can I do to ensure I have a successful marriage for all eternity?

—Jane from West Virginia, USA



If eternal life is the greatest blessing, we ought to make sure that what we're doing in our lives is working towards that goal, working towards a temple experience and a temple sealing.

You can do that now by doing baptisms for the dead. You can do that as families. You can do that as youth groups. And you can go and get the feeling of the temple and being worthy to go to the temple right now. That way you don't have to just look to the temple in the future; you can experience it now.

Don't wait for some future day. Engage now and develop your love for the temple.

—Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

How can I, as a young woman today, prepare to be a mother?

—Janessa from Utah, USA



Look to Jesus Christ. He's the perfect example for both men and women. Look at the attributes that Christ had and exemplified; those are the attributes a mother needs too.

We also have great role models around us. Look to your own mother and see what qualities she has that have helped you become the good person you are. Look to your grandmothers.

And then look to your Young Women leaders. Look to your bishop's wife. There are some great role models around you in the Church who can teach you how to be a good mother someday. At the basis of it all is Christlike behavior.

—Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women General President

Adapted from Face to Face events on January 20, 2016, and March 8, 2016, and from a meeting with youth in Argentina held on February 23, 2016.

THE MESSAGE YOU SEND

What you say, think, wear, and do sends a message. What message do you want to send?

By Joshua J. Perkey
Church Magazines

Modesty. It seems like every time it comes up, we start talking about clothes.

But this time, we're not talking about how tight or how short someone's clothes are. Well, not exactly, anyway. We're talking about ourselves. About what kind of message we send to the world. And a little bit about who we really are on the inside.

Because what we say, think, wear, and do sends a message—whether we mean for it to or not.

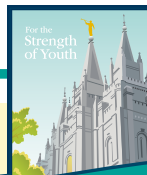
OK, so we know we aren't responsible for how other people act or think. Everyone has agency.

But what we're thinking and how we're feeling and the way we act, dress, and talk can affect ourselves and other people. It can send positive messages that invite us and others to be happy, thoughtful, grateful, excited, uplifted, inspired, encouraged, and a host of other things.

Or it can send a negative or even just a distracting message.

But ultimately, if we recognize the messages we're sending, we'll be able to understand a lot about what's really going on inside us. About how we're feeling and maybe even why we feel that way. And that means we'll begin to see that how we act affects the way we think and how we feel.





DRESS AND APPEARANCE

So, what are some of those messages?

I'm confident, or I'm filled with doubt. I respect myself, or I don't. I believe in standards, or I disrespect them. I love this particular TV show or that color. I'm happy, or I'm sad. I want you to be happy, or maybe I don't care. I want people to notice me or to not notice me. I love God, or maybe I'm not sure.

Now, we *do* have to put what we're talking about in the context of each of our own lives. Sometimes the way we feel or act is a reaction to some truly negative things happening to us, and that's nothing to ignore. Or maybe we don't even intend to send a message in a certain way.

But a lot of how we feel, act, or influence others has to do with our own choices.

That means we can help build the world—make it a stronger, happier, healthier, more marvelous place.

Or we can pull it down.

Here's the really cool part: there's great power in each of us to do good, to help focus ourselves and others on the good that comes from God.

We just have to take a step back from ourselves and ask a couple of simple questions: What do I really believe? What kind of person do I



THE POWER OF THE PLAN

"If we understand the Father's plan, we will have great respect and reverence for our physical bodies. Understanding the gospel and the plan of happiness affects everything—where you go, what you say, what you eat, what you drink, what you think, and what you wear. If you understand who you are as a son or a daughter of God and the purpose for having a physical body in this life, and if we understand what we can become after we leave this life, no one should have to tell you how to dress. You will know."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, from a meeting with youth in Argentina on February 23, 2016.

want to be? And what message do I want to send to the world—and myself—today?

Talking, thinking, dressing, and acting in a way that's truly modest is a message that's based in the gospel, and that's a powerful message. It reminds us of who we really are and sends a message—to the world, to us, and to God—that we know God really is there, that we love Him, and that He's ready to help, no matter what problems we're facing.

That message can inspire and empower. And it certainly will change someone's life—including yours.

So, what message do *you* want to send today? **NE**



Music Download

When you let your true self show, you can change the world in a way only you can! Check out the song "Only You" on this topic at lds.org/go/youNE816.



I love my brother, but this was asking a lot.

By Kaci Rhodes Cronin

I thought I had life pretty much figured out. I had lots of friends, and my week was jam-packed with seminary, school, Church activities, and cheerleading. So when the weekend came, I was ready to kick back with my friends and have some time just for me.

Then one day my parents put a giant cramp in my 10th-grade style. I could continue to have Friday nights for myself, but Saturday was to be their official date night. And guess who was to be their official babysitter for my 11-year-old brother? You guessed it: me. I protested that I was being forced to miss out on everything my friends were doing on Saturday nights, but to no avail. I just knew this was the beginning of something terrible.





Music Download

Download the song "Nothing Can Separate Us" from the 2016 Mutual Theme album at pressforward.lds.org

The first Saturday babysitting night came around, and my brother picked out movies for us to watch. He excitedly began the first one as I pouted that this was going to be boring. When the movie began, I scanned the buffet of irresistible foods my parents had so strategically spread out on the table. The movies my brother had chosen were surprisingly not lame, and by the time all was said and done, we'd made quite a dent in the refreshments.

Another week passed and Saturday rolled around once more. This time we were going to make chocolate chip cookies together. They didn't turn out exactly like our mom's, but we didn't struggle to choke them down. In fact, we started up a little contest to see who could eat the most chocolate chip cookies without drinking any milk. When I gave up and chugged my glass of ice-cold goodness, my brother smiled from ear to ear.

Over the next two years, my Saturdays were filled with trips to the mall, games at the bowling alley, late-night

swims, eating out at just about every fast-food place imaginable, seeing movies, reading books, building forts, telling scary stories, and so much more. It didn't take long for me to realize that my Saturday babysitting episodes were not the beginning of something terrible after all. They were the beginning of something wonderful.

Saturday nights together with my brother helped me learn one of the most important lessons of my life. I was not stuck at home with my brother while all of my friends were out having fun. That wasn't even possible. I was no longer babysitting my brother; I was babysitting a friend.

I realize that we don't get to choose who will be our brother or our sister, but we do get to choose who will be our friend. I'm grateful for all of our Saturday nights together that have allowed us the chance to choose each other. **NE**

Kaci Rhodes Cronin lives in Alabama, USA.

We don't get to choose
who will be our
brother or our sister,
but we do get
to choose who will be
our friend.



THE 30-DAY “I LOVE YOU” CHALLENGE

HOW DO YOU SAY “I LOVE YOU” TO YOUR FAMILY EACH DAY?

By Bethany Bartholomew
Church Magazines

How often do you say, “I love you”? Can you say it more? (Trick question. The answer is always YES!) It can be easy to forget those simple words, but saying them out loud and showing that love to your family can make a big difference.

One young woman from Utah, USA, learned this lesson when she was struggling to create a better relationship with her dad. They were having a hard time getting along, and she was praying for help and strength to know how to heal their relationship. One day, she felt like she should tell her dad she loved him. But that was something her family didn’t say very much. Their love was understood in how they acted around each other, but actually saying the words *I love you* was not a normal occurrence in their house. Still, she felt like she needed to do it.

She mustered up her courage, looked at her dad, and said, “Dad, I love you.” It caught everyone by surprise. Her dad looked up at her and replied with a slight catch in his voice, “I love you too.”

It was a simple step, but from that day forward, her whole family started saying those words to each other, and they’ve been saying it ever since. Of course, it doesn’t always happen exactly like that; another young woman tried it several years ago, and it took her family a couple of years to start saying “I love you” back to her (and then to each other). But *she* kept saying it, and she could tell it made a difference. And those changes come not just through words but also through actions!

How can showing love strengthen your family? Try it out! Here’s a challenge for you: for 30 days, find a way to say “I love you” to your family each day. If you need ideas, here are 30 ways you can tell your family you love them—in addition to saying those three little words. Try a different idea each day. Or pick one, two, or a few you specifically want to turn into a regular habit, and work on those. You can even scrap this list and make a completely different list of ways you want to say “I love you” that’s unique to your family. The key is to *intentionally* show love for 30 days. After 30 days, you can share what happened by leaving a comment on lds.org/go/loveNE816.



1. Give a family member a hug unexpectedly.



2. Do something your brother or sister likes you to do, even if you don’t like it.



3. Plan an entire family home evening (with your parents’ permission).



4. Put away the dishes after dinner—without being asked.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK, TWENTY20.COM,
AND CHURCH PUBLISHING SERVICES



5. Read a story to your younger sibling.



8. Cheer on a sibling at a sports event or bring a personalized note to say congratulations at a music or dance recital.



12. Exercise with your family.



16. Bake a treat or cook a meal with your family.

30 WAYS TO SAY "I LOVE YOU"

(IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER)



9. Tell your parents about how your date went.



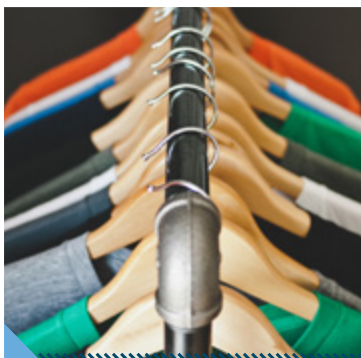
13. Teach a sibling a new skill. Anything from family history to sports to how to tie a shoe.



17. Surprise a sibling by doing his or her least favorite chore. Better yet, do it together!



6. Let your sister or brother pick out the movie for a family night.



10. Let your sibling borrow your favorite shirt.



14. Babysit your younger siblings, nieces, nephews, or younger cousins.



18. Write down positive things about your siblings in your journal, and say at least one of them out loud to each of them.



7. Let your sister or brother sit in the front seat of the car—and tell them why.



11. Sit down and talk with your family members just to chat. Share stories about your favorite memories and ask your parents or grandparents to share stories about their lives. (You could even record audio to post in the Memories section of [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)!)



15. Take a sibling out for lunch or ice cream or even just make them a snack after school.



19. Let your siblings hang out with you and your friends.



LET THEM KNOW

"What is most important almost always involves the people around us. Often we assume that they *must* know how much we love them. But we should never assume; we should let them know. . . . We will never regret the kind words spoken or the affection shown. Rather, our regrets will come if such things are omitted from our relationships with those who mean the most to us."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Finding Joy in the Journey," Oct. 2008 general conference.



22. If you drive, offer to give your siblings a ride somewhere.



26. Pray for specific family members and their needs during family and individual prayer.



28. Work with your siblings on a top-secret surprise project to help Mom and Dad with something.



23. Call a grandparent or distant family member just to chat.



27. Help siblings with homework.



29. Talk positively about your parents and siblings to others.



20. Take pictures of your siblings doing their favorite hobbies and make a photo collage for them.



24. Share some family names you've found with your family, and go to the temple together to do the work for those ancestors.

BTW:
Guess what? You can use this challenge in your Personal Progress and Duty to God projects!

.....

Young women, you can fulfill the Divine Nature value experience #3. Young men, serving your family is in all of the "Serving Others" sections of your booklet. Bonus!



21. Bring home a flower for your mom or sister.



25. Compile a music playlist of a family member's favorite music.



30. Actually say, "I love you"!

By Siera Lara

Sometimes it's hard to understand how to apply the Atonement of Jesus Christ in our lives. For a long time I viewed it only as a tool for repentance and didn't realize how much more there is to it. The Savior's Atonement doesn't just bring the power to change but also the power to overcome our challenges and shortcomings through Jesus Christ. Not only did He take upon Himself the sins of the world but also "their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy" (Alma 7:12).

I understood this principle a little bit more after watching a session of general conference. I'd just gotten into a fight with my sister, and I was fuming in my room. At first, I didn't really feel bad for what I'd done. I felt like she'd earned my anger and definitely did not deserve an apology. The conference

I learned how the Atonement of Jesus Christ applies to me—and my sister.

messages touched me, though, and I felt the Spirit soften my heart. I realized that I needed to apologize. As I thought through my apology, I felt sick to my stomach. I started to doubt that my words would fix anything. I reasoned that she would still be hurt and she wouldn't understand that I really was sorry. I felt hopeless knowing that I couldn't completely heal the wound that I'd created. At a loss about what to do, I decided to get on my knees and pray. I prayed and asked Heavenly Father for forgiveness.

I asked Him to bless me with the ability to let my sister know that I was truly sorry.

"I'm Sorry"
Didn't Feel Like Enough

After my prayer, I asked my sister if I could talk to her for a minute. I told

her I was sorry. She played with her hair and wouldn't meet my eyes and then mumbled her own apology. "No," I responded, "I'm sorry. I'm really sorry."

I felt my heart soften even more and tears filled my eyes. I gave her a hug and apologized for all the times I'd been mean to her and for not being a good big sister. My relationship with my sister was different after that day. It still is far from perfect, but a new understanding and love has grown between us.

I know that I would not have had the same experience if I hadn't worked to have the Savior's Atonement change my heart. The Savior knew what each of us was feeling, and He knew how to fix it, even when I didn't. When we choose to apply His Atonement, anything is possible. Come to Him with your weakness and He will transform that weakness into strength (see Ether 12:27). Come to Him with your problems and He will help you find a solution. He knows you and loves you and will always be there for you. **NE**

Siera Lara lives in Arizona, USA.

PARENTS IN TRAINING

You can do four simple things right now to build a happy, faithful home in the future.



FUTURE PARENTS



YOUR CHILDREN



4 SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO:

1.



2.



3.



4.





By Neill F. Marriott

Second Counselor
in the Young Women
General Presidency

Imagine yourself 20 years from now. What will your future home be like? Can you picture it? Is there love there? Does the Spirit dwell within those walls? You have the opportunity now to work toward that personal vision of the home you want to have.

Now imagine your children. Are they strong in the gospel? Are they happy? What kind of parent are you?

It can be hard to look so far ahead. You're probably thinking, "What's the point in thinking about things like children and my future home when I'm not even finished with seminary or if I haven't even started it!"

These things are important now because the decisions you make today affect not only your future but also your children's future. If you want to teach your children how to be happy, you have to learn how to be happy now. If you want to teach in your home, you need to look at what you're putting into your head and your heart now.

While the thought of preparing to be a parent already might seem completely overwhelming, it doesn't have to be. Let me share four simple things you can do that could help you become the mom or dad you hope to be.

1.



DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER

First, develop your relationship with Heavenly Father. You'll need to talk with Him through earnest, daily prayer, learn about Him through sincere scripture study, and show Him you love Him by keeping the commandments, following the *For the Strength of Youth* guidelines, and partaking of the sacrament carefully and thoughtfully. Then, as you develop that trust, that faith, and that testimony, you'll be converted to the truth that we have a Heavenly Father. And the promises you have made—and the blessings that He has promised—will seem more real than ever.

As you bring the Father to a prominent place in your life, you'll be more willing to pray not only for guidance but also for His love. This might not be easy at first, but as you experiment and call upon Him, you'll begin to recognize His love and guidance in your life, and your testimony of the gospel will continue to grow.



ASK YOURSELF:

How will this make me a better parent?

If you develop a relationship with your Heavenly Father now, it will be easier to make Him a prominent part of your home when you have your own family. Since your testimony of Him will be tangible and strong, you'll be able to teach your children about Him and they'll feel that you truly do know that He lives. Your children will need to hear your testimony often—usually informally; bearing it often now will make it very natural to testify of God and truth with your future children throughout their lives. As Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, “Within the walls of our own homes, we can and should bear pure testimony of the divinity and reality of the Father and the Son, of the great plan of happiness, and of the Restoration.”¹

You'll also be more prepared to raise children because your faith in Jesus Christ will grow and you will know you can rely on Him through the good times and the bad. Your children will need to hear you praying aloud with faith in Heavenly Father's plan. This trust you have developed will be apparent to your children as they hear you praying and testifying. So communicate with your Heavenly Father now and do it regularly. It will be a blessing to you for generations.

NOTE

1. David A. Bednar, “More Diligent and Concerned at Home,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 19.



2.



OBSERVE YOUR FAMILY

I have a suggestion for you. Write down the following sentences in your journal and think about what they mean:

- › What has my father or mother said or done that has changed me for the better?
- › How did he or she do it?
- › How has service among my family members strengthened family ties?
- › What brings my family happiness?
- › What kind of person do I want to be when I have children?
- › What are the best ways to communicate ideas clearly?

With these questions in mind, it's time to observe your family! What works and what doesn't? (Don't judge unrighteously, of course, but be objective and honest with yourself.)

Please don't expect your family to be perfect—because it will not be. It doesn't help anyone to dwell on faults and imperfections. Instead, focus on what your family does well and practice what you've learned from the answers to these questions. As you strive to become a constant source of goodness, you'll likely influence your family for the better. And as you recognize the good aspects of your family, you will have a strong foundation for establishing good patterns in your future home.



ASK YOURSELF:

How will this make me a better parent?

When you're older and you have your own home, you'll be the one who determines the atmosphere. It can be as peaceful as you decide to make it. It can be a place of love and forgiveness, a sanctuary of safety and trust, a place of God where the Spirit abounds. It can be all those things, but you'll be responsible for making it that way.

If you start planning for that atmosphere now, using your journal as a record, you'll go into parenthood with a list of ideals to guide your home. If you know now what you want your home to be like, then it will be much easier to make that home real when the time comes. No matter what kind of home you come from now, you can choose what kind of parent you will be in the future.

It doesn't help anyone to dwell on faults and imperfections. Instead, focus on what your family does well.

3.



FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH THE GOSPEL

You'll have opportunities to teach the gospel in both formal and informal settings. Sometimes you'll teach by example, and other times you'll be asked to give a talk in church or prepare a lesson for family home evening. So even without realizing it, you could be teaching the gospel every single day. What better way could you prepare to be a parent!

Try to find natural opportunities to talk about God with those around you without being preachy or overbearing. Before you know it, you'll find yourself talking about God very naturally in everyday conversation.

It's so important that you learn how to teach when you're young.



ASK YOURSELF:

How will this make me a better parent?

With children, teaching in the home happens every moment. Everything you do is going to teach something. Everything from the TV programs you watch to the kind of words you say. And you will always be an example, especially when your children are younger, because they will look to you to know what's wrong and what's right. That's why it's so important that you learn how to teach when you're young so you can be the teacher that your children will need you to be. Most often the parent sets the patterns of faith and obedience. Your children will absorb your attitudes early!

By bringing Heavenly Father's influence into everyday things and making that influence an understood part of your family rhythm, teaching the gospel will not seem strange or

awkward to your children. It will invite the Spirit into your home, and it will create a foundation for your children that will give them confidence in you and in the gospel.



4.



BE A CARING LISTENER

When I was a little girl and throughout my youth, my father would come into my room each night and ask me about my day. I can't remember much of what I said to him; I just remember that he would listen. He showed he cared enough about me to give his time to me. Because of that, I adored my father and trusted the things he said. Just by being kind and interested in me, he made me feel like I put the moon in the sky!

Learn to connect with people around you and give them your time. Some friends will need a joke or a compliment, while others will need advice, reassurance, or validation. And sometimes people just need you to listen. Develop the skill of awareness; notice the feelings of others. You'll need this sensitivity as you raise your future family.

You can practice by setting aside time for friends and family now, without electronic devices or distractions, for the sole purpose of giving them your attention. This doesn't mean a casual "hello" in the hallway or a "How are you?" on your way out the door. It means taking the time to ask sincere, thoughtful questions and listening to the answers. You'll be surprised how fast you'll bond with people and how much you'll find out about them.



Share Your Ideas

Share ideas on how to prepare to be a future parent and read the experiences of other youth at lds.org/go/parentNE816.

ASK YOURSELF:

How will this make me a better parent?

Even from a young age, you'll be able to tell that each of your children has a unique spirit and a distinct personality. That means that they will each have different needs and different ways of learning. In order to be able to teach your children individually and cater to their needs, you'll first need to connect with them and understand them. Making time to sit down with them and listening to them is a gift of yourself. Your friends today will treasure this gift and so will future children!

The more time you give them, the more they'll say. And the more you listen and hear, the more you'll understand them. Then when you trust them and they trust you, you can begin to teach. That's the most effective way to guide them toward paths of truth and light.

YOUR FUTURE STARTS NOW

Now go back to that future home and life you imagined and ask yourself the same questions you wrote down about your current home. There is much for you there. If you really want a happy, faithful home, now is the time to prepare. Now is the time to be your best self. **NE**



RESCUED by My Brother

When my brother Tanner turned 12, I invited him to start attending the temple with me. Little did I know how badly we would need each other's support in the coming years.

By Brittney Ann Harman

I was almost 12 years old when the Twin Falls Idaho Temple was dedicated. I was so excited when my older sister asked me for the first time if I wanted to start going to the temple regularly with her and her friend.

I was happy when my younger brother Tanner turned 12 three years later because I could finally invite him to attend the temple with me.

Each morning that we went, we would help each other get up and go, and when we were tired Tanner would make jokes to help us wake up. After going to the temple,

we would take some time to talk about how we'd felt in the temple and what we'd thought about.

Going to the temple with Tanner became the spiritual highlight of my week. Through our regular temple visits we became better friends, which strengthened me more than I would have imagined when some trials came my way. Our two older sisters had left for college and our ward had just been split, leaving Tanner and me as some of the only active youth in our ward.

Tanner and I spent hours calling and inviting less-active



youth to church and Mutual. It often felt like a hopeless effort because no one ever came no matter how many girls I tried to befriend.

Our parents tried to help. They would bear testimony to us when we were discouraged, and they let us talk out our frustration when we came home upset. But even so, we didn't suddenly have more friends at church, and wanting to go when I'd be the only young woman there was getting harder and harder. Our temple visits started becoming less frequent because of our busy school schedules.

I spent a lot of time reading my scriptures and pleading with the Lord to help me be strong. I was lonely and tired—tired of being alone, tired of my efforts not making a difference, tired of struggling spiritually and emotionally.

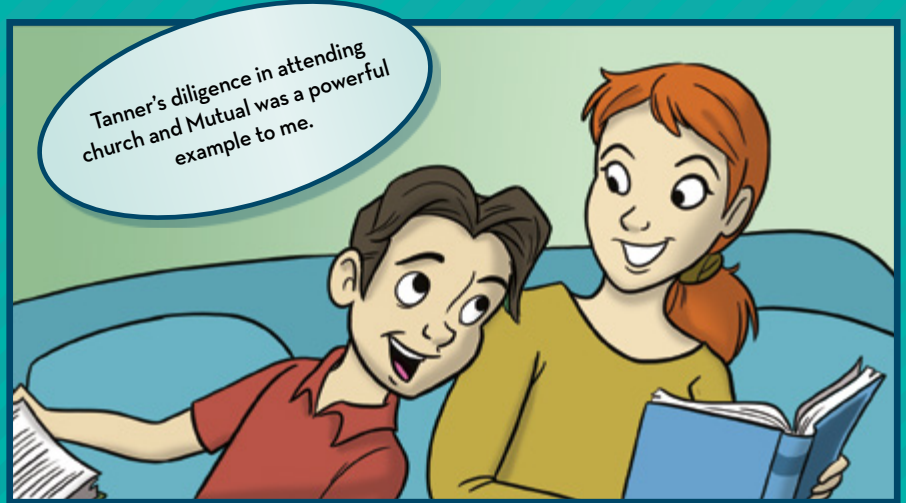
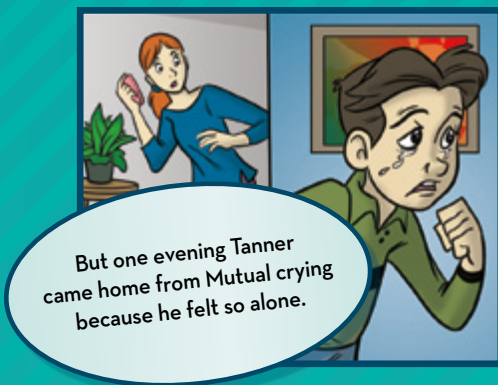
During this time, I worked as a lifeguard at the city pool. I liked being there a lot more than I liked being at church because my co-workers were my friends and were always

excited to see me. One day I decided that I wouldn't go back to Mutual since work was more fun and more helpful for me financially.

I was lonely and tired—tired of being alone, . . . tired of struggling.

I didn't think it was a big deal until I noticed myself lowering my standards. I didn't say anything about my friends' swearing, and one day I was shocked to hear myself accidentally swear when I never had before. I even watched an inappropriate movie one night at a party with my lifeguarding friends. I felt terrible and wondered what I was doing.

Meanwhile my parents had told me how much more lonely Tanner had become since I stopped attending Mutual. Every week he would ask me, "Hey, are you going to come to Mutual tonight?" When he would get home from Mutual, he would go straight to his room and read his



scriptures for a long time. He wasn't talking as much anymore, and when I asked if he was OK, he just said, "No," and walked away.

One night he came home crying because he had felt so alone.

That's when I decided that I needed to go back. It didn't matter how hard being alone was for me; Tanner needed me.

Tanner had been taking a family history course at church, and I decided that I wanted to take it with him. We wanted to start going to the temple more regularly again, and now we would be able to find names ourselves.

We enjoyed taking the class together on Sundays. After church, we'd search for names together. The coolest thing about taking our own names to the temple was that we had found them together, and even better, we were able to support each other at church and even enjoy church because we were doing the Lord's work.

Tanner's diligence in attending church and Mutual was a powerful example to me. I had a testimony of the gospel, but he helped me gain a testimony of attending church meetings and activities.

We [used] our testimonies of the temple to . . . be strong in the Church.

Together we were able to comfort one another and use our testimonies of the temple to help each other be strong in the Church. Youth attendance at church and Mutual never really got better, but Tanner and I became stronger and more able to bear our burdens as we helped each other press forward.

I'm so glad that I invited him to come to the temple with me. While I'm sure it helped him, I know it rescued me. **NE**

Brittney Ann Harman lives in Idaho, USA.

DON'T GET SUCKED IN

Pay attention to your family and friends.
Your status update can wait.



WHO'S ON ^{your} BOARD?

By David Dickson
Church Magazines

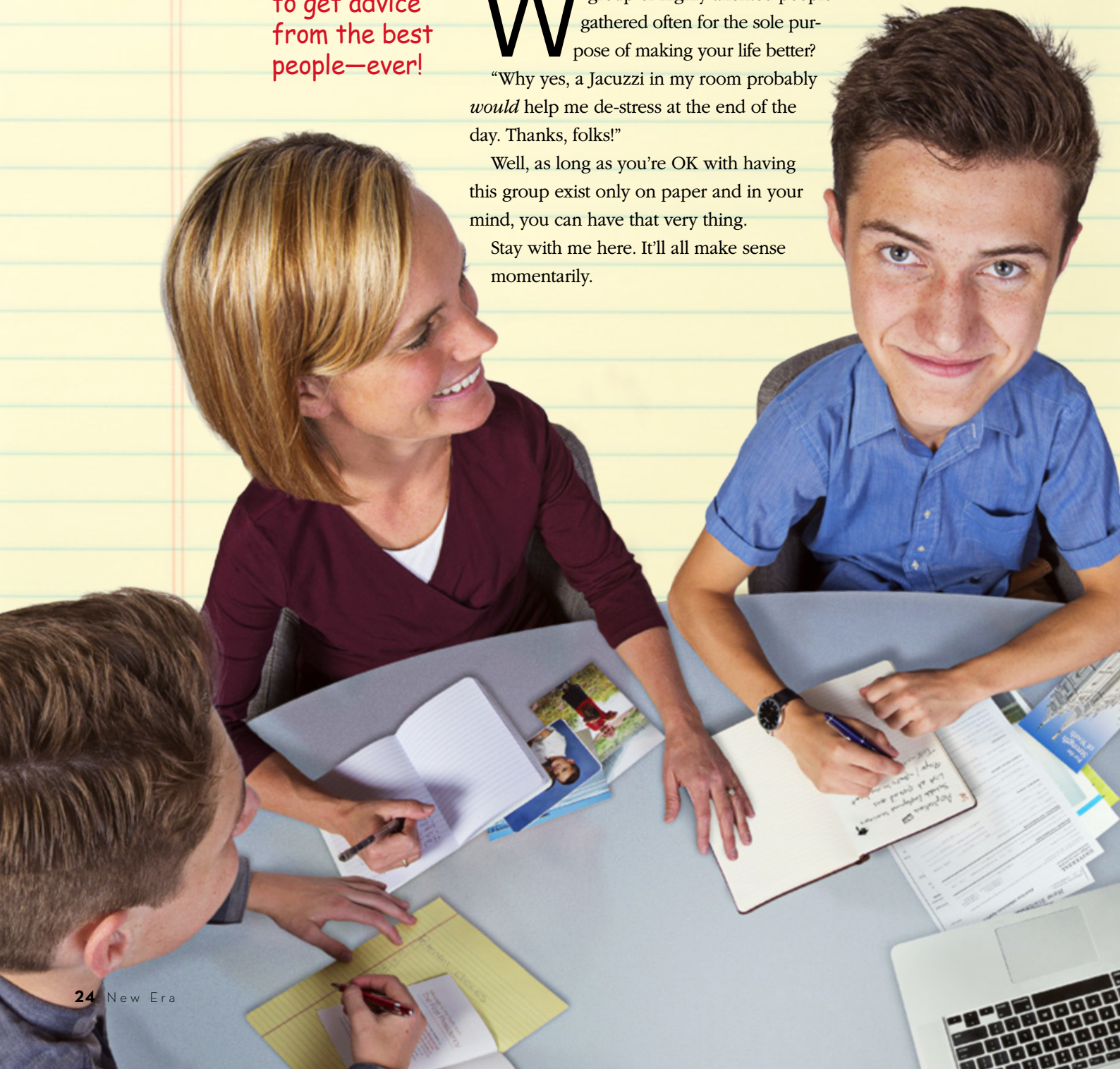
Here's how
to get advice
from the best
people—ever!

Wouldn't it be awesome if a group of highly talented people gathered often for the sole purpose of making your life better?

"Why yes, a Jacuzzi in my room probably *would* help me de-stress at the end of the day. Thanks, folks!"

Well, as long as you're OK with having this group exist only on paper and in your mind, you can have that very thing.

Stay with me here. It'll all make sense momentarily.



Oh, and you'll have to think beyond hot tubs and the like. This group can improve your life, sure enough, but in much more important ways than making life comfy or entertaining.

They can even help out your future family.

Always in Your Corner

A board of trustees is a group that makes decisions for the good of an organization. An effective board has many different talents and abilities represented

in its ranks. Bottom

line: the board wants what's best for the organization, especially what's best in the long run.

Here's the cool

part. In this case, you are "the organization." So the board wants what's best for *you*. You currently have lots of people filling this role—parents, Church leaders, friends, and so on.

For this activity, though, you can cast a *much* wider net. Your board of trustees can include anybody who has ever lived—and even people who haven't been born yet, such as your future children. The only thing they need to have in common is that they want what's best for you and those around you, including your future family.

As the "organization," your job is to listen carefully to what they tell you and then make good decisions based on trusted counsel.

Board Meetings Ahead

The point of this mental exercise is to think outside yourself when making decisions, particularly the bigger decisions in life.

Example: Let's say one of the main choices looming over you is whether to attend college. It's natural to think only how this decision will benefit you specifically. But this decision—like most decisions—ultimately affects a lot of people down the road. We're talking about your future spouse, your future children, and in this instance, all the different people you'd influence in your profession.

People
in your
future
are
counting
on you.

↑
Your
decisions
matter,
big time.

Imagine for a moment how many future people might be influenced by your decision of whether or not to become a mechanic, a teacher, a physical therapist, etc.

Here's where your board comes in. Create a list of people whose advice would be helpful in any given decision. This could be a different group each time, such as:

- What would a future son or daughter suggest?
- How about Joseph Smith? What counsel would he give you?
- Or your great-grandfather whom you never met but who kept such an excellent journal that you feel like you know him anyway?
- What might President Thomas S. Monson or Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, say to you?
- What do you imagine the Savior might tell

you? You could even search the scriptures to find His very words.

One by one, hold a mental interview with each member on your board. You might even want to pray beforehand and ask for promptings and guidance in the exercise. (Remember, the Holy Ghost can help you receive very specific counsel.) Take notes and write down impressions as you "talk" with each board member.

Ask them for their advice. Remember, their job isn't to tell you what you want to hear. Their job is to give it to you straight. Though this all takes place in your mind and heart, you might be surprised at the ideas that come to you that you've never considered before. Their counsel will be more helpful when you look for how the general principles they've taught apply to your specific situation.

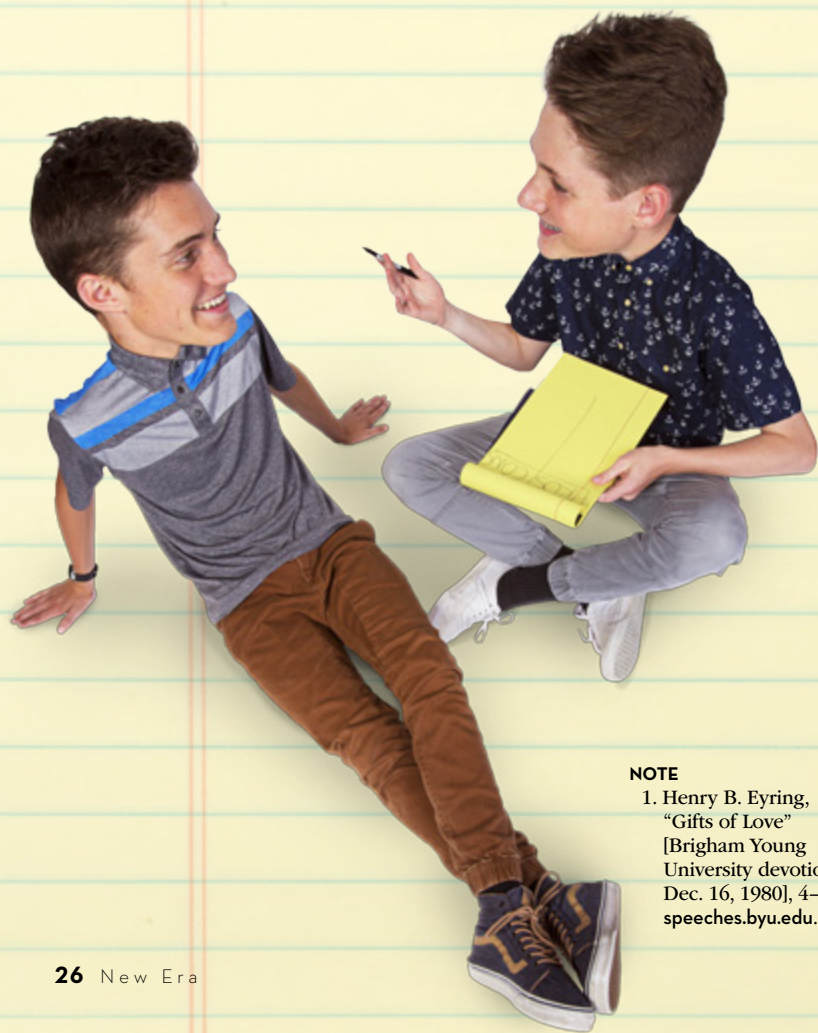
Think Bigger

When you plan your life with other people in mind, you make decisions differently. Maybe you hate to ride bikes, but learning how to fix a flat bike tire anyway might make you a hero in the eyes of your kids someday. Or perhaps thinking about your future children could help you keep going on that next huge homework problem you've got to tackle.

For example, President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, remembers when, as a young man, he'd convinced himself he couldn't understand math. His dad thought otherwise and helped him through his homework. "I can't remember the gifts my dad wrapped and gave to me" for holidays, he said. "But I remember the chalkboard and his quiet voice. . . . Because he had spent time [studying as a boy], he and I could have that time at the chalkboard and he could help me."¹

People in your future are counting on you.
Your decisions matter, big time.

So who's on your board? **NE**



NOTE

1. Henry B. Eyring, "Gifts of Love" [Brigham Young University devotional, Dec. 16, 1980], 4–5, speeches.byu.edu.



HOW DO I **REALLY FEEL?**

Her email hurt me, but while I was typing my angry reply, something made me stop.

By Laura Nelson

I had just returned from school. I'd gotten into an argument with one of my best friends from church, and it had really got me down.

As usual, I sat down to read my email. I saw one from her and opened it. I scanned the text carefully. The hurtful words covered me like a wave. The tears streamed down my face as I read to the end. My heart felt like it had been blown apart.

I quickly created a new email to her and started to type, but then something told me to stop. I knew it was the Holy Ghost. I backed away from the computer. In my head I asked, "Why do I need to stop? I need to tell her how I feel." Then came the words, "All right. Tell her how you really feel." I quickly moved toward the computer again.

I paused to analyze the Spirit's words. Though they had been almost exactly my own words, they made me ponder. I wondered, "How *do* I really feel?" Immediately the words *betrayed*, *broken*, and *hurt* came to mind. Again a voice said, "Tell her how you really feel." True, I felt those things, but I wouldn't want to hurt her like she hurt me. We were friends, weren't we? I realized that what I really felt was love.

My anger and sadness still surrounded me, but I decided to trust the Lord. I deleted the words I had written and started listing things I loved about her. As I did, my negative emotions completely left me. I found myself making a list so long that it took multiple scrolls to get through it. When I finally hit Send, I let out a sigh. I felt like my heart had been cleansed of pain and grief. I knew that my Savior had taken away my pain and filled my soul with Christlike love.

A couple of days later I received a response from my friend. She explained that at first she had been too shocked to respond. As soon as she had seen the list, she started reading it, expecting it to be a list of insults. When she found that they were compliments, she was blown away with disbelief.

I learned that when you make someone else feel better, it makes you feel better. Never underestimate the power of God. It deeply affected my life at that moment. I'll never forget my pause to question and listen and how it has benefited my life. **NE**

Laura Nelson lives in New Hampshire, USA.

GETTING A **JUMP** ON HER FUTURE

By Miriam Sweeney
Church Self-Reliance Services

An idea, a trampoline, and a desire to help others propelled an 11-year-old girl to great lessons about self-reliance and service.

Most 11-year-olds are already busy with school, household chores, and activities with friends. But Alexandra C., from the state of Durango, Mexico, wasn't a typical 11-year-old. In addition to all the normal things young people do at that age, Alexandra was making money from her own business and serving in her community.

So how does a girl that young start her own company?

Starting with an Idea

It began when Alexandra heard of some classes the Church offers to help people learn to be self-reliant. The group was mainly for people 18 and older, but Alexandra was determined to join. She loved the idea of learning how to get a job or start her own business.

Could it be that she, a girl still in elementary school, might not only shape her *own* future but also help people who had even less than she did? After all, many of the Church members she knew from her town had little education and few resources.

Alexandra joined a group called "Starting and Growing My Business," one of three subjects offered. Rather than being taught by a teacher, the group was led by a facilitator—a fellow group member who guides the other members through the course and encourages discussion. Alexandra met with her group every week for three months.

As Alexandra learned how to be both temporally and spiritually self-reliant, she began to look around at the needs in her area. She noticed that there weren't enough recreational activities for all the kids in her town, so she saved up money and bought a small trampoline. Alexandra put the trampoline in a public area and started renting it out, using ideas she'd learned about marketing and finance in her course.

The trampoline became very popular in her community.



Alexandra learned to balance homework, the trampoline business, and her facilitator role exceptionally well.



BLESSINGS OF WORK

“Developing the capacity to work will help you contribute to the world in which you live. It will bring you an increased sense of self-worth. It will bless you and your family, both now and in the future. . . .

“To be truly self-reliant, you must learn how to work with others and turn to the Lord for His help and strength.”

For the Strength of Youth (2011), 40, 41.

The Blessings of Service and Hard Work

Alexandra started using her skills in other ways too. Because she’d shown great respect for all her group members and had followed through on all her commitments, Alexandra was trusted to facilitate a new group—a position normally held by people 18 or older.

When Alexandra became a facilitator, she was by far the youngest of the six participants in her group. She carefully studied the materials before each group meeting so she’d know how to best help her fellow group members. She took her new role seriously. “She would get anxious when her group didn’t arrive on time or when the video equipment didn’t work,” said her father, David.

Alexandra learned to balance homework, the trampoline business, and her facilitator role exceptionally well. And she thinks it was well worth it. “God blessed me when He made me a facilitator,” she said. For her, one blessing was to learn about loving those you serve.





“I learned I could improve myself. . . . I know that the self-reliance training was revelation from God.”

That love led her to reach out to her group with a real desire for them to succeed. For instance, each time they met, group members made weekly commitments to apply what they studied to their businesses and then teach their families the gospel principles they’d learned. When participants in Alexandra’s group didn’t reach their goals or missed a class, she’d visit them in their homes to see if they were all right and to encourage them to fulfill their commitments. “I loved visiting my group members,” she said.

Alexandra’s dad added, “I marvel to see how my little daughter could feel so strongly about the well-being of those in need. She has great compassion for those she serves.”

Now a Beehive in Young Women, Alexandra has plans to expand her trampoline business to a nearby community. By learning to be more self-reliant and helping others do the same, she said she’s already started to see changes in herself and her new friends in her group. “My testimony of Christ has grown,” Alexandra said. “I feel more sure of myself, and I want to serve.”

Alexandra said that because of this training course, she’s more aware of who she really is and how she can serve. “I learned I could improve myself. And I loved to see all of the group members improving. I know they’ll be better off now; their businesses will improve. I know that the self-reliance training was revelation from God.”

For Alexandra, her testimony, self-worth, and service to others have definitely been things worth working for. **NE**



To learn more about the self-reliance classes, visit lds.org/go/relianceNE816.



By Elder
Timothy J. Dyches
Of the Seventy

When we recognize that we are dependent on God, we also realize that He is eager to help us.

ONLY WITH THE HELP OF GOD

My senior year in high school brought a challenge I wasn't expecting. Shortly after school began, our speech teacher assigned me to participate in debate. We studied, practiced, and competed, and I humbly learned many valuable lessons.

Months later and four weeks before the state speech competition, my teacher casually informed me that he had also just entered my name to compete in extemporaneous speech. He began explaining that on the first day I would be required to deliver at least three different seven-minute speeches in front of a panel of judges.

And there was another catch—the speech topics were randomly assigned contemporary issues, with only 30 minutes to prepare. I was stunned; I had never even witnessed an extemporaneous speech.

Preparing in the remaining weeks, reading as many articles on contemporary issues as I could, I still felt overwhelming self-doubt and anxiety. On the day of the competition, I asked the officials, "I've already drawn my topic, but may I go in and listen a couple of moments to someone who's actually giving his talk?" They replied, "You've only got 30 minutes. If you want to spend it listening, that's up to you."

Asking for Help

That very first time, I went in and listened for a few precious moments. I knew I needed to be alone and pray to my Heavenly Father. I noticed a secluded grove on the university campus next to a pond where I could be alone, on my knees.

I pleaded with Heavenly Father for help. It wasn't a prayer to win—it was an earnest prayer for the assistance of the Holy Ghost so that I would be able to do something I had never done before and make it through this challenge. I realized I needed God's help.



Heavenly Father answered my prayer. I remembered what I had studied and was able to connect facts and impressions. With every new topic drawn, I would first leave to pray. Then I would go to work. The next day surprisingly brought me to the final round.

My faith in God was developing into my testimony, and my faith grew stronger as I felt Him near. I thanked Heavenly Father for the help I had received, for after doing all that I could do, He made more of me than I could ever have done myself (see 2 Nephi 25:23).

In my professional life, I was an ear, nose, and throat surgeon. On one occasion in Reno, Nevada, USA, I was called on to assist the hospital's pediatric intensive care team as they treated a fragile baby boy who had been born very early. That little guy overcame some tough challenges in the first few months of life and gained enough strength to go home with his parents and family.

Unfortunately, after being home for two months, he was now back in the hospital with a serious infection in his left lung, and he was not responding well to a high dose of medication.

The intensive care specialists were suspicious that the baby might have breathed something in that became stuck in his lung, but it had not shown up on any X-rays. Due to his worsening state, they recommended that I look into his lungs with him asleep in the operating room.

At the time we did not have the technology to see very far down into the small airways of infants well. As we labored to clear the infection from his left lung, for just a brief moment I saw

It wasn't
a prayer to
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what he had inhaled—a bright yellow fragment of crayon, wedged beyond the reach of any of the instruments available to retrieve it.

A nurse in the operating suite realized the severity of the situation and mentioned that she had seen a long, slender instrument used in removing kidney stones from tight places. She quickly produced one, a slender spiral flexible wire basket that un-spirals just enough when used properly to retrieve a small stone without damaging the surrounding tissue. But how to get it there?

“I Can’t Do This by Myself”

I asked the anesthesiologist to continue to manage our little patient for a moment while I went to the corner of the operating room. “Heavenly Father, I can’t do this by myself.” The thought came to my mind: “Do your best. Together we can do this.”

The thought came to my mind: “Do your best. Together we can do this.”

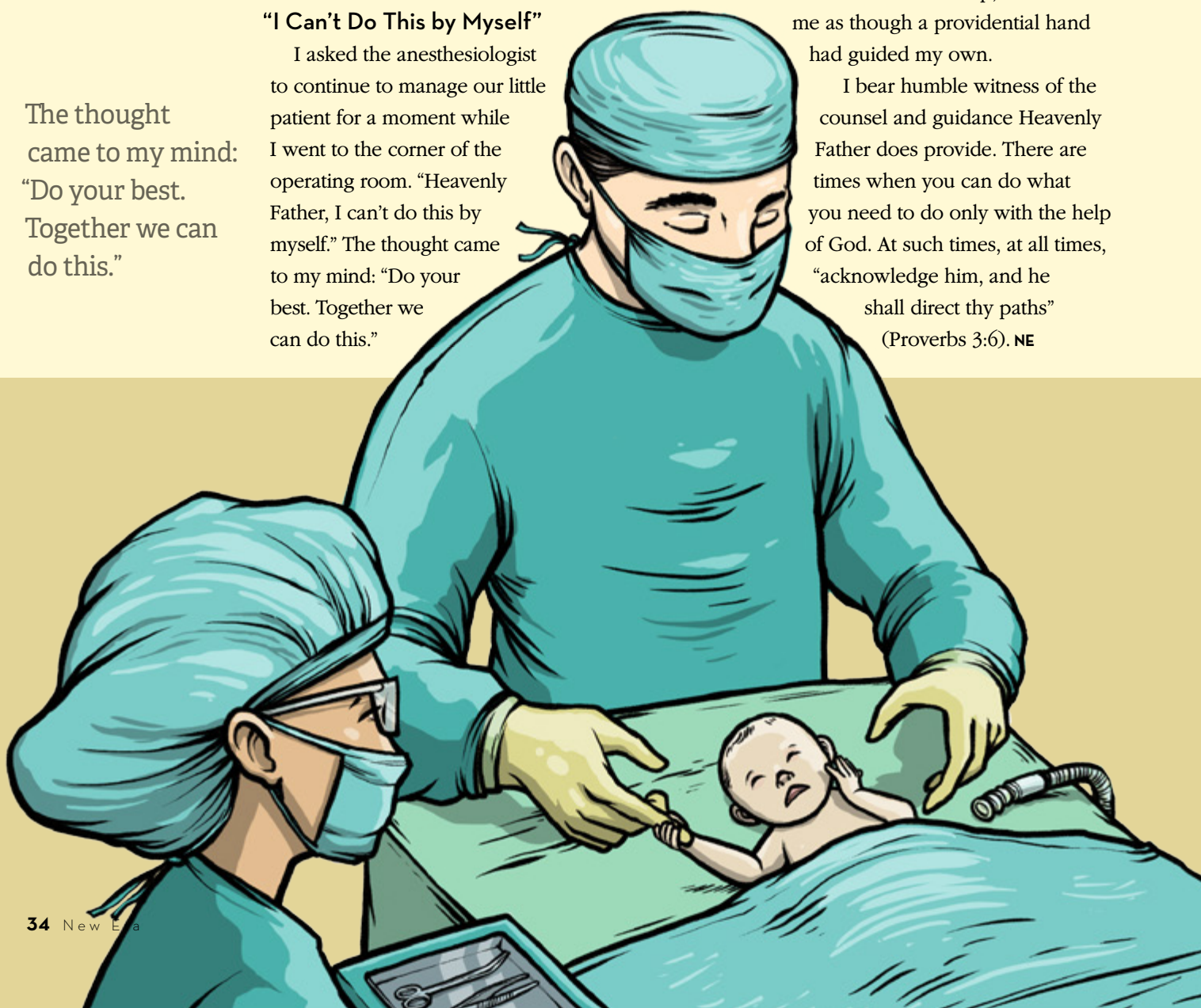
I practiced several times opening and closing the wire basket in my hands in different positions. Ever so gently, the slender wire basket was passed through the instrument right up to the crayon. With delicate maneuvering, it was passed beyond, opened, and then slowly allowed to close. The airway was now clear and clean.

With the crayon removed, the child quickly recovered and thrived. He was discharged within the week with a little jar containing a bright yellow souvenir.

I know I received divine help, as real to me as though a providential hand had guided my own.

I bear humble witness of the counsel and guidance Heavenly Father does provide. There are times when you can do what you need to do only with the help of God. At such times, at all times, “acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths”

(Proverbs 3:6). NE



a day?

This was going to be hard. But maybe my family could help.

By Avery Winter

When I was a deacon, a member of our bishopric challenged our deacons quorum to read the standard works in a year. He explained that we could accomplish this goal by reading five chapters a day, and I decided to do it.

A few nights later, a guideline for accomplishing the scripture reading challenge was dropped off at my house, and I realized that it would be hard to do this by myself. I asked my family if they would join me. After some discussion, they agreed it would improve our family scripture study. We decided to start that night.

It was not easy. Some days it felt almost like a chore. I remember one night when I had to wake my family up late at night so that we could read. We were determined not to miss a night of reading, and we didn't.

It took some creativity to reach our goal. When my dad was on a business trip we would put him on speakerphone and read together. We kept a copy of the scriptures in the car in case we were ever on the road.

As we read, our lives changed. We grew spiritually, and I found that I handled trials better. My dad was laid off from work. It was a difficult time for our family, but we gained valuable insight on Heavenly Father's plan for us through our scripture study. I know Heavenly Father was blessing us.

When my family finished our challenge we decided that we would not stop reading and learning. We started rereading the Book of Mormon the very next day. My life has been changed forever, and I know that daily scripture study is a habit I will not break. The Spirit whispered to me that the things I read are true. We can do hard things. As I prepare for a mission I will be armed with the power of God because I acted upon this challenge from my Church leader. **NE**

Avery Winter lives in Utah, USA.



SEARCHING FOR GOD



By Ismael Ezequiel Polanco Almonte

When I was only about eight years old, I wondered about the nature of God. One day my father read the scripture from the book of James that promises that if we lack wisdom, we can “ask of God, that giveth . . . liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given” (James 1:5). Those words filled my heart and were imprinted on my mind.

When I was alone in my bedroom, I prayed to God, asking Him to tell me if the church I was attending was the right one. I wanted Him to answer me immediately. But that didn’t happen. God didn’t do what I wanted, and I was sad that He hadn’t answered my prayer immediately.

I wanted to know! I had done what I thought was sufficient.

Growing up, I had the opportunity to search for the answer in many churches. As I did, I got more and more confused. Everybody contradicted each other, and they would just gloss over my questions about the nature of God.

Years later, tired of searching, I said, “There is no answer.”

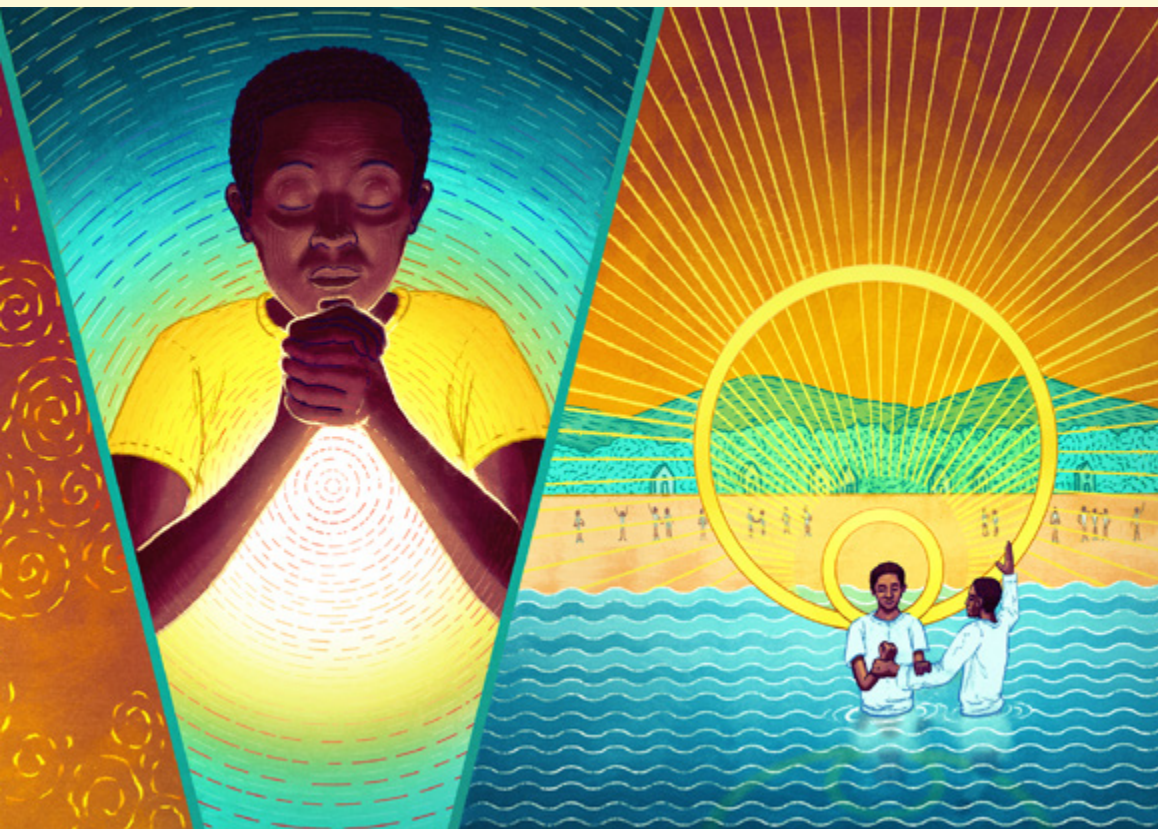
I began to do things that some modern youth do, such as partying and participating in a lot of worldly diversions. Each week I sank further and further into darkness because my decisions weren’t the best. The bad habits were also distancing me from my family, who had always supported me.

But once again the desire came

to me to ask God. I prayed, “Father, I am here waiting. I have searched, and I have not found. The scriptures promise answers, but nothing is coming. Look at me. I am alone. I want to know, but I don’t know how to find You.”

At that time only—not before and not after, but just when I needed it—I felt that my chest burned as strong as if a volcano were inside of me. I couldn’t control the tears. I knew it was an answer to my question.

In the afternoon, when I was at school, I was thinking about my answer when my best friend asked me, “What are you thinking about, Ismael?” I didn’t give him a truthful answer then, telling him that I was thinking about the beach and that



I have never felt such a strong feeling of peace as I did when I first attended seminary.

I wanted to go see the sunrise in the morning. I invited him to go.

"I can't," he told me, smiling.

"Why not?" I asked him. "What are you doing so early in the morning?"

"Seminary," he said.

"Seminary? What is seminary?"

I asked him. He explained to me that it was classes that his church held.

"How long have you been going to a church?" I asked him, surprised.

"As long as I can remember. I'm a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

I told him I wanted to go and see. I knew inside that it was an answer to my long years of prayer.

The next day I woke up at 5:30 a.m. and went to seminary. The greatest surprise was that they were

studying the Bible. I can say that I have never felt such a strong feeling of peace as I did when I entered the branch's building in Matancita, the Dominican Republic, where pure doctrine was shared, delicious to a soul that had sought so anxiously. The hymns sung filled my mind and my heart with a thought: "This is the truth."

"Wow," I thought, "I want to feel this every day." I asked when I could come back, and the teacher, my friend's mother, gave me the class schedule and invited me to come to the branch's Sunday services also.

From then on, every Monday through Friday, I got up at 5:30 to go to seminary and every Sunday to church. I couldn't miss. I had found

what I had always been looking for.

Sadly, there were no missionaries to teach me and baptize me. After a year and a half and much prayer, missionaries arrived and taught me all of the missionary lessons in a week. I remember the moment when I was submerged in the blue waters on my village's beautiful beach.

I now enjoy the privilege of being not a stranger or foreigner (see Ephesians 2:19) but a brother of all those who have entered in the path of the Lord, the strait and narrow path. **NE**

Ismael Ezequiel Polanco Almonte lives in Santiago, the Dominican Republic.

*When the Sabbath comes,
you'll be glad you got
ready all week long.*



READY TO TAKE THE FIELD

By Richard M. Romney
Church Magazines

Mateo was playing the best soccer of his life. In the preseason, he'd scored five times. His passes were crisp, his defense superb. He was popular with fans, teammates, and coaches.

"So why not relax a little before the season opener?" he thought. The next week he took it easy. He arrived at practice just as it was starting and played with less than his best effort. "It's OK," he thought. "In the game, I'll turn it up a notch."

But the night before the match, friends came by. He stayed up late, then slept in, and barely arrived as the game was starting. When the coach asked what was wrong, he brushed it off. He couldn't remember the game plan, but it was too late to go over it again. "I'll just have to rely on what I did last week," he said.

The game did not go well. Mateo tried to blame teammates, coaches, and officials. But he knew in his heart that it was his fault. If you're into sports, you know why: if you want to play well, you prepare all week long. Then when the real game comes you're ready to take the field.



SOMETHING BIGGER

Having heard Mateo's story, let's talk about something bigger you need to prepare for all week long: the Sabbath. You can get in all-star shape for it with these ideas.

DURING THE WEEK

Just like you do in sports, focus on basics. Pray. Participate in family home evening. Go to Young Men or Young Women, Mutual activities, and service projects. Think of these as your conditioning drills. Study the scriptures. That's like reading the spiritual playbook. Church videos that relate to the week's topic can be like watching team films.

Develop a game plan. You know you're supposed to always remember the Savior. What can you do to be ready to renew that promise when you take the sacrament?

And what about assignments? Is there anything you need to get ready, like a talk, a lesson, or an agenda? Preparation will be more

complete if you're working on it all week long.



THE DAY BEFORE

Sports teams usually have a run-through the day before a game. You can do the same by making sure your "uniform" is ready. Knowing on Saturday what you'll wear on Sunday means you won't be as rushed before church. Also, finish prepping for talks or lessons. If tomorrow is fast Sunday, plan around when you'll start your fast. Do you have something specific to fast for? Make sure to start your fast with prayer.

Also, enforce a personal training rule. Since you want to be alert during meetings, get enough sleep the night before. Athletes have curfews. You can too.

A Pep Song

Maybe a pep song will help you get ready for Sunday. How about page 196 in the *Children's Songbook*? "Saturday is a special day. It's the day we get ready for Sunday." But you might want to sing it on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.





ON SUNDAY

The big day is here. Give yourself every advantage by getting up early. Listen to music that will prepare you for worship. Help junior “players” (younger brothers and sisters) to “suit up.” Have a family prayer, and get to the meetinghouse early. As assigned, prepare the “field” by setting up chairs and organizing classrooms. Ask teachers if you can get anything for

COUNSEL WITH YOUR “COACHES”

Think of your parents as your head coaches and your leaders as additional coaches and trainers. Just like an athlete accepts advice from the coaching staff, you can seek counsel from parents and leaders about how to better prepare for the Sabbath day.

them. If you’re in a presidency, huddle together and make sure you’re good to go before church starts. Enter the chapel early and prepare by reverently listening to the prelude music.

Stay focused by singing the hymns, thinking about the Savior during the sacrament, and helping your siblings as you sit with your family. In Sunday School and quorum and class lessons, take part and encourage others to join in. Offer comments, share experiences, read out loud, and keep your mind on what you’re doing. Set goals together and individually. Be a “team player.”

After church, fill your day with spiritual experiences: researching family history, writing in a journal, gathering fast offerings (for young men), or sharing what you learned in church with your family. Visit someone who is sick or lonely. As the scriptures say, make the Sabbath a delight by doing God’s work on His special day (see Isaiah 58:13).



Share #HisDay

Share your Sabbath experiences on social media with the hashtag #HisDay. For more information, go to lds.org/sabbath-day.

STRENGTHENING YOUR SABBATH EXPERIENCE

By the way, after one bad week, Mateo returned to proper preparation and strengthened his season. Each week he focused on the basics and got ready all week long. From then on, he came to games ready to take the field.

How about you? Would some proper preparation strengthen your Sabbath? Start now. You’ll find yourself looking forward to the most important day of the week. **NE**

Why do we **talk** so much
about **marriage**?
It's something I'm just
not interested in.

“**E**verything we do should have celestial marriage as its focus and purpose”¹ because “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and . . . the family is central to the Creator’s plan for [our] *eternal* destiny.”²

Marriage in the Father’s plan is not just about here and now but also the eternities. During this life, “God . . . has extended to us the privilege of our own family . . . to help us become more like Him.”³

Heavenly Father is an exalted being with an eternal family. He wants the same for us. It’s a major part of His plan for us. “A family built on the marriage of a man and woman supplies the best setting for God’s plan to thrive. . . . Such marriage . . . is as much a part of the plan of happiness as the Fall and the Atonement.”⁴

Now, not all are able to marry for eternity in this life. But all who are worthy have been promised the opportunity either here or in the next life. Pray to Heavenly Father about the role of eternal marriage in His plan for you. He will answer you through His Spirit. **NE**

NOTES

1. Henry B. Eyring, “Eternal Families,” *Ensign*, May 2016, 82.
2. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129; emphasis added.
3. M. Russell Ballard, “That the Lost May Be Found,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 100.
4. D. Todd Christofferson, “Why Marriage, Why Family,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 52.



As a young man,
how do I **decide** whether to go
on a **mission** right after
turning **18** or to wait?

Your decision about when to leave on a mission may be based on a number of factors: school and/or career plans, military or civil-service obligations, finances, physical or emotional health, maturity, and so on. These are things you should talk about with your parents, your bishop, and other appropriate advisers.

You shouldn’t feel pressure to leave on your mission as soon as possible after turning 18. When President Thomas S. Monson introduced the change in the missionary eligibility age, he said: “I am not suggesting that all young men will—or should—serve at this earlier age. Rather, based on individual circumstances as well as upon a determination by priesthood leaders, this option is now available” (“Welcome to Conference,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 4–5). **NE**

“I have a friend who feels like she doesn’t have any friends at church except me. What can I do to help her?”

In this situation, she probably feels left out, lonely, or vulnerable. Fortunately, because of your friendship, there are several things you can do to encourage her:

- Help her make friends with the other youth. Introduce her to them, include her in your conversations with them, and suggest activities for the youth in your ward to get to know each other better. Also, you could talk to your Young Women president so she and other leaders can help.
- Help her recognize her divine worth. You could tell her some of the great qualities you see in her.
- Help her remember the Savior’s love and your love. The Savior said, “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine” (John 10:14). Even if she feels like no one understands, the Lord will know exactly how she is feeling. Pray for her, and of course show your love for her by including her in activities and talking to her at church.
- Suggest that she turn to the scriptures and prayer to strengthen her relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
- Above all, encourage her to always attend church, even if it’s tough for her. Remind her of the importance of taking the sacrament and learning the gospel at Church meetings.

If your ideas aren’t working out immediately, continue to be there for your friend and encourage her to do the right things.



Be Stronger Together

Encourage and help her to approach other youth. Individually

we are strong, but together we are stronger. Tell your friend that she will be better able to help the kingdom of God grow if she has more friends who will edify her, be a support in her life, and help her love Jesus Christ and His gospel!

Scarlet M., 16, Cautín Province, Chile

Invite Her to Activities

When I joined the Church, I felt alone, though some of the youth made efforts to interact with me. I went to Mutual activities and got more involved in their conversations. I listened to them and gave my contribution. I smiled at them and showed genuine interest in them. My advice is to help your friend open up. Help her participate in any Church activity, and she will begin to enjoy the company of many friends.

Faith O., 17, Abia, Nigeria



Include Her

I would try to help include your friend in conversations and activities with the other

youth at church. Talking with other good friends about how this friend feels can help. Asking for their help to include her might bring awareness to other friends of this person’s needs

and help them remember to be kinder and include her in conversations and activities.

Trevor C., 14, Idaho, USA

Tell Her What She Means to You

I felt the same way when I changed wards. That stage is difficult. It is important to tell your friend how special she is, what she means to you, and the good qualities she has so that she will feel confident and that she doesn't need to fear. We are all important. Encourage her to speak with a leader, pray, and read the scriptures to know that she is not alone.

Sharon G., 14, Yucatán, Mexico

Host a Party

You or she could host a party with just a few people from church. It's easier to get to know others when it's a smaller group.

Trais H., 13, Idaho, USA

Be Ready to Help

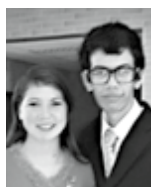
You can help her understand that we are all members of God's family, sisters and brothers, and that she needs to show love and interact with everyone. Also, let her know that in our large spiritual family, we are always ready to help and strengthen each other. We all share the same goal that we strive for. In the gospel, we are never alone.

*Sister Anna Kaigorodova,
Russia Moscow Mission*

Listen to the Lord's Guidance

Pray for her and ask Heavenly Father to help you know how you can help her. Talk to your leaders and try involving her in the conversations with the other girls at church. Continue to be her friend and do the best you can, and the Lord will help you know how to help her.

Anastasia B., 18, Utah, USA



Tell Her She Is Never Alone

First, we would pray for that young woman and invite her to each activity or service project so that she can feel she is a part of the group. Let's not let anyone fall! Second, we would tell her that she is never alone, that Heavenly Father is always with us and loves us deeply and eternally.



A TRUE FRIEND

"All of us need true friends to love us, to listen to us, to show us the way, and to testify of truth to us so that we may retain the companionship of the Holy Ghost. You must be such a true friend."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "True Friends," Ensign, May 2002, 29.

We would remind her of the quote from our prophet: "You will one day stand aside and look at your difficult times, and you will realize that He was always there beside you" (Thomas S. Monson, "We Never Walk Alone," *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 124).

*Yenifer S., 18, and Fernando P., 18,
Tacuarembó, Uruguay*

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

UPCOMING QUESTION

"How can I help my friends overcome problems like swearing or excessive video gaming?"

Send your answer and photo by September 15, 2016.

Go to newera.lds.org, and click "Submit Your Work." Sign in with your LDS Account, and then select "New Era" under "Choose Magazine." Type your info, 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.



Marriage and Family

Did you notice how often the topic of marriage and family came up in the April 2016 general conference? Have you thought much about what the reason for that may be? As you think about this month's *Come, Follow Me* theme, review the talks that discussed this topic. Here are a few of them:

- "Eternal Families," by President Henry B. Eyring
- "In Praise of Those Who Save," by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf
- "Family Councils," by Elder M. Russell Ballard
- "Fathers," by Elder D. Todd Christofferson

Find these and more at 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 lds.org/go/cardsNE816.

WHATEVER PROBLEMS

YOUR FAMILY IS FACING,

WHATEVER YOU MUST DO TO SOLVE THEM,

the beginning and the
end of the solution is

CHARITY,

the pure love of

CHRIST.

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

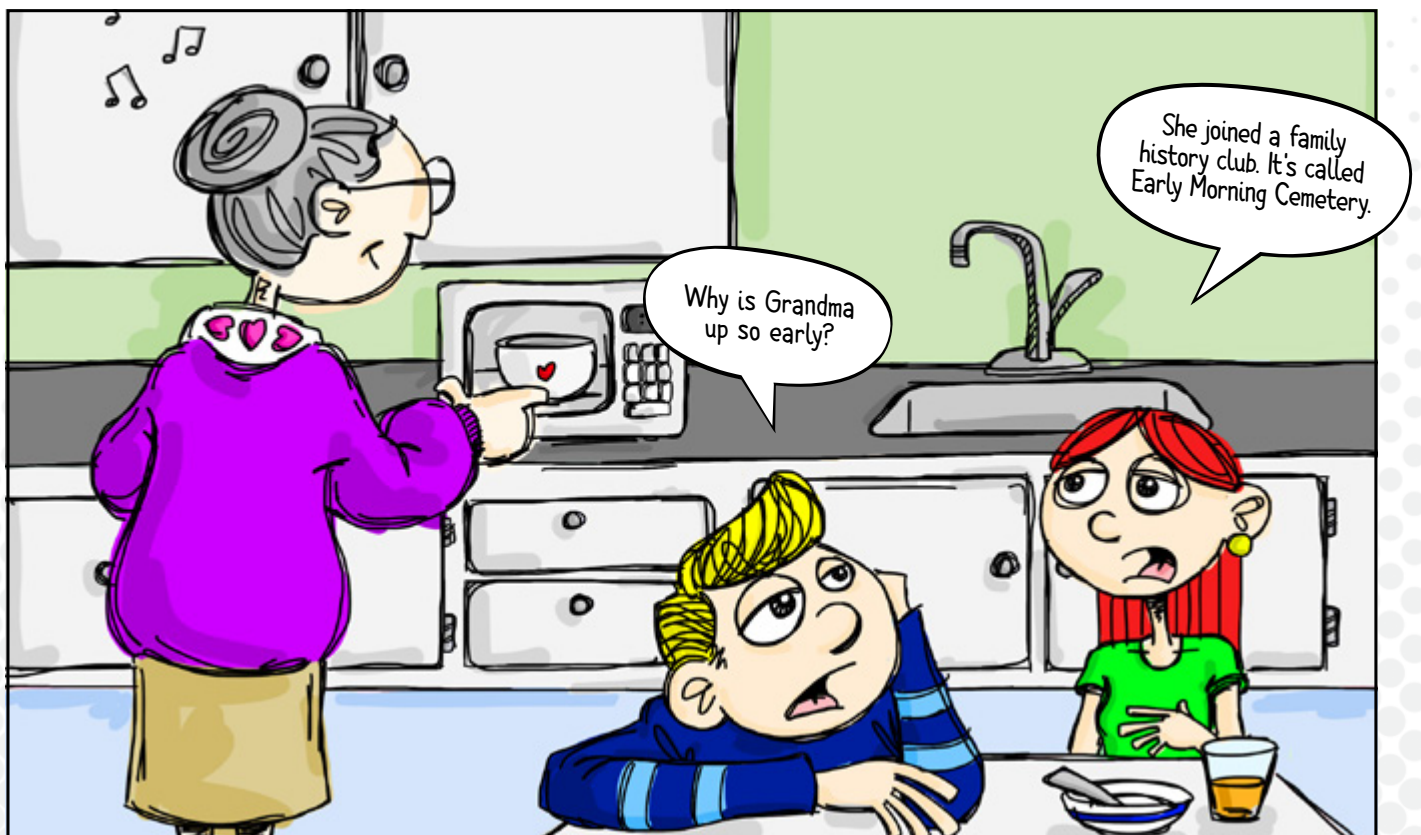
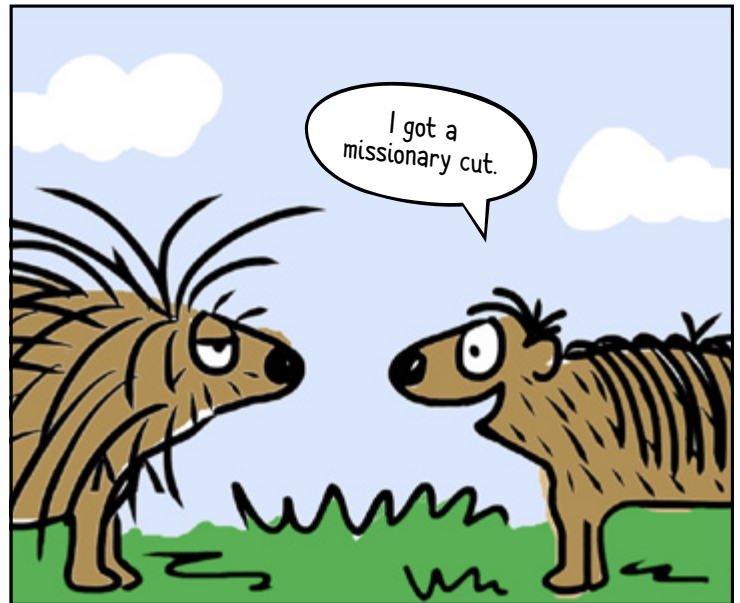
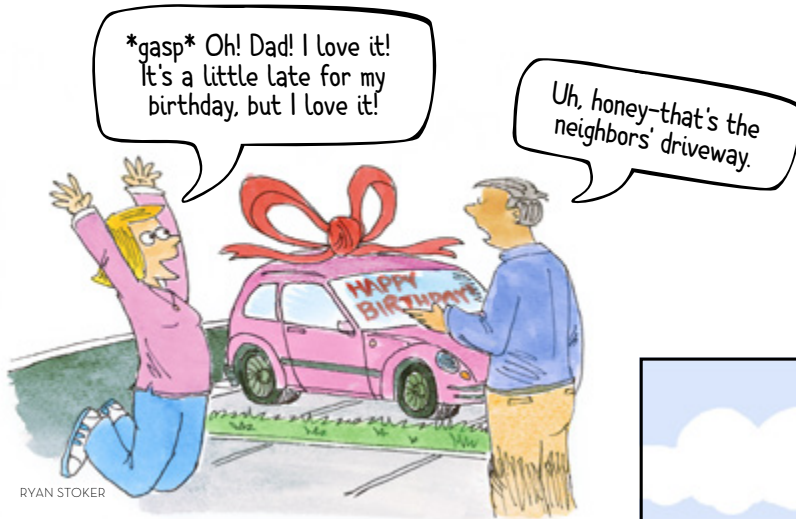
LIVE *your* LIFE

SO THAT...YOU WILL BRING

PURITY

to your marriage & to your children.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
April 2016 general conference





JUST 200 MORE FEET

One summer, my mother and I went on a humanitarian trip to Guatemala. One day, we went to the Semac Champey, a park with pool after pool of deep blue water connected by rock terraces overflowing with water.

Our group hiked up the steep, rugged path to the cliff top overlooking the pools. The hike involved many staircases along a sheer drop-off. Several times we had to stop by a bench just to catch our breath.

After hiking for hours, my mother was winded and tired. She stopped alongside the trail, saying she would join us on our way back down.

I continued about 200 feet farther and came to the clearing with the lookout. The view was beyond words. Hurriedly, I ran back to my mother and encouraged her to come and see it.

As we rested and took in the view, I thought about how that hike is like our lives. Though the pathway of the gospel is straight and narrow, sometimes it seems like a vertical climb. We get discouraged as friends give up or turn back to paths that seem easier. And the adversary is constantly there, telling us that we're foolish or just not spiritually cut out for the journey.

But we shouldn't give up. Eternal

life, just like that view, will be beyond words. Though we won't achieve perfection in our mortal state, we can reach any heights through Christ, and He will always be there to help us for those last 200 feet.

Since this experience, I've tried to not give up on my hike to heaven. The Lord has blessed me in my efforts to fulfill His commandments and serve others. I know that He will help all of His children. Our part is to keep pressing on.

Ryan Q., Missouri, USA

A PRIESTHOOD BLESSING

One night, I became very sick and spent most of the night moaning. I wasn't able to keep anything down and my stomach was doing somersaults. It took a while, but I finally got up enough courage to ask my dad for a blessing. It was the first father's blessing I had requested personally, and my dad was not expecting it. He found his little container of oil and blessed me that I would be well and be able to sleep peacefully. As soon as he finished, I felt so much better that I started to cry. The Spirit has never touched me so completely as it did then, and my testimony grew a lot.

So if you're ever in a difficult situation and you need a priesthood blessing, don't be afraid to ask your father (or home teacher). It takes courage and strength, but you just feel so much better after. It doesn't have to just be an illness—anything can call for a blessing, no matter how small it may seem.

Hannah C., Idaho, USA

A STRONG CONNECTION

I'd lost my cell phone. No matter how hard I searched my room, I couldn't find it. I knew this phone was of no worth in the grand scheme of things, but it was still important to me. I decided, "Why should I keep looking? I'll never find it," when all of a sudden I felt the need to pray.

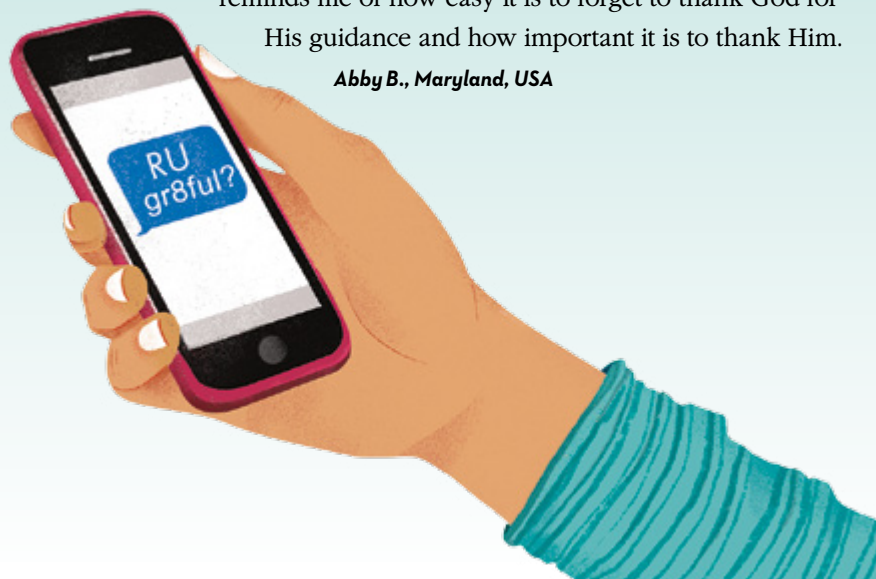
I knelt down and prayed for help. When I opened my eyes, I was staring at a certain spot in between my bookcase and my bed. It was covered by my blanket, so I moved it. I looked under the bed, and there was my cell phone! I was so relieved.

I suddenly remembered all of the *Friend* magazine stories I'd read about children thanking their Heavenly Father for helping. So that's what I did. I thanked Heavenly Father for helping me find my cell phone, an earthly item that could have been replaced.

After this happened, I began to think of the parable of the 10 lepers. In this parable, Jesus healed 10 lepers and only one returned to thank Him. This man was blessed greatly because of his humble heart. This

reminds me of how easy it is to forget to thank God for His guidance and how important it is to thank Him.

Abby B., Maryland, USA



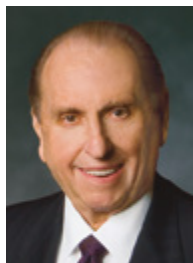
SAY HELLO

There's a girl in our school who doesn't have many friends. The other day I was walking into school with some of my friends when I saw her. She walked to the doors just in front of me and very shyly said hi. I didn't want my friends to think I was weird so I wasn't sure what to do, but I walked in the door and said hi

back. Immediately, I knew that simply saying hi was the right thing to do.

Sometimes just saying hi can brighten someone's day, and I try often to say hi and be more kind in my day-to-day life. It's made me a better person.

Brad B., Alberta, Canada



By President
Thomas S. Monson

HOW TO STAY WORTHY

I've lived long enough to have witnessed much of the metamorphosis of society's morals. Where once the standards of the Church and the standards of society were mostly compatible, now there is a wide chasm between us, and it's growing ever wider.

Many movies and television shows portray behavior which is in direct opposition to the laws of God.

Do not subject yourself to the innuendo and outright filth which are so often found there. The lyrics in much of today's music fall in the same category. The profanity so prevalent around us today would never have been tolerated in the not-too-distant past. I implore you **not to say or to do anything of which you cannot be proud.**

Stay completely away from pornography. Do not allow yourself to view it, ever. It has proven to be an addiction which is more than difficult to overcome.

Avoid alcohol and tobacco or any other drugs, also addictions which you would be hard pressed to conquer.

What will protect you from the sin and evil around you? I maintain that a strong testimony of our Savior and of His gospel will help see you through to safety. If you have not **read the Book of Mormon,** read it. If you do so prayerfully and with a sincere **desire to know the truth,** the Holy Ghost will manifest its truth to you. If it is true—and it *is*—then Joseph Smith was a prophet who saw God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. The Church is true. If you do not already have a testimony of these things, do that which is necessary to obtain one. **It is essential for you to have your own testimony,** for the testimonies of others will carry you only so far. Once obtained, a testimony needs to be kept vital and alive through obedience to the commandments of God and through regular



Share Your Experiences

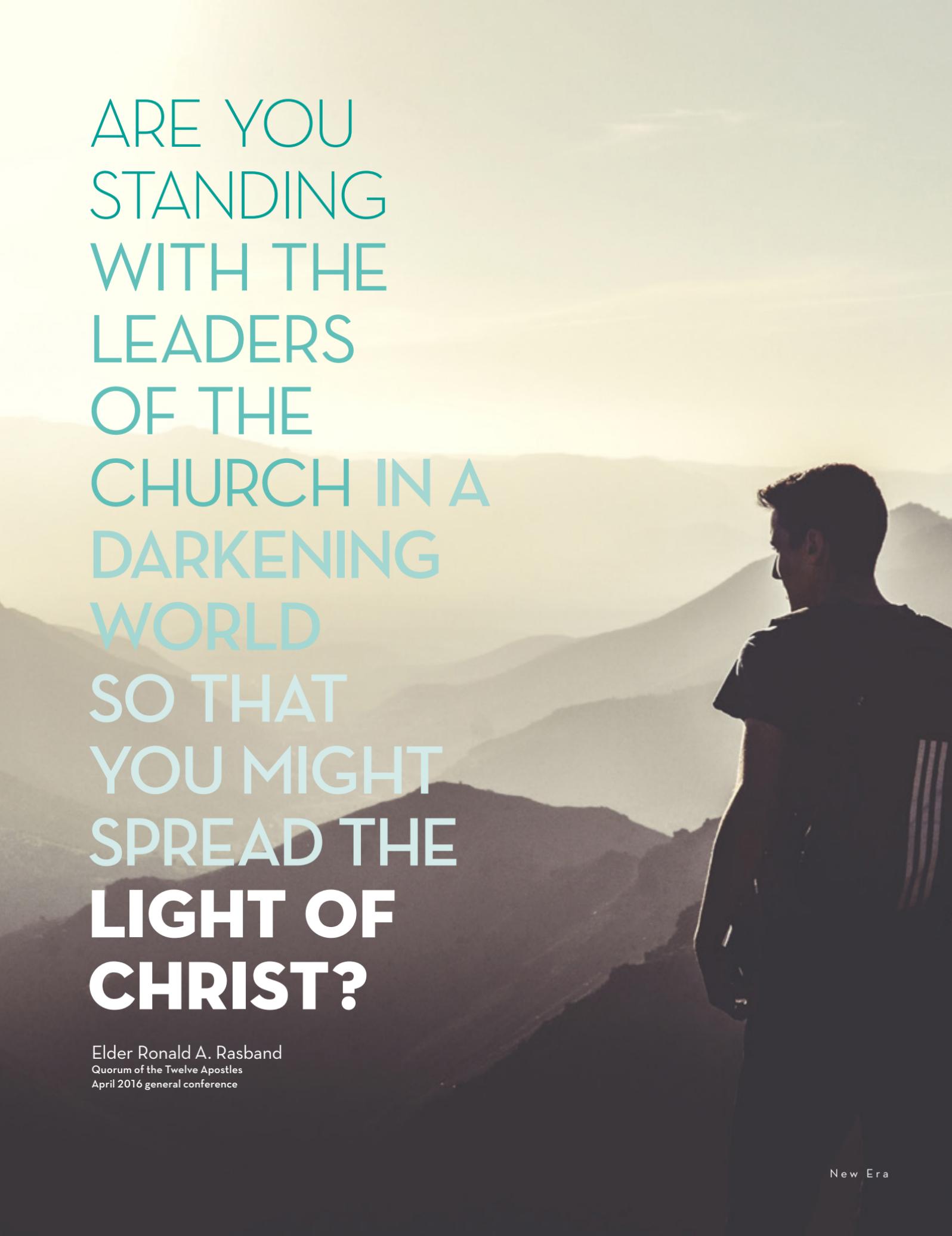
Share what you do to stay worthy and read the experiences of other youth at lds.org/go/worthyNE816.

prayer and scripture study. Attend church. Attend seminary.

Should there be anything amiss in your life, there is open to you a way out. **Cease any unrighteousness.** Talk with your bishop. Whatever the problem, it can be worked out through **proper repentance.** You can become clean once again (see D&C 58:42).

The Savior of mankind described Himself as being in the world but not of the world. We also can be in the world but not of the world as we **reject false concepts and false teachings.** Remain true to that which God has commanded. **NE**

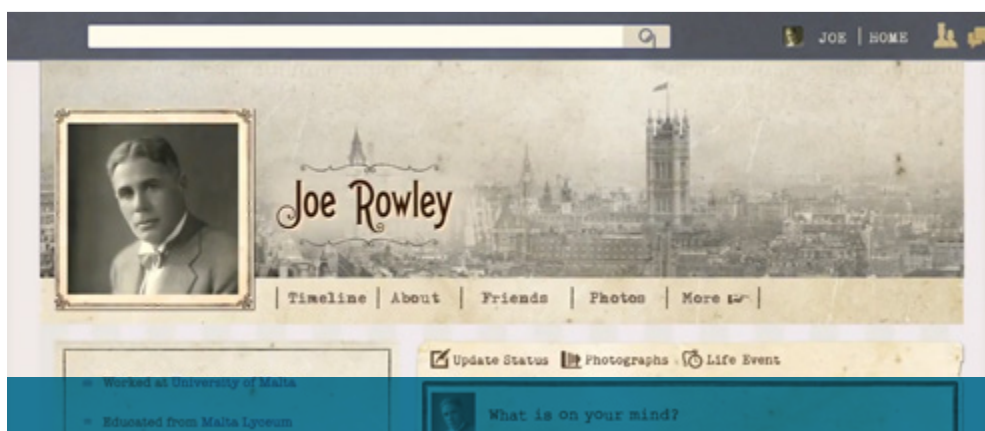
From an April 2011 general conference address.



ARE YOU
STANDING
WITH THE
LEADERS
OF THE
CHURCH IN A
DARKENING
WORLD
SO THAT
YOU MIGHT
SPREAD THE
**LIGHT OF
CHRIST?**

Elder Ronald A. Rasband
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
April 2016 general conference

WHAT'S ONLINE



FAMILY HISTORY *and Facebook*

What would your ancestors have posted on Facebook had it been around 100 years ago? The video “Ancestors on Facebook” will give you a fun glimpse at lds.org/go/ancestorsNE816. Check it out and you might discover how your ancestors’ lives may be more relatable to yours than you might have guessed!

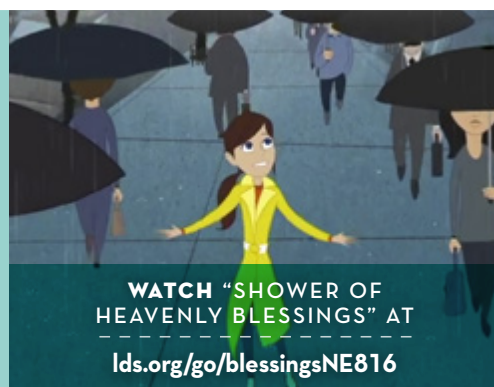


MORE SPORTS *Analogies*

After reading “Ready to Take the Field” (page 38), see more sports comparisons online. For example, rock climbers will enjoy a message from Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) at lds.org/go/anchorNE816. And Elder Jeffrey R. Holland’s analogy applies to multiple sports at lds.org/go/linesNE816. You’ll also find an article about how God is our greatest coach.

A DOWNPOUR *of Blessings*

If you feel like life is weighing you down and you could use a few more blessings, don’t miss the *Mormon Message* “Shower of Heavenly Blessings.” President Dieter F. Uchtdorf shares how to unlock all the blessings God wants to give you—“the grand recipe for happiness, peace, and eternal life!”



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS