FOUR TOOLS FOR
ANSWERING
QUESTIONS

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I **DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN.** After hearing my friends talk about a controversial issue in Church history, I did the first thing I could think of to find answers to my new questions. I searched the internet.

After reading online about this debated topic, I became very confused and even angry. Why had I never known about this? Was the Church trying to hide something? How was I supposed to know if what these people were writing was true or if it was made up?

I felt a lot of fear and uncertainty after reading so many conflicting views. It was scary to realize my faith was being tested. Without noticing it, I slowly withdrew myself from God. At a time when I should've been praying and reading my scriptures the most, I found myself constantly forgetting and then eventually avoiding these habits.

I was trying to discover truth without the help of God—and it wasn't working.

One Sunday I was sitting in testimony meeting and had the strong impression to talk to one of my priesthood leaders about my concerns. After the meeting, I asked my leader if we could talk. It felt so good to finally talk about what was worrying me. I cried as I explained what I had been going through the past few months and my desire to understand the truth.

He patiently listened, and then offered me comfort and advice that immediately lifted a heavy burden from my shoulders; but the most valuable thing he taught me that day was how to respond when you are faced with concerns and doubts about Church history and doctrine.

His advice included some important principles that I developed into four tools any of us can use when we come across materials that seem to undermine our faith:

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KEEP A STRONG CONNECTION WITH GOD.

Don't forget to continue to fast and pray for guidance, read the scriptures for revelation, attend church, and worship in the temple. Amidst confusion and doubt, it might sometimes seem like prayer and scripture study are tedious tasks, but they are your most valuable tools. Remember that God is the source of all truth; as you seek to be close to Him, you will be able to find the peace you are looking for.

TALK TO YOUR PARENTS OR LEADERS.

If you ever feel overwhelmed by negative information and don't know where to look next, don't give up! Make sure your parents and Church leaders know what you are struggling with. They can help you find answers to your questions and guide you to reliable resources.

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH RELIABLE RESOURCES.

Church leaders have given us many resources to learn more about Church history, including those in the scriptures, the Gospel Topics essays found on ChurchofJesusChrist. org, the Joseph Smith Papers, and the Church's official history books, *Saints.* When you know the facts and the Church's official stance on controversial subjects, you will feel more confident when you're confronted with opposition.

HAVE FAITH IN GOD'S TIMING.

While there is a lot of information now available to us, some questions do not yet have answers. We need to "remember that although Heavenly Father has revealed all that is necessary for our salvation, He has not yet revealed all truth."[1] We must have the faith and humility to persevere until we receive a greater knowledge. God teaches us line upon line, and we can experience an increase of faith and hope in the future as we draw closer to Him.

I am so grateful for what I learned through my experience. It was scary and hard at times, but now I know how to search for truth with confidence. I also know that fear and doubt are not of God and don't help me answer my questions (see Doctrine & Covenants 6:36). The accessibility of information on the internet makes it even more important to follow the counsel in Doctrine and Covenants 88:118: "Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith." As we search for truth in holy places, we can strengthen our testimonies and faithfully endure through trials. **NE**

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1. *Doctrinal Mastery Core Document* (2016), 2, doctrinalmastery .ChurchofJesusChrist.org.