

"My parents aren't members of the Church. How can I share the gospel with them without offending them?"

Remember the commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12). While respecting their wishes, try to bring the gospel into your home. For example, you could ask your parents to help you with Personal Progress or Duty to God so they will see what good programs the Church has. You could invite Church friends to your home and talk to them about the gospel. This could help your parents ask about your beliefs. Most important, tell your parents how grateful you are for them and for the gospel.

When you feel the time is right, prayerfully invite your parents—without pressuring them—to pray with you, to attend church or a Church activity, or to have family home evening, for instance. If they don't want to, respect that. If they aren't ready for the gospel now, they could be in the future. Pray and hope for that day.

Always look for the good in your parents. Loving them will keep the door of opportunity open. Try to live the gospel as well as you can. Your parents might become more interested as they see your good example and how the gospel blesses you.

Use *Liahona* Posters



Before I was baptized in 2006, I had been participating in another church that my family belonged to. Initially I was afraid to talk about the Church to my family because I feared rejection. But when I began to place the Posters from the *Liahona* in a few places in our house, family members began to ask, "What is this picture about? What does it mean?" These questions made it easier to talk about what the Church offers to families. Through this means, my youngest sister was baptized, and now, while I'm on my mission, my father and mother write me saying how they love going to church.

Elder Almeida, 20, Brazil São Paulo East Mission

Live the Gospel

Let your parents know by the way you live how important the Church is to you and the wonderful difference it has made in your life. To help you do that, you should follow the counsel of the General Authorities, including living the gospel. Be consistent with your own prayers, scripture reading, attending church, keeping the commandments, living the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, working to achieve goals, and following the Holy Ghost. You can also pray and fast for your parents and ask for the Spirit to guide you. In addition, I believe that you should express your love for them.

Andrew B., 14, Nevada, USA

Difficult but Not Impossible



I would pray and ask God that, when I talk to my parents, He would put the correct words in my mouth so that I won't offend them. I would also ask for His Spirit so they can feel my sincerity and my love. I would share a scripture from the Bible that supports the Book of Mormon. I would share my experiences and feelings too. I would say that the gospel, the love of God, and prayer bring us closer to the spiritual peace we all want to have. The work of the Lord is difficult but not impossible. Trust in the Spirit.

Jonathan E., 19, Veracruz, Mexico

Explain How You Feel



If you're scared of sharing the gospel, start by telling them how you feel when you pray and read the scriptures. Explain that you have a testimony, and explain why you like the gospel. Once you put it in perspective, they can understand and won't be offended.

Madison N., 14, Illinois, USA

Speak with Love

My father is not a member, and this has sometimes been difficult, but there are a few things I have learned. First, when I talk to him with love and not condescendingly, it is difficult for him to reject what I am saying. My dad can feel that love, although we don't always agree. Second, the gospel is simple. It is not ours to sugarcoat or change. State simple truths. Finally, remember we are called to be witnesses of Christ.

Paige L., 19, Utah, USA

A Change of Heart

You can set a positive example to your parents by following Church standards and keeping all the commandments, especially the Word of Wisdom, and by showing love and obedience through your actions. This may turn their attention toward your behavior and help them come into the Lord's Church. I strongly believe that through your personal prayers, you can ask Heavenly Father to change their hearts.

Sharmila S., 18, Karnataka, India

Be an Example



Paul taught us in 1 Timothy 4:12, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Showing a good example opens the gate for the conversion of your parents. It will create the right climate and opportunity to bear testimony of the gospel. Having faith, not fearing, and being an example could help change their minds and bless their lives and yours.

*Elder Tonumaipea, 20, Philippines
Cauayan Mission*

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

NEXT QUESTION

**"I have a hard time motivating myself to read the scriptures.
How can I find the motivation?"**

Send your answer by January 15, 2010, to:

**New Era, Q&A 1/10
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024,
USA
Or e-mail: newera@ldschurch.org**

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

Please include the following information and permission in your e-mail or letter:

FULL NAME _____

BIRTH DATE _____

WARD (OR BRANCH) _____

STAKE (OR DISTRICT) _____

I grant permission to print response and photo:

SIGNATURE _____

PARENT'S SIGNATURE (IF YOU ARE UNDER 18) _____



IN THE LORD'S WAY AND TIME

"Our actions must be directed by the Lord. It is His work, not ours, and it must be done in His way and on His timing, not ours. Otherwise, our efforts may be fated to frustration and failure."

"All of us have family members or friends who need the gospel but are not now interested. To be effective, our efforts with them must be directed by the Lord so that we act in the way and at the time when they will be most receptive."

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Sharing the Gospel," *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 8.