

JANUARY 2015

THE

New Era

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EMBARK

IN THE SERVICE OF GOD
(D&C 4:2)

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THE MONTHLY YOUTH MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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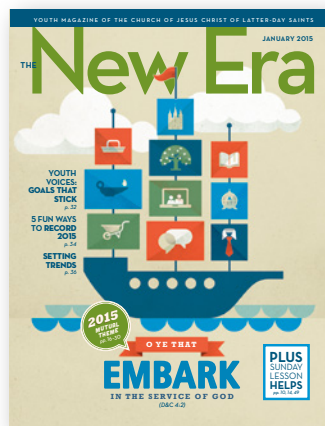
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LEHI'S DREAM *and You*

You may think that Lehi's dream has no special meaning for you, but it does. You are in it.



**President
Boyd K. Packer**

President of the
Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

You live in a time of war, the spiritual war that will never end. War itself now dominates the affairs of mankind. Your world at war has lost its innocence. There is nothing, however crude or unworthy, that is not deemed acceptable for movies or plays or music or conversation. The world seems to be turned upside down (see 2 Peter 2:1–22).

Formality, respect for authority, dignity, and nobility are mocked. Modesty and neatness yield to slouchiness and shabbiness in dress and grooming. The rules of honesty and integrity and basic morality are now ignored. Conversation is laced with profanity. You see that in art and literature, in drama and entertainment. Instead of being refined, they become coarse (see 1 Timothy 4:1–3; 2 Timothy 3:1–9).

You have decisions almost every day as to whether you will follow those trends. You have many tests ahead.

LEHI'S DREAM

In 1 Nephi 8, read about Lehi's dream. He told his family, "Behold, I have dreamed

a dream; or, in other words, I have seen a vision" (1 Nephi 8:2).

You may think that Lehi's dream or vision has no special meaning for you, but it does. You are in it; all of us are in it (see 1 Nephi 19:23).

Lehi's dream or vision of the iron rod has in it everything a young Latter-day Saint needs to understand the test of life. Lehi saw:

A great and spacious building (see 1 Nephi 11:35–36; 12:18).

A path following a river (see 1 Nephi 8:19–22).

A mist of darkness (see 1 Nephi 12:16–17).

An iron rod which led through the mist of darkness (see 1 Nephi 11:24–25).

The tree of life, "whose fruit was desirable to make one happy" (1 Nephi 8:10; see 1 Nephi 11:8–9, 21–24).

Read it carefully; then read it again.

If you hold to the rod, you can feel your way forward with the gift of the Holy Ghost, conferred upon you at the time you were confirmed a member of the Church. The Holy

Ghost will comfort you. You will be able to feel the influence of the angels, as Nephi did, and feel your way through life.

The Book of Mormon has been my iron rod.

Lehi saw great multitudes of people “pressing forward” (1 Nephi 8:21) toward the tree.

The great and spacious building “was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female; and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit” (1 Nephi 8:27).

One word in this dream or vision should have special meaning to you young Latter-day Saints. The word is *after*. It was *after* the people had found the tree that they

became ashamed, and because of the mockery of the world they fell away.

“And *after* they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost. . . .

“And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And *after* they did enter into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; [that was the test, and then Lehi said] but we heeded them not. [And that was the answer]” (1 Nephi 8:28, 33; emphasis added).

At your baptism and confirmation, you took hold of the iron rod. But you are never safe. It is *after* you have partaken of that fruit that your test will come.

Lehi’s dream or vision of the iron rod has in it everything a young Latter-day Saint needs to understand the test of life.



THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

I think now and then of one of my classmates—very bright, good looking, faithful in the Church, and drenched with talent and ability. He married well and rose quickly to prominence. He began to compromise to please the world and please those around him. They flattered him into following after their ways, which were the ways of the world.

Sometimes it is so simple a thing as how you groom yourself or what you wear.

Somewhere in little things, my classmate's grasp on the iron rod loosened a bit. His wife held on to the rod with one hand and on to him with the other. Finally, he slipped away from her and let go of the rod. Just as Lehi's dream or vision predicted, he fell away into forbidden paths and was lost.



.....
*An unseen power will hold your hand
as you hold to the iron rod.*
.....

INSIDE THE GREAT AND SPACIOUS BUILDING

Largely because of television, instead of looking over into that spacious building, we are, in effect, living inside of it. That is your fate in this generation. You are living in that great and spacious building.

You will be safe if you look like and groom like and act like an ordinary Latter-day Saint: dress modestly, attend your meetings, pay tithes, take the sacrament, honor the priesthood, honor your parents, follow your leaders, read the scriptures, study the Book of Mormon, and pray, always pray. An unseen power will hold your hand as you hold to the iron rod.

Will this solve all your problems? Of course not! That would be contrary to the purpose of your coming into mortality. It will, however, give you a solid foundation on which to build your life (see Helaman 5:12).

The mist of darkness will cover you at times so much that you will not be able to see your way even a short distance ahead. You will not be able to see clearly. But you can *feel* your way. With the gift of the Holy Ghost, you can *feel* your way ahead through life. Grasp the iron rod, and do not let go. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, you can *feel* your way through life (see 3 Nephi 18:25; D&C 9:8).

SECRET COMBINATIONS IN OUR DAY

We live in a time of war, that spiritual war that will never end. Moroni warned us of secret combinations (see Ether 8:20, 23–24). Atheists and agnostics make nonbelief their religion and today organize in unprecedented ways to attack faith and belief. They are now organized, and they pursue political power. You will be hearing much about them and from them. Much of their attack is indirect in mocking the faithful, in mocking religion. Their arguments

are not so different from those in the Book of Mormon (see Jacob 7:1–21; Alma 1:1–15; Alma 30:6–60).

You who are young will see many things that will try your courage and test your faith. All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. Let me say that again: All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. Be careful that you do not fall into the category of mocking.

The Lord promised, “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30).

Embedded in that dream or vision is the “pearl of great price” (Matthew 13:46).

Lehi and Nephi saw:

A virgin bearing a child in her arms.

One who should prepare the way—John the Baptist.

The ministry of the Son of God.

Twelve others following the Messiah.

The heavens open and angels ministering to them.

The multitudes blessed and healed.

The Crucifixion of the Christ.

All of this they saw in dream or vision. And they saw the wisdom and pride of the world opposing His work (see 1 Nephi 11:14–36; see also 1 Nephi 1:9–14).

And that is what we face now.

You live in an interesting generation where trials will be constant in your life. Learn to follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost. It is to be a shield and a protection and a teacher for you. Never be ashamed or embarrassed about the doctrines of the gospel or about the standards that we teach in the Church. You always, if you are faithful in the Church, will be that much different from the world at large.

You have the advantage of being assured that you can be inspired in all of your decisions.

As we think of you young Latter-day Saints and think of the Book of Mormon and think of the dream or vision that Lehi had, we see that there are prophecies in there that can be specifically applied to your life. Read it again, beginning with the eighth chapter of 1 Nephi, and read on to the



.....
*All of the things that you need to know
are there [in the Book of Mormon].
Read it, and make it a part of your life.*
.....

counsel that is given. The Book of Mormon talks about life after death: what happens to the spirit (see Alma 40:11–12) and what happens in the spirit world (see 2 Nephi 2:29; 9:10–13; Alma 12:24). All of the things that you need to know are there. Read it, and make it a part of your life. Then the criticism or mocking of the world, the mocking of those in the Church, will be of no concern to you as it is of no concern to us (see 1 Nephi 8:33). We just move forward doing the things which we are called to do and know that the Lord is guiding us.

You are better than we were. I have the conviction that against what was surely coming and the prophecies that were given, the Lord has reserved special spirits to bring forth at this time to see that His Church and kingdom are protected and moved forward in the world. **NE**

From a Brigham Young University devotional given on January 16, 2007.



The DEWS from HEAVEN

What can little drops of water teach us about how we receive revelation?

FACTS ABOUT DEW

What it is. Condensed water vapor on a cooled surface.

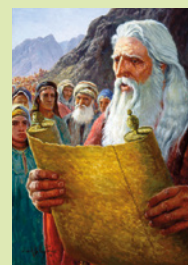
How it is formed. When air cools below the dew point (the temperature at which relative humidity reaches 100 percent), water molecules in the air cluster to form dew-drops on cool surfaces through condensation (changing from a gas to a liquid). Under certain conditions, drops also form in the air, creating a night mist.

When it occurs. Dew usually forms at night, when temperatures are falling.

What its effects are. Dew moistens and cools whatever it forms on. Because of this, it can help plants survive hot, dry summers. In the westernmost areas of the Holy Land, for instance, moist air from the sea causes large amounts of dew to form during the summer months, greatly benefiting crops.

BIBLE FACTS

- In Hebrew, the word for *dew* and *night mist* is the same (*tal*).
- Moses was the first prophet to teach that God's word "shall distil as the dew" (Deuteronomy 32:2).
- The manna that fed the children of Israel in the wilderness came with the dew (see Numbers 11:9).
- The miraculously refreshing and reviving effect of dew upon the plants in the Holy Land prompted Isaiah to use it as a figure of resurrection (see Isaiah 26:19) and Hosea to use it as a figure of repentance (see Hosea 14:4–5).





HOW HEAVENLY FATHER COMMUNICATES

“Most frequently, revelation comes in small increments over time and is granted according to our desire,

worthiness, and preparation. Such communications from Heavenly Father gradually and gently ‘distil upon [our souls] as the dews from heaven’ (D&C 121:45).”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Spirit of Revelation,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 88.



“Let thy bowels also be *full of charity* towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy *confidence wax strong* in the presence of God; and the *doctrine of the priesthood* shall distil upon thy soul as the *dews from heaven*.”

Doctrine and Covenants 121:45

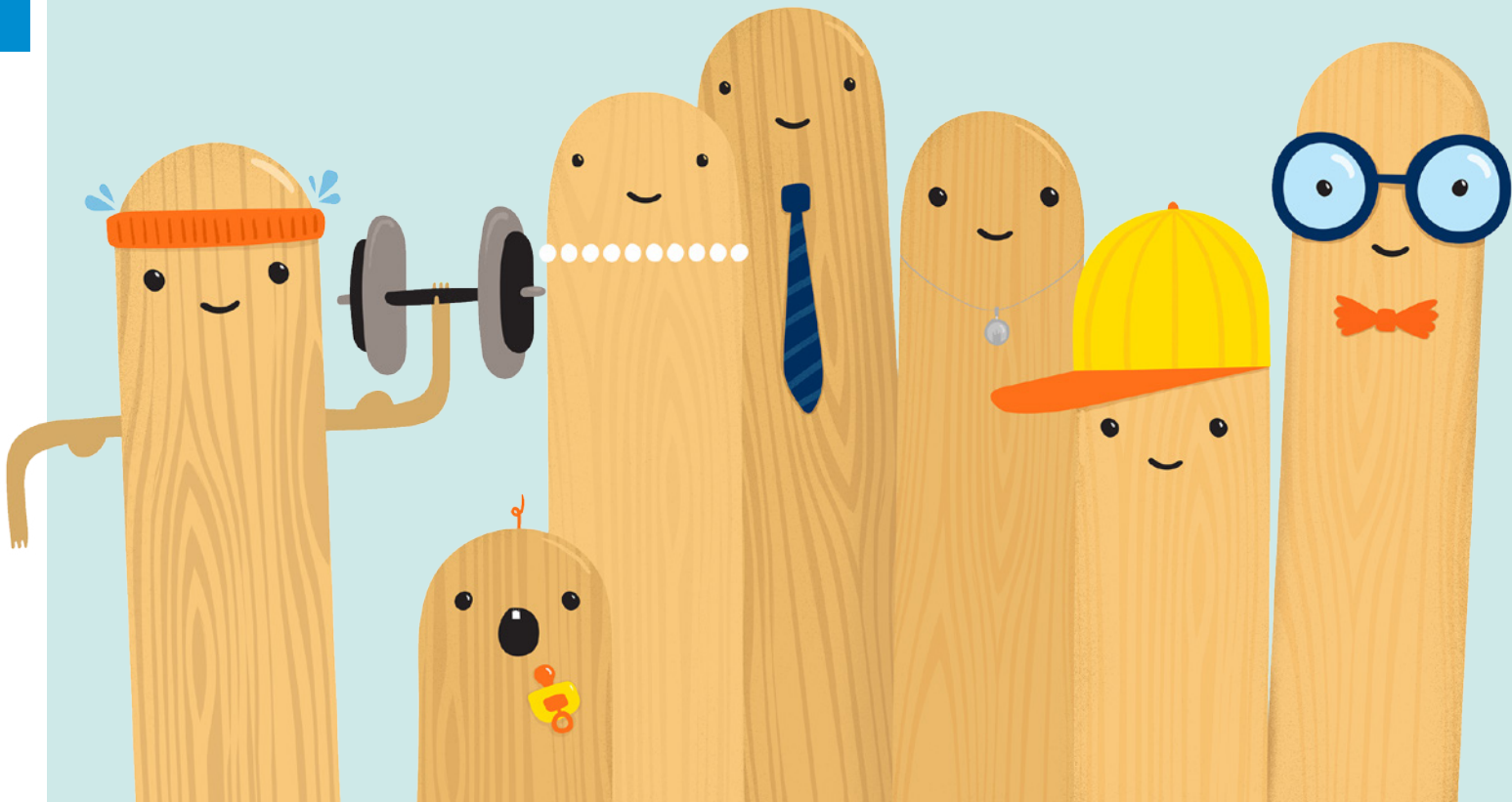
What WE CAN LEARN

Dew:

- **Collects gradually.** Though the Lord can flood our souls with revelation and inspiration at times, we are more likely to experience a gradual increase in understanding and testimony of His word throughout our lives.
- **Forms quietly and invisibly.** A testimony of the truth is a gift from God. Because of this, it can seem miraculous to us. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has said, “We become taller in our testimony like we grow in physical stature and hardly know it is happening, because it comes by growth” (“How Does the Spirit Speak to Us?” *New Era*, Feb. 2010, 3).

- **Helps keep plants alive in harsh conditions.**

We live in a world that is hostile to faith and testimony, but our Heavenly Father never leaves us to wither. When we allow God’s word to “distil upon [our souls],” we can be refreshed and kept alive spiritually, and we can then thrive, grow, and bring forth the fruits of faith—a change of heart, a love of God and our fellowmen, and good works. **NE**



PUT SOME *Muscle* INTO YOUR FAMILY

A simple object lesson can help you teach your family about sticking together and strengthening one another.

Bring on the Muscle

Do you have a brother or other relative who likes to prove their physical strength at every opportunity? You know, someone who never met a phone book they wouldn't try to rip in half with their bare hands?

If so, here's the perfect family home evening lesson for that guy! But even if you don't have a muscle-minded relative close at hand, this object lesson still has something valuable to teach us all about the

importance of strengthening one another.

For this lesson, you'll need about 50 craft sticks (Popsicle sticks) and your scriptures.

Getting Snappy

To begin your lesson, ask for a volunteer willing to demonstrate a feat of amazing strength. You can actually pick anybody from your family, because this part is easy. Once you have your volunteer, hand over a single craft stick and ask if he or she can break it in

two. Your volunteer should be able to snap it with no problem.

Tell your family that each craft stick represents a single person—and that we're not always strong when we try to go through life's trials relying only on our own abilities.

Standing Together

You might want to share the following quote from President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, about why we should gather together with other people: "God urges us to gather so that He can bless us. He wants us to gather into families. He has established classes, wards, and branches and commanded us to meet together often" ("Our Hearts Knit as One," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 69).

We all stand stronger with the support of those around us, and you can put that analogy to the test in your lesson. Ask your muscle guy (or girl) to help out for this next part. Hand him the remaining craft sticks and ask if he can break them all at the same time. If you have at least 40 craft sticks together, they should be nearly impossible to break, even though it looks easy.

As Muscle Man (or whomever you've asked to be your volunteer) strains and grunts and tries in vain to complete the task, explain that these sticks represent the people in your family and at church who can help support and strengthen you. And of course, the Lord is always our greatest source of strength.

Now's a great time to discuss why the Lord has commanded us to be unified. Consider sharing a scripture on this topic, such as Doctrine and Covenants 38:27: "Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine." You can

then talk about why your family members believe there's strength in sticking together.

The Strength You Add

Just as the people in your life are a strength to you, *you* can help others be strong as well—especially those in your own family. As explained in *For the Strength of Youth*, "Strong families require effort. Your family will be blessed as you do your part to strengthen it. . . . Your righteous example can make a difference in strengthening your family" ([2011], 14).

As we support one another and also as we each follow the commandments, we all contribute to the bundle of craft sticks that can't be broken when we stand together. Standing strong with a group of friends and family who support you, as you support them, is a great way to navigate the challenges of life.

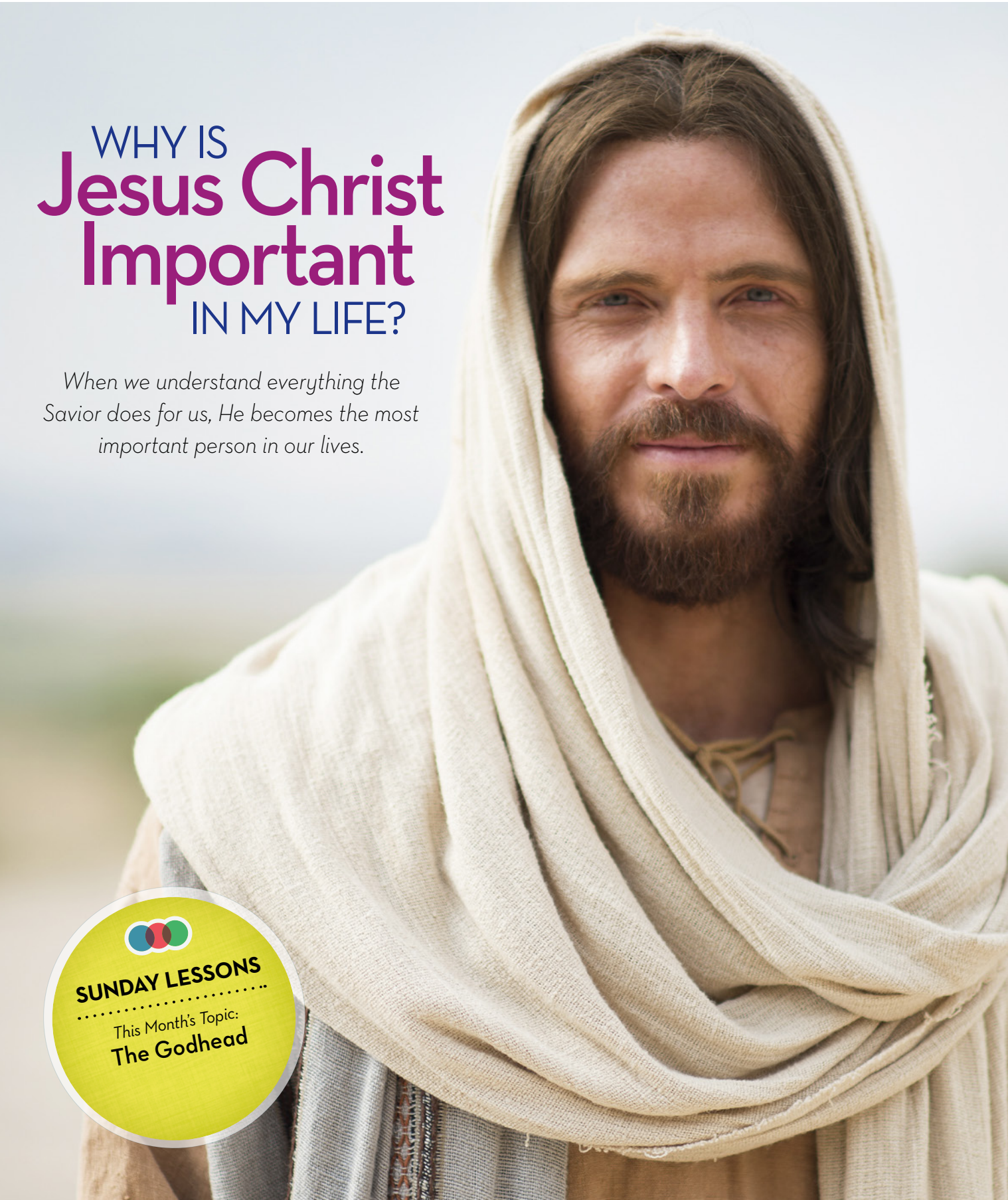
A Strong Finish

You might consider closing your lesson with this quote from President Thomas S. Monson: "When we can work together cooperatively to lift the level of life for so many people, we can accomplish anything. When we do so, we eliminate the weakness of one person standing alone and substitute the strength of many serving together" ("Our Brothers' Keepers," *Ensign*, June 1998, 38).

Oh, and if Muscle Man hasn't yet stopped trying to break the sticks, hand him an old phone book to shred instead. Reassure him that the laws of physics were just plain working against him earlier.

There's strength in gathering together. **NE**





WHY IS Jesus Christ Important IN MY LIFE?

When we understand everything the Savior does for us, He becomes the most important person in our lives.



SUNDAY LESSONS

.....
This Month's Topic:
The Godhead

By Michael R. Morris

Church Magazines

Recently I read a blog post where the author talked about how the Savior plays a vital role in her daily life. I was happy she was willing to share her feelings, but I was saddened by one reader's response: "He is of no importance whatever in my life—never has been and never will be."

That reader couldn't be more wrong. Sooner or later, all of us will need the Savior. We all make mistakes we cannot fix, experience losses we cannot recover, and face pains, persecution, tragedies, burdens, and disappointments we cannot handle alone.

The good news is that we don't *have* to handle them alone.

"In a moment of weakness we may cry out, 'No one knows what it is like. No one understands.' But the Son of God perfectly knows and understands, for He has felt and borne our individual burdens," said Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "And because of His infinite and eternal sacrifice (see Alma 34:14), He has perfect empathy and can extend to us His arm of mercy."¹

Jesus is important to us because through His Atonement, teachings, hope, peace, and example, He helps us change our lives, face our trials, and move forward with faith as we journey back to Him and His Father.

Jesus Makes Repentance Possible

One of the reasons Jesus is so important to those who sincerely

try to follow Him is that all of us fall short and need the gift of repentance offered through the Atonement.

When we stumble and fall, Satan wants us to think we're not good enough to get up and get back on the right path. He also wants us to forget that the gospel is "the gospel of *repentance*" (D&C 13:1; emphasis added). But we know that "the grace of Christ is real, affording both forgiveness and cleansing to the repentant sinner."²

The power of Jesus Christ's Atonement is available to each of us, but we have to choose to let it work in our lives. Imagine giving a special gift to a friend—something your friend really needs and something you prepared through personal sacrifice. Then imagine your friend responding, "Thanks, but I don't really want your gift." How would you feel?



When we don't invite Jesus to help us become clean through repentance, it's as if we're rejecting His gift.

Jesus Teaches Truth

On one occasion, after a number of people refused to walk any longer with Him, Jesus asked the Twelve Apostles, "Will ye also go away?" Peter replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:67–68).



You can find the Savior's "words of eternal life" in the scriptures, the teachings of the living prophets, and the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. They offer a foundation for "happiness in this life and eternal life in the world to come,"³ and they guide us safely back to our Heavenly Father and our Savior.

What are some of the great truths the Savior taught? President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, listed four in a recent general conference talk:

- "Our Father has given His children the great plan of happiness."
- "Through the Atonement . . . , we can live forever with our loved ones."
- "We will have glorious, perfect, and immortal bodies, unburdened by sickness or disability."
- "Our tears of sadness and loss will be replaced with an abundance of happiness and joy."⁴

Jesus Offers Hope

When we face serious challenges, sometimes we find it difficult to trust in the Lord. But trusting in Him brings us the hope we need in order to face our challenges.

That's what happened with members of the Gatrell family, who live in Sister Jean A. Stevens's ward. Sister Stevens, first counselor in the Primary general presidency, said the family held tight to the gospel and to their

temple covenants after Brother Gatrell was diagnosed with cancer. Doing so gave them hope in God's promises that they would be together again after this life.

Through the difficult days before her husband passed away, Sister Gatrell said, "I knew the Lord was watching over us. If you trust in the Lord, truly you can overcome any of life's challenges."⁵

The gift of the Atonement gives us the hope of eternal life—something we need when we suffer trials or the death of a loved one.

"Our loving Heavenly Father gave us the gift of His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior," said President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency. "That great gift and blessing of the Atonement of Jesus Christ brings a universal inheritance: the promise of the Resurrection and the possibility of eternal life to all who are born."⁶

Jesus Offers Peace

If you've ever faced a natural disaster, been the subject of cruel gossip, experienced a life-changing challenge, had a falling-out with a friend, or stood up for what's right, you know you need the Lord's peace. "The peace of the Savior," said Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "subdues the swirling whirlwinds of the world."⁷

During a recent general conference, Elder Andersen shared a story about



a Laurel who was ridiculed and called names for standing up for traditional marriage. Ridicule, she learned, is sometimes the cost of “being true to God and to the teachings of His living prophets.”⁸

But standing up doesn’t mean standing alone. We can always turn to the Prince of Peace when we feel alone or overwhelmed, sad or worried, afraid or worthless. We do so by:

- Praying to Heavenly Father for the Spirit to be with us.
- Reading the Lord’s words in the scriptures and as revealed by living prophets.
- Attending the temple.
- Studying the Savior’s life at church and in seminary.
- Applying His Atonement by repenting of our sins.
- Sharing our testimonies of Him.

When we feel the Savior’s peace, our hearts need not be troubled or afraid (see John 14:26–27).

“Only the Master knows the depths of our trials, our pain, and our suffering,” said President Thomas S. Monson. “He alone offers us eternal peace in times of adversity. He alone touches our tortured souls with His comforting words.”⁹

Jesus Sets the Example

Throughout His ministry, Jesus doesn’t just point the way to happiness—He leads the way. Through His Atonement, He leads us

to love. Through His teachings, He leads us to eternal truths. Through His perfect life, He leads us to the path of obedience.

“The greatest example who ever walked the earth is our Savior, Jesus Christ. His mortal ministry was filled with teaching, serving, and loving others,” said Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The Savior, he added, “invites us to follow His perfect example.”¹⁰

When we understand that the Savior makes possible repentance and resurrection, teaches vital truths, offers hope and peace, and sets the perfect example, He becomes the center of our lives. And with Him as our friend, we have the courage to cast out fear and move forward with faith. **NE**

NOTES

1. David A. Bednar, “Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 90.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “The Resurrection of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 113.
3. “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Apr. 2000, 3.
4. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Grateful in Any Circumstances,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 76.
5. Jean A. Stevens, “Fear Not; I Am with Thee,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 83.
6. Henry B. Eyring, “A Priceless Heritage of Hope,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 24.
7. Neil L. Andersen, “Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 21.
8. See Neil L. Andersen, “Spiritual Whirlwinds,” 19–20.
9. Thomas S. Monson, “I Will Not Fail Thee, nor Forsake Thee,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 87.
10. Richard G. Scott, “I Have Given You an Example,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 35.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Things to Ponder for Sunday

- How has the Atonement of Jesus Christ blessed your life?
- What words of Jesus do you turn to for comfort?
- Can you think of a time when you felt the Savior’s peace through the Holy Ghost?

Things You Might Do

- Record in your journal the next time the Savior’s example or teachings help you choose the right.
- Study the Atonement in preparation for taking the sacrament.
- Share your feelings about Jesus Christ with your family, at church, or on social media at [lds.org/go/centerNE1](https://www.lds.org/go/centerNE1).



The CENTER of MY LIFE

I knew of Christ's ministry from the Bible, but could He really have visited the Americas?

By Roberto Pacheco Pretel

When I turned 18, my father allowed me to be baptized in any church I wanted.

I wanted to join a Christian church because I'd studied the Bible in several congregations and believed in Jesus Christ.

One day my uncle invited two sister missionaries to our home. They spoke with much conviction about their belief in the Book of Mormon as another testament of Jesus Christ, stating that He had visited the American continent.

On that point, I expressed my opinion that perhaps they were mistaken, since never in my life had I studied about that. One of the sister missionaries, with tears in her eyes and with kindness, said to me, "Brother Roberto, the fact that you do not know the Book of Mormon is true

does not mean that we are mistaken. I know that Jesus Christ loves us and that He was on this continent and that He taught His gospel just as He had in the Holy Land."

They tried to help me with my many concerns and doubts during that first discussion, agreeing that they would visit me the next week.

That night I began to leaf through the Book of Mormon. As I read the title page, one phrase caught my attention: "Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations." I also read 3 Nephi 11 about the Savior's visit to the Americas, and I felt a gladness in my heart. So I did what the missionaries had told me to do: I knelt and asked my Heavenly Father if the book was true.

As I finished the prayer, I felt a

peace and a surety that this was so. For a moment I thought that the tears of the sisters had moved me and caused me to believe in their testimony. So I continued reading the Book of Mormon until a little after 4:00 in the morning. Each time I prayed, I felt with more strength the confirmation that Christ had come to the Americas and that He wanted me to learn more about His true gospel.

Within weeks, I finished reading the Book of Mormon and felt a need to be baptized into the true Church.

Reading the Book of Mormon helped me to grow closer to Jesus Christ and to make Him the center of my life. I am so grateful that the Savior put the missionaries and His Church into my path. **NE**

Roberto Pacheco Pretel lives in Arequipa, Peru.

“DON'T YIELD TO SATAN'S LIE THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES.

Choose to take time to study them. Feasting on the word of God each day is more important than sleep, school, work, television shows, video games, or social media. You may need to reorganize your priorities to provide time for the study of the word of God. If so, do it!”

Elder Richard G. Scott
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
“Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority,”
Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2014, 93.



Make the Most

Find tips for bringing the scriptures to life at [lds.org/go/sixtipsNE1](https://www.lds.org/go/sixtipsNE1) and [lds.org/go/successNE1](https://www.lds.org/go/successNE1). You can also read stories about how studying the scriptures helped other teens at [lds.org/go/storiesNE1](https://www.lds.org/go/storiesNE1).

2015 MUTUAL THEME

"Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day" (D&C 4:2).



O YE THAT
EMBARK
IN THE SERVICE OF GOD

SERVING WITH YOUR WHOLE SOUL

By the Young Women
General Presidency

As we learn in the Mutual theme for 2015, it is a sacred privilege to serve God. It is our hope that this year each of us will learn to serve with greater commitment in the way the Savior has instructed—with all our heart, might, mind, and strength. How can we do that? Here are some ideas.

First, we serve with all of our **hearts**. We understand this to mean that your service of God must be motivated by your love for Him and His children. "Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities."¹ You show the Lord your love when you keep His commandments (see D&C 42:29). You serve in your home and strengthen your family. You magnify your calling and reach out to those who need a friend. You find family names to take to the temple.

Second, we serve with all of our **might**. Physical labor and diligent



Bonnie L. Oscarson, president (center); Carol F. McConkie, first counselor (left); Neill F. Marriott, second counselor (right)

effort are required. Missionary work requires stamina and endurance. You serve with might when you attend to the needs of others, “such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally” (Mosiah 4:26).

Next, we serve with all of our **mind**. Your thoughts must be clean and pure, centered on the Savior. You have covenanted to always remember Him. You seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost through scripture study and prayer. As you align your thoughts, words, and actions with the mind and will of God, you recognize the needs of others and are worthy and ready to serve.

Finally, we serve God with all of our **strength**. One way to obtain strength is to exercise faith in the Savior’s Atonement. You repent and sanctify yourself through obedience to His commandments. You feel the Savior’s enabling power and witness miracles as you serve in the strength of the Lord (see Alma 26:12).

As you serve God with your whole soul, He promises that you will be cleansed from sin and prepared to stand before Him and receive His eternal glory. **NE**

NOTE

1. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Great Commandment —Love the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 4.

THIS MARVELOUS WORK

By the Young Men
General Presidency

When you hear the word *embark*, what do you think of? A ship setting sail? Joining a great cause? The beginning of a journey?

When you “embark in the service of God,” you’re joining the greatest journey ever. You’re helping God hasten His work, and it’s a great, joyful, and marvelous experience.

Don’t just take our word for it. Last year in a small town in Utah, young men in a teachers quorum visited the youth activities website (lds.org/youth/activities) to find ideas for an activity. One in particular caught their attention: “Seven Days of Service.”

These young men decided to do something even bigger: they would provide service each day for an entire week to anyone in the ward who requested it. When 19 families signed up, the young men were a little surprised and perhaps even a little overwhelmed. How would they be able to do so much service in such a short time? But they had made a

commitment, so they decided to serve all of the families.

In just one week, they gave over 250 hours of combined service, doing such projects as moving a huge pile of rocks, digging a sandbox, cleaning out gutters, and stacking wood. And it changed the young men too. (See a video at lds.org/go/serviceNE1.)

They felt awed by the strength they felt and the blessings they received. They described feeling united as a quorum and receiving divine help to do homework and other responsibilities. Now, when their ward needs service, the teachers quorum responds enthusiastically. They didn’t just serve for a week—they try to serve every day.

Serving and building the kingdom of God truly is a marvelous work. It brought joy to these young men, and it will bring joy to you as you lift others and see their lives changed by pure and honest efforts. As the Young Women general presidency notes on page 16, it is a privilege to serve God.

Embark right now in your service to God “with all your heart, might, mind and strength” (D&C 4:2). We want to know about your service experiences! Make videos and take pictures of your service, upload them onto social media sites, share them with your family and friends, and email them to newera@ldschurch.org. You can also tell others about them on the youth activities site. Please invite others to join you in this marvelous work, and let’s see how much we can change the world. **NE**



David L. Beck, president (center); Larry M. Gibson, first counselor (left); Randall L. Ridd, second counselor (right)

Doctrine and Covenants 4:2

The Lord has told us about the kind of service He expects from us.

O YE

Although this revelation was given to Joseph Smith Sr., the counsel applies to everyone who enters into God's service. Joseph Smith said, "When you joined this Church you enlisted to serve God" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 324). So this scripture applies to all members of the Church.



STAND BLAMELESS BEFORE GOD

"We will all stand before [the Lord], in person. . . .

"As we do what He would have us do for His Father's children, the Lord considers it kindness to Him, and we will feel closer to Him as we feel His love and His approval. In time we will become like Him and will think of the Judgment Day with happy anticipation. . . .

"If we serve with faith, humility, and a desire to do God's will, I testify that the judgment bar of the great Jehovah will be pleasing. We will see our loving Father and His Son as They see us now—with perfect clarity and with perfect love."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Where Is the Pavilion?" *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 74–75.

EMBARK

Embark—to begin or start.

The origin of this word means to get on a ship and set sail. This involves a certain amount of commitment, because once you're at sea you can't just get off and go back. You also must rely on the wind to help you. What does the use of this word teach you about committing to serve God? How does His power, like the wind, help you once you've embarked?

2 Therefore, O ye that embark in the "service of God, ~~see that ye~~ ^bserve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand ^cblameless before God at the last day.

MIGHT, MIND AND STRENGTH

This phrase appears several times in the scriptures. Read these scriptures to learn what else we are commanded to do with all our might, mind, and strength.

- Alma 39:13
- D&C 11:20
- D&C 59:5

Read these verses to find out what additional blessings we can receive for following these directions.

- Moroni 10:32
- D&C 20:31
- D&C 98:47



SERVICE OF GOD

"In the Lord's service the path is not always easy. It often requires sacrifices, and

we will likely experience adversity. But in serving Him, we discover that His hand is truly over us. . . . The Lord expects us to be as faithful, as devoted, as courageous as those who went before us. They were called to *give* their lives for the gospel. We are called to *live* our lives for the same purpose."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Preparations for the Restoration and the Second Coming: 'My Hand Shall Be over Thee,'" *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 91.

LAST DAY

Last day—The Judgment Day, when all will be "judged according to their works" (Alma 11:44), including whether and how they served God.

Editors' note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected scripture verse, only a starting point for your own study.

EMBARK

“Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God,
see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength,
that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day.”
(D&C 4:2)





SERVING GOD

THROUGH

DUTY TO GOD

SEE HOW *DUTY TO GOD* CAN HELP YOU LIVE
THIS YEAR'S MUTUAL THEME EVERY DAY.

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

DEACON

Serving as a full-time missionary, a father, or a leader will require you to understand Church doctrine so you can teach it better. See “**Understand Doctrine**” bullet 2 (page 18”) on studying doctrinal topics, and expand your knowledge so you can be an effective servant of the Lord.

TEACHER

Holding the priesthood gives you an opportunity to serve others forever and to develop your personal attributes. See “**Live Worthily**” bullet 1 (page 40”) for a list of attributes you should have as a priesthood holder, and pick a few to work on developing. Think about how those attributes help you serve better.

PRIEST

When you have the Spirit, you can receive promptings of who needs your service or how you can serve. See “**Pray and Study the Scriptures**” bullet 1 (page 62”) for ideas on how to keep the Spirit with you always, and ponder how those actions help you serve.

PRIESTHOOD DUTIES

DEACON

Serving with all your “heart, might, mind and strength” really does make a difference. **“Invite All to Come Unto Christ”** bullet 2 (page 28*) suggests comparing scripture stories showing the effects of different missionaries’ efforts. Read those verses again and ponder how your attitude and motivation affect your service.

TEACHER

One service opportunity you have is to prepare the sacrament each Sunday. See the **“Administer Priesthood Ordinances”** section (page 48*) for a guide to help you make the most of this service. See how your approach to the sacrament changes your experience when you think about how it lets you serve God and others.

PRIEST

You can serve for many reasons. **“Serve Others”** bullet 2 (page 74*) lists some scriptures to remind you of reasons you might serve. What are some of your motivations to serve? Keep this in mind as you embark on your next act of service.

FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

DEACON

Being able to serve might start with being willing, but many people don’t realize that you should be physically able to serve too. Look at the projects listed in the **“For the Strength of Youth”** section (page 31*), and consider how improving your physical health will make you better able to serve now and in the future.

TEACHER

One way you can expand your capacity to serve is by developing your education. Look at the projects listed in the **“For the Strength of Youth”** section (page 55*) for ideas on projects you can plan to improve your education. You might add some goals about how you can use that education to serve too.

PRIEST

The service you’re asked to give will often be for those closest to you, such as family or friends. By nurturing these relationships, you might see some of the greatest blessings. Look at the projects listed in the **“For the Strength of Youth”** section (page 79*) for ideas on different relationships you can develop through service, and then establish a plan to act on the promptings you receive. **NE**



* Pages referred to are in the *Fulfilling My Duty to God* booklet.

SERVING GOD

THROUGH

PERSONAL PROGRESS

See how you can live this year's
completing Personal Progress

FAITH

A woman's role as a mother, grandmother, or leader requires a lifetime of dedicated service. Consider reviewing Faith value experience #2, focusing on how the qualities you discuss allow you to serve others. Record your thoughts.

DIVINE NATURE

Serving others is love in action. In Divine Nature value experience #3, you're invited to improve a relationship with a family member for two weeks. You might do this experience (again) and see how it affects your relationship when you focus on serving your family member.

INDIVIDUAL WORTH

Review Individual Worth value experience #4 about preparing for your future, and add some goals about how you want to serve in your home, family, education, and other ways.

Mutual theme every day while

KNOWLEDGE

Serving with your “heart, might, mind and strength”

(D&C 4:2) can mean service in a temporal as well as a spiritual sense. Just see Knowledge value experience #5, which helps you learn about all kinds of people who give their all to jobs that serve the community. See how developing new skills can help you serve God and others better.

CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Having the Holy Ghost as a constant companion is one way to become aware of those around you who need your service. See Choice and Accountability value experience #5 about how you can keep the Holy Ghost in your life, and then pray to ask Heavenly Father to help you know whom and how to serve.

GOOD WORKS

One way we serve God and others is by sharing the gospel. Good Works value experience #7 suggests that you pray for missionary experiences. As you seek for opportunities to share your beliefs, the Lord will give them to you, and He will help you have the confidence you need too! Consider putting a reminder by your bed to help you remember to pray for these experiences.

INTEGRITY

Serving with your “heart, might, mind and strength” might sound a little overwhelming. Integrity value experience #5, about improving your personal behaviors, can guide you in gradually overcoming your weaknesses and little by little becoming a better servant of God. Consider setting a goal to work on improving yourself in one area this week and see how daily efforts can bring about big changes.

VIRTUE

Remember that no matter where you are in life, you can always repent and be forgiven. Virtue value experience #4 gives great suggestions on how to strengthen yourself spiritually and work toward a “blameless” life. As you serve, pay special attention to how your service brings spiritual power, and record your experiences. **NE**

goals at the same time.

SERVING GOD AND COME, FOLLOW ME

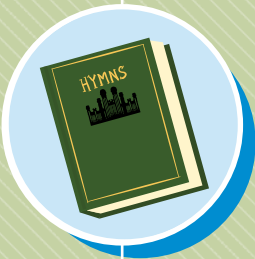
AS YOU STUDY THE *COME, FOLLOW ME* SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS THIS YEAR, THINK ABOUT HOW THE PRINCIPLES CAN HELP YOU LIVE THIS YEAR'S MUTUAL THEME AS YOU SERVE GOD "WITH ALL YOUR HEART, MIGHT, MIND AND STRENGTH" (D&C 4:2). YOU MIGHT FOCUS ON A DIFFERENT PRINCIPLE EACH MONTH. FOR EXAMPLE, TRY ONE OF THESE IDEAS.

01 JANUARY



One of the greatest ways we can serve God and others is by teaching the gospel. See "How can I help others learn about Heavenly Father?" for ideas on what you can teach your friends about our relationship with God.

02 FEBRUARY



You've been given talents to use for good. See "How can I use Church music to learn about the plan of salvation?" for an example of how music can contribute to teaching the gospel. Consider other talents you have and how you can use those to serve.

03 MARCH



How do you serve "with all your ... might" when sometimes you don't feel all that mighty, especially spiritually? Look at "How can I use the words of living prophets and apostles to strengthen my faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ?" for ideas on resources to strengthen you and your faith in Jesus Christ as you "embark in the service of God."

04 APRIL



You're surrounded by good examples of dedicated servants. "What does Joseph Smith's example teach me about learning the gospel?" invites you to study the life of Joseph Smith. Consider how his gospel learning led him to serve others and how you can do the same.

05 ● MAY



Sharing your testimony is a type of service where you may not always see how you're blessing someone else, but it's just as valuable. See "What does it mean to bear testimony?" for examples of how one person's testimony has blessed others' lives. You might get new ideas on ways you can serve others by sharing your testimony too.

06 ● JUNE



Look at "How do women and priesthood holders work together to build the kingdom of God?" and record how the priesthood has blessed your life or how you can use the priesthood to serve God and others.

07 ● JULY



When you were baptized you made a covenant to serve God. See "How can I deepen my understanding of covenants?" and think about how service is an important part of your baptismal covenant.

08 ● AUGUST



Did you realize keeping a journal can be service? "How will keeping a personal journal bless me and my family?" shows the importance and blessings of this record. Consider making a goal for how you want to keep a record of your life.

09 ● SEPTEMBER



One way you can "embark in the service of God" is simply by obeying Him, which sets a great example. See "How can I help others understand my standards?" for ideas on how to talk to friends about your standards. It's a chance to teach them and enjoy the blessings of obedience!

10 ● OCTOBER



Often when we serve others, we naturally develop love for them, but sometimes it takes a little effort first. See "How can I show love for those I teach?" to learn about developing that Christlike love for others you'll serve.

11 ● NOVEMBER



"Meaningful goals and careful planning can help us achieve the work the Lord has for us to do." This is taught in "How can setting goals help me become self-reliant?" Set one or two goals to focus on this month, perhaps something to help you serve others!

12 ● DECEMBER



Throughout your life you'll be called to serve in the Church. See "How can I learn to serve more effectively in the Church?" for ideas on how you can fulfill those callings "with all your heart, might, mind and strength." NE

A stylized illustration of a person with brown hair, wearing a green and black plaid shirt, dark pants, and yellow boots, climbing a steep, rocky mountain. The person is using a long wooden pole for support and has a green backpack with orange gear. The background is a warm, yellowish-orange wash. The title 'ONE STEP AT A TIME' is written in large, bold letters, with 'ONE STEP' in orange and 'AT A TIME' in blue.

ONE STEP AT A TIME

**YOUTH IN ITALY SHARE HOW THEY
SERVE GOD WITH ALL THEIR HEART,
MIGHT, MIND, AND STRENGTH.**

By Hillary Olsen

Now that you know this year's Mutual theme is about service, what are you going to do? The Lord has asked you to serve Him with *all* your heart, might, mind, and strength (see D&C 4:2). That's a lot, and it can feel overwhelming. But it doesn't have to.

"It's like climbing a mountain," says Marco D., of Apulia, Italy. "Thinking about climbing the whole mountain at once is hard, but if you take it one step at a time, it's a lot easier. Put one foot in front of the other, and once you take a step, think, 'I did it!' and then take the next step."

Amid the pizza, pasta, and cobblestones of Italian life, youth in southern Italy have found some useful steps to focus on as they try to serve with *all* their heart, might, mind, and strength.

SEEK SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Receiving spiritual guidance is an important step to serving the Lord, and Davide C., 15, knows that it won't happen without effort on his part. "I need to be an instrument in God's hands," he says. "I have to be ready to receive and follow the promptings of the Spirit. To do that, I need to constantly surround myself with the things of the Lord."

Davide and his family are converts to the Church. Before he was even baptized, Davide learned how important scripture study is. His brother was the first to be baptized, and his parents soon followed. Davide knew that he needed his own testimony. As he studied the Book of Mormon, he felt the Spirit. The good feelings he felt helped him make the decision to join the Church.

Four years later, Davide still relies on guidance from the Spirit. "We have to be constant. We can't slack off in our scripture study and prayer," he says.

STAY PURE

Marco D., 17, points out the importance of obeying the commandments, specifically the law of chastity. "The adversary tempts us in every way, trying to get us to mess up," says Marco. "Friends can also be a bad influence." Several years ago Marco had to change the friends he spent time with because



he recognized the negative influence they were making on his choices. "I had to find friends who accepted me for who I am and not for who the world expects me to be."

Sometimes in our climb up the mountain, we stumble. When this happens, "go see the bishop and talk openly with him," urges Marco. "The bishop is our brother. We can trust him."

His efforts to be obedient and stay pure give Marco opportunities to serve God now, and they are also preparing him to be worthy to one day serve a full-time mission.

MAKE TIME

Manuel M., 17, recognizes that it's not always easy to serve God. "We are often put to the test," says Manuel. "Sometimes we'd rather sleep, go to a soccer game, or hang out with my friends. But my mom has always taught me that we have to choose to serve the Lord. It's OK to do other things too, but serving the Lord needs to be our priority."

Miriam D., 14, knows that the only way for her to ensure that scripture study and prayer happen each day is to set aside a specific time to do it. "I feel like I'm able to accomplish so

much when I set aside the time," says Miriam. "Besides, when we dedicate more time to the Lord, we can't be tempted as much—it makes us stronger."

SERVE WILLINGLY

For Sabrina D., 15, serving with all her heart, might, mind, and strength means serving with *buona volontà*. That means doing things with a willing and cheerful attitude.

Alessio I., 12, agrees: "It doesn't make sense to do it just because the bishop or your parents tell you to. You shouldn't feel obligated. The Lord wants us to serve for the right reasons."

How can we have more *buona volontà* as we serve? "Reading the scriptures helps me, because they teach us that serving is the right thing to do," says Sabrina.

Studying and understanding the Atonement better can also help us serve willingly and cheerfully. Elisa D., 17, says, "Just as Heavenly Father sent His Son, who sacrificed



everything for us, we need to be willing to dedicate all we can to serving the Lord.”

FOCUS ON OTHERS

Sisters Giulia, 16, and Veronica D., 14, know it's important to focus on others. “Service helps us to see people differently. When you serve someone, you're both blessed,” says Giulia.

Veronica says, “At one point I really wanted to share the gospel, but I didn't feel ready. I was scared. But when I focused on the people I was serving, I felt more confident because I knew that the Lord would help me.”

Giulia and Veronica were able to serve their friend Virginia in a life-changing way. They started inviting her to come to Church activities with them. They also invited Virginia's family to do things with their family. Soon Virginia's family started meeting with the missionaries. A year later, Virginia and her little sister were baptized.

Now that she's a member of the Church, Virginia looks for ways to serve the people around her. She really wants to share the gospel with others. Sometimes her friends at school make fun of her for her new beliefs, so she prays to know whom she should talk to. One day the Spirit prompted her to talk to a girl she knew. “I gave her a Book of Mormon and invited her to come to church

with me. She came! And now she's reading the Book of Mormon.”

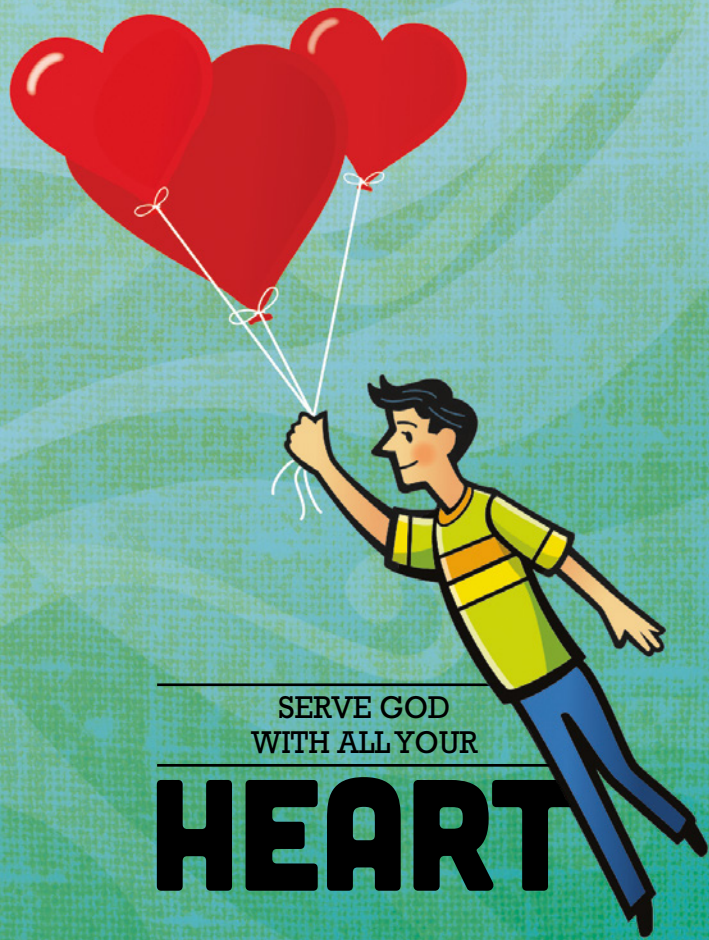
Samuele D., 14, looks for opportunities to strengthen the members of his quorum: “I try to help the other boys in my quorum by encouraging them in class. Sometimes they feel embarrassed or nervous to participate.” Samuele says that helping others feel confident is one way he can serve God and prepare for future responsibilities.

START NOW

So, what are *you* going to do? Alessio I. says, “I don't have to wait till I'm older to make a difference. I need to do it now.”

These steps will help you too as you come to realize that you are a valuable part of the Lord's work. Take it a step at a time. You will make an important difference as you learn to give your all to the Lord's service. **NE**
Hillary Olsen lives in Utah, USA.





SERVE GOD
WITH ALL YOUR

HEART



SERVE GOD
WITH ALL YOUR

MIND



SERVE GOD
WITH ALL YOUR

MIGHT

SERVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR

STRENGTH



Serve with All Your Mind

"The power to think is a gift from God... The way we think greatly affects attitudes and behavior, as well as our standing after this life" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Thoughts," scriptures.lds.org). Our minds help us learn and change for the better—if we seek after good things. Here are some ideas for serving God with all your mind:

- Study the scriptures and the words of prophets.
- Think positive thoughts about others and yourself.
- Seek knowledge, especially of edifying things.
- Choose wholesome and uplifting entertainment.
- Research something important to you—for example, an event in Church history or an ancestor.
- Focus your thoughts on the Savior during the sacrament.
- Keep a journal and review it periodically.

Serve with All Your Heart

The heart sustains life. "Heart" often means the center or core of something and the place where desires and emotions reside. To serve God with all our heart is to give Him all of our desires, will, and love. He asks us to love Him by keeping His commandments and loving others. Here are some ideas for doing this:

- Put prayer, scripture study, and Church attendance above your own wishes.
- Show compassion and kindness toward someone in your family or at school.
- Spend time doing what someone else wants to do.
- Try to understand how someone else feels.
- Give a sincere compliment to someone.
- Talk or sit next to someone who is alone.

Serve with All Your Strength

The energy with which we serve God is part of giving Him all our strength. Strength is also spiritual power, inner commitment, resilience, and diligence in doing good. We can show our strength as we live the principles the Savior Himself lived. Then we can receive divine spiritual power. Here are ideas for serving with all your strength:

- Give your undivided attention to your scripture study.
- Work in unity with those in your ward or branch.
- Stand strong for moral standards.
- Act on promptings from the Holy Ghost to bless others.
- Commit to live righteously and stick to your commitment when temptations arise.
- Take care of your body through nutrition and exercise.
- Keep your covenants to gain greater spiritual power.

Serve with All Your Might

Serving with our might can mean simply doing what we are able to do, both spiritually and temporally, and is outward focused. Whatever our individual talents (from lifting a heavy couch to staying positive in difficult situations), we can use them to strengthen others. Here are some ideas for serving with all your might:

- Ask yourself, "Who can use my help today?"—and do something about it.
- Perform a task for someone, like sweeping a porch, cleaning up a room, or washing dishes.
- Use your talents: fix a vehicle or a computer, beautify a room, create a homemade gift, write a poem.
- Go out of your way to be a friend and a good example.
- Teach someone a skill you have learned.

GIVING THE *Best Gift*

I gave my friend the best birthday present she had ever received.

By Mariela Rodriguez

When I was 13 years old, the prophet asked Church members to read the Book of Mormon in five months, by the end of that year, and promised blessings for doing so. One day as I was reading on the bus, a girl named Cynthia sat by me and asked what the book was. I said it was the Book of Mormon and that it was a special book. I said I wanted to finish reading it before the year ended so I could receive blessings.

She started asking more questions, and I told her she could come to my house so we could talk more about it. She accepted my invitation, and we spent several hours over the following days talking about the Book of Mormon and the Church.

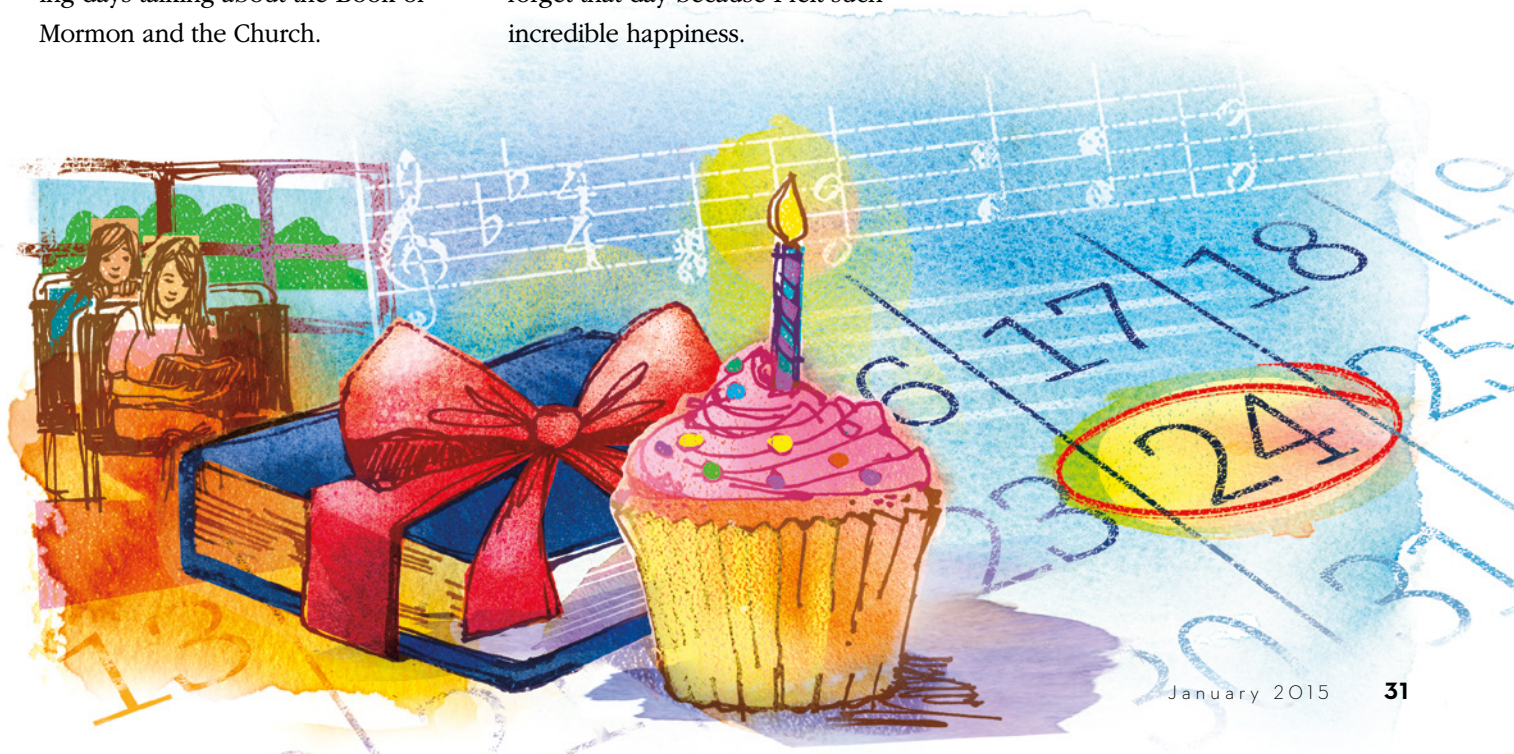
The next Monday, I invited her to family home evening, where I introduced her to the missionaries. They started teaching her the lessons, and she began coming to church and to all the youth activities and other Church meetings.

She decided that she wanted to be baptized, and with her parents' permission, she was baptized on her birthday that year. She said it was the best present she'd ever received. Her mother and siblings attended the baptism. She asked me to sing "The Spirit of God" (*Hymns*, no. 2), and she asked my father to perform the baptism. After she came out of the water, we embraced and cried. I will never forget that day because I felt such incredible happiness.

A year later my family moved away. It was difficult because Cynthia and I had become good friends and sisters in the gospel.

Even though we don't live close to each other anymore, we're still great friends. We talk often on the phone, and recently she called to tell me that her mom was listening to the missionary lessons. This made me happy because before that her mom didn't want to listen to the lessons. Cynthia told me that someday she hopes to go to church with her entire family. She thanked me for introducing her to the Church. **NE**

Mariela Rodriguez lives in Texas, USA.



It's January 1—time to set some goals for the new year. Want to make sure you don't forget about them by January 15? Find out what helps these youth finish what they start.

WRITE THEM DOWN

A goal is not a goal if it is not written down, so I have to write my goals in a table. When I accomplish one goal, I make a check and move on to the next. In order to keep your goals, two people are involved: God and yourself. We need to pray to Heavenly Father for guidance and for help in keeping our goals, and we need to keep an open mind and try to work toward our goals.

Rowallan N., 19, Zimbabwe

MAKE A PLAN AND TELL OTHERS

It's great to have my mom and dad help motivate me. When I was trying out for cheerleading, I set goals to push myself further, concentrate, and do my best. I kept these goals and ended up landing a spot on the varsity cheer team. My parents' love and motivation—and my own perseverance to the end—helped a lot.

Aubrey C., 14, Michigan, USA

YOUTH VOICES:

Goals

BE WILLING TO DO WHAT IT TAKES

In fifth grade I did a science project designing pedestrian gates to make train crossings safer. I had to push myself to get my project done and to make it work. Several months later, after a girl was killed at a train crossing, I was asked to be interviewed by a newspaper and TV station about my project. I went to a city council meeting and spoke about how the city could use my ideas to make the train crossings safer. It took courage to stand up and talk to the city council members, but I learned that when you put time and effort into something, you can do things that seemed too hard at first.

James B., 14, Utah, USA

REVIEW YOUR GOALS

At the beginning of each year I make a list of specific goals for the year in my journal, including academic goals, new habits, and Personal Progress values that I want to complete in the year. I also write some statements of Church leaders that encourage me to work hard to achieve worthy goals.

I review my list throughout the year, especially when I have to make choices about how to use my time.

Ana M., 17, Paraguay

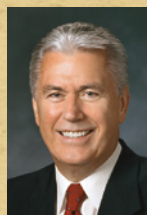
PUT GOD FIRST

I have found that when I put God first, everything else will fall into place—maybe not at that moment, but eventually it will.

Sometimes we can't do all the things we want to do, so we should turn to the Lord to help us know what would be best in the long run. We should always listen to Him because He knows what is best for us.

Amy G., 18, Montana, USA

THAT STICK



CONTINUING FORWARD

"Even though we might fall short of our finish line, just continuing the journey will make us greater than we were before."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "The Best Time to Plant a Tree," *Ensign*, Jan. 2014, 6.

FIVE FUN WAYS TO RECORD 2015

.....
YOUR LIFE ISN'T BORING. KEEPING A RECORD OF IT
DOESN'T NEED TO BE, EITHER.

By Brittany Beattie
Church Magazines

Do you ever feel overwhelmed when people talk about how important it is to keep a journal? Maybe you feel a little guilty when you go to sleep without jotting down a few things that happened during the day, but you just know that it will take *forever* to write about the day, and your pillow is already calling your name.

Maybe it's time to take a new approach to journal writing. Rather than feeling like you need to write a ton each day or that journaling has to be a play-by-play of every event in your life, try one of these creative ideas for 2015. Give it a go and see how rewarding it can be!

1

PHOTO + SENTENCE

Take a photo each day and jot down a quick sentence explaining what the photo shows or what the memory means to you. You can take a phone photo and include a sentence by emailing yourself the pic. Or just snap a photo each day, write your sentence afterward, and then combine the photos and sentences for the week into a document each Sunday. If you have an app-compatible device, some apps are designed to help you with the photo-a-day approach—just make sure you transfer them to a stand-alone document that can be kept long after you quit using the app.



2

SAME TIME, DIFFERENT PLACE

Set a watch or phone with a silent alarm to go off at a certain time each day—not during classes but preferably during a time that tends to have the most variety of activities from day to day. When the alarm goes off, write down, text, or email yourself a quick sentence about what you're doing at that moment. It takes almost no time at all, and at the end of the year it provides a glimpse into what your everyday life is like!



HANDWRITTEN VS. DIGITAL

Are you already on the computer or a tablet each day? Let technology work for you by keeping your journal digitally if that fits your life better than a printed journal. Just make sure to back up your journal often, in case your computer or tablet crashes, and print it out every so often. You may want to consider handwriting an entry every once in a while and adding the photo to your digital document—that way you at least get a sampling of your handwriting over time.

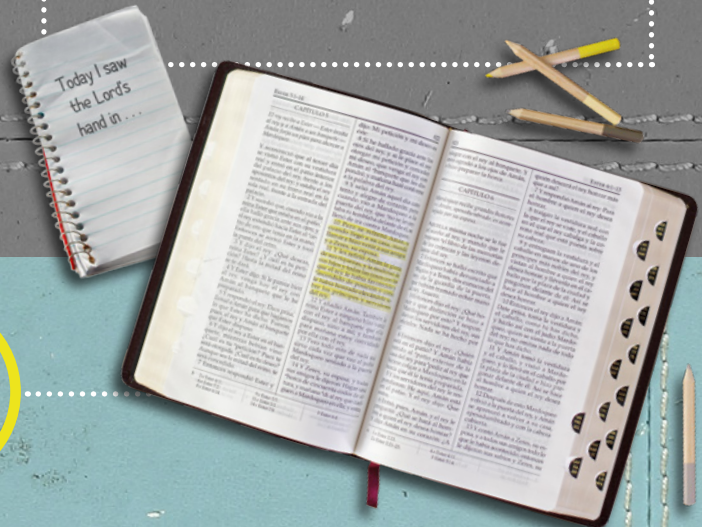


3

BLESSINGS FROM HEAVENLY FATHER

Every day, Heavenly Father is giving each of us many blessings! We just have to learn to look for them. Consider this approach from President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, for a daily journal entry:

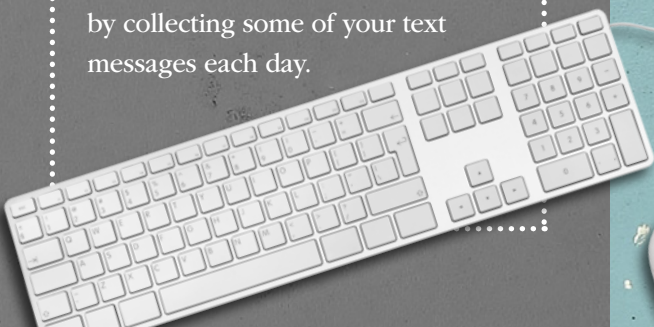
“I wrote down a few lines every day for years. . . . Before I would write, I would ponder this question: ‘Have I seen the hand of God reaching out to touch us or our children or our family today?’ As I kept at it, something began to happen. As I would cast my mind over the day, I would see evidence of what God had done for one of us that I had not recognized in the busy moments of the day. As that happened, and it happened often, I realized that trying to remember had allowed God to show me what He had done” (“O Remember, Remember,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 67).



4

SOCIAL MEDIA MASH-UP

If you're on social media, your posts are already capturing a part of your life. Each time you post, copy the text into a digital journal. If you're not on social media, you can try this approach by collecting some of your text messages each day.

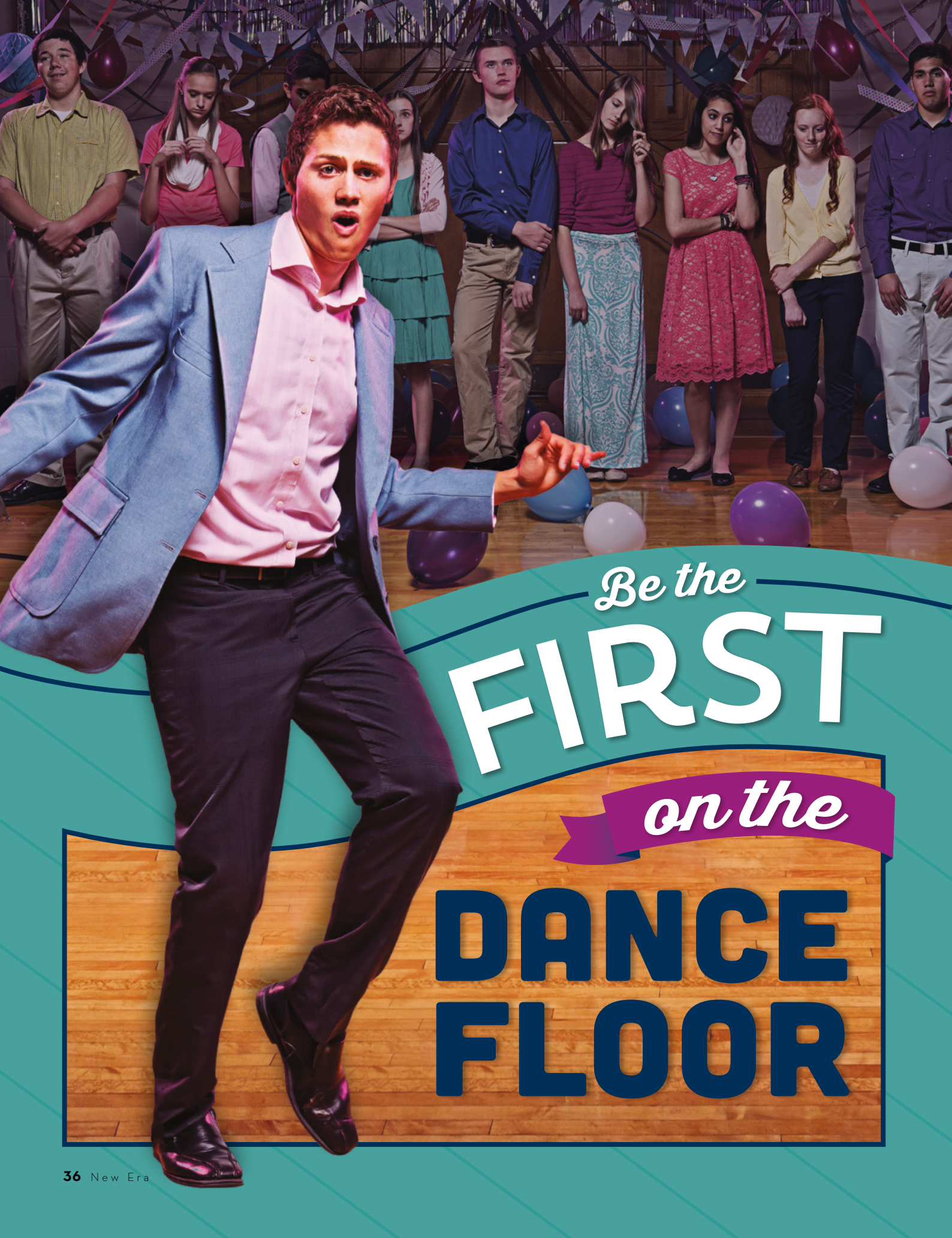


5

SAYING IT WITH SCRIPTURES

Each day when you read your scriptures, jot down a verse that stood out to you and tell in a few sentences why it's important to you or how it relates to your life right now.

You'll be like Nephi, who kept the “small plates” that contained his spiritual record instead of just the history of the events happening around him (this principle would apply to #3 too!). NE



Be the
FIRST
on the
DANCE FLOOR

Set trends and make friends. After all, the world could use a little more of your positive influence.

By David Dickson
Church Magazines

No patch of vacant ground ever looks so intimidating as an empty floor at a stake dance. That seemingly innocent, well-swept gymnasium might as well be loaded with finely oiled bear traps ready to spring shut.

It's kind of weird, when you think about it.

The room itself is often decorated to perfection. Dozens or even hundreds of people have spent time and effort getting ready for the dance. They look their best. They want to be there and have a good time. Upbeat music plays in the background. And yet almost without exception there's usually a stretch in the beginning when the whole crowd hovers at the sides of the room. Nobody is willing to start dancing until *someone else* starts first.

Those awkward minutes can drag on and on until a few brave people finally take the plunge. At that point, an empty dance floor can go from zero to flooded in seconds. But someone has to start.

Why not let that someone be you?

THE CHOICE TO ACT

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: "As sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father, we have been blessed with the gift of moral agency, the capacity for independent action and choice. Endowed with agency, you and I are agents, and we primarily are to act and not just be acted upon" ("And Nothing Shall Offend Them," *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 90; see also 2 Nephi 2:26).

Plowing headlong onto an empty dance floor is only one small example of how we can use our agency to lead out in positive activities. If dancing isn't your thing, don't

worry. The ways we can influence others and be a force for good are truly endless.

THE START OF SOMETHING NEW

Opportunities to create new and uplifting activities can come anywhere and anytime. For example, a group of young men camping in Goblin Valley State Park (south-central Utah, USA) found a creative and exciting way to share the gospel: they buried some treasure.

Their modern-day treasure hunt was made possible with geocaching, where, with the use of a global positioning system (GPS) device or mobile phone, all you need is a set of numbers to help you find an exact location even in the middle of nowhere. The standard practice in geocaching is to take what you find when you reach your destination, usually something small such as an inexpensive toy, and then leave something else for the next person.

BE ANXIOUSLY ENGAGED

"Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

"For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward."

Doctrine and
Covenants 58:27-28.





These young men were learning about geocaching on their campout. They wanted to create an official geocache of their own, but with a twist. Instead of taking and leaving small objects, they wanted visitors to read (take) and mark (leave) scriptures.

“I’ve looked at a lot of geocaches in the past, and I’ve never seen anything like this before,” says John B., 16, one of the young men in the group.

Each member of the group marked a favorite scripture with his name next to it in a single copy of the Book of Mormon. John also included his testimony along with written instructions to those who will visit the geocache in the future.

The young men then placed the Book of Mormon in a weatherproof container surrounded by rocks and made note of the GPS coordinates. They have high hopes that this geocache, which they registered online, will be visited for many years to come.

“It was a lot of fun,” John says. “This was a way for us to share the gospel.”

These young men led out—being “the first on the dance floor”—by sharing scriptures that strengthened them and inviting others to follow their lead.

“MADE YOU SMILE”

As another example of youth leading out in positive activities that strengthen others, an entire city in Texas, USA, became a bit brighter after a group of young women in

one ward decided to **“SMILE”** at everyone around them: **“Surround Myself In Light Every day.”**

The goal of their SMILE Project was to spread happiness through smiling at every person they came in contact with—including themselves. Each day for two weeks, the young women would smile at the mirror in the morning and then smile at each person they met during the day. Their efforts quickly turned into something worth grinning over.

“I felt extremely privileged to be able to spread happiness in such a simple and brilliant way!” says Kelly D., 15. “I felt like I was really trying to be like Jesus and sharing my love with the community by smiling.”

Of course, when you smile at someone, you often receive a smile back. Their smiles began spreading through town.

The young women also noticed that smiling at themselves in the mirror made a difference in their day. “At first the part about smiling at myself sounded kind of strange,” admits Megan M., 13. “But after a little while, my self-confidence grew.”

As the two weeks unfolded, the young women realized their small acts of kindness had a big impact. Maisie D., 17, sums up the project: “I learned for myself that small and simple acts of kindness can make all the difference in someone’s life,” she says. In this case, as in many cases (see Alma 37:6), taking “the first step on the dance floor” didn’t require a huge effort—just a simple goal that invited happiness and allowed others to join in a good thing.

SCRIPTURAL TRAILBLAZERS

Like these youth, don't be afraid to try ideas that are brand new. After all, the scriptures are full of examples of people who accomplished big tasks that had never been done before. When the Jaredites built barges to cross the ocean (see Ether 2), the Brother of Jared went to the Lord with an idea for how to provide light to the ships. His idea was anything but common (see Ether 3).

Similarly, when Nephi and his family built a ship for their own journey to the promised land, they weren't following standard building practices. "Now I, Nephi, did not work the timbers after the manner which was learned by men, neither did I build the ship after the manner of men; but I did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown unto me" (1 Nephi 18:2).

In more modern times, during the construction of the first temple built in this dispensation, the Kirtland Temple, the First Presidency (Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams) received revelation on how they should build. The temple would be unlike any building they'd ever seen.

"Now here is wisdom, and the mind of the Lord—let the house be built, not after the manner of the world, for I

give not unto you that ye shall live after the manner of the world; therefore, let it be built after the manner which I shall show" (D&C 95:13–14).

The Jaredites had light for their journey. Nephi's ship carried them safely to the promised land. The Kirtland Temple blessed the lives of the Saints who worked so hard to build it. Each of these stories shows that with the Lord's help and according to His will, you can accomplish great things even when you've never had experience in that particular area.

YOUR OWN DANCE FLOOR

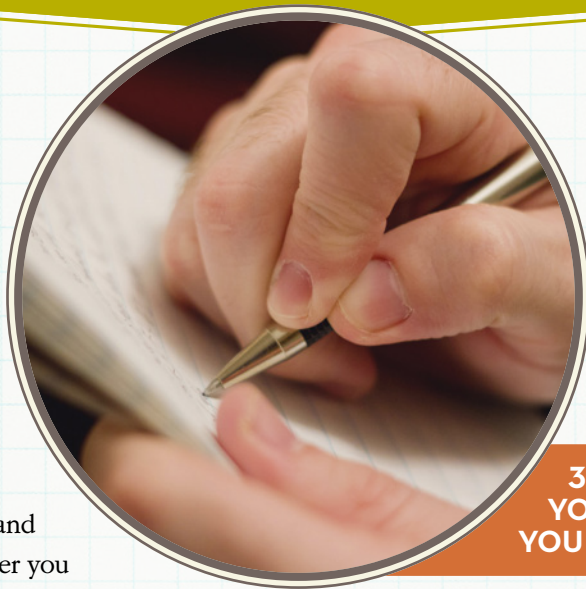
You can be a force for good in so many ways. You can help your friends become excited about family history. You can start a book club to encourage the use of media that meet the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*. You can help stop profanity at your school (see [lds.org/go/NoCussingNE1](https://www.lds.org/go/NoCussingNE1) and [lds.org/go/CM2NE1](https://www.lds.org/go/CM2NE1) for examples). You can throw a welcome party for the new kid on the block.

No matter what uplifting and exciting efforts you decide to pursue, it's usually a lot more rewarding to participate than it is to watch from the sidelines.

So, head on out there and dance. **NE**



3 WAYS SETTING GOALS CAN BE DIFFERENT THIS YEAR



The beginning of a new year can be great, with family time, parties, tasty food . . . and goals. Some people love goals—they rank right up there with watching fireworks and counting down to midnight. Other people, well, don't. It can be terribly frustrating to set goals and then not achieve them. But whether you love setting goals or dread it, *setting goals can be different this year!* Here's how:

1. KNOW WHAT GOD WANTS FOR YOU.

When you seek revelation to know what goals to set, you'll likely be more committed to them. As you seek that revelation through prayer and ponder what Heavenly Father wants you to accomplish, remember this counsel from President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency: "The holy scriptures and the talks given at general conference are an effective mirror we can hold up for self-examination."¹

Don't think this principle applies only to spiritual goals, either—God can help you see how to improve physically, in relationships, in your job, and with your education too.

2. KNOW THAT GOD CAN HELP YOU SUCCEED.

In the October 2014 general conference, President Thomas S. Monson said, "Although we are left to find and follow that path which will lead us back to our Father in Heaven, He did not send us here without direction and guidance. . . . He will assist us as we seek His help and

strive to do all in our power to endure to the end and gain eternal life."² Remember that the Atonement of Jesus Christ provides enabling power to do more than you think you can at first.

3. KNOW THAT GOD LOVES YOU, EVEN IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE FAILED.

So what happens when you set goals and you *don't* reach them?

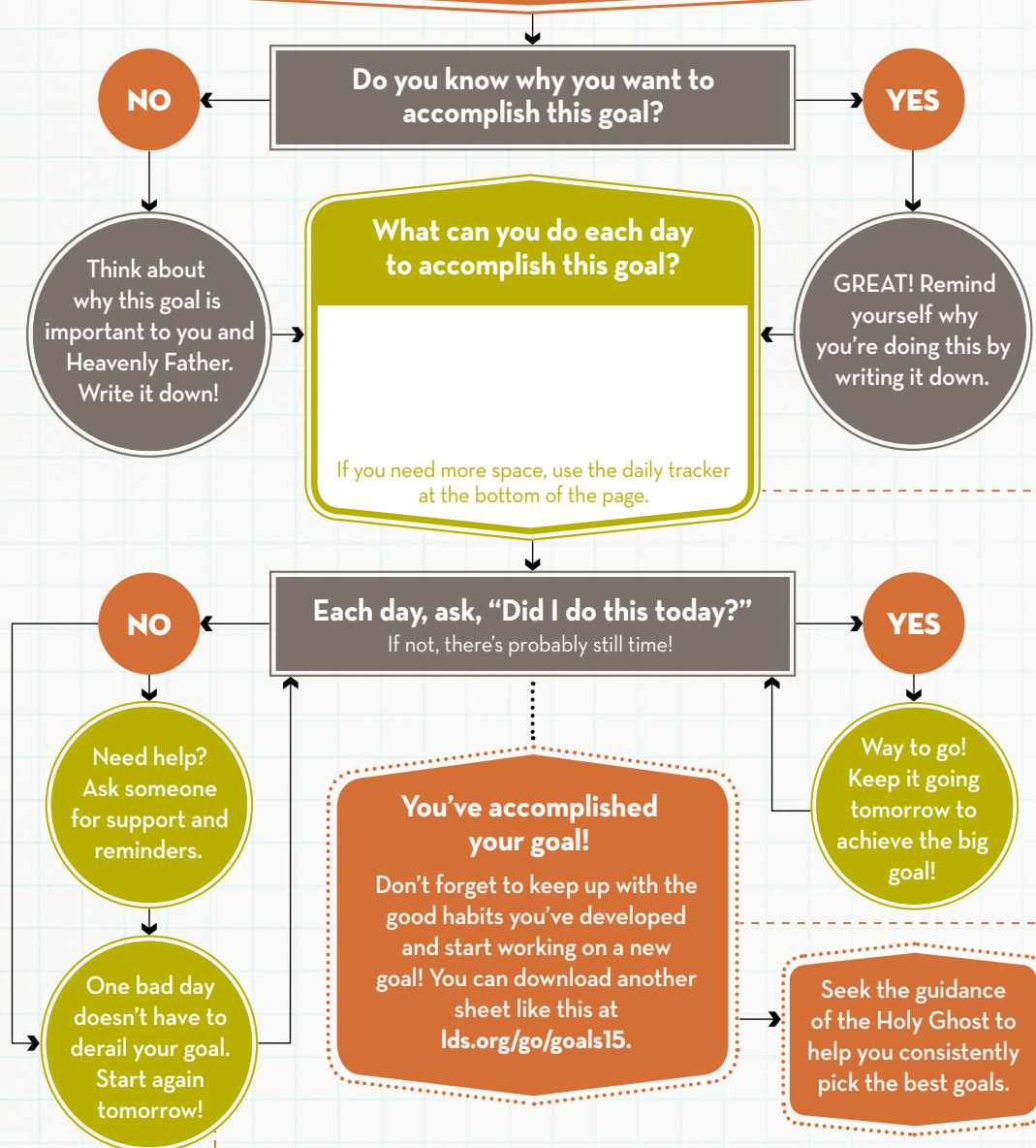
President Uchtdorf has said, "God loves you this very day and always. He is not waiting to love you until you have overcome your weaknesses and bad habits. He loves you today with a full understanding of your struggles. . . . He knows of your remorse for the times you have fallen short or failed. And still He loves you. . . . He wants you to achieve your destiny—to return to your heavenly home in honor."³

God will continue to help you. Even if you didn't achieve your goals perfectly, you're still growing from the effort of trying to get there! Whatever progress you make leaves you better than before you started. And if you miss your goal, don't get discouraged; just start again where you left off. Look to Heavenly Father and to others who love you for support. Also, check out more ideas at lds.org/go/change15 and the chart at right to help you make this year different from any other!

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Lord, Is It I?" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 58.
2. Thomas S. Monson, "Ponder the Path of Thy Feet," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 86.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Living the Gospel Joyful," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 123.

WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?



"We must be willing to learn and to change. And, oh, how much we gain by committing to live the life our Heavenly Father intends for us."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Lord, Is It I?" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 58.

"Just because things are going well does not mean that we should not from time to time consider whether there might be something better."

Elder Carlos A. Godoy of the Seventy, "The Lord Has a Plan for Us!" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 98.

"Acknowledge and face your weaknesses, but don't be immobilized by them."

Elder Jörg Klebingat of the Seventy, "Approaching the Throne of God with Confidence," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 37.

DAILY CHART

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY

“How can I **really** know for myself that the **Church** is **true**?”

We all need to build our faith and testimony for ourselves in order to grow spiritually. In Alma 32, Alma gives us the pattern for this lifelong process of building faith and testimony, and modern-day Church leaders encourage us to find the truth for ourselves. Elder Marcos A.

Aidukaitis of the Seventy has said, “In the kingdom of God, the search for truth is appreciated, encouraged, and in no way repressed or feared” (“If Ye Lack Wisdom,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 108), meaning that it’s OK if you feel like you’re still working on your testimony (just like everyone else).

Young women from a stake in Utah, USA, recently shared several important ideas on how to know the truth: “If you choose to keep believing, even for another day, it will be enough to keep you going until your testimony is stronger,” says Eden B., 15. And Keslie T., 17, says, “The best way to know something is to put forth effort and study the subject. We’re given so many tools to learn about the gospel, and the more you study it, the more your testimony will grow.” Maddy R., 14, adds, “Heavenly Father loves us, and prayer is a direct way of communication with Him. Pray often and go to God with any questions. He will always answer.”

As these young women experienced, gaining and maintaining a testimony is a lifelong process that requires faith, scripture study, and putting gospel principles into practice. If you don’t feel completely confident about your testimony, don’t worry. Just keep working on it, be patient, and rely on what you know to be true. And you might consider watching this great story about a young man who was worried that he did not *know* the Church is true but only *believed* it. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “I told him how very proud I was of him for the honesty of his quest” (see [lds.org/go/believeNET](https://www.lds.org/go/believeNET)). **NE**



We Need to Take the First Step

We often get caught up trying to look for definitive proof for

answers we seek. However, if we look at the history of prophets looking for revelation, they always took the first step in their faith by asking Heavenly Father what to believe with an honest intent. Being able to “prove” the Church to be true would defeat the purpose of having faith in the first place. When we exercise our faith, we can gradually gain a personal witness of its truthfulness. We must take the first step.

Hunter J., 17, Arizona, USA

Start Out with Hope

Start out by doing things with hope, such as reading your scriptures, praying every day, and going to all three meetings every Sunday. In doing these things, you will feel the Lord’s Spirit with you, testifying of the truth. As you continue to do these things, your knowledge of the gospel and the Lord’s plan for you will expand and grow.

Ryker J., 16, Utah, USA



Remember the Testimony You Do Have

Gain a testimony of the priesthood, the Book of Mormon, and the prophets. These are things that set The Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints apart from other religions. When you feel the Spirit confirm that these things are true, write down your feelings and thoughts. In times of doubt, remember the Spirit you have felt. Remember the power of the priesthood you have experienced. When doubts come into my mind, I say to myself, “I have a testimony!” Then the Spirit confirms to me again that my testimony is true.

Erin J., 18, Kansas, USA

Live Like You Believe

To know the Church is true, you have to live like you believe. Live the gospel standards, read scriptures with real intent to learn, and pray sincerely—these are some great ways to know of the truthfulness of this gospel. Heavenly Father loves you and wants to give you the answer.

Danielle A., 18, Utah, USA



Open Your Heart

In order to know the Church is true, I needed to completely open my heart to the voice of the Spirit and have faith. I have to allow the Spirit to help me understand my Young Women values, apply the Atonement in my life, and build my testimony of this gospel. Then I have to have faith that the things the Holy Ghost is allowing me to feel are true.

Kaiya C., 17, Hawaii, USA

Ask in Prayer

There are different ways to know that the Church is true. One way is to do the Lord’s work, such as paying tithing, and you will have a sure feeling in your heart that it is the truth. Another example is by asking in prayer. James 1:5 says, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” This scripture tells us that if there is something we do not know, we can ask Him in prayer. I know that this is the true Church and that others can know the same.

Logan B., 12, Georgia, USA

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



GOD HAS PROMISED

“God Himself—the Lord of Hosts who knows all truth—has given His children the promise that they can know truth for themselves. . . .

“He will speak to them in dreams, visions, thoughts, and feelings.

“He will speak in a way that is unmistakable and that transcends human experience. He will give them divine direction and answers for their personal lives.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Receiving a Testimony of Light and Truth,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 21.

UPCOMING QUESTION

My friends say
seminary is amazing.
**What’s so
“amazing” about
seminary?**

Send your answer and photo by February 15, 2015.

Go to newera.lds.org, click “Submit Your Work,” sign in with your LDS Account, and then select “New Era.”

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



I used to be mean,
but I've changed,
and I want to share
the gospel. How can
I overcome my reputation?

First of all, don't let fear stop you. If you have been touched by the Spirit and are trying to repent and change, that is a marvelous thing. Remember, this change happens through the enabling power of the grace of Jesus Christ. With His help, you can become a new person and start to change your reputation. He will also help you share the gospel. Though changing your reputation will take time, it will be worth it. Here are just a few things you can do in that process:

- Apologize to people you know you've hurt.
- Go out of your way to show kindness to people you wouldn't have shown kindness to before.
- Always be sincere and genuine.
- If the people you hang out with are unkind to others, either get them to stop it or stop hanging out with them. Otherwise, people will lump you in with them.
- Consider studying Moroni 7 and praying for charity. **NE**

The Savior said the **spirit of contention** is of the devil (see 3 Nephi 11:29). What's the **difference** between **disagreeing** and **contending**?

It's normal for people to have different views, and there are times when disciples of Jesus Christ need to stand up in the face of opposition for what we believe. But we need to

state our positions in a positive and factual way without becoming angry, bitter, or insulting. So how do we avoid contentious conflict?

You've probably heard we can "disagree

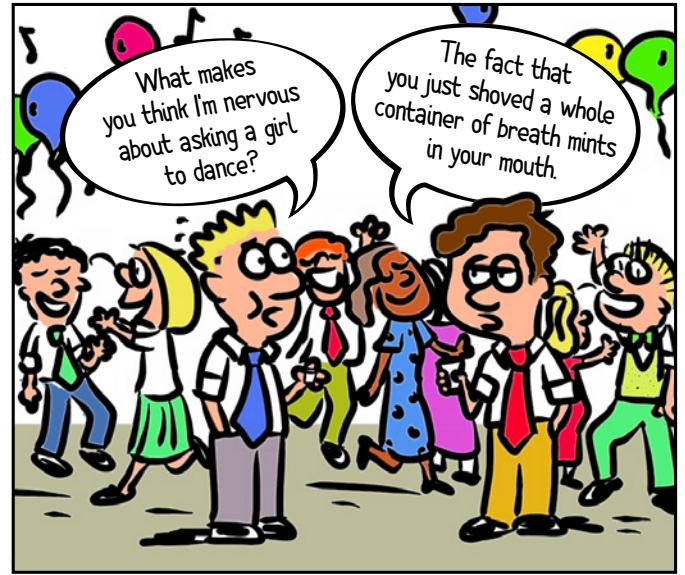
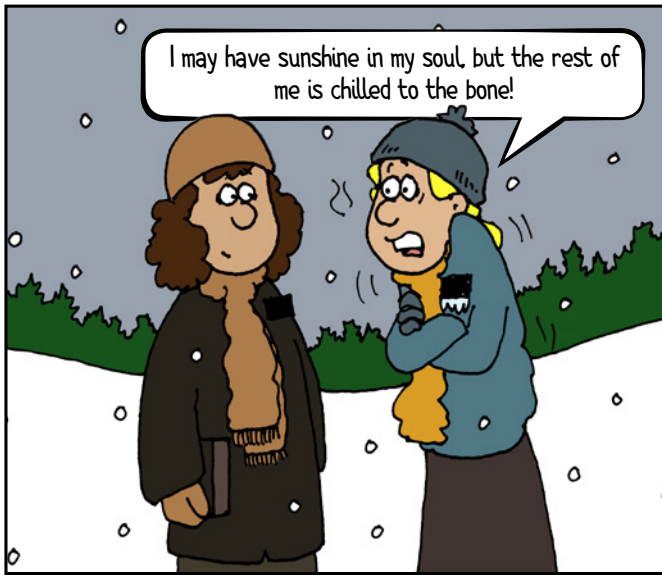
without being disagreeable." Avoiding contention begins with your motives and desires. The scriptures say that "only by pride cometh contention" (Proverbs 13:10). If you care more about "winning an argument" or "being right," a spirit of contention is almost certain to follow.

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has

taught some ways to avoid contention: (1) "show compassionate concern for others"; (2) "bridle the passion to speak or write contentiously for personal gain or glory"; and (3) "in humble submissiveness, truly [love] God."¹ Then we can have the Spirit of the Lord with us, not the spirit of contention. **NE**

NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson, "The Canker of Contention," *Ensign*, May 1989, 70–71.





AN INSPIRED ROLE

One summer some of the youth in my stake were asked to put on a play commemorating the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Many of my friends were involved, and I was excited to watch the performance. About a week before opening night, I received a phone call from one of the directors. She told me that one of the actors would not be able to participate and

asked if I could fill in for him. I was surprised, but I accepted.

Because I'd joined the cast so late in the rehearsal schedule, I had less than a week to learn my lines and know what to do during the scenes I was onstage. By our first performance, I felt confident in my role, but I was still unfamiliar with much of the play's content. One night I decided to watch the rest of the play from backstage. The play was wonderful, and during the scene where Joseph and Hyrum Smith were martyred, the Spirit testified to me that Joseph Smith truly was

a prophet. I felt the Spirit stronger than I ever had before.

I can never deny the testimony I gained that night. I know the Lord truly helped cultivate the Spirit in that performance, and I know I had the chance to play a role in the production so that I could gain a testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I will be eternally grateful for Joseph Smith's faithfulness and for inspired leaders who asked me to participate in this testimony-promoting experience.

Chad M., Arizona, USA

A SIMPLE INVITATION

When I entered high school, I started going to seminary every evening after school. Beginning in my sophomore year, I became a student-body officer and member of the dance company, and I participated in other extracurricular activities. I had countless meetings and rehearsals and was bombarded with homework and reading assignments.

One day a meeting was held at the same time as my seminary class. The meeting was important, but seminary was much more important; it was an easy decision for me. I immediately told my classmate about seminary and, to my surprise, she got me excused from the meeting so I could go to seminary. After some time, my classmate began asking about seminary. She asked what we did there and what we were learning. I told her and invited her to attend. She was eager and excited. When the time came, she attended the class, where she gained more friends. I found it was really easy to invite my friend to seminary and that by choosing to put seminary first and standing tall, I was able to bring light to someone else.

Cielo Mae D., Bukidnon, Philippines

IT'S TIME TO KEEP A JOURNAL

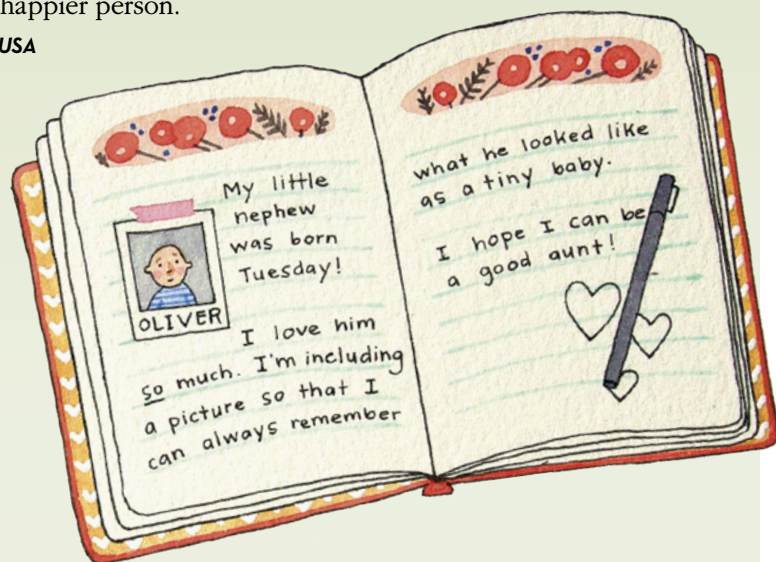
When my first nephew was born, I felt inspired to start writing in a journal. I'd never been very successful at it before, but seeing this new little person made me think about the fact that someday I would have children too, and I would want them to know what I was like when I was their age. I also wanted to be able to remind myself of my everyday life when I was a teen and of the people who helped shape who I'd become. I always knew that keeping a journal was an important thing to do, but I felt impressed that it was something I needed to do now.

To stay motivated, it helped me to think about how amazing it would be to find a journal of my grandparents or my great-grandparents, to get to know them from their real thoughts and feelings.

I also thought about the Bible and the Book of Mormon. These are records the Lord commanded His people to write. Maybe the writers didn't always feel like engraving another chapter into the plates on a particular day, but I'm glad they did. God inspired them to write a record, and they chose to listen.

I've been steadily keeping journals since that day. I don't think it matters how much or how often you write, as long as you write. Writing in a journal feels like being listened to when you're desperate to be heard. It's turned me into a better writer, and during some harder times, it's made me a happier person.

Millie T., Utah, USA





By Elder
Robert D. Hales

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

HOW TO ACHIEVE ETERNAL GOALS

I would like to suggest a few of the most important goals in life that will give you joy as you fulfill your mission on this earth—eternal goals that will help you return with honor to your Father in Heaven. They include:

1. **Marry in the temple** and **cultivate** eternal **family relationships** by prayerfully balancing the many facets of life, such as family, occupation, continuing education, hobbies, and entertainment.
2. Faithfully and obediently **live your religion** and **be true to your** baptismal and temple **covenants**, always **treasuring up the good things** of life.
3. **Hold on to the eternal perspective**, remembering that the things of the kingdom are eternal and the things of the world are temporal or temporary.

4. Remember to **give dedicated service** throughout your life and always **care for the needy** who may require your **love** and other **support**.

These are lifetime goals that take focus and time to achieve. Making these goals is not enough; we must **make a plan** to carry them out.

Tonight or tomorrow, **ponder what you want to achieve** in *your* life and what *your* goals should be. Take the time to **write them down** and **review them** throughout the coming years. Then spend a few hours asking yourself what you can do to accomplish these goals today, tomorrow, next week, and in months ahead.

How do you choose and define these important, eternal goals? And, just as vital, how do you make a plan to achieve them? Remember: time is the essential—even critical—element in your calculations. From where you stand now, it may seem that you have an indefinite amount of

time to accomplish eternal things.

Everyone has time; it's true. But just because time passes doesn't mean we are making progress.

"This life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors" (Alma 34:32).

The secret is to **choose wisely those activities** that will help us achieve our divinely inspired goals and then have the strength of character and conviction to **disregard what would distract or detain us** from our eternal destination.

I testify that your time on earth will be sufficient to accomplish your preparation and perform the labors of your life's mission—if you **use your time wisely**. And there is no better time to do that than now, in your youth (see Alma 37:35). **NE**

From a commencement address delivered at Brigham Young University–Idaho on December 11, 2004.



Share Your Experiences

Share how you choose eternal goals and read the experiences of other youth at lds.org/go/eternalNET.



A personal
TESTIMONY
of the
GOSPEL
and the
CHURCH
is the

**MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU
CAN EARN IN THIS LIFE.**



President Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Second Counselor in the First Presidency
October 2014 general conference

WHAT'S ONLINE



2015 MUTUAL THEME

Looking for resources to support this year's Mutual theme (D&C 4:2; see also pages 16–30)? You can find music, videos, and more to help plan Mutual activities, camps, conferences, seminary devotionals, quorum and class lessons, and family home evenings. Go to lds.org/go/theme2015.



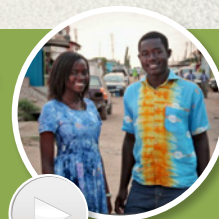
SET GREAT GOALS

As you think about setting goals this year, don't forget about all the great talks last conference that help you do just that! Watch, listen to, or read talks by President Thomas S. Monson (lds.org/go/ponderNE1); President Dieter F. Uchtdorf (lds.org/go/askNE1); Elder Quentin L. Cook (lds.org/go/chooseNE1); Elder Carlos A. Godoy (lds.org/go/planNE1); and Elder Larry S. Kacher (lds.org/go/triflenotNE1).

SUNDAY LESSONS ON THE GODHEAD

This month in Sunday lessons you'll study the Godhead. Don't miss out on these great videos:

- “Godhead—He Knows Me”: Two siblings in Ghana talk about how they can grow closer to their Heavenly Father. lds.org/go/GhanaNE1.
- “God Is Our Father”: God is the Father of our spirits, and we are His children. lds.org/go/ducklingNE1.
- “The Only True God”: Elder Jeffrey R. Holland testifies of the Savior and what it means to be a Christian. lds.org/go/trueNE1.



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

