

RECOVERING **My**
SPIRITUAL
CONFIDENCE



I KNEW THE CHURCH WAS TRUE,
BUT ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10,
MY SPIRITUAL CONFIDENCE WAS AT A -50.
WHAT HAD HAPPENED?

NICE

By Sarah Anderson

I can't remember the exact day I crumbled, but I do remember how I felt. I was sitting in seminary. For some reason, I didn't want to raise my hand to answer a question. Pretty soon, I didn't feel I knew the answers, whether in seminary, Sunday school, or Young Women meetings. Suddenly, I had no confidence in my knowledge of the gospel.

I still knew the Church was true, but I felt I was doing something wrong. I judged myself harshly and didn't feel worthy to pray. I started to panic. I felt horrible inside, all the time. It was like I was sick and hadn't the slightest idea what the cure was, because I didn't know what was wrong. I hadn't committed any serious sin or transgression, and my

senior year of high school had started off really great. So what in the world was the matter with me?

These feelings continued for a couple of months, and before I knew it, it was time for October 2014 general conference. I was looking forward to my mother's October conference chili with corn chips, but my mind was all over the place. One of my teachers at church had challenged us to write out questions we were seeking answers for and to then listen for the answers in conference. Ten minutes before the Saturday morning session was to begin, I finally sat down with my computer and started typing up questions I had. I still felt sick and still didn't know why.

Conference began, and just as I had for the previous few years, I paid attention to the speakers and took notes, but I still didn't know what I was looking for.

During the hymn halfway through the Saturday afternoon session, Mom got the chili out and Dad and I got up to fill our bowls, pile on the corn chips, and get back to the couch before the song ended. For some reason I was hesitant to get up, but I was hungry. In the kitchen, as I contemplated the right chili-to-corn chip ratio, I felt like I needed to go back. I quickly grabbed a bowl and was about to get a spoon when I felt as though the Holy Ghost jolted me and said, "Sit down on the couch." I dropped my bowl on the counter and got to the couch in two strides. I pulled my laptop onto my lap just as Elder Klebingat began speaking.

His first sentence: "On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your spiritual confidence before God?"¹

My jaw dropped. Elder Klebingat was through the first paragraph of his talk before I actually digested the fact that he was saying exactly what I needed to hear. Stunned, I vigorously began typing notes on my computer. Elder Klebingat had accurately diagnosed me: my spiritual confidence was a -50. Then he proceeded to prescribe a cure for my sickness.





“NOW I REALIZE THAT I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS GOSPEL IS TRUE BECAUSE I HAVE TESTED IT. I HAVE TRUSTED IT. AND BY SO DOING, I OPENED MY HEART TO HEAVENLY FATHER.”

The Lord was the only one who knew what I needed, and He was the only one who knew when Elder Klebingat would be speaking (at the precise moment my corn chips would be calling to me). I am so glad I sat down and listened.

So, now that I was on the road to recovering my spiritual confidence, I had a new question: why had my spiritual confidence crumbled in the first place? I had seen a teaser on a website about how a dark chapter in my nation became a time to reinvent itself. How can a dark time bring about rejuvenation? It seemed a little paradoxical, but it brought to mind a scripture from Ether 12:27: “And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in

me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.”

Hmm. “Weak things become strong.” OK, I’m seeing a pattern here.

I hadn’t seen this time of spiritual panic coming. I had been scared and hadn’t known what was going on or how to fix it. But because of Elder Klebingat’s diagnosis and prescribed cure, I now study my scriptures for 30 minutes every day. I am expanding my knowledge of the Savior’s Atonement, and I see trials and challenges in a completely different light. As Elder Klebingat said in his talk:

“When these trials come, the adversary’s minions begin broadcasting that you did something wrong, that this is a punishment, a sign that Heavenly Father does not love you. Ignore that! Instead, try to force a smile, gaze heavenward, and say, ‘I understand, Lord. I know what this is. A time to prove myself, isn’t it?’ Then partner with Him to endure well to the end. Spiritual confidence increases when you accept that often trials and tribulations are allowed to come into [your life] because of what [you] are doing right.”²

Before this experience I felt like I knew the gospel. But now I realize that I understand that this gospel is true because I have tested it. I have trusted it. And by so doing, I opened my heart to Heavenly Father. He has kept His promises: He has “manifest[ed] the truth of it unto [me] by the power of the Holy Ghost” (Moroni 10:4). I know Heavenly Father has a plan for me. I know He has a plan for you. Don’t be afraid to find out what it is. **NE**

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NOTES

1. Jörg Klebingat, “Approaching the Throne of God with Confidence,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 34, conference.lds.org.
2. Jörg Klebingat, “Approaching the Throne of God with Confidence,” 36–37.