

By Schantell Remington

was 13 when I found myself faced with what I felt was a no-win scenario. I had been friends with this girl for a few months. She was not a member of the Church, nor did she share all of our values of always striving to be Christlike. She preferred to settle her disagreements with her fists. During lunch that day, I had been sitting quietly, listening to the conversation around me. Then my friend suddenly started bad-mouthing another friend of mine. This other friend I knew to be a nice, polite girl, who always tried to treat everyone kindly. My heart started to pound, sounding in my ears. I knew it wasn't right for me to sit there and say nothing; so I spoke.

"You want to take this outside?" my friend asked, challenging me to a fight.

"Please don't talk about her like that."
My friend glared at me. "I can talk about her if I want," she responded.
"I'm asking you not to," I said a little louder.
That's when she stood—face flushed and eyes wide. "You want to take this outside?" she snarled.
There I sat, unsure of how to keep one friend while defending another, who I knew didn't deserve to have her reputation slandered.

I remember a story about Joseph Smith, who found himself in a more severe situation. It was 1838 when he was visiting his mother, Lucy Mack Smith, in Far West. A group of armed militiamen came to him, enraged, believing Joseph to have committed a crime they felt was worthy of death.

When they came upon him, Joseph reached out and shook each one of their hands, giving them a friendly smile. Then he sat down and explained to them the beliefs of the Church and the

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members' mistreatment. The militiamen were so shocked by his unusual behavior that not one of them wanted to harm Joseph.¹ They had come to falsely accuse and then kill Joseph, but he treated them as friends rather than foes. I stood up to meet my friend's eyes, praying that Heavenly Father would help me be a peacemaker.

I spoke calmly but sincerely. "You're my friend," I told her, "and it hurts me to hear you talk badly about another friend I care about." That was all it took. The wrinkles between her brows disappeared and her eyes softened. She shrugged, "Fine." Then, she sat back down.

That may not have been our last disagreement, but that was the last time she ever wanted to fight me. I learned then that treating others as friends and fellow sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father is the right thing to do,

no matter the situation. And I'm grateful for the example that our Savior, Jesus Christ, and the Prophet Joseph Smith set for me so that

I could learn this for myself. **NE**

Schantell Remington lives in Arizona, USA.

NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 339–40.

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