

JULY 2016

THE

New Era

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BEAT
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SNIPPETS FROM THIS ISSUE

This is a joyful religion, one of hope.

—page 4 • He reached into his pocket, counted the loose change (88 cents), and Eighty Eight, Kentucky, was born. —page 6 • You probably

wouldn't **ever dream of leaving a cute boy floundering on the dance floor.**

—page 14 • **Marriage? That's too far away to worry about, right?** Nope! —page 19

• I used to be left out. I've been there before.

—page 20 • He . . . helped people have a change of heart—literally. —page 24 • No, I won't have

my blood drained today, thanks! —page 27 • **Do not take counsel from your fears.**

—page 30 • Theater: not for the faint of heart!

—page 34 • Hormones . . . are telling us, “Go, go, go,” but the Light of Christ and the Holy Ghost

. . . are telling us, “Wait, wait, wait.” —page 41



Cover: 3 Ways to Beat FOMO, p. 30

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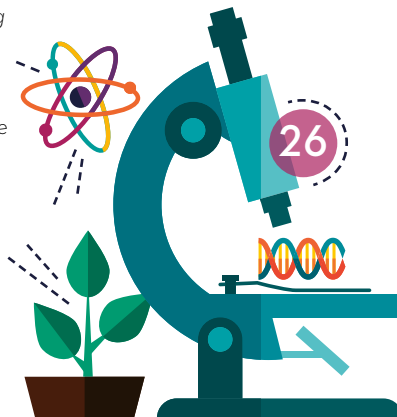
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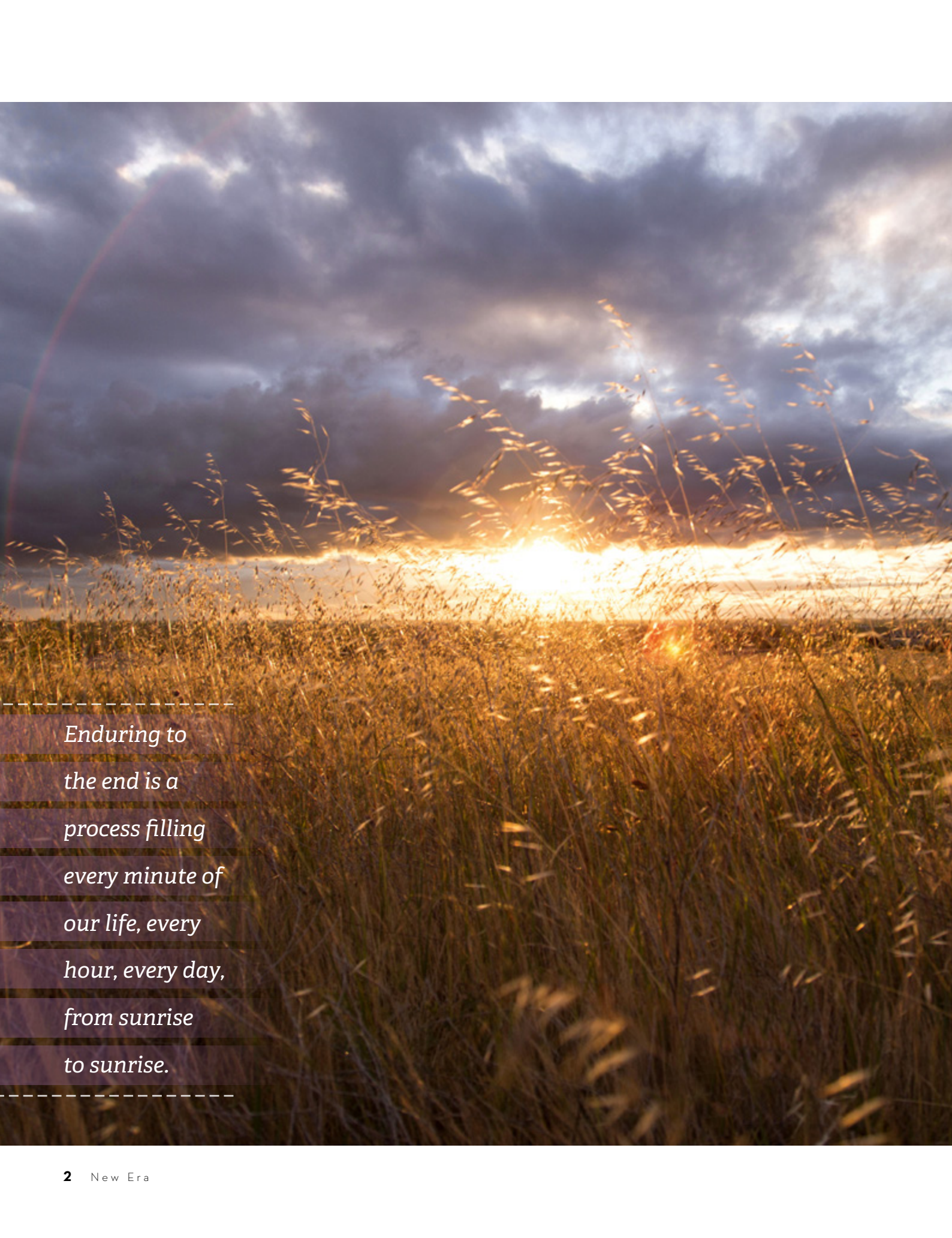
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*Enduring to
the end is a
process filling
every minute of
our life, every
hour, every day,
from sunrise
to sunrise.*



**By President
Dieter F.
Uchtdorf**

Second Counselor
in the First
Presidency

Enduring TO THE END

The blessings that come to us from enduring to the end in this life are real and very significant.

The scriptures teach us that once we have received the ordinances of baptism and confirmation, our task then is to “endure to the end” (2 Nephi 31:20).

When I was a young boy, “endure to the end” meant to me mainly that I had to try harder to stay awake until the end of our Church meetings. Later as a teenager I progressed only slightly in my understanding of this scriptural phrase. I linked it with youthful empathy to the efforts of our dear elderly members to hang in there until the end of their lives.

What Enduring to the End Means

Enduring to the end, or remaining faithful to the laws and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout our life, is a fundamental requirement for salvation in the kingdom of God. This belief distinguishes Latter-day Saints from many other Christian denominations that teach that salvation is given to all who simply believe and confess that Jesus is the Christ. The Lord clearly declared, “If you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 14:7).

Therefore, enduring to the end is not just a matter of passively tolerating life’s difficult circumstances or “hanging in there.” Ours is an active religion, helping God’s children along the strait and narrow path to develop their full





By doing our
best to endure
to the end,
a beautiful
refinement
will come into
our lives.

potential during this life and return to Him one day. Viewed from this perspective, enduring to the end is exalting and glorious, not grim and gloomy. This is a joyful religion, one of hope, strength, and deliverance. “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25).

Enduring to the end is a process filling every minute of our life, every hour, every day, from sunrise to sunrise. It is accomplished through personal discipline following the commandments of God.

The restored gospel of Jesus Christ is a way of life. It is not for Sunday only. It is not something we can do only as a habit or a tradition if we expect to harvest all of its promised blessings. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7).

Enduring to the end implies “patient continuance in well doing” (Romans 2:7), striving to keep the commandments (see 2 Nephi 31:10), and doing the works of righteousness (see D&C 59:23). It requires sacrifice and hard work. To endure to the end, we need to trust our Father in Heaven and make wise choices, including paying our tithes and offerings, honoring our temple covenants, and serving the Lord and one another willingly and faithfully in our Church callings and responsibilities. It means strength of character, selflessness, and humility; it means integrity and honesty to the Lord and our fellowmen. It means making our homes strong places of defense and a refuge against worldly evils; it means loving and honoring our spouses and children.

The Blessings of Enduring to the End

By doing our best to endure to the end, a beautiful refinement will come into our lives. We will learn to “do good to them that hate [us], and pray for them which despitefully use [us]” (Matthew 5:44). The blessings that come to us from enduring to the end in this life are real and very significant, and for the life to come they are beyond our comprehension.

My dear brothers and sisters, there will be days and nights when you feel overwhelmed, when your hearts are heavy and your heads hang down. Then, please remember, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, is the Head of this Church. It is His gospel. He wants you to succeed. He gave His life for just this purpose. He is the Son of the living God. He has promised:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

“For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee” (3 Nephi 22:10). “I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer” (3 Nephi 22:8).

My dear friends, the Savior heals the broken heart and binds up your wounds (see Psalm 147:3). Whatever your challenges may be, wherever you live on this earth, your faithful membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the divine powers of the gospel of Jesus Christ will bless you to endure joyfully to the end. **NE**

From an October 2007 general conference address.

HALF THERE?

“Do you think deeply about the Savior and His atoning sacrifice for you when you are asked to prepare, bless, pass, or partake of the sacrament?”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
("The Greatest Generation of Young Adults," *Ensign*, May 2015, 68.)



WORDS THAT STICK

*Want to leave a lasting impression?
Say something out loud.*

Have any spare change in your pocket? What do you think you could do with it? Could you scrape together enough for a lunch item off the dollar menu? Buy something amazing at a garage sale?

Name a town?

In a small town in Kentucky, USA, the very first postmaster didn't think much of his own handwriting. He figured that if a town had a number as its name, then it'd be easier to read and understand that name on an envelope even if somebody had bad handwriting.

He reached into his pocket, counted the loose change (88 cents), and Eighty Eight, Kentucky, was born. The town name stuck and has been used ever since.¹

It's funny how such random and seemingly small decisions can cause such lasting consequences. A lot of life is like that. Especially with the words we use.



MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

When it comes to seemingly small decisions that can have lasting consequences, the words we use to communicate with the people in our lives rank plenty high. A few words spoken, texted, or written can completely lift or ruin a day—or a much longer period of time.

“The voice that bears profound testimony, utters fervent prayer, and sings the hymns of Zion *can* be the same voice that berates and criticizes, embarrasses and demeans, inflicts pain and destroys the spirit of oneself and of others in the process,” taught Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.²

Words are important! Choosing not to use profanity is noble and righteous, yet it’s only one aspect we need to think about when it comes to our choice of language.

As stated in *For the Strength of Youth*: “Choose not to insult others or put them down, even in joking. Avoid gossip of any kind, and avoid speaking in anger. When you are tempted to say harsh or hurtful things, leave them unsaid” ([2011], 20).

Often, our words can stick even if we don’t intend them to. Did you ever know somebody who

had a nickname he didn’t like? How do you think he got that nickname in the first place?

USING YOUR SUPERPOWERS FOR GOOD

Of course, words don’t have to tear people down any more than a hammer has to tear down buildings rather than build them up. Words can be a powerful and lasting tool for good. As *For the Strength of Youth* says, “Good language that uplifts, encourages, and compliments others invites the Spirit to be with you” (20).

Think of it this way. Just as gossip can be damaging, saying nice things about people can make their lives sweeter. “Have you met the new kid yet? He’s cool!” Now *those* are a few words worth spreading around.

Then there’s the guy trudging down the hallway between classes at your school. His bad day is written all over his face. Time for a few words to the rescue. “Hey, Collin, I like your shirt!” You can always find something nice to say. Options abound when it comes to using words to save the day.

And what about posting compliments and other nice comments through social media? Social media posts are supposed to live forever, right? So why not post something like, “Mindy, you’re incredible! You always know how to make me

smile.” Maybe months or years down the road Mindy will find herself in a rough spot and take comfort in reading those words again.

Elder Holland taught, “Our words, like our deeds, should be filled with faith and hope and charity, the three great Christian imperatives so desperately needed in the world today. With such words, spoken under the influence of the Spirit, tears can be dried, hearts can be healed, lives can be elevated, hope can return, confidence can prevail.”³

The kind and encouraging words you speak in a single moment could help a soul forever.

WORD WISE 101

There’s no shortage of quirky town names out there, from Santa Claus, Indiana, USA, to Saint-Louis-du-Ha! Ha! in Quebec, Canada. There’s also no shortage of words burning in the minds and hearts of people everywhere—both words that lift them up and words that bring them down.

Yes, words are powerful and have a shelf life that’s usually out of our hands.

Solution? Let all of your words be awesome. **NE**

NOTES

1. See nytimes.com/1988/08/05/us/eighty-eight-journal-a-date-that-will-live-in-kentucky.html.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Tongue of Angels,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 16.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Tongue of Angels,” 18.

PUT ON A PIONEER PLAY? WAY OUT *HERE*?

Hitch up the ox and wagon. Bermuda is waiting!

By David Dickson

Church Magazines

The stunningly beautiful island of Bermuda is only about 21 square miles (54 km) in total area. It's also one of the most isolated inhabited islands you can find—the nearest land mass is over 600 miles (966 km) away. I was one of six full-time missionaries in Bermuda, four elders and one senior missionary couple, serving in the single branch on the island when we decided to try something a bit unusual.

We were going to put on a play! And not just any play.

I can't remember exactly how the idea first came up to produce a play about Mormon pioneers for the general community, but once the idea was out there in the open, we all felt a spiritual confirmation that it was worth pursuing.

The other missionaries and I had never written a play before. But why let that stop us? With the help of the branch, we came up with a simple storyline based on Church history. The play included early Church hymns, such as "Come, Come, Ye Saints" (*Hymns*, no. 30).

We built simple sets and cobbled together costumes from various sources. The branch members and missionaries made up the small cast.

All along I kept wondering how many people would actually attend a play about Mormon pioneers who had lived half a world away from this scenic island.

Still, we pressed on, both with our regular missionary work and in our free time by memorizing lines and practicing hymns.

In time, we were ready. Our branch president placed an advertisement for the date of the free-to-attend production in the newspaper.

Showtime! As you might have guessed, the room was not exactly packed to standing-room-only status (there might've been 60 people). Still, we were happy with the turnout and enjoyed spending an evening honoring and celebrating the faith and courage of the early Saints.

And then the following Sunday rolled around. A woman we didn't recognize sat down with the congregation.

We hurried over to introduce ourselves.

This sister turned out to be a member of the Church who hadn't attended in years. She was new to the area, so her records were not with the branch. After seeing the newspaper ad, she decided to watch the performance. From that Sunday on she attended regularly and became a big blessing to the branch.

I'm sure plenty of other good came out of this pioneer play effort, but for me it's also a reminder of how important is the "one" (see Luke 15:4). Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, "Brothers and sisters, never, never underestimate how precious is the *one*."¹

It well may be that the entire reason we were inspired to put on this play was to reach this one sister. On an island already so full of beauty, isn't that a beautiful thought? **NE**

NOTE

1. M. Russell Ballard, "The Atonement and the Value of One Soul," *Ensign*, May 2004, 87.





REMEMBERING THE

By Eric B. Murdock

Church Magazines

Each week, we are blessed with the opportunity to partake of the sacrament as we attend church. In fact, it's one of the main reasons we go to church on Sunday. But do you know why the sacrament is so important? There is one thing we promise to do that makes it one of the most important and sacred ordinances in the Church: remember Jesus Christ.

Think about it: remembering the Savior is a central part of the sacrament prayers. In them we promise that we will “always remember him” (D&C 20:77, 79),

not just on Sunday but *always*. As we always remember the Savior, our lives will reflect His standards and teachings, and we will also find a powerful and sustaining influence in our lives.

How Remembering Helped One Young Man

For example, when an angel of God called Alma the Younger to repentance, Alma fell to the earth and could not speak or move for several days. During this time, he was tormented by the memory of his sins, but then he “remembered . . . to have heard [his] father prophesy . . . concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world.” Then he said: “Now, as my mind caught hold upon this thought, I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death. And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more” (Alma 36:17–19).

Just the thought of Christ led Alma to pray for mercy, which lifted his guilt, eased his pain, and helped him repent. Like Alma, we can turn our lives over to Christ and experience the joy that comes from living the gospel. It all begins with our choice to remember Jesus Christ and the power of His Atonement.

SAVIOR

HERE ARE FIVE MORE BLESSINGS THAT COME FROM KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO ALWAYS REMEMBER THE SAVIOR.

1. His Spirit Will Be with Us

When you take the sacrament on Sunday, you are reminded of the promise that, if you remember Christ, keep His commandments, and take His name upon you, you may always have His Spirit to be with you. In a world full of challenges, it's easy to be led astray. But if you have the Holy Ghost with you, “by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). The Spirit of the Lord can be your guide and bless you with direction, instruction, and protection.

2. He Can Give Us Strength to Resist Temptation

Our best and most sure defense against temptation is our faith in Jesus Christ (see Alma 37:33). As we focus our minds on Christ, we can recognize Satan's lies and detect his attempts to deceive us. Because Jesus faced temptation but never gave in to it, we can rely on Him when we are faced with temptations. Nephi taught that those who “hold fast unto [the word of God] would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them” (1 Nephi 15:24). As we remember the Savior and His teachings, He can lift us up and strengthen us against temptations.

3. His Example Will Guide Us

Jesus doesn't just tell us where to go for eternal life; He leads the way. He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Christ is our perfect example. During His mortal ministry, Jesus taught and exemplified love, meekness, humility, and compassion. He spent His time teaching, serving, and loving others.

Great blessings come
as we remember
Jesus Christ through
partaking of the
sacrament.

FOR MORE ON THE SACRAMENT

To learn more about the Savior and the sacrament, you can read:

- Jeffrey R. Holland, “This Do in Remembrance of Me,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 67.
- Cheryl A. Esplin, “The Sacrament—a Renewal for the Soul,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 12.



Music Download

Download the song “New Life” from the 2016 Mutual Theme album at pressforward.lds.org.



In everything He did, He was obeying His Father’s will (see John 5:30). In all things, the Savior has set the pattern for how we should live, and He invites us all to follow His example.

If you ever find that you don’t know where to go or what to do, remember the Savior. He said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

4. He Can Help Us Serve Others

Jesus always placed the needs of others above His own needs. He “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). He healed the sick and helped those around Him. When we remember Jesus, we remember the acts of selfless service that defined His life. We also remember that He has asked us to serve Him by serving others. “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17).

The Lord will open your eyes to see those around you who could use your help. You will also be guided in how you can best serve them. Your life will be happier and more fulfilling as you give small and simple acts of kind service. Serving others will bring a sense of peace and joy into your life.

5. We Can Repent

We all fall short in keeping the commandments, even when we sincerely try, but because of the life and mission of Jesus Christ, there is a way back.

Remembering Jesus Christ reminds us of the gift of repentance that is offered through His Atonement. Jesus invites us all to repent, and we experience joy as we turn away from sin and turn to Him. When we have a sincere desire to change and to keep the commandments, the Lord promises, “He who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more” (D&C 58:42).

As you partake of the sacrament, you make a commitment to always remember the Savior. The more you keep Christ in your thoughts, the more He will become the center of your life and the more He will guide and direct you to reach your full potential. Always remembering the Savior will always bless your life. **NE**



SAVING MY SABBATH

By Mackenzie Brown

I was late! I threw on a nice dress, grabbed a hair tie, drove to church, parked, and hurried inside. Whew! I found a seat on the stand just as the bishop got up to start sacrament meeting.

I was speaking that Sunday, so I quickly looked over my notes, making sure I didn't forget anything. In no time at all, it seemed like the sacrament meeting was over, and I was going to Sunday School. Another sacrament success!

But was it?

Over the next week I began to wonder. Another Sunday rolled around, and as I sat in sacrament

meeting, considering what the sacrament meant to me, a thought hit me: I recommit each week to always remember Jesus Christ, but how seriously was I doing that?

I wanted to change, so I decided to come up with a weekly plan.

- During the week, I would spend time considering my behavior and asking forgiveness for my sins. I would also make sure to arrive early to church so I could listen to the prelude music and feel the Spirit.
- During the sacrament, I would remember Jesus Christ and His Atonement. I'd prayerfully review

what I did right and what I did wrong. I'd ask myself, "Lord, what lack I yet?" (see Matthew 19:20).

- Every day after the sacrament, I would pray for help to improve and to remember Christ.

As I followed my plan, I grew to really love the sacrament! I loved praying to Heavenly Father and talking with Him about my life. Regardless of my behavior the past week, I was always grateful for Jesus Christ's Atonement and the opportunity to change and become better. Now I've learned that the sacrament isn't just for Sundays; it's for *every* day. *Mackenzie Brown lives in Utah, USA.*

Can *You* Be Counted On?

When you say you'll do something, what do you really mean?

By Bethany Bartholomew

At the stake dance, a boy you like just asked you to dance. Yes! You start to walk onto the dance floor together. The slow song plays. The boy asks you a funny question about the color of your toothbrush or your favorite food. Before you give an answer, you stop dancing. You shrug your shoulders and say, "Actually, I don't feel like dancing right now," and you walk away.

Never gonna happen, right?

You probably wouldn't ever dream of leaving a cute boy floundering on the dance floor, but have you ever said you'd do something and then put it off or just decided not to do it after all?

Sometimes it's easy to be so busy doing everything that we forget what we've committed to do or don't think it's a big deal if we need to cancel last minute (except for in emergency situations). But practicing keeping commitments now will not only help you later in life (it's a necessary life skill to have for work, school, callings, family, and everything else), but it's also important as you make and keep covenants.

Check out these examples of commitments you might make each day that help you remain true to who you are—and thus true to your covenants.

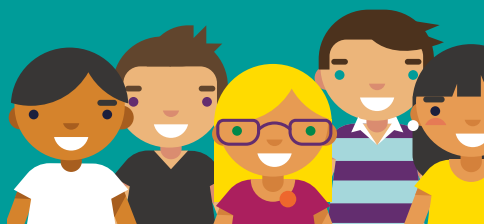
Commitments You Might Be Keeping



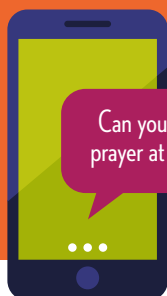
Supporting your sports team by attending practices and games

(while maintaining Sabbath-day standards, of course)

**DOING
GROUP
WORK AT
SCHOOL**



Going to Mutual, especially if you have an assignment



Can you say the prayer at Mutual?



**Paying
your tithing**

**Cleaning your
room when you
say you will**



Actually reminding your friend about that thing she asked you to remind her about



Showing up to work or Church meetings on time



Texting someone back instead of leaving someone hanging in the middle of a conversation

Following through on your promise to take your little brother to the park



Accepting a challenge from a Church leader
(#TempleChallenge, anyone?)
and following through

DOING THE DISHES WHEN IT'S YOUR TURN



Comforting a friend having a rough day

Going to seminary and doing your reading before class



Giving your full attention to the person you're talking to
(no checking your phone)



COMMITMENT KEEPERS

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once said:
"There are three important elements that will allow us to make good decisions:

"First, we must have an eternal *plan* with objectives that we are committed to achieve.

"Second, we need to *study and pray* on a daily basis about our decisions for feelings of spiritual guidance, courage, and commitment.

"And third, we need to *examine our motives* each time we make a decision" ("Making Righteous Choices at the Crossroads of Life," *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 9).

How are you making good decisions each day by keeping your commitments and covenants? This week, choose one commitment you'd like to work on keeping. Apply the counsel from Elder Hales for making good choices, and let us know what happens! Share your experiences at lds.org/go/commitNE716.

You may not have committed to do all of these things, but think about what you *have* committed to do. Hopefully many of your commitments are spiritual ones. As you practice keeping those and other commitments, you're preparing to better keep your most important commitments: your covenants. Keeping those significant commitments will bring you closer to Christ and bless your life. So keep practicing! **NE**

Bethany Bartholomew lives in Utah, USA.



Practicing
[insert cool musical instrument here]
for a certain amount of time each day

Paying a friend back for the shake he bought you that time you forgot your wallet



DOING HOMEWORK

A Q&A ABOUT COVENANTS

Baptism



Confirmation



Sacrament



Priesthood



Endowment



Temple Marriage



As you think about your covenants, you may still have a few questions about what it really means to live them. Don't stress! Check out these frequently asked questions to see if any answers help you on your search for knowledge.

UNDERSTANDING MY COVENANTS

What are covenants?

“A covenant is a binding spiritual contract, a solemn promise to God our Father that we will live and think and act in a certain way—the way of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In return, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost promise us the full splendor of eternal life” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Keeping Covenants: A Message for Those Who Will Serve a Mission,” *New Era*, Jan. 2012, 3).



What you can do:

When you make a covenant, you are making a commitment to the Lord. As you practice keeping everyday commitments, you're preparing to better keep very special spiritual commitments prescribed by God—your covenants. Whether you've agreed to practice the violin for 30 minutes every day or accepted the assignment in bishopric youth committee to invite a less-active member to a Mutual activity, what commitments can you practice keeping this week? (See more on pages 14–15.)



What covenants have I made?

“What have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?” (Mosiah 18:10).



What you can do:

Did you catch that last part regarding covenants at baptism? It says, “that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments.” Think about the sacrament prayers, too (see D&C 20:77, 79 and Moroni 4–5). When you were baptized, you covenanted to take upon yourself the name of Jesus Christ, keep His commandments, and always remember Him. And you make this same covenant each time you take the sacrament. You can make goals to help you remember the Savior each day, whether it's putting your favorite general conference quotes about the Savior in your school notebook or talking to your friends more about your beliefs. Be sure to read and think about how to live other parts of your covenants mentioned in Mosiah 18:8–9 as well.



HOW DO I PREPARE FOR FUTURE COVENANTS?

Preparing for the Temple

“We become worthy [to obtain a temple recommend] by steadily and steadfastly obeying the commandments. This obedience begins in childhood and intensifies through experiences in the Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women during the years of preparation. Then, hopefully, priests and Laurels set goals and specifically prepare themselves to be endowed and sealed in the temple” (Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Coming to Ourselves: The Sacrament, the Temple, and Sacrifice in Service,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 35).¹



What you can do:

You can start making goals now that will help you prepare to participate in temple ordinances and make and keep the associated covenants. Pick a standard in *For the Strength of Youth* that you want to practice living better this week. Or you can work on remembering your morning prayers more often or studying your scriptures every day. Any spiritual goal, no matter how small, is one more step on the road to the temple. And of course, having a limited-use temple recommend and attending the temple now will help you stay worthy and focused to prepare for temple ordinances in the future.

NOTE

1. For more detailed information about preparing to enter the temple, see President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Personal Preparation for Temple Blessings,” Apr. 2001 general conference; *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* [2001], at lds.org/go/templeNE716.



Preparing to Receive the Melchizedek Priesthood

“The Aaronic Priesthood is ‘an appendage to the greater, or the Melchizedek Priesthood’ (D&C 107:14). It is often called the preparatory priesthood. As a priesthood holder serves in the Aaronic Priesthood, he prepares to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, to receive the blessings of the temple, to serve a full-time mission, to be a loving husband and father, and to continue in lifelong service to the Lord” (“Aaronic Priesthood,” topics.lds.org).



What you can do:

Young men, everything you do in the Aaronic Priesthood is helping you prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. As you help prepare, pass, or bless the sacrament, you’re preparing. As you work on your Duty to God, you’re preparing. As you home teach, you’re preparing. As you build family unity and love at home, you’re preparing. Creating patterns of faithful priesthood service now will keep you on the covenant path that leads to even greater future blessings.





Preparing for Temple Marriage

“Some young people profess their goal is to be married in the temple but do not date temple-worthy individuals. To be honest, some don’t even date, period! . . . Please get ‘anxiously engaged’ [D&C 58:27] in spiritual and social activities compatible with your goal of a temple marriage” (Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Choose Wisely,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 47).



What you can do:

Marriage? That’s too far away to worry about, right? Nope! Once you’re 16, you can start preparing now by going on group dates with other young men and women who help you keep your standards. You can also set goals to learn a new skill or activity. Having a variety of interests can be fun and can help you meet new people. No matter what your age, you can work on skills and habits that will create a happy home (see “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” at [lds.org/go/familyNE716](https://www.lds.org/go/familyNE716)).



Covenant Checkpoints

Want to know more? Check out “Checkpoints on the Covenant Path” for a brief overview of covenants at [lds.org/go/checkpointsNE716](https://www.lds.org/go/checkpointsNE716).

HOW DO I KEEP MY COVENANTS?

The Sacrament

“When worthy Church members take the sacrament, they promise to take upon them the name of Christ, to always remember him, and to keep his commandments. Through this ordinance, Church members renew their baptismal covenants” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Sacrament,” [scriptures.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/scriptures)).



What you can do:

Once you’re baptized, you can keep your covenants by worthily partaking of the sacrament each week. Set a goal to turn your thoughts to the Savior during this sacred weekly ordinance, whether by reading hymns or the sacrament prayers in Doctrine and Covenants 20 or by pondering quietly. (See more on pages 10–12.)

Daily Living

“When we realize that we are children of the covenant, we know who we are and what God expects of us. His law is written in our hearts. He is our God and we are His people. Committed children of the covenant remain steadfast, even in the midst of adversity. . . .

“The greatest compliment that can be earned here in this life is to be known as a covenant keeper” (President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Covenants,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 88).



What you can do:

It’s the little things that help you make daily covenant-keeping decisions. All of them bring you closer to Heavenly Father and the Savior and show your commitment to Them and your desire to become like Them. What daily covenant-keeping decision can you work on this week? **NE**

Smiling, Talking, & Keeping Covenants

By Carolyn Call

I first saw Hannah* at a Mutual activity. No one really talked with her. She just sat by herself looking miserable. I had already made several good friends in the ward, so at first I didn't see any reason to talk with her. I thought it would be a burden to leave my friends and be with someone who seemed so unhappy.

Then I thought, "I used to be left out. I've been there before." I remembered a time when I was watching everyone happily talking with each other but not with me. I felt bad thinking that Hannah might come away from Mutual feeling like that.

So I went up to her, smiled, and said hi.

She nodded in return.

I asked what her name was and what school she went to.

I got two one-word answers in a row.

As a naturally talkative person, I felt awkward. But I didn't want to just get up and leave her alone, so I sat next to her until it was time to split up for our different activities. I mustered another smile and said, "It was nice to meet you. Will you come again next week?" She nodded.

She came back to Mutual over the next several weeks. Her dark hair was never combed, and she always seemed to be wearing the same black clothing. I talked with her whenever she came, even though it was hard. But, from the bits and pieces that she spoke, I got to know her better and found out that she likes drawing and art. After a while, I started to see her as one of my friends.



I realized that by helping others and being a friend, I was keeping my covenants.



I soon found myself hoping she would keep coming to activities and especially to church. But I still didn't know much about her circumstances or if she even wanted to come to church.

I went to her house a few times to drop off activity announcements. Later, I dropped off a card and a treat on her birthday. In spite of my efforts, she was never home and never answered the phone.

She only came to Mutual, so I kept on talking with her there and including her during the combined activities.

Then one Sunday it happened—she came to church! Although she only attended occasionally, I made

sure to sit by her during lessons on Sundays whenever she came.

Later on that year we both took the same art class. I had never taken high school art before, and I was the one who needed help. I would ask her about how to use the different tools and for advice on creating art.

“Hey, Hannah, what does this white pencil do?” I asked.

“It's a blending tool. It makes your pencil drawings look smoother. Cool, huh?”

“Wow! I didn't know that. Thanks!” She smiled.

At the end of the semester, we gave each other small sketches and drawings we had created in class.

When I graduated from high school about five months later, Hannah was wearing colorful clothes, looked happier, and had attended church several times. And she was actually smiling!

This experience confirmed to me that sometimes it's hard to make righteous choices, but it's those choices that make us stronger. I also learned to never underestimate the influence of small actions and decisions. Who knew that I would be the one needing Hannah's help in the end?

I didn't know it then, but as I look back on the experience, I also realize that being nice to Hannah and trying to be her friend was a part of keeping my covenants. Of course, at that first Mutual activity, I didn't go up to Hannah thinking, “OK, I'm going to keep my covenants by befriending her.” I just saw that she looked lonely, and I didn't want her to feel alone during Mutual. And that small act made a big difference in my life.

We don't need to perform giant miracles with immediate results in order to keep our covenants. We do it through the small choices we make every day. **NE**

Carolyn Call lives in Utah, USA.

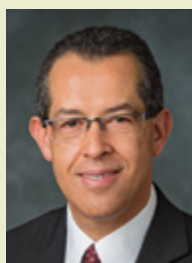
** Name has been changed.*



HELPING OTHERS

“When you love, watch over, and serve others in small and simple ways, you are actively participating in the work of salvation, God's work ‘to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’ [Moses 1:39].”

Carole M. Stephens, “We Have Great Reason to Rejoice,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 116.



Elder Hugo E.
Martinez
Of the Seventy

PREPARE & DO

Preparing yourself and doing the Lord's work will change your life.

I was a seminary teacher for six years. We met at 6:00 a.m. every morning in my home in Puerto Rico. It was a lot of work to prepare lessons every day, Monday through Friday. But I enjoyed it, and

COME WITH
A DESIRE TO LEARN.

it helped me develop an even greater love for the youth of the Church.

I noticed that much of what the students gained from seminary depended on their preparation. So if you would like to gain a lot from a seminary lesson, I invite you to study the lesson beforehand and really ponder. Come to class with a thirst for knowledge. Come as a little child, always wanting to learn. Prepare in order to participate so that you can teach each other. And come with questions. Another youth, a scripture that is read, or perhaps a comment the teacher makes may answer your questions.

The best instruction during any class or Church meeting comes

when you have prepared and you receive spiritual promptings that come as thoughts. Write them down, and then act upon them. Look for more scriptures or general conference talks or articles from Church magazines about those ideas. Ponder them in your mind and heart and be ready to serve, because once you have these truths inside you, the Lord will use you to help others.

Later, when I served as a mission president with my wife, I realized that seminary is a great preparation for missionary service. Over the years I have seen the marvelous power of the gospel bless those who were faithful seminary students. They have applied what was taught in those

PREPARE IN ORDER
TO PARTICIPATE.

lessons to significant challenges in their lives and have come through the challenges, even returned to the Church after a period of being less active.

You are very important to the Lord. You really are. The work of the youth is to prepare for missionary work and then do missionary work. Now, you must understand that as you continue to do missionary work, and as you continue to prepare, this will drive and guide your further development as the Lord's missionary. You don't need a missionary name tag to do missionary work, because you carry the name of Jesus Christ written on your heart because of your covenants.

YOU CAN
DO THIS WORK.

The same is true in family history and temple work. For example, in the Caribbean Area, where I serve, stakes that use youth as family history consultants have a higher percentage of members finding names for temple work and doing the temple work. In one stake there are 20 youth who were called to be family history consultants for one year before they are old enough for missions. As they

visit members in their homes to show them how to do family history, they talk to people along the way and tell them about family history and the temple. That is missionary work!

I hope that when they serve missions, they have already felt the

IT WILL BLESS AND
CHANGE YOUR LIFE.

Spirit in a powerful way—hopefully in their homes, but if not there, then certainly as they do missionary, family history, and temple work. Then, when they enter the missionary training center, I hope none of them tells me, “I have felt the Spirit more strongly here than ever before in my life.” They should have felt His influence strongly even before that.

The Lord loves you. His vision is for family history, temple, and missionary work to be driven by you. You have the skills and the knowledge. When you prepare well, you can do this work. It will bless and change your life. **NE**





SERVING WITH ALL HIS HEART

Elder Dale G. Renlund, the newest member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has always said yes to serving the Lord.

Conversion is the scriptural phrase for a change of heart (see Mosiah 5:2; Alma 5:14). Elder Dale G. Renlund knows all about that. As a new Apostle, Elder Renlund teaches the gospel of Jesus Christ to help people have a change of heart.

In his professional career he also helped people have a change of heart—literally. Before serving as a General Authority, he was a heart transplant doctor.

He was known for the good care he showed to his patients and co-workers. One doctor said Elder Renlund “brought out the best in people. He listened well and cared, and he was immensely interested in the success of those who worked with him.”

A Swedish Upbringing

Dale Gunnar Renlund was born in Utah, USA, on November 13, 1952, but he and his family spoke Swedish at home. His parents had moved from Sweden to Utah in 1950 in order to be sealed in the Salt Lake Temple. (There were no temples in Sweden or Europe then.)

When Dale was 11, his father was called to be a building missionary in Sweden, so the family moved back for a time. There, Dale had a memorable spiritual experience.

After reading the Book of Mormon, he prayed and asked if it was true. He recalls, “I had a distinct impression: ‘I’ve been telling you all along that it’s true.’”

A few years after his family returned to Utah, Elder Renlund was called to serve his own full-time mission in Sweden. He describes it as a lot of work but also a wonderful experience: “It was life-changing in terms of commitment and deciding to do the best one can to be a disciple of Christ.”

Marriage and Medical Education

Following his mission, he was an excellent student at the University of Utah, receiving a bachelor’s degree in chemistry and then a medical degree there. After graduating, Elder Renlund was happy to be accepted for further study by Johns Hopkins University, one of the finest medical schools in the United States.

By this time, he had married Ruth Lybbert, whom he met in his ward after his mission. “Aside from the decision to be active in the Church,” Elder Renlund said, “marrying Ruth has been the most amazing thing in my life.” They were married in the Salt Lake Temple in 1977. Their daughter, Ashley, was born in 1980, one week after Dale





graduated from medical school.

To attend Johns Hopkins University, the Renlunds moved to Baltimore, Maryland. In addition to being a busy doctor and a young husband and father, Dale was called to be the bishop of the Baltimore Ward.

Growing through Trials

A year after moving to Baltimore, the Renlunds faced a severe trial: Sister Renlund was diagnosed with cancer. She had to have two surgeries and nine months of chemotherapy. Struggling to take care of Ruth and their daughter, Elder Renlund recalled, “I was hurting, and it seemed as if my prayers wouldn’t go heavenward.”

One time when he brought Ruth home from the hospital, she was weak, but they wanted to pray together. He asked Sister Renlund if she would pray. “Her first words were, ‘Our Father in Heaven, we thank Thee for priesthood power that makes it so that no matter what happens, we can be together forever.’”

In that moment he felt a special closeness to his wife and to God. “What I’d previously understood about eternal families in my mind, I now understood in my heart,” he said. “Ruth’s illness changed the course of our lives.”

Called of God

After Elder Renlund finished his medical training, they moved back to Utah. He had a successful medical career and served as a stake president and then as an Area Seventy in the Utah Area. In April 2009 he was called to be a General Authority Seventy. His first assignment: to serve in the Africa Southeast Area Presidency.

One Sunday in central Congo he asked the members what challenges they were facing. An old gentleman in the back of the room stood and said, “Elder Renlund, how can we have any challenges? We have the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Elder Renlund recalls, “I want to be like these Congolese Saints, who pray for food every day, are grateful every day for food, are grateful for their families. They have nothing, but they have everything.”

On September 29, 2015, President Thomas S. Monson called him to be an Apostle, telling him, “God called you; the Lord made it known to me.”

Elder Renlund said, “I don’t feel qualified, with the exception that I do know that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world.” **NE**



SCIENCE

AND OUR SEARCH FOR

TRUTH

There's no need to worry if there seems to be a conflict between your understanding of the gospel and what you learn through science.

By Alicia K. Stanton

Can you imagine going to the dermatologist with a bad case of acne and being told the treatment will be to drain some of your blood? That might sound absurd to you, but it wouldn't have been far-fetched a couple of centuries ago. Back then, withdrawing a sizable amount of blood was considered standard treatment for almost any medical condition, including indigestion, insanity, and even acne. Nobody questioned that. Why should they have? After all, bloodletting had been used for thousands of years by many different cultures.

It wasn't until doctors started approaching medicine from a scientific viewpoint that anyone questioned the practice. When bloodletting was finally examined more closely, doctors stopped using it for all but a few specific medical conditions.¹

From this historical example, we see that just because a belief is widely accepted or has been around for a long time doesn't necessarily mean it's true. And we see that science can be a great tool in uncovering real truth.

For Latter-day Saints, that's a big deal. Not only does knowing truth give us a better basis for making practical decisions ("No, I won't have my blood drained today, thanks!"), but it also adds to our understanding of the gospel. As President Brigham Young (1801–77) taught, "There is no truth but what belongs to the Gospel. . . . If you can find a truth in heaven [or] earth, . . . it belongs to our doctrine."²

The Why Versus the How

Of course, when we talk about how science contributes to the truths we know, we've got to be sure we understand what kind of truth science can uncover—and what kind it can't. One way to look at it is to ask what kinds of questions science can and can't answer.

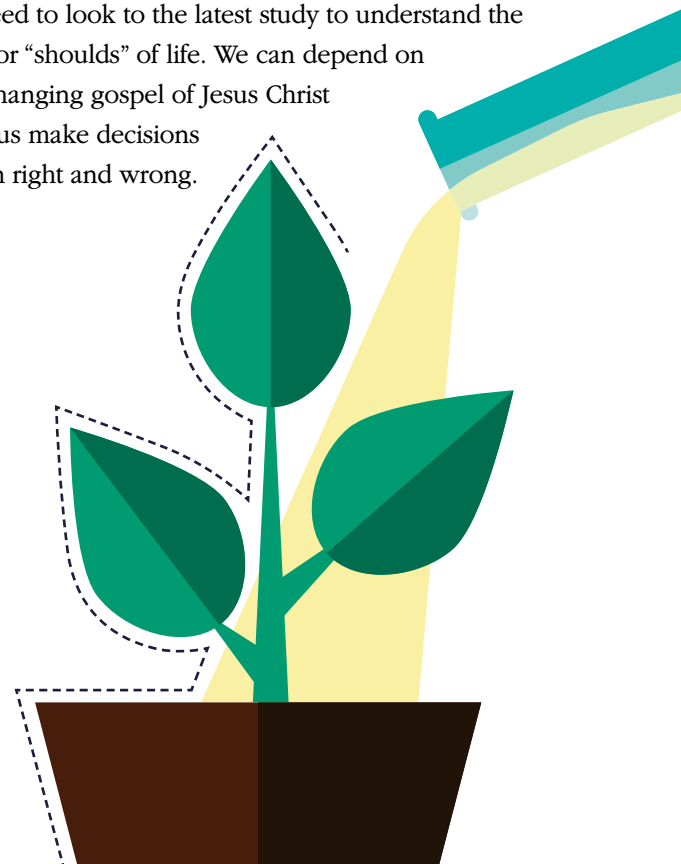
Sister Ellen Mangrum, who studied chemical engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, USA,

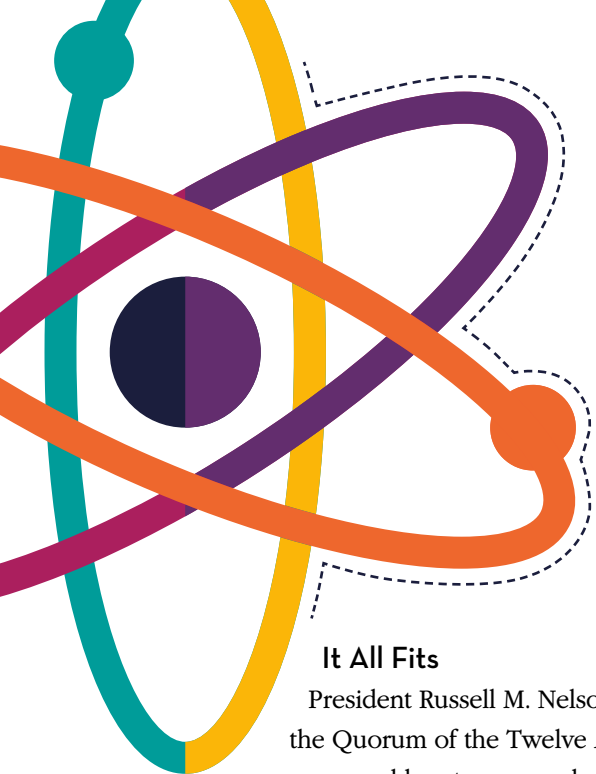
explains it this way: "Science explains the how. But it stops short of explaining the why." She adds that religion is what explains the why, such as why the earth was created and why we were put here.

The famous physicist Albert Einstein also believed that religion and science have different, complementary purposes.

"Science can only ascertain what *is*, but not what *should be*," he wrote. "Outside of [science's] domain value judgments of all kinds remain necessary."³

What does that mean to Latter-day Saints? First, we know scientific understanding will keep changing. After all, science is all about trying to find better ways to understand the "hows" of the world around us. Knowing that, we don't need to look to the latest study to understand the "whys" or "shoulds" of life. We can depend on the unchanging gospel of Jesus Christ to help us make decisions between right and wrong.





It All Fits

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and a renowned heart surgeon, has talked about

how religion and science fit together.

“There is no conflict between science and religion,” he said. “Conflict only arises from an incomplete knowledge of either science or religion, or both. . . . Whether truth comes from a scientific laboratory or by revelation from the Lord, it is compatible.”⁴

So if you’ve ever had questions about how the age of the earth or dinosaurs or evolution or anything else you’ve learned in a science class fits into the gospel, that’s great! It does all fit together, but there are still a lot of questions because there’s still a lot that we’re learning. Brother Brian Down, a pharmaceutical scientist in Quebec, Canada, said that he looks forward to the time when everything will be revealed to us (see D&C 101:32–34).

In the meantime, “we are limited in our ability to comprehend all the mysteries of the world around us through scientific endeavors,” he says. “Likewise, we are limited in our understanding of the mysteries of God and His grand design for His children.”

There’s no need to worry, then, if there seems to be a conflict between your understanding of the gospel and what you learn through science. In reality, nothing that science reveals can disprove your faith.

So if you like science, learn all you can about your area of interest! Your faith can even give you an advantage. Brother Richard Gardner, an associate professor of biology at Southern Virginia University, says that his faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ has been a big help to him.

“At times when research got difficult, and nothing seemed to be working—research is like that a lot—having a perspective on the blessings of the gospel helped me get through it,” he says.

Brother Down also feels that his faith has helped him with his work in science.

“I always worked with the faith that there was logic and order in everything and that if I pursued a question long and hard enough, Heavenly Father would eventually open my mind to the answer,” he says.

Rejoicing in Scientific Discovery

Our faith in Christ and His gospel can also help us stay humble and open to the truth we’re seeking, whether it’s scientific or spiritual.

“There is a lot we don’t know in science and a lot about God that He has not yet revealed,” Professor Gardner says. “So it is important to keep an open mind as more information comes to us and not to get worried in the meantime.”

For example, some people believe in God simply because they see no other explanation for their observations of the world. This is called believing in a “God of the gaps,” and it can make people feel nervous about scientific discovery. Professor Gardner gives an example:

“Some people have believed in God because there are gaps in the fossil record (meaning, to them, that evolution cannot explain how we got here). But what happens to our faith when these gaps are closed by the discovery of new fossils? Rather, we need to obtain positive evidence of God, through the Holy Ghost, and then we can rejoice in any scientific discovery instead of worrying about it.”

When we take this approach, we remember that both science and religion can help us along in our search for truth, and that, ultimately, all of that truth comes from the same source: God.

“God could reveal anything He wants to, including all scientific facts,” Professor Gardner says. “And He definitely has inspired scientists, inventors, and engineers—but He doesn’t just give them all the answers. He wants them, and

us, to use our brains, so He lets us work out the science, and His revelations to the Church are instead about how to organize the Church and especially how we can come to Christ and be saved.

“His personal revelations to us may be on any subject, but especially to let us know that He lives and loves us, that Christ put into effect the plan of salvation, that we have a living prophet today, that we can follow God’s plan, and that it is totally worth it to do so.” NE

Alicia K. Stanton lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. See, for example, K. Codell Carter and Barbara R. Carter, *Childbed Fever: A Scientific Biography of Ignaz Semmelweis* (1994).
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 16.
3. Albert Einstein, in “Science and Religion,” in Ken Wilber, *Quantum Questions: Mystical Writings of the World’s Greatest Physicists* (1984).
4. Russell M. Nelson, in Marianne Holman Prescott, “Church Leaders Gather at BYU’s Life Sciences Building for Dedication,” *Church News*, Apr. 17, 2015, LDS.org.



Q&A WITH DR. RICHARD GARDNER

Molecular and Cell Biologist

How did you get interested in science?

My father, a botanist, got me interested in science. Growing up, I used to play with his microscopes and other lab equipment and hear him talk about plants and fungi. And his geneticist father gave me some fruit flies when I was about nine. I took all the science I could in high school and especially enjoyed the assignment to create an insect collection. I determined when I was very young to get a PhD in science because I like to know how things work and I love learning.

How have your scientific pursuits strengthened your faith?

The more I have learned about the complexity inside a single cell, the more amazed I am. I have two large posters diagramming in small print most of the chemical reactions in a typical cell; all of these reactions are tightly controlled. Once I showed them to a priesthood class I taught. I reminded them of the *Christus* statue on Temple Square and at other LDS visitors' centers. Behind the statue is a painting of the universe, and the implication is, “Here is the Creator of all this!” But I suggested, let’s put these posters behind the statue. They aren’t as pretty as the universe painting, but He created this cell chemistry too and understands it all in detail!

How has your faith helped you in your scientific pursuits?

When I was doing research and now that I am mostly teaching science, my faith is important to me because I cannot have the complete picture without it. To learn how cells work but not why they or we are on this earth would leave me unsatisfied.



FEAR

OF

MISSING

OUT

Afraid of missing out? You might have FOMO.

By Sam Lund



DO NOT TAKE COUNSEL FROM FEAR

“Much has been said about how ‘fear of missing out’—or FOMO as it is often referred to—can make it difficult for us to appreciate our current circumstances and environments. This is especially true as people tend to share only the best parts of their family lives and careers with us on social media. I invite you to embrace what the Lord has blessed you with and to act in faith. Do not take counsel from your fears.

“To not take counsel from our fears simply means that we do not permit fear and uncertainty to determine our course in life, to affect negatively our attitudes and behavior, to influence improperly our important decisions, or to divert or distract us from all in this world that is virtuous, lovely, or of good report.

“To not take counsel from our fears means that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ overrules our fears and that we press forward with a steadfastness in Him.

“To not take counsel from our fears means that we trust in God’s guidance, assurance, and timing in our lives.

“I promise each of us can and will be blessed with direction, protection, and lasting joy as we learn to not take counsel from our fears.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, [facebook.com/lds.david.a.bednar/posts/1006027242758350](https://www.facebook.com/lds.david.a.bednar/posts/1006027242758350).

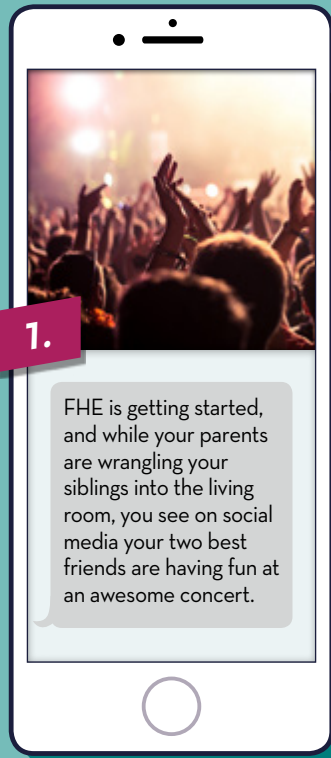
DON'T WORRY!

There are many ways to get over FOMO.
Here are a few ideas:

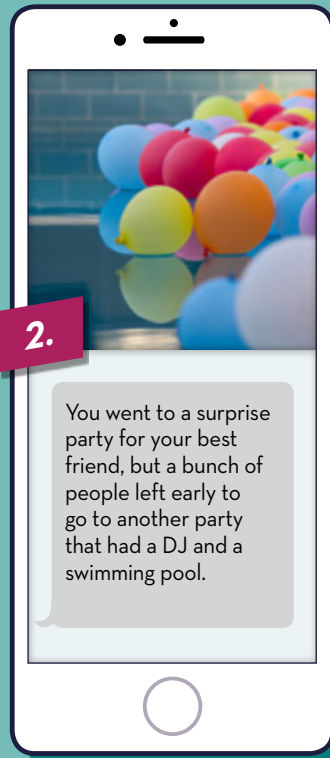
1. RECOGNIZE IT.

- ▶ When you start getting that FOMO feeling, step back for a moment.
- ▶ Realize that those feelings of insecurity, anxiety, and unhappiness are a product of FOMO and that they're not unusual.

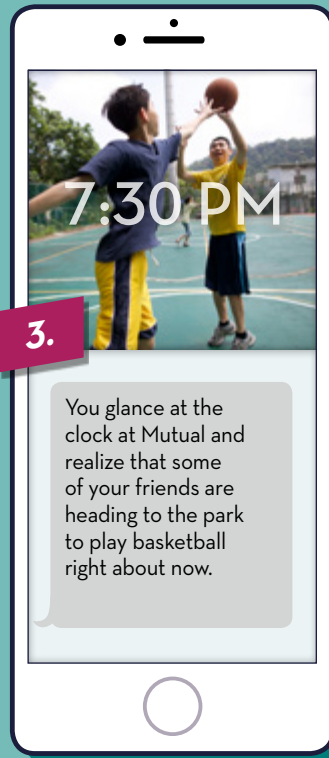
HAVE YOU HAD ONE OF THESE MOMENTS?



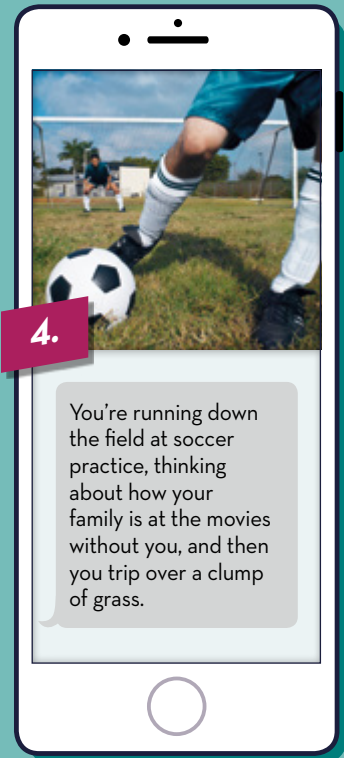
FHE is getting started, and while your parents are wrangling your siblings into the living room, you see on social media your two best friends are having fun at an awesome concert.



You went to a surprise party for your best friend, but a bunch of people left early to go to another party that had a DJ and a swimming pool.



You glance at the clock at Mutual and realize that some of your friends are heading to the park to play basketball right about now.



You're running down the field at soccer practice, thinking about how your family is at the movies without you, and then you trip over a clump of grass.

WHAT DO YOU DO IN THESE CASES?

A

Post a selfie and brag about what you're doing right now.

B

Feel slightly hurt and left out, but don't say anything.

C

Complain about it and check your phone obsessively.

D

Don't worry about it. You're happy with what you're doing.

If you picked D, you're on the right track. But whatever you picked, your future FOMO has a cure. Keep reading!

2. MAKE THE CHOICE TO BE PRESENT.

- ▶ Remind yourself that what you've committed to do is important, and think about why it makes you happy.
- ▶ Read "Good, Better, Best" by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (Oct. 2007 general conference). It will help you remember that while lots of things are good, certain things are most important.
- ▶ Pray for Heavenly Father's help to overcome feelings of FOMO.
- ▶ Read these scriptures for strength: Isaiah 41:10; Psalm 46:1; D&C 6:33; D&C 50:41.
- ▶ Think about whom you're helping by being present.

3. ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF KEEPING YOUR COMMITMENTS, SUCH AS:

- ▶ Feeling the Spirit and having peace and comfort.
- ▶ Knowing you're doing what Heavenly Father wants you to be doing.
- ▶ Getting closer to family and friends.
- ▶ Gaining more confidence in making decisions.
- ▶ Feeling happier while carrying out your commitments.
- ▶ Realizing what's most important in your life. **NE**

Sam Lund lives in Utah, USA.

Peer Pressure & Pisto

I was finally at a party with all my friends, but everyone was drinking.



By Kiara Blanco

When I was 12, some of the girls in my new school invited me to a birthday party. It was the first party with these school friends I had been invited to. When I asked my parents if I could go, they said no because the party started too late.

A short time later, I got another invitation. I again asked my parents, but they again said no, and I got mad. Couldn't I have any fun?

Then one of my closest friends planned a party. I was one of the first people she invited. The party started earlier than the others. It would be private and held near my home. I asked my parents for permission to go, and they said yes! I was excited.

The day arrived. As my parents drove me there, they said that they would pick me up at 10:00 p.m. When I got to the party, I found my girlfriends. Twenty minutes later, I still hadn't seen the birthday girl.

A few minutes later, a young man came up to us and asked, "Have you brought money for the *pisto*?" He made a sign that let me know that "pisto" was beer. My girlfriends gave in at the request for money. I didn't have any money with me, so I decided to go

off with some other girls while these ones did their business.

Finally, the birthday girl arrived—an hour late. I congratulated her, and while we were talking, a big truck arrived. Five men got out and unloaded two crates of beer. Everyone crowded around and started handing out the beer. My girlfriends went off, and I was alone, watching those young people fighting to drink beer.

My girlfriends came over and offered me some. "No, thanks," I told them. They again insisted. I again said no. My heart started beating fast, and I felt strange, like in a suspense movie where I was the main character and I was trapped in the middle of nowhere. Then I heard a car horn—it was my parents! I made my exit with a single good-bye and ran to the car.

I got in, breathing hard. I started thinking how heavy the environment felt where I had been. My mom asked if I was all right. "Yes," I replied, "but something surprised me."

"What surprised you?" asked my father.

"All my friends were drinking, and there I was, startled, waiting for something good to happen. How I wished



GOOD FRIENDS MATTER

"Associate with those who, like you, are planning ... for those things that matter most—even eternal objectives."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Decisions Determine Destiny" (Brigham Young University devotional, Nov. 6, 2005), 4, speeches.byu.edu.

for you both to get here, and now I'm here." I looked at the car clock; it wasn't yet 10:00.

My mom said, "That's how parties are in the world. That was why we didn't allow you to go to previous parties."

That night when I prayed, I thanked my Heavenly Father that my parents had arrived early.

We members of the Church are in the world, but we are not like the world. I have learned that if I would have continued attending those parties, I might have fallen into breaking the Word of Wisdom and even the law of chastity. Many of my acquaintances have fallen into this, most of them outside of the Church, but even members of the Church themselves can reach the point of falling if they do not remain firm.

I feel happy with that decision I made to not drink. I thought that I would be made fun of afterwards, but my friends ended up with more respect for me because they know my standards. After that, I have not been afraid to say no to what I know will harm me. **NE**

Kiara Blanco lives in Saltillo, Mexico.

BOWING

The lights dim. The crowd awaits. A thin curtain is all that separates you from an audience full of people ready to laugh, gasp, cry, and cheer as you deftly deliver the dramatic performance of a lifetime.

Unless you forget your lines, that is. Then that large and welcoming audience can start to feel like nothing more than a roomful of eyes witnessing every agonizing second of silence.

Theater: not for the faint of heart! But despite all the stomach butterflies and unexpected speed bumps it often provides, the payoff can be truly magical.

For the youth in one ward in Maryland, USA, acting and theater are more than just a hobby. "It's my happy place," says Mary A., a high school senior. "Our theater group has a really strong family vibe."

The youth in this ward have many different hobbies and interests. Theater, though, is common ground. "All of us are involved in theater," says Sonja G., also a senior. "It's a really good place to get together and make something great."

For this group, the appeal of the open stage is obviously a big one.

So it wasn't a small thing when an upcoming school play was announced that made them feel uncomfortable.

Plot Problems

"I had no idea what this particular show was about," says Nathan H., a senior. However, he soon got the feeling that the play in question wasn't just any old production. A few friends from school started asking him if he planned to

OUT

*The spotlight
was ready.
But these
youth weren't.*

actually audition this time. Intrigued by why they'd ask, Nathan did some research.

"I looked into it and made a decision based on what I found that I wasn't going to be a part of this show."

He wasn't the only one. "Once I learned about the story, I didn't audition," says Carolyn K., a junior.

"It wouldn't be appropriate for me to be up there on stage to show these characters."

This wasn't merely a matter of waiting for the next show to come around, either. For the seniors, it would be one of their last chances to perform at school. This was also the only musical of the year. "It was devastating," Mary says about the prospects of not being in a show with her friends.

Sonja, who would have been stage manager for the musical, also chose not to join. "There was not really a way for me to do my job and not watch the things I wasn't comfortable with," she says. One by one each of the youth in the ward decided not to participate.

The director asked the students to please reconsider, but their decision held. Soon, the director paid the rights for the show (payment which could not be refunded), auditions were held, and parts were cast. Everything was looking like a done deal. And then along came a snowstorm.

Plot Twist

Right when things were getting rolling with the musical, an enormous snowstorm shut down that part of Maryland. They were out of school for over a week. During this time their theater director—who some of these youth think of as a kind of second dad—gave the matter a lot of thought. This director, who is a



STAND TRUE

"Be a friend to all, but never compromise your standards. Stand true to your convictions and faith."

Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Your Wonderful Journey Home," *Ensign*, May 2013, 128.

Christian from another faith, had been praying about what to do. Before school resumed after the big storm, the drama group got some big news. Mary said, "He sent a text. The text said, 'I've been praying and I don't feel right leaving out the Mormon kids. You've got until Tuesday to come up with a monologue and a song.'" (That's theater-speak for get ready to audition.)

Yes, the director decided to drop the original musical entirely. And just like that, the curtain beckoned once more.

"We were all really excited!" Carolyn said.

The youth all jumped at the chance to help in the new production and have enjoyed rolling up their theatrical sleeves once more.

Plot Fix

Now, not all stories of this nature can have this kind of a happy ending (on *or* off the stage). Most of the time, choosing not to participate in something inappropriate doesn't result in such a significant reversal. But even realizing that they'd be missing out on one of their favorite interests, the youth were at peace with their choice. "I had finally come to terms that it's OK," Mary said.

From the start, this group of youth kept each other strong and helped one another live the gospel. "It was easier for us to stand up for our beliefs because there was more than just one of us," says Sonja. "It's good when you have friends and you can stand together." NE



Learning to be A LIGHT TO THE WORLD

By Victor de Jesus Cruz Vargas

I was born in the Dominican Republic and was raised in the Church. I grew up surrounded by great leaders who tried to help me follow the right path. I dreamed of serving a mission and helping people.

Because my father moved to the United States to try to find a better life for us, my mother raised my sisters and me alone. Sometimes I felt alone, but I never was because I could talk about any difficulties in my life with my Church leaders.

When we moved to the United States, great trials began for me. We attended a small branch and I had great leaders who wanted to help me, but my school friends tried to pull me off the gospel path. Unfortunately, I began to speak to my mother in an unkind way and rarely listened to her counsel.

I would go to church every Sunday, but I really didn't have the desire to go, and I didn't know if I wanted to go on a mission anymore.

One morning I opened the Book of Mormon, and it opened exactly to the page of my favorite scripture, 3 Nephi 12:14–16:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of this people. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

“Behold, do men light a candle and put it under a bushel? Nay, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house;

“Therefore let your light so shine before this people, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

It gave me great joy to read this because it helped me remember what I learned in seminary and how marvelous the plan of our Father is. So I decided to try to be a light to the world.

I invited two cousins to come to church. One was less active, and he became active. The other was not a member, and I was able to baptize him.

A year later I received my mission call to serve in California, USA. As I served, I saw without a doubt that this is the true gospel of Jesus Christ. As I helped people, my testimony grew more and more, and every time I read my scriptures, I always recited the passage in 3 Nephi to be a light unto the world. **NE**

Victor de Jesus Cruz Vargas lives in the Dominican Republic.



One by One

Words by David A. Bednar
Music by Paul Cardall

Arranged by Ken Neff and Shauna Swainston

With conviction ♩ = 108–112

mp

1. One by one, one by one. Je - sus, the Fa - ther's Be -
2. One by one, one by one. Mul - ti - tudes gath - ered and
3. One by one, one by one. Christ looked a - round Him and

lov - ed Son — One by one, one by one — From the be -
saw Him come. One by one, one by one. Each heard a
saw their tears. One by one, one by one. In His com -

gin - ning said, "Thy will be done." Je - sus Christ came to earth to ful - fill God's
voice de - clare, "Be-hold My Son." Je - sus Christ came and stood in the midst of
pas - sion, He calmed their fears. Je - sus Christ healed each one brought forth un - to

cresc. *mf*

3 Nephi 11:3–17

3 Nephi 17:5–12, 20–24

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plan, For He a - lone could a - tone as Sav - ior of man. The
 them. They fell to the earth in great rev - 'rence for Him. The
 Him. Then He blessed each pre - cious child and prayed for them. The

Lord blessed and beck - oned them, "Come un - to me," And
 Lord bid, "A - rise, and come forth un - to me." With
 an - gels de - scend - ed from heav - en a - bove, En -

will - ing - ly sac - ri - ficed to set us free. One by one,
 hands they did feel and with eyes they did see. One by one,
 cir - cling those lit - tle ones; each felt His love. One by one,

cresc. *mp*



Music Downloads

Download sheet music and audio files at lds.org/go/onebyone.

one by one. He suf-fered for us and vic-to-ry won.
 one by one. Each knew and bore re-cord, He is our Lord.
 one by one. He in-ter-cedes for each daugh-ter and son.

One by one, one by one. We mar-vel at all His
 One by one, one by one. They cried "Ho-san-na" with
 One by one, one by one. Strength from His grace gives us

love has done, ____ One by one.
 one ac-cord, ____ One by one.
 pow'r to be - come, ____ One by one.

Why does God give us romantic feelings so early compared to the time of life when marriage is appropriate?

Feelings of attraction are, of course, not bad in and of themselves and ultimately serve a divine purpose in marriage. But why do we have these feelings for so many years before we can appropriately act on them?

Well, this life is a test of obedience, and the law of chastity is one of the most important laws to obey. The test gets tougher after puberty, when hormones (and a permissive culture) are telling us, “Go, go, go,” but the Light of Christ and the Holy Ghost (as well as the scriptures, prophets, parents, and leaders) are telling us, “Wait, wait, wait.” As we heed the latter message, we prove our worthiness and show our maturity and moral discipline, which is “the consistent exercise of agency to choose the right because it is right, even when it is hard” (D. Todd Christofferson, “Moral Discipline,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 105).

As with so many tests in life, this one allows us to prove ourselves worthy of the greater blessings to come—including temple sealing for time and all eternity. **NE**



Why don't miracles happen today like they did in Christ's time?

The Savior's miracles were “divine acts” as well as “part of the divine teaching” (Bible Dictionary, “Miracles”). Healing and other miracles are still found in the Church today, though they aren't always dramatic and aren't always spoken of publicly because those who experience them hold them sacred. You may want to look for miracles in your life or the lives of your family members or ancestors. Though we may desire miracles, we should remember that Heavenly Father answers in His time and in His own way.

Miracles are part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are a sign that faith is on the earth (see Ether 12:12), and they are a gift of the Spirit (see D&C 46:21). **NE**

“What should I do if fasting just feels like going hungry?”

There may be times when you skip a meal because of a tight schedule or some other reason. Is that fasting? No, that's going hungry. A true fast includes prayerfully desiring to draw closer to Heavenly Father. It may help to think of the reasons *why* we fast. “The Lord has established the law of the fast and fast offerings to bless His people and to provide a way for them to serve those in need (see Isaiah 58:6–12). . . . Blessings associated with the law of the fast include closeness to the Lord, increased spiritual strength, temporal well-being, greater compassion, and a stronger desire to serve” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church*, 6.1.2).

There are many reasons to fast: one is for spiritual growth, and another is to help the poor and needy through fast offerings. You might also fast for a friend or family member who is going through a hard time. All are important ways of becoming more like the Savior.

So how can you make your fast more meaningful and enjoyable? Consider the following ideas:

- Begin and end your fast with prayer.
- Fast with a purpose. For example, you can fast for someone who is sick or for yourself to receive greater spiritual strength.
- Fast with a happy countenance (see Matthew 6:1–4). Don't make a show of suffering while you are fasting.
- Attend fast and testimony meetings. Bear your testimony when you feel prompted.
- Pay a generous fast offering. Remember that this is an important part of the experience.

When we are obedient to this law, we will be blessed: “He who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23). **NE**

Think about Why You're Fasting

You can enjoy fasting more by thinking about what you are fasting for. It really helps you focus on that reason and not on how hungry you are. You can write in your journal about the things you are fasting for, spiritual things, or fun experiences that have happened lately. You can play hymns on a musical instrument or just listen to them. Write to a friend or family member. Try to keep peace in your home with your siblings and parents so the Spirit can be there. These things keep you focused on the spirit of fasting and not on your hunger.

Lia H., 15, Alabama, USA



Focus on the Reason for Fasting

Look at fasting as a blessing, not a forced and dreaded chore.

I used to focus on my hunger pains on fast Sunday until my mom told me to fast with a purpose. She said every time you have a hunger pain, think of what you're fasting for and say a silent prayer. I tried that the next fast Sunday, and it really helped! I didn't feel hungry, and I saw the effects of my fast when

I received the help I had fasted for. I gained a testimony of fasting that day, and ever since, fast Sunday has always been a blessing to me.

Janae S., 15, California, USA



Fast with Faith

Fasting with any kind of purpose makes it so much more meaningful. Whether it be for school, yourself, or family. It can be something small, but as long as you have a purpose and have faith, God will help you and fasting will be more enjoyable.

Dallin L., 17, California, USA

Fast Offering Blessings

If you think of what you are fasting for, you might see that it isn't just going hungry. You can think of the person you are giving a meal to through your fast offering. When you fast, you will receive blessings.

McKayla R., 15, New Mexico, USA

Have a Purpose

I have noticed that having a purpose helps a lot. Many people fast for families in need, a chance to regain their own testimonies, or maybe even an opportunity to practice missionary work. When your thoughts

are centered on these topics and the people you love, your hunger will turn into meaning. We need the feeling of sacrifice just as Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, has felt. With this in mind, feeling hungry won't go away, but it can become easier and more rewarding.

Dallin B., 16, Utah, USA



Find Things to Fast For

I used to feel like I would be starving myself each fast

Sunday, but then I realized that I needed to find things to fast for, like if I needed help with a problem or if someone was having a hard time, I could fast for it.

Evelyn W., 15, New Mexico, USA



FASTING BRINGS A CHANGE IN OUR NATURES

"The brief time we fast every month

and the small amount we offer for the poor may give us only a small part of the change in our natures to have no more desire to do evil. But there is a great promise, even as we do all that we reasonably can to pray, to fast, and to donate for those in need: ... 'Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am' (Isaiah 58:9)."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?" *Ensign*, May 2015, 25.

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

UPCOMING QUESTION

As a young woman, how can I know if Heavenly Father wants me to serve a mission?

Send your answer and photo by July 15, 2016.

Go to newera.lds.org, and click "Submit Your Work." Sign in with your LDS Account, and then select "New Era" under "Choose Magazine." Click "Add File" to select your file and photos, and then click "Submit" to upload and send us your file.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



Ordinances and Covenants

Church leaders had a lot to say about ordinances and covenants in the April 2016 general conference. Here are just a few talks that taught us important lessons or invited us to do something on this topic:

- “Always Retain a Remission of Your Sins,” by Elder David A. Bednar
- “That I Might Draw All Men unto Me,” by Elder Dale G. Renlund
- “Always Remember Him,” by Elder Gerrit W. Gong
- “The Power of Godliness,” by Elder Kent F. Richards

Find these and more at conference.lds.org.



Share These Cards

Give yourself an easy reminder to think about this month's theme. Just place these cards in your scriptures, locker, or bedroom. You can also download or share them online at lds.org/go/cardsNE716.



THE BEST WAY I KNOW OF
**TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD IS
TO PREPARE CONSCIENTIOUSLY AND
PARTAKE WORTHILY OF THE SACRAMENT EACH WEEK.**

Elder Dale G. Renlund
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
April 2016 general conference

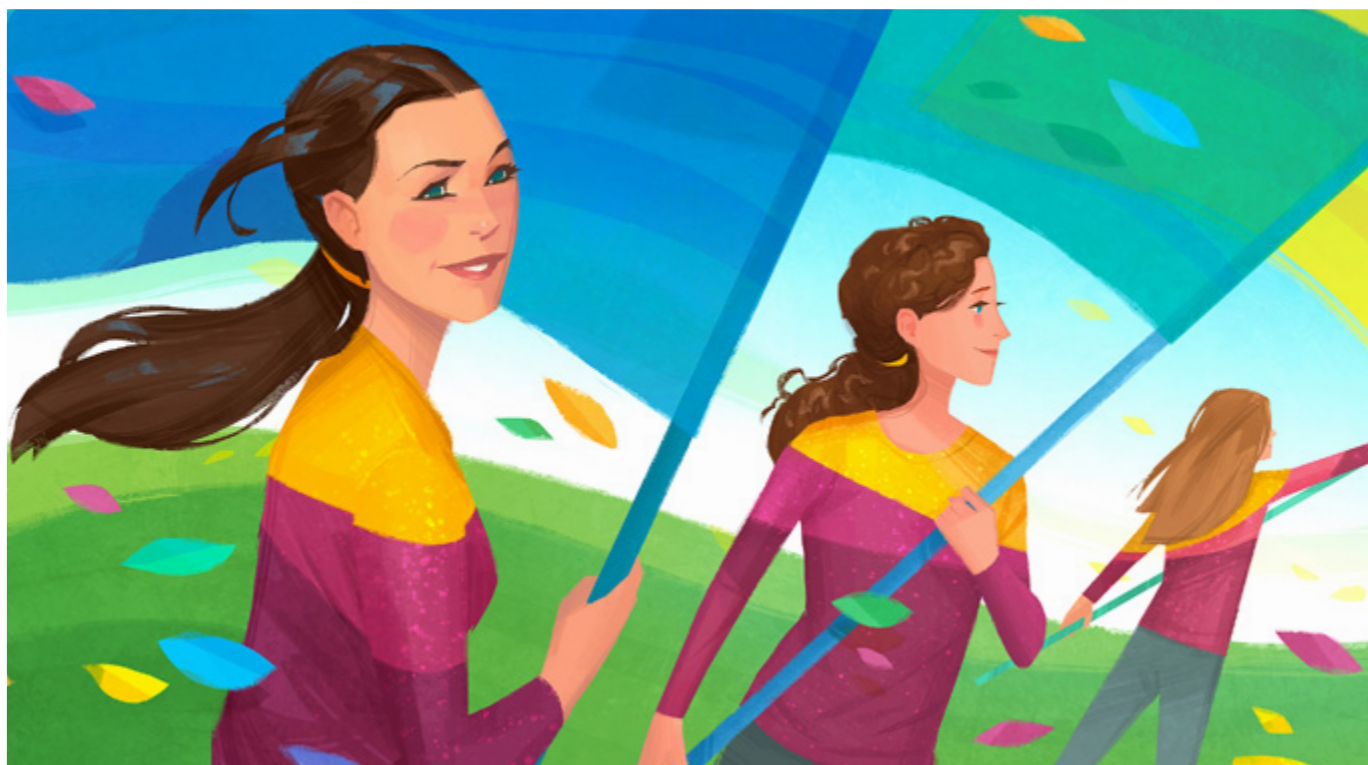
**COME TO THE TEMPLE.
COME OFTEN.**

COME WITH AND FOR YOUR FAMILY.
COME, AND HELP OTHERS TO COME TOO.

Elder Kent F. Richards
Of the Seventy
April 2016 general conference







OUR TRUE COLORS

My sister and I had both been chosen to be on our school color guard (flag team). We were so excited, and we practiced daily so that we could be at the same level of expertise as the others who had been doing this for years. After a long summer of practice, it was time to take a picture of the entire color guard and marching band. For the picture the guard girls were asked to wear an outfit that was very tight and revealing. My sister and I were a little upset. We'd been taught to dress modestly, and we knew this should be no exception.

That night my sister and I made a plan. Color guard was important to

us, and it was something we loved to do, but we knew that if we lowered our standards, we would be asked to do the same in the future because we'd already done it once. We knew we must be strong and stand up for what we represent, and if our coach and team couldn't accept that, then we would quit color guard because our standards were too important to us to be changed by a sport.

The next day, after a lot of prayer that everything would turn out OK, we walked into the gym for pictures, wearing black slacks and T-shirts. The only comments we received from our teammates were that they wished

they'd worn what we did because they were embarrassed to be wearing something so immodest. Even our coach agreed! My sister and I were so proud that we'd stood for what we believed in and that we could continue doing color guard! For the past two years, the uniforms had been short or sleeveless, but because we stood up for our beliefs, we've been able to modify them to our standards.

Though it may seem hard, if you stand up for your beliefs, the result may be something you never expected. It may not work out like it did for us, but you'll never know if you don't try.

Shelby W., Missouri, USA

WE'LL ALL BE TOGETHER AGAIN

I was having a meltdown. I was working on a family history project, and I was getting nowhere. I was looking for a marriage certificate for my great-great-grandparents, but when I'd done a quick search on FamilySearch for their names, nothing had come up. I'd prayed to Heavenly Father that the Spirit would help and guide me, but I was starting to get frustrated because my prayer hadn't been answered yet.

I started scrolling down matches again. No, no, no; this wasn't helpful at all. I scrolled back to the top. Wait—I'd missed one! There were my grandparents' names, but they were on a baby's birth certificate. I called for my mom, and I told

STRONGER THAN FEAR

I used to have nightmares every night after hearing a scary story at Scout camp. I was very scared—it was hard to go to sleep. I prayed every night for Heavenly Father to help me, but I still had nightmares. Then one night I told my dad. I was shaking a little when I told him because it scared me to talk about it. We said a prayer together. Dad suggested I sing a Church hymn to myself, because I share a room with my brother. My favorite hymn is “There Is a Green Hill Far Away” (*Hymns*, no. 194). Every night after that I wasn't scared, and I stopped having nightmares. In my personal prayers every night I ask Heavenly Father to continue helping me with my fears, and I still sing my favorite hymn to myself every night.

James W., Arkansas, USA



her I'd found a record of a baby named Sarah. I would have never imagined her response.

“We don't have a known great-aunt by the name Sarah,” she said.

I checked the record. Yep, it was correct. We searched for her name by itself, and we found a death certificate for her. It was

four days after she was born. I was ready to cry, but they were tears of happiness. My prayer had been answered. I had one thought: “*We'll all be together again.*”

Melody M., South Korea



By Elder
Ronald A. Rasband

Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

HOW TO CLAIM TEMPLE BLESSINGS

Temples are houses of the Lord, where our Savior's teachings are reaffirmed through sacred ordinances such as baptisms for the dead and marriage, which unites families for all eternity.

I would recommend to you that temple worship is an important pattern for each of you to set—individually and as families—as you consider your own areas of focus and attention, as you **put in place firm foundations in your life**. I know many of you already do this, and for that we are most grateful to you.

The First Presidency has issued an invitation to all the members of the Church, which certainly applies to you and me: “Where time and circumstances permit, members are encouraged to **replace some leisure activities with temple service**.”¹

May we also **consider the promised blessings** by prophets, seers, and revelators as we faithfully attend the temple. From President Thomas S. Monson comes this promise: **“Come to the temple** and place your burdens before the

Lord and you'll **be filled with a new spirit and confidence in the future**. Trust in the Lord, and if you do He'll hold you and cradle you and lead you step by step along that pathway that leads to the celestial kingdom of God.”²

Another comforting blessing of temple worship is the assurance of protection and peace from the storm that is upon us in our day. Some of the safest places that Heavenly Father has established for the gathering of His people are in the temples of the Lord.

The statement on the outside facade of every temple reads: “Holiness to the Lord / The House of the Lord.” I testify that all of the temples of the Lord are His sanctuaries here upon the earth. I invite all of you to **attend more frequently, as your circumstances permit, and claim your blessings and protections** that have been promised to you by prophets of God. **NE**

From a Brigham Young University devotional address given on February 10, 2009.

NOTES

1. First Presidency letter, Mar. 11, 2003.
2. Thomas S. Monson, quoted in Dell Van Orden, “San Diego Temple: 45th House of the Lord Dedicated in ‘Season for Temple Building,’” *Church News*, May 8, 1993, 12.



HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?


Something that has cemented the temple being the house of the Lord in my mind is the peace that I feel every time I go to the temple. Because my family is in the military, I have visited several temples around the world and the feeling has been the same—of peace, comfort, and the Spirit. The peace of the temple has helped me more fully understand my role in this life and how to better myself. It has also increased my ability to deal with the stress of everyday life.

Genesee B., Utah, USA



Share Your Experiences

Share how you claim the blessings of the temple and read the experiences of other youth at lds.org/go/templesNE716.



While a child's
earthly situation
may not be ideal,
a child's spiritual DNA
is perfect because
**one's true
identity**
is as
**a son
or daughter
of God.**

Elder Neil L. Andersen
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
April 2016 general conference

WHAT'S ONLINE



TAKING THE TEMPLE *with You*

If you're traveling this summer, why not see if there's a temple nearby? Visit lds.org/go/findNE716 to find a temple wherever you and your family might go. You could even take the #TempleChallenge with you on your travels (see templechallenge.lds.org). Also check out lds.org/go/meetingNE716 to find a meetinghouse where you can attend church on Sunday.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK



WATCH
"STRIVE" AT

lds.org/go/striveNE716

YOUR BEST *Self*

No matter where you were yesterday, you should always be moving forward to become your best self today (think this year's Mutual theme: 2 Nephi 31:20). See what Church leaders have said about striving to reach the great potential He sees in you.

STAYING *in the Boat*

In some climates, July is the perfect time for outdoor adventures—warm weather, friends, and free time. So get out there! A video based on Elder M. Russell Ballard's talk "Stay in the Boat and Hold On!" shows teens on a rafting adventure. But not listening to their instructor got them into a bit of deep water—literally.



CHECK OUT
"STAY IN THE BOAT" AT

lds.org/go/boatNE716