

JUNE 2014

THE

# New Era

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New Era

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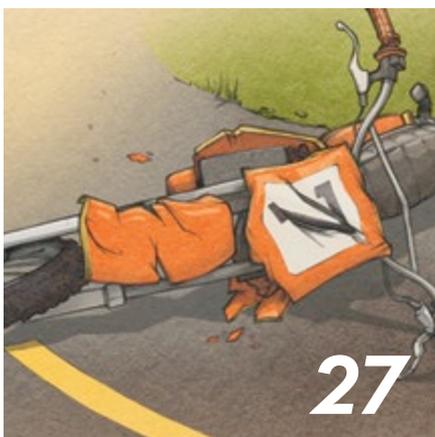
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# Agency and Answers: RECOGNIZING REVELATION

*What sometimes seems an impenetrable barrier to communication is a giant step to be taken in trust.*



By Elder  
Richard G. Scott  
Of the Quorum of  
the Twelve Apostles

**A**cross from me a woman sat sobbing. With tear-filled eyes, she told me, “I don’t know what I believe anymore.” She spoke of having struggled and prayed many days to know how to make a vitally important decision in her life, without success. She anguished, “I don’t know what to do. If you’ll tell me what to do, I’ll do it.” With her hand on the scriptures, she said, “God told us He would help us. He answers everybody else’s prayers. Why won’t He answer mine?”

When one is caught in a whirlpool of emotion, it is difficult to find a way out alone. My prayer is to help you who have similar feelings.

When answers to urgent prayer don’t seem to come, it can be that we don’t understand some truths about prayer or because we don’t recognize answers when they come.

## Principles of Prayer

Communication with our Father in Heaven is not a trivial matter. It is a sacred privilege. It is based upon unchanging principles.

When we receive help from our Father in Heaven, it is in response to faith, obedience, and the proper use of agency.

It is a mistake to assume that every prayer we offer will be answered immediately. Some prayers require considerable effort on our part. True, sometimes impressions come when we have not specifically sought them. They generally concern something we need to know and are not otherwise able to find out.

*She said, “God told us He would help us. He answers everybody else’s prayers. Why won’t He answer mine?”*

We are here on earth to gain experience we can obtain in no other way. We are given the opportunity to grow, to develop, and to gain spiritual maturity. To do that, we must learn to apply truth. How we face challenges and resolve difficult problems is crucially important to our happiness.

To better understand prayer, I have listened to the counsel of others, pondered the

scriptures, and studied the lives of prophets and others. Yet what seems most helpful is seeing in my mind a child approaching trustingly a loving, kind, wise, understanding Father, who wants us to succeed.

Don't worry about your clumsily expressed feelings. Just talk to your Father. He hears every prayer and answers it in His way.

When we explain a problem and a proposed solution, sometimes He answers yes, sometimes no. Often He withholds an answer, not for lack of concern, but because He loves us—perfectly. He wants us to apply truths He has given us. For us to grow, we need to trust our ability to make correct decisions. We need to do what we *feel* is

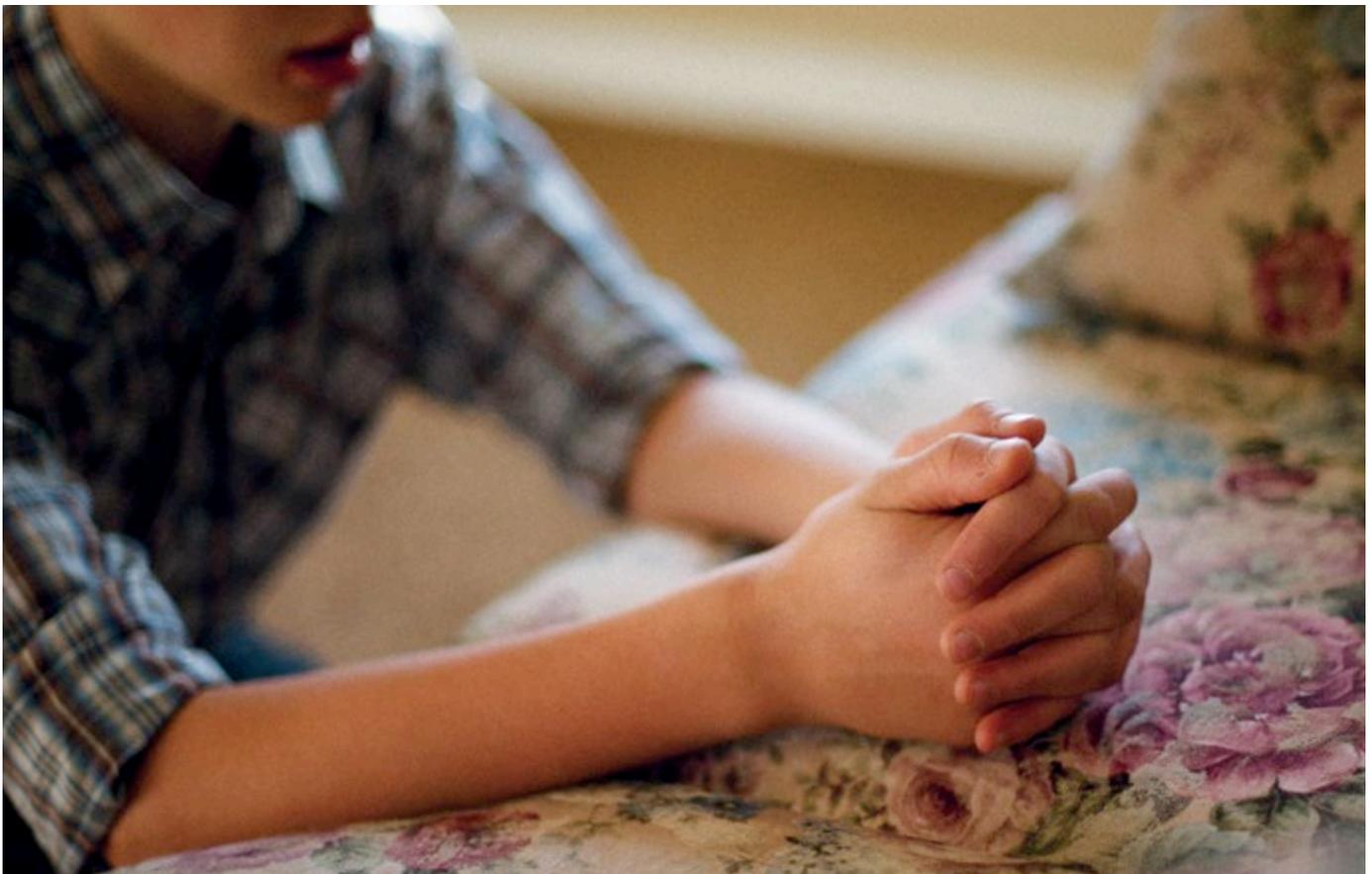
right. In time, He will answer. He will not fail us.

I have described the absolute reality of our relationship with our Father. There is nothing about us He does not know. He is conscious of our every need and could provide all of the answers. Yet, because His purpose is our eternal happiness, He encourages us to make the correct choices.

### Three Ways to Find Answers

#### 1. Look for Evidence That He Has Already Answered You

Like many of us, Oliver Cowdery did not recognize the evidence of answers to prayers already given by the Lord. To open his—and our—eyes, this revelation was given through Joseph Smith:



“Blessed art thou for what thou hast done; for thou hast inquired of me, and behold, *as often as thou hast inquired thou hast received instruction* of my Spirit. If it had not been so, thou wouldst not have come to the place where thou art at this time.

“Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and I did *enlighten thy mind*; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou hast been enlightened by the Spirit of truth” (D&C 6:14–15; emphasis added).

If you feel that God has not answered *your* prayers, ponder these scriptures—then carefully look for evidence in your own life of His having already answered you.

## 2. Pay Attention to Feelings

To help each of us recognize answers given, the Lord said:

“If you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things.

*“Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter?”* (D&C 6:22–23; emphasis added).

The Lord provides further insight by counseling us to study a problem out in our mind and then to ask if it be right:

“If it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall *feel* that it is right.

“But if it be not right you shall have no such *feelings*, but you shall have a stupor of thought” (D&C 9:8–9; emphasis added).

## 3. Act When He Withholds an Answer

It is vitally important to recognize that the Lord also responds a third way to prayer by *withholding an answer* when the prayer is offered. Why would He do that?

He is our perfect Father. He loves us beyond our capacity to understand. He knows what is best for us. He sees the end from the beginning. He wants us to act to gain needed experience:

When He answers *yes*, it is to give us confidence.

When He answers *no*, it is to prevent error.

When He *withholds an answer*, it is to have us grow through faith in Him, obedience to His commandments, and a willingness to act on truth. We are expected to

assume accountability by acting on a decision that is consistent with His teachings without prior confirmation. We are not to sit passively waiting or to murmur because the Lord has not spoken. We are to act.

Most often what we have chosen to do is right. He will confirm the correctness of our choices His way. That confirmation generally comes through packets of help found along the way. We discover them by being spiritually sensitive. They are like notes from a loving Father as evidence of His approval. If, in trust, we begin something that is not right, He will let us know before we have gone too far. We sense that help by recognizing troubled or uneasy feelings.

Nephi’s efforts to obtain the plates of brass show how the principles work (see 1 Nephi 3:6–7). After two unsuccessful attempts, Nephi remained confident. He crept into the city toward the house of Laban without all the answers. He observed, “I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do,” significantly adding, *“nevertheless I went forth”* (1 Nephi 4:6–7; emphasis added).

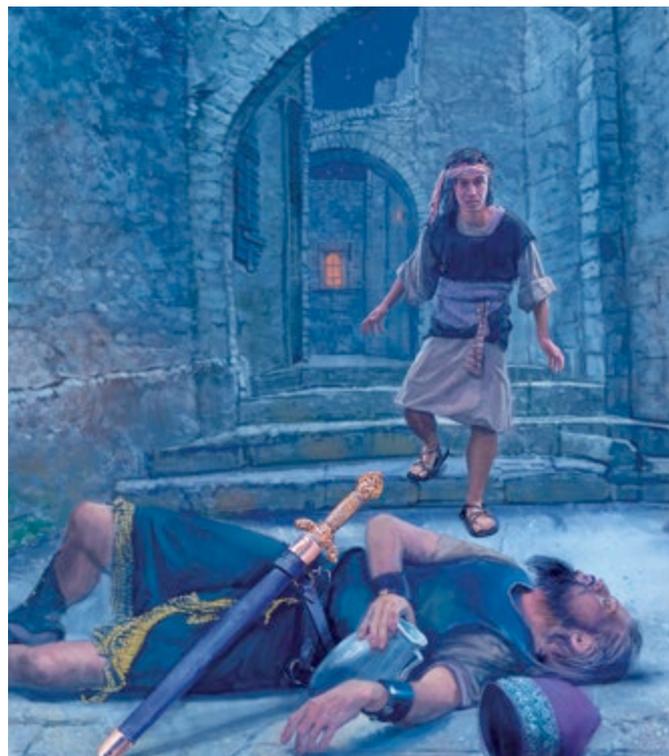


ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN CALL

Nephi was willing to try time and again, using his best efforts. He expressed faith that he would be helped. He refused to be discouraged. But because he acted, had confidence in the Lord, was obedient, and properly used his agency, he received guidance. He was inspired step after step to success, and in his mother's words was "given . . . power [to] accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded" (1 Nephi 5:8; emphasis added).

Nephi knew he was required to confide in God, to exercise faith, and to act so that he could receive help, step by step. He did not murmur nor ask for a full explanation. But, observe particularly, he did not wait passively for help. He acted! By following spiritual law, he was inspired and given power to act.

### Trusting God's Will and Way

Sometimes answers to prayer are not recognized because we are too intent on wanting confirmation of our own desires. We fail to see that the Lord would have us do something else. Be careful to seek His will.

I confess I don't know how to make a correct decision except where there is righteousness and trust in a Heavenly Father. The principles simply will not work when agency is intentionally used at variance with the will of God. If there is unrepented sin, we are left to our own devices to flounder and struggle on our own. We *can* be rescued through our own repentance.

When we seek inspiration to help make decisions, the Lord gives gentle promptings. These require us to think, to exercise faith, to work, to struggle at times, and to act. Seldom does the whole answer to a decisively important matter or complex problem come all at once. More often, it comes a piece at a time, without the end in sight.

I have saved the most important part about prayer until the end. It is gratitude! Our sincere efforts to thank our beloved Father generate wondrous feelings of peace, self-worth, and love.

Why is it that the most impoverished seem to know best how to thank the Lord? In the highlands of Guatemala, members barely subsist. Going to the temple requires great

sacrifice. A visit takes a year of preparation. There is hard work, sacrifice to save money and food, the spinning, dyeing, and weaving of new clothing. There is the long, barefoot walk out of the mountains, the crossing of Lake Isabel, the bus rides with little food. Tired and worn, they arrive at the temple. They scrub until they shine, dress in their new clothing, and enter the house of the Lord.

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Sometimes answers to prayer are not recognized because we are too intent on wanting confirmation of our own desires.

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Reclothed in white, they are taught by the Spirit, receive ordinances, and make covenants. One highland woman was greatly touched by the spirit and meaning of the endowment. Entering the celestial room, she saw others seated, with heads reverently bowed. Innocently, she knelt at the entrance to the room, oblivious to others. She bowed her head, sobbed, and for 20 minutes poured out her heart to her Father in Heaven. Finally, with her dress soaked with tears, she raised her head. The sensitive temple matron asked, "May I help?" She responded, "Oh, would you? This is my problem: I've tried to tell Father in Heaven of my gratitude for all of my blessings, but I don't feel that I've communicated. Will you help me tell Him how grateful I am?"

This counsel about prayer is true. I have tested it thoroughly in the laboratory of my own personal life. I have discovered that what sometimes seems an impenetrable barrier to communication is a giant step to be taken in trust.

If you seek His help, be sure your life is clean, your motives are worthy, and you're willing to do what He asks—for He *will* answer your prayers. He is your loving Father; you are His beloved child. He loves you perfectly and wants to help you. **NE**

*From an October 1989 general conference address.*

DO YOU KNOW

# That Girl

SITTING OVER THERE?



*I would never have guessed that following a simple prompting could lead to so much.*

By Sierra H. Hess

I gazed at the girl sitting alone at the table across from mine. Her long hair hid her face, but I could sense her loneliness as she idly scooted food around her tray. I couldn't help but feel selfish watching her eat by herself when I was surrounded by friends.

One of my friends suddenly elbowed me. "Sierra! I'm talking to you. Wake up!" My focus snapped back to the conversation at our lunch table.



"Oh, sorry! I wasn't paying attention. Hey, do you guys see that girl sitting over there?" I nodded toward the young woman eating alone. "Do you know her name?"



My friends shrugged and returned to their conversation. Their laughter muddled into the noise of the cafeteria while my mind wandered back to the girl at the table. The thought came that I should do something to help her. “But what if she thinks I’m weird or if she’s waiting for her other friends?” I silently objected. But the thought returned, and I knew what I needed to do.

I shuffled nervously toward her, and she glanced up when I reached her table.

“Do you want to sit with us?” I asked.

She half nodded, gathered her belongings, and followed me as my friends scooted over to give her room to sit.

“I have two classes with you,” I said, “but I don’t think I’ve met you before. What’s your name?”

“Kelsey,” she said. Her reply was barely audible.

For the rest of lunch, my friends and I asked about her interests and school schedule, trying to help her feel welcome. I could tell she was relieved not to be sitting alone. When lunch was over, a warm, light feeling filled my heart.

In the following weeks, Kelsey continued to sit with us at lunch. While her face always made it seem like she was fine, I could see pain in her eyes. She didn’t talk much about her background, but I could sense that there was a lot of stuff she was trying to keep hidden or forget about.

Months flew by, and I grew to love Kelsey.



We enjoyed each other’s friendship. I was amazed by her lofty dreams and loving personality.

One day in our computer class, the teacher moved me next to Kelsey, who seemed to be struggling with some of the material. We spent hours working together, and I watched happily as her grade inched up to an A. For one assignment, we created time lines that included 10 major events in our lives. When Kelsey completed hers, she tapped me on the shoulder.

“Do you want to see my time line?” She grinned.

“Yeah, sure!” I looked over at her computer. Stifling a gasp, I read some of the sad events that had filled Kelsey’s life. My surprise reached its peak, however, when I read the final event on her time line: *I met Sierra*.

Stunned, I hugged her and whispered, “Oh, Kelsey. Thank you.”



Toward the end of the school year, Kelsey suddenly moved to California. About a year after that, Mrs. Cummings,\* who worked at my school, told me she wanted to talk with me. She hesitantly explained that Kelsey had passed away over the weekend. Tears started pouring down my cheeks. Mrs. Cummings didn’t know—or at least couldn’t tell me—how it happened, but she did tell me some things about Kelsey that I hadn’t known before. Her life on earth was challenging. I cried for several days, but even through my tears, I was comforted because of the plan of salvation.

Back in that lunchroom, when I saw a girl sitting alone, Heavenly Father knew she was a daughter of His who needed a friend. He knows our needs and knows how we can meet the needs of others. Though it’s easy to ignore the promptings of the Spirit at times, I will forever be glad for the day I listened to the Spirit at lunch. **NE**

*Sierra H. Hess lives in Colorado, USA.*

\* Names have been changed.

# 2 Nephi 31:19–20

*Nephi taught us what to do after we've been baptized and received the Holy Ghost.*

## STRAIT AND NARROW PATH

We get into the strait and narrow path by repentance, baptism, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost (see 2 Nephi 31:17–18). When we're baptized and confirmed, we make a covenant to continue following in God's path. To learn more about this covenant, read Mosiah 18:8–10, 13; Moroni 4:3; and D&C 20:37.

## PRESS FORWARD, FEASTING UPON THE WORD OF CHRIST

In Lehi's vision of the tree of life, the only people who didn't fall away were those who "did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron" (1 Nephi 8:30). When you consider that the iron rod is the word of God, how does that relate to this phrase? Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, "The key phrase in this verse is *continually holding fast* to the rod of iron. . . . Perhaps this third group of people *consistently* read *and* studied *and* searched the scriptures. . . . Perhaps it was the spiritual nourishment and strength provided by continually 'feasting upon the word of Christ' (2 Nephi 31:20) that enabled this group to heed not the scorning and mocking of the people in the great

and spacious building (see 1 Nephi 8:33). This is the group you and I should strive to join" ("Lehi's Dream: Holding Fast to the Rod," *Ensign*, Oct. 2011, 35–36).

19 And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow "path, I would ask if all is <sup>b</sup>done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far save it were by the word of Christ with unshaken "faith in him, "relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to <sup>c</sup>save.

20 Wherefore, ye must press forward with a "steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of <sup>b</sup>hope, and a "love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and <sup>d</sup>endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have <sup>e</sup>eternal life.

## STEADFASTNESS IN CHRIST

*Steadfast* means to stand firm and not waver. "How do you remain 'steadfast and immovable'? [Alma 1:25]," asks Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "You immerse yourself in the very things that helped build your core of faith: you exercise faith in Christ, you pray, you ponder the scriptures, you repent, you keep the commandments, and you serve others" ("Trial of Your Faith," *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 40).

## FAITH . . . HOPE . . . LOVE

In the scriptures, these three characteristics are often found together. You can find the pattern of faith, hope, and love (charity) in many places. Here are some scriptures where they appear together. See if you can find more.

- 1 Corinthians 13:13
- Alma 13:29
- Ether 12:28–36
- Moroni 7:20–48
- Moroni 10:20–23
- D&C 4:5–6

## ENDURE TO THE END



"Endurance . . . is important because the quality of our eternal future is proportional to

our ability to endure in righteousness. . . . In order to receive the greatest of all the blessings of our Heavenly Father, which is eternal life, we must complete the appropriate ordinance work and then continue to keep the associated covenants. In other words, we must successfully endure."

Elder Richard J. Maynes of the Presidency of the Seventy, "The Strength to Endure," *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 79.

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

# FOLLOW *the Little* PROMPTINGS

*Every whisper from  
the Holy Ghost  
is worth listening to.*

If a tornado were going to hurl an enormous tree trunk onto your bed during the night, you'd probably want to know ahead of time.

Wilford Woodruff (1807–98), who later became the fourth President of the Church, was once sleeping outside in his wagon with his wife and child when the Spirit whispered, “Get up and move [your] carriage.”<sup>1</sup> He could have dismissed it as a strange idea, but instead he obeyed. Half an hour later, a whirlwind snapped off an enormous tree and flung it through the air. The tree landed exactly where the wagon had been.

There are many such examples of miracles that happened as a result of following promptings (see more on pages 20 and 47).

But what about a prompting that inspires you to call a friend just to say hello? Or a prompting to put an extra pair of socks in your backpack for your next hike? Following such promptings likely won't lead to dramatic outcomes, but they're still important.

The friend you call might be having a hard day. A phone call could cheer him up. On the hike, an extra pair of socks could mean the difference between a comfortable outing and painful blisters if your feet got wet unexpectedly.

President Thomas S. Monson has taught: “We watch. We wait. We listen for that still, small voice. When it speaks, wise men and women obey. We do not postpone following promptings of the Spirit.”<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes spiritual promptings are urgent. More often, however, they are gentle. Heavenly Father has promised to instruct us “line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little” (2 Nephi 28:30).

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: “Most frequently, revelation comes in small increments over time and is granted according to our desire, worthiness, and preparation.”<sup>3</sup>

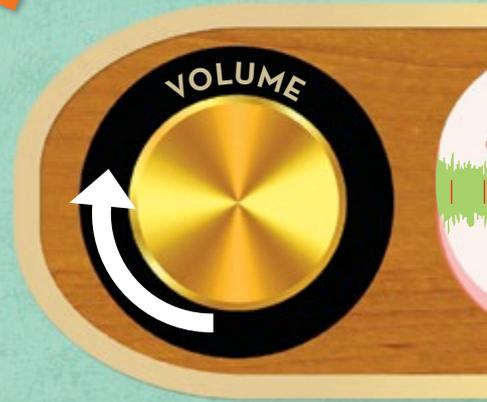
Most likely, none of us will need to dodge a tree trunk tossed at us by a tornado. Yet we can be certain there will always be some small and simple good we can do as we pay attention to the Spirit. **NE**

#### NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* (2004), 47.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “The Spirit Giveth Life,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 68.
3. David A. Bednar, “The Spirit of Revelation,” *Ensign* May 2011, 88.

# TUNE INTO *the* SPIRIT

**FHE**  
*Object Lesson*



By Eric B. Murdock

**Y**ou've been assigned to give a family home evening lesson about listening to the Spirit, but you're not quite sure how to teach your family with a fun and engaging lesson. Well, here's an object lesson that's perfect for you! All you need is a radio, and you're ready to go.

## THE MESSAGE

Our Heavenly Father has blessed us with the Spirit to help us through our mortal journey, and although there are many other voices to distract us, we can have the continual guidance of the Spirit. To listen to the Spirit we need to be tuned in so we can recognize His promptings and follow them. Tuning in to the voice of the Spirit is a lot like tuning in to a radio station. Each station is transmitted on a specific frequency, so in order to hear the broadcast of a certain station, you have to tune in to the correct channel, avoiding all the static and other stations around it.

## THE ACTIVITY

Here's where your object lesson comes in. Grab your radio, and set it to a random radio station or frequency (don't let others see where you set it). Then as a family,

pick a radio station that everyone wants to find. Start turning the radio dial and scan through all the stations trying to find it. You'll notice that some frequencies will come in clear and others will come in as static. Some will be easy to tell that they're not the station you're looking for (they're classical and you're looking for jazz, for instance). Others may at first seem close to what you want (another jazz station) but won't be the exact pick.

Once you've found your station, talk about the similarities you see between the activity and tuning in to the Spirit. For example, we may hear some messages coming from stations that can sound appealing but that keep us from tuning in to the right station. We may also be distracted by static—things in life that don't really harm us but that prevent us from truly focusing on the message of the station we want to hear.

You may want to have your family pick a second station as well. But this time, let them see where the radio dial is set as you scan—you'll be able to go right to it this time. Once you've found it, consider discussing what you can do as a family to learn how to quickly recognize and tune in to the Spirit. For example, we can tune in to the Spirit by praying, studying the scriptures, following the words of living prophets, and listening to our parents. We're in the best position to feel the Spirit when we've repented of our sins and when we listen to and follow His promptings.

There are a lot of voices out in the world.  
Which one will you tune in to?



## THE MEANING

It's important that we know how to recognize and listen to the Spirit in our lives. That way we won't get distracted from all the other voices that seek to keep us from the influence of the Holy Ghost and God's messages to us. President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency (1920–2007), taught, "The adversary tries to smother [us] with a multitude of loud, persistent, persuasive, and appealing voices." These voices will lead us away from the joy of the gospel. President Faust added that we must "filter out the static generated by Satan."<sup>1</sup>

If we're to listen to the voice of the Spirit, how do we know that we're tuning in to His guidance? President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said that we can know by asking ourselves, "Does it persuade one to do good, to rise, to stand tall, to do the right thing, to be kind, to be generous? Then it is of the Spirit of God. . . ."

"If it invites to do good, it is of God. If it inviteth to do evil, it is of the devil. . . . And if you are doing the right thing and if you are living the right way, you will know in your heart what the Spirit is saying to you."<sup>2</sup> (See also Moroni 7:13, 16–17.) This is how we know we're tuned in to the Spirit. **NE**

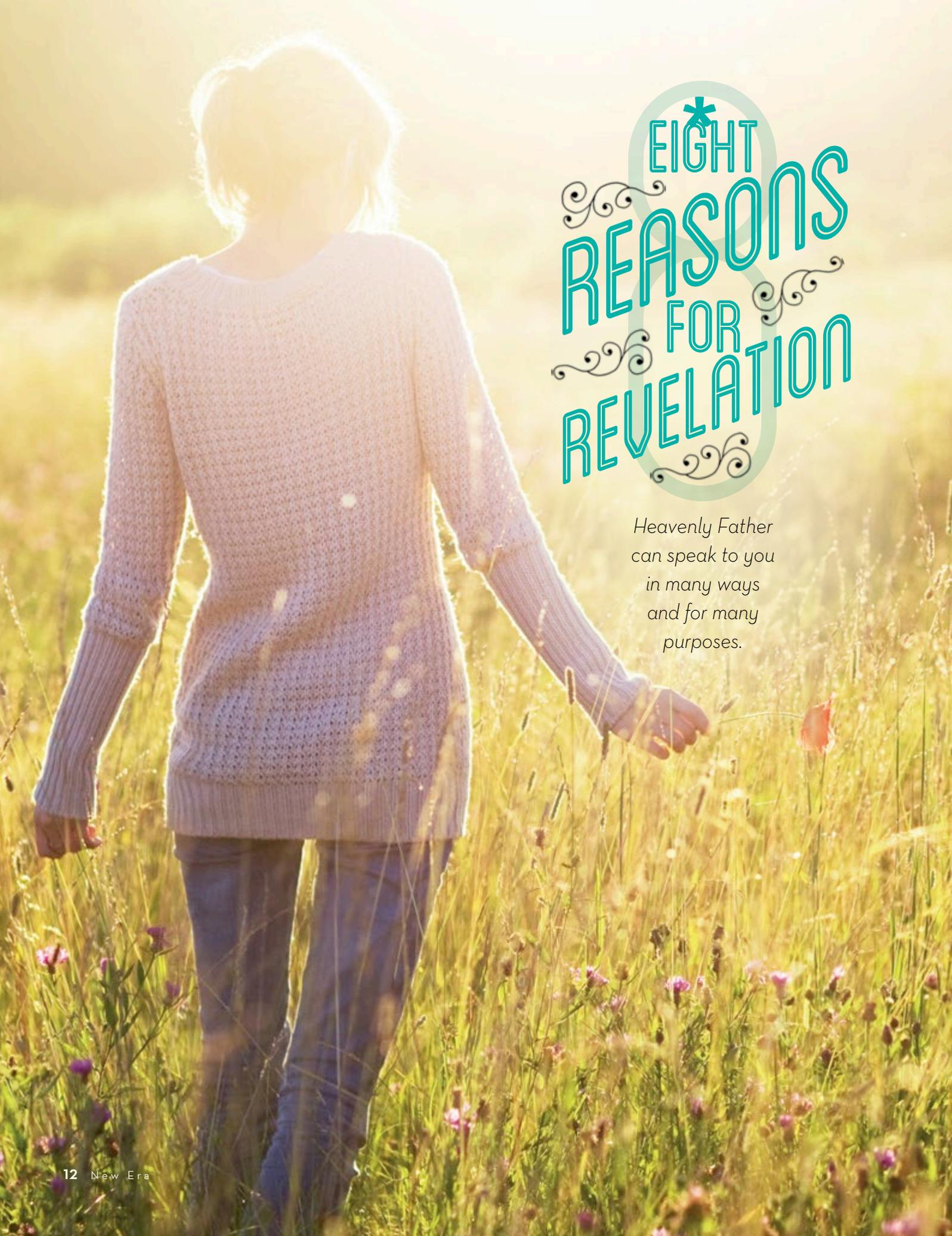
*Eric B. Murdock lives in Utah, USA.*

## More Ideas FOR YOUR LESSON

- Show how the radio volume affects your ability to hear the music. Talk about what things increase or decrease the "volume" of the Spirit in our lives.
- Watch a *Mormon Messages* video about tuning in to the Spirit from President James E. Faust at [lds.org/go/voiceNE6](https://www.lds.org/go/voiceNE6).
- Read chapter four of *Preach My Gospel*. Discuss with your family what personal revelation is, who the Holy Ghost is, and how He speaks to us.
- Check out pages 2–5, 9, and 12–22 of this issue for more ideas on recognizing and following promptings of the Holy Ghost.

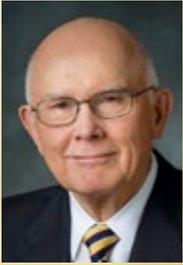
### NOTES

1. James E. Faust, "Voice of the Spirit," *Ensign*, June 2006, 4, 6.
2. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 260–61.



# EIGHT REASONS FOR REVELATION

*Heavenly Father  
can speak to you  
in many ways  
and for many  
purposes.*



By Elder  
Dallin H. Oaks

Of the  
Quorum of  
the Twelve  
Apostles

You have already received revelations, and you can receive more revelations because communication from God to men and women is a reality. President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) declared that it is “the grand privilege of every Latter-day Saint . . . to have the manifestations of the Spirit every day of our lives.”<sup>1</sup>

As I review the following eight purposes of revelation, I hope you will recognize the extent to which you have already received revelation or inspiration and resolve to cultivate this spiritual gift for more frequent use in the future.

### 1. Testify

The testimony or witness of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ and that the gospel is true is a revelation from God. When the Apostle Peter affirmed that Jesus Christ was the Son of the living God, the Savior called him blessed, “for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:17).

### 2. Prophecy

Speaking under the influence of the Holy Ghost and within the limits of his or her stewardship, a person may be inspired to predict what will come to pass in the future. This is the office of the prophet, seer, and revelator, who prophesies for the Church. Prophecy is part of the calling of a patriarch. Each of us is privileged to receive prophetic revelation illuminating future events in our lives, like a Church calling we are to receive.

### 3. Comfort

A third purpose of revelation is to give comfort. Such a revelation came to the Prophet Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail.

After many months in deplorable conditions, he cried out in agony and loneliness, pleading with the Lord to remember the persecuted Saints. The comforting answer came:

“My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

“And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes” (D&C 121:7–8).

A revelation of comfort can also come in connection with a blessing of the priesthood, either from the words spoken or from the feeling communicated in connection with the blessing.

Another type of comforting revelation is the assurance received that a sin has been forgiven. This revelation, which comes after a person has completed all the steps of repentance, gives assurance that the price has been paid, that God has heard the repentant sinner, and that his or her sins are forgiven.

### 4. Uplift

At some time in our lives each of us needs to be lifted up from a depression, from a sense of foreboding or inadequacy, or just from a plateau of spiritual mediocrity. Because it raises our spirits and helps us resist evil and seek good, I believe that the feeling of uplift that is communicated by reading the scriptures or by enjoying wholesome music, art, or literature is a distinct purpose of revelation.

### 5. Inform

The fifth purpose of revelation is to inform. This may consist of inspiration giving a person the words to speak on a particular occasion, such as in the blessings pronounced

by a patriarch or in sermons or other words spoken under the influence of the Holy Ghost. The Lord commanded Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon to lift up their voices and speak the thoughts that he would put into their hearts:

“For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say” (D&C 100:6; see also D&C 84:85; D&C 124:97).

In other circumstances, needed information is communicated by the quiet whisperings of the Spirit. A child loses a treasured possession, prays for help, and is inspired to find it; an adult has a problem at work, at home, or in family history research, prays, and is led to the information necessary to resolve it; a Church leader prays to know whom the Lord would have him call to fill a position, and the Spirit whispers a name. In all of these examples, familiar to each of us, the Holy Ghost acts in His office as a teacher and revelator, communicating information and truths for the edification and guidance of the recipient.

## 6. *Restrain*

The revelation that restrains us from doing something is one of the most common forms of revelation. It often comes by surprise, when we have not asked for revelation or guidance on a particular subject. But if we are keeping the commandments of God and living in tune with His Spirit, a restraining force will steer us away from things we should not do.

## 7. *Confirm*

A common way to seek revelation is to propose a particular course of action and then pray for inspiration to confirm it. The Lord explained the confirming type of

revelation when Oliver Cowdery failed in his efforts to translate the Book of Mormon:

“Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

“But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right” (D&C 9:7–8).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stressed our responsibility to do all that we can before we seek a revelation: “We’re expected to use the gifts and talents and abilities, the sense and judgment and agency with which we are endowed. . . . We’re expected to do everything in our power that we can and then to seek an answer from the Lord, a confirming seal that we’ve reached the right conclusion.”<sup>2</sup>

## 8. *Impel*

The Spirit can impel a person to action. This is not a case where a person proposes to take a particular action and the Spirit either restrains or confirms. This is a case where revelation comes when it is not being sought and impels some action not proposed. This type of revelation is obviously less common than other types, but its rarity makes it all the more significant.

I know that God lives and that revelation to His children is a reality. I pray that we will be worthy and willing and that He will bless us to grow in this principle of revelation. **NE**

*From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University on September 29, 1981.*

### NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 76.
2. Bruce R. McConkie, “Agency and Inspiration,” *New Era*, June 2012, 30, 32.



*I was excited to get the feeling everyone else seemed to have. Why wouldn't it come?*

By Susan Stoffer

**G**rowing up in the Church, I'd always just assumed that God existed and loved me. It wasn't until high school that I felt the need to discover for myself if everything I'd been taught was true.

I went to a Church-sponsored youth camp one summer where faithful peers spoke of receiving answers to their prayers by feeling the Holy Ghost. I thought the Holy Ghost had never communicated with me because I'd never felt "my heart burn within my chest" as many of the other youth had described. At the camp, one of the counselors said that "if you ask God if He loves you, then He will answer." Excited at the prospect of definite revelation, I knelt that night and asked God if He loves me. I felt nothing. I was angry. I begged for an answer. I'd never felt so very alone. I knew that God loves me—why wouldn't He let me feel it?

I spent the next year coming to terms with this experience. Over time, I realized that the Holy Ghost *had* spoken to me, just not in the way I'd expected. It was not through intense feelings but through a calm and pure knowledge of truth in my heart and mind. By the time I went back to camp the following summer, I'd realized I didn't need

an intense confirming feeling to know that God loves me, because the Spirit spoke to me a different way.

And then the strangest thing happened: I got that feeling. One night while writing in my journal, I heard a voice in my head say, "I love you." It was a soft whisper, and I knew it was of divine origin. I knelt and tearfully thanked God and felt surrounded by His love. It often seems too bold to say, but I felt like I was wrapped in the arms of God that night.

Though I felt a lot of emotions during this experience, I also learned that the Holy Ghost speaks to people in different ways. To this day, the Spirit gives me a pure knowledge of the truth. I know that God lives and loves us more than we can comprehend. He may not give us everything we want, but when we're ready, worthy, and faithful, He will answer our earnest and fervent prayers in the way and time He knows is best. **NE**

*Susan Stoffer lives in Wisconsin, USA.*

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN LUKE AND MATTHEW REIER



WHAT IF I  
DON'T FEEL A  
*Burning* IN THE  
Bosom?

*When you know what to look for, you can more easily recognize the Holy Ghost.*

By Rachel Nielsen

“Invite Mr. Wood\* to seminary.” The thought popped into my mind as soon as I heard the announcement, and I immediately thought it was crazy. Why would I invite my music teacher to come to seminary at 5:30 in the morning?

The seminary president had just told our class that we would be having a teacher appreciation day. We were challenged to invite some of our schoolteachers to join us for a morning of seminary where we would thank them for their service. The entire week after hearing this

announcement, I thought about inviting Mr. Wood. Every time I went to seminary or saw him in music class, the thought came back: “Invite Mr. Wood to seminary.” After several days of this, I couldn’t ignore the thought any longer.

One morning as all the students in music class were getting out their instruments, I put my trombone aside and approached Mr. Wood. My heart was pounding and my hands were shaking, but when I opened my mouth to extend the invitation, I felt comfort.

To my surprise, Mr. Wood said that he would come! He was curious about why I went to seminary every morning before school and wanted to learn more. After giving him all the details, I walked away full of joy.

During this experience, I didn’t feel a burning in the bosom (see D&C 9:8). But I did feel the Holy Ghost. The recurring thought to invite Mr. Wood (see D&C 128:1), the comfort I felt when I invited him (see John 14:26), and the joy I felt after I invited him (see Galatians 5:22) all came from the Spirit. But if I had been looking only

\* Name has been changed.

for a burning in the bosom, I might not have recognized when the Holy Ghost was prompting me.

The Holy Ghost speaks in many ways, and when you study how He communicates, you will know what to look for as you strive to recognize when He is with you and when He is teaching or directing you.

## LOOK FOR THE SMALL AND SIMPLE THINGS

Before looking at the many ways the Holy Ghost speaks to us, we need to remember that most often, revelation is quiet and small. If we are looking for an Alma-the-Younger experience with an angel and an earthquake, we may miss the more frequent and quieter promptings from the Holy Ghost. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles warns that if we “emphasize marvelous and dramatic spiritual manifestations,” we may overlook the “small and incremental spiritual impressions” that are more common.<sup>1</sup> As you try to recognize the Holy Ghost, look for the small and simple promptings.

## LOOK FOR WAYS THE HOLY GHOST COMMUNICATES

If you’ve never felt a burning in the bosom, don’t worry. There are many people who recognize the

influence of the Holy Ghost in this way, but He also speaks in many other ways too, and you don’t have to feel a burning in the bosom to feel His presence. In fact, as you learn the ways the Holy Ghost inspires you and look for them in your life, you may find that He is communicating with you more than you realized.

This list includes only a small number of ways that the Holy Ghost communicates. Study the scriptures and the words of modern-day prophets as well as pages 96–97 in *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004) to discover more ways that He can speak to you.

“The spirit of revelation typically functions as thoughts and feelings that come into our minds and hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost. (See D&C 8:1–2; 100:5–8.)”<sup>2</sup> The Holy Ghost can speak to you through:

- Feelings of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faith, meekness (see Galatians 5:22–23).
- Thoughts that occupy the mind or press on your feelings (see D&C 128:1).
- A desire to do good and obey the commandments (see Mosiah 5:2).
- A feeling that something is right (see D&C 9:8).
- Feelings of comfort (see John 14:26).
- Feelings that “enlarge [your] soul” (Alma 32:28).
- Thoughts that “enlighten [your] understanding” (Alma 32:28).
- A hunger for more truth (see Alma 32:28).
- Feeling constrained (encouraged) to take an action or restrained (held back) from doing something (see 1 Nephi 7:15; 2 Nephi 32:7).



### WHAT IS A BURNING IN THE BOSOM?

“What does a ‘burning in the bosom’ mean? Does it need to be a feeling of caloric heat, like the burning produced by combustion? If that is the meaning, I have never had a burning in the bosom. Surely, the word ‘burning’ in this scripture [D&C 9:8] signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity. That is the witness many receive. That is the way revelation works.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 13.



## *How Do I Know If a Thought Comes from Me or the Holy Ghost?*

“We have to act. Then we find out if it’s coming from me or if it’s the power of God. . . . Everything that invites and entices us to do good and to be good comes from God.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Patterns of Light: Discerning Light” (video), LDS.org. Watch the whole video at [lds.org/go/patternNE6](https://www.lds.org/go/patternNE6).

## HOW THESE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS CAN COME

*Thoughts and feelings from the Holy Ghost may come to:*

- Bring things to our remembrance (see John 14:26).
- Protect us from deception (see D&C 45:57).
- Testify of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ (see 2 Nephi 31:18).
- Help us teach (see D&C 84:85).
- Grant gifts of the Spirit (see D&C 46:11).
- Bring a remission of sins (see 2 Nephi 31:17).

*Thoughts and feelings from the Holy Ghost can come:*

- “Immediately and intensely.”
- “Subtly and gradually.”
- “So delicately that you may not even consciously recognize it.”<sup>3</sup>

Learn more about this by watching a video at [lds.org/go/revelationNE6](https://www.lds.org/go/revelationNE6).



THE SAVIOR BY JON MCNAUGHTON

## LOOK FOR THE GOOD

When you're trying to recognize the Spirit, think of the impression's intended outcome: does the thought or feeling lead you to do good? Moroni 7:16 says, "Wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said, "How do we recognize the promptings of the Spirit? I don't think that's too difficult, really. . . . Does it persuade one to do good, to rise, to stand tall, to do the right thing, to be kind, to be generous? Then it is of the Spirit of God. If it is dark, sinister, ugly, not good, then you may know that it is of the adversary."<sup>4</sup>

If you're wondering whether or not you're feeling the Spirit, ask yourself if the thought or the feeling is inviting you to do good. If it is, you can be assured that it is from God.

## LOOK FOR A CHANCE TO USE YOUR AGENCY

If you're worthy and you're still having a hard time recognizing the Holy Ghost, take action. Heavenly Father has blessed you with agency, and sometimes He will require you to act without His guidance. He will ask you to exercise your faith by

taking a step into the dark. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, "Somewhere in your quest for spiritual knowledge, there is that 'leap of faith.' . . . It is the moment when you have gone to the edge of the light and stepped into the darkness to discover that the way is lighted ahead for just a footstep or two."<sup>5</sup> If you faithfully act on the knowledge you already have, even without recognizing promptings from the Holy Ghost, Heavenly Father will make sure you don't go astray. **NE**

*Rachel Nielsen lives in Utah, USA.*

### NOTES

1. David A. Bednar, "The Spirit of Revelation," *Ensign*, May 2011, 88.
2. David A. Bednar, "The Spirit of Revelation," 88.
3. David A. Bednar, "The Spirit of Revelation," 90.
4. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 260–61.
5. Boyd K. Packer, "The Quest for Spiritual Knowledge," *New Era*, Jan. 2007, 6.



### WHY IS IT HARD TO RECOGNIZE THE HOLY GHOST?

"Our Father expects you to learn how to obtain that divine help by exercising faith in Him and His Holy Son, Jesus Christ. Were you to receive inspired guidance just for the asking, you would become weak and ever more dependent on Them. They know that essential personal growth will come as you struggle to learn how to be led by the Spirit."

**Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "To Acquire Spiritual Guidance," *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 7.**

## What Does the Spirit Feel Like?

"We do not have the words . . . which perfectly describe the Spirit" (Boyd K. Packer, "The Candle of the Lord," *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 52). Because it's hard to describe how the Spirit feels, everyone will describe it in a slightly different way. But regardless of these differences, we can learn a lot when others explain how the Holy Ghost speaks to them. Watch several people describe how they feel the Holy Ghost at [lds.org/go/feelNE6](https://www.lds.org/go/feelNE6).

By Krista Batts

*When I saw the danger my brother was in, I could hardly believe it. I was so grateful I'd listened to the Holy Ghost.*

I stared out the window as I washed my hands in the kitchen sink. It was a very warm summer day and the birds were singing. The sun was bright and the grass was green. I could see the little dirt road that ran down the hill past our house to the fields, which were flooded again. This happened all the time when the water was let into the canal so the farmers could water.

I was just about to return to my afternoon hideout in my room when I got a sudden feeling that I should go play with my brothers. And even though I couldn't hear them and I hadn't seen them for hours, somehow I knew they were outside playing in the water.

Now, I really like my brothers. Blake was 5, and Morgan was almost 4. And even though I enjoyed spending time with them, I didn't usually seek them out to play. But this time, I knew I needed to.

As I left the house, heading toward the flooded road and the ditch beyond, my main concern was that I didn't want to get wet. A small children's tricycle was sitting next to the road, so I used it like a scooter to begin my journey through the water.

The dirt road that led to the neighbor's field ran on top of a culvert, a drainage pipe that carried water underneath the road and let the water out into the ditch on the other side. As I was making my way toward the culvert, I heard yelling and instantly knew I had to get there fast! Abandoning the tricycle, I ran through the water to the ditch. As the water drained through the culvert, it made a whirlpool. It was an impressive sight. But when I saw my brothers, I gasped.

Morgan had been sucked in! Blake was standing on one side of the culvert's opening and Travis, our cousin who was the same age as Blake, was standing on the other side. The water was swirling around their legs and



each of them was grasping one of Morgan's hands. Only Morgan's head and arms were above water. Only the desperate grips of two small boys were keeping him from being swept into the culvert.

Morgan went under the water. Blake and Travis pulled with all their might and were able to bring him up just far enough that his head came out of the water again. Thoughts of confusion and panic were rushing through my head. The one thing I remember thinking was that it was going to be hard to pull Morgan out of the water, like pulling your foot out of mud that's halfway to your knees. But when I grabbed him and pulled, it was more like pulling a hot knife out of butter. He just slid out of the water.

The current from the whirlpool was so strong that it had pulled off Morgan's shoes and socks. I bundled him up in the other boys' shirts and laid him in a wagon and took him home.

After we got home and told Mom what happened, I went back down to the ditch to get Morgan's stuff. What I saw there made my heart stop. On the other end of the culvert was a grate that had been welded on. It was there to keep anything other than water from leaving the culvert. The grate was full of garbage, and nothing bigger than a leaf was getting through. Had Morgan been pulled into the culvert, he wouldn't have come out. He would have been stopped by that grate and drowned.

I know it was the Holy Ghost who gave me the impression to go play with my brothers that day, and it was because of the Holy Ghost that I knew where my brothers were. I'm thankful I have the Holy Ghost with me to help protect me and those I love. And I'm thankful I listened when I was inspired to go play with my brothers. **NE**

*Krista Batts lives in Idaho, USA.*



**LISTEN AND ACT**

"We watch. We wait. We listen for that

still, small voice. When it speaks, wise men and women obey. We do not postpone following promptings of the Spirit."

President Thomas S. Monson, "The Spirit Giveth Light," *Ensign*, May 1985, 68.

BROTHERS



# CAN YOU Taste THE Difference?

See what strawberries and service, lemons and lying have in common.

By David Dickson  
Church Magazines

Imagine that your favorite grocery store set up a blindfolded taste test to find out how many fruits someone can detect through taste and smell alone. How do you think you'd do?

Now imagine if your first bite were a strawberry. Could you identify it? What about an apple or a watermelon? Odds are, you'd get them right every time. Now pretend your next bite were a lemon wedge. You'd be able to name that one too, but you'd also spend the next few minutes getting over the sour flavor!

When it comes to fruits at the store,

we recognize easily which ones we like and which ones we want to avoid biting into. Similarly, we can learn to recognize and seek after the fruits of the Spirit and avoid situations or things that drive the fruits of the Spirit away.

## Different Fruits

The fruits of the Spirit are emotions or character traits we can detect as clearly as the flavor of a strawberry. The Apostle Paul listed them as follows: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (see Galatians 5:22–23).

As an example, how do you feel when you're doing a service project? Happy? Peaceful? Those are fruits of the Spirit. Through those fruits, the Holy Ghost is confirming that what you're doing is right.

On the other hand, how do you feel when you lie or when you argue and become angry? Anger and contention are *not* fruits of the Spirit. The Savior taught, "He that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil" (3 Nephi 11:29).

## Everyday Choices

Learning to recognize fruits of the Spirit can help us navigate daily life. For instance, when listening to a new song on the radio, you can ask: "Am I feeling fruits of the Spirit?" Does the song help you experience love, joy, peace, or goodness? Or, instead, does the song make

you uncomfortable and nervous? If it leaves you feeling uncomfortable, turn it off.

You're never going to mistake a lemon for a strawberry in a taste test. In the same way, you can learn to identify with confidence the fruits of the Spirit and then shape your thoughts and actions to seek after those fruits.

President Thomas S. Monson has taught: "Happiness comes from living the way the Lord wants you to live and from service to God and others" ("Preparation Brings Blessings," *Ensign*, May 2010, 67).

Seeking the fruits of the Spirit is a sweet way to live. **NE**



# UNBREAKABLE

**“We cannot break the Ten Commandments. We can only break ourselves against them.”**

(Cecil B. DeMille, American film director and producer, “Commencement Address” [Brigham Young University, May 31, 1957], 5; [speeches.byu.edu](https://speeches.byu.edu).)



**WHY**

**WE  
LOVE**

**BEING**

**LDS**

*If someone asked you why you think being a Latter-day Saint youth is awesome, how would you respond? Here's what several teens had to say.*

## GOOD FEELINGS

**DUSTIN B.** I get to feel the Spirit a lot.

**STETSONS.** There's so much to look forward to and so much hope that the gospel brings into our lives.

**BRYCE B.** I'm happy all the time.

**PARKER J.** With the gospel, you feel a lot of joy. You're just happy and you feel like this is the place where you need to be.

## FRIENDS

**DAVID L.** There's such a good group of friends, and I know I'm not going to be exposed to anything I'm not going to be comfortable around.

**DON J.** The ward provides a great support system.

**DYLAN N.** I have so many friends I've met through the ward.

**SAM A.** I think it's really neat that wherever I go in the world, I can find a Latter-day Saint Church building and I can make friends. I can be comfortable around them because they all share the same standards as I do.

**KYLEE W.** So many other people have the same high standards as you, and you can all be friends and enjoy the Church and the gospel and what it teaches you.

### Why Do You Love Being a Latter-day Saint?

What are some reasons you think it's awesome to be a member of the Church? Tell us by visiting [lds.org/go/awesomeNE6](https://lds.org/go/awesomeNE6).

## PERSPECTIVE

**CONNER L.** I know that I can turn to the gospel to be my light and that I can avoid many of the struggles that some of my friends are going through.



**SARAH B.** Because I know I'm a daughter of God, I'm not as affected by what other people think of me.



**ERIN P.** Whenever I have a trial or a hardship, I know it's sent to me for a reason and it's meant for me to become stronger.



**DALTON T.** I really love that we know where we're going—that everything doesn't just end at death. There is life after death, and we'll be able to see our loved ones again.



**KOLT C.** Knowing that your families can be together forever just makes life so much easier to go through.



## ACTIVITIES

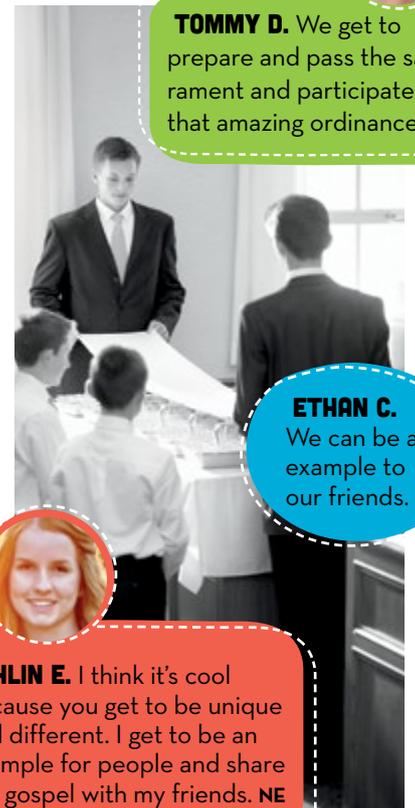


**CAMERON O.** Our dances are awesome because instead of pairing off like at other dances, everyone just enjoys it together. We're friends and we respect each other, so we have more fun because we can be goofy.

**TAYLOR P.** We have all these experiences like Young Women camp and youth conference where you get to learn a lot and build your testimony.



## OPPORTUNITIES



**TOMMY D.** We get to prepare and pass the sacrament and participate in that amazing ordinance.

**ETHAN C.** We can be an example to our friends.



**ASHLIN E.** I think it's cool because you get to be unique and different. I get to be an example for people and share the gospel with my friends. **NE**

# FINDING MY WAY BACK TO THE CHURCH



*I tried to find answers outside the gospel, but all I found was emptiness.*

By Doug Boyack

I was raised in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but in college I decided that I didn't need the Church anymore. I began a shallow, selfish search for "truth" in other places. Finding no answers that brought me peace or joy, I fell into a deep spiritual darkness. I felt that I would never be happy again.

However, I could still see that I had been happier when I was active in the Church. I began to go through the motions of Church activity, hoping to find some deliverance from the gloom that controlled my life. But my halfhearted efforts did not accomplish much. I focused on my studies, hoping they would distract me from the emptiness I felt. This helped temporarily, but it provided no real answer.

After stumbling around and realizing I was going nowhere, I decided to take a break from school and to travel. I had saved a little money but not enough to last very long. Before leaving, I resolved to exercise some real faith and pay tithing on my modest savings. This wasn't easy. I would be far from home, and soon I would be broke. Still, I hoped there was a God, and I knew that I would need His help.

I wrote a check for my tithing, sent it to my bishop, packed my Book of Mormon, and set off. Almost immediately I felt the warmth of the Spirit. I was amazed to feel my doubt and sorrow replaced with understanding and optimism. From Idaho to Washington, D.C., members of the Church reached out to me and, more

important, helped me to develop faith and righteous desires. It seemed like home was all around me.

After a short time, I knew I would be cutting my travels short—not for lack of money but because a much better journey awaited me. Returning home, I met with my bishop and stake president. With their help, I was soon serving the Lord as a missionary.

Now each time I pay my tithing or meet with Church leaders, I remember the "beginning" of my true conversion. Since then I have experienced ups and downs, but I have worked to remain spiritually strong. I will always be grateful for Heavenly Father's accepting my meager offering of faith and extending His loving arm to me. **NE**  
*Doug Boyack lives in California, USA.*

# A BLESSING for MY BROTHER

By Jesse Jones

I learned about the power and blessings of the priesthood at an unfortunate time. A few years ago, when my little brother was 14, he wrecked on his motorcycle and snapped his leg in half. My dad called and told me they were taking him to the hospital. I had a sick feeling in my stomach as I rushed to the hospital. When I got there, I saw one of my uncles. He told me how bad the accident was.

Fearing what I would see, I opened the door where my brother was and stepped into the room. I took one step, closed my eyes, and was instantly at peace. Just as I will never forget the sick feeling I had, I will never forget the feeling of peace and comfort that came over me. I recognized the feeling—it was the Spirit.

I then heard my father speaking. He and my uncle were giving my brother a priesthood blessing. He humbly blessed his son in the name of Jesus Christ to be OK, to heal, to have his leg work properly again.

After the blessing, everyone was quiet for a while. I knew at that moment that I had to live worthy to

receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and be able to perform blessings for my future children.

When we gathered in the hall outside my brother's room, my parents started to discuss what they should do. They debated whether to leave Mexico to take him to a doctor in the United States or to have the surgery performed here. Whatever option they felt was best for my brother, I knew he had already received the best attention he could receive. He had received a blessing by two men holding the priesthood, so no matter what my parents decided, my brother was going to be fine.

They decided to stay in Mexico for the operation. Doctors put a plate and 10 screws into my brother's leg. It healed well, and a few months later he joined a soccer team. The blessing was fulfilled just as my dad had said.

I know the priesthood is the power and authority of God given to men. What a great gift He has given us. **NE**

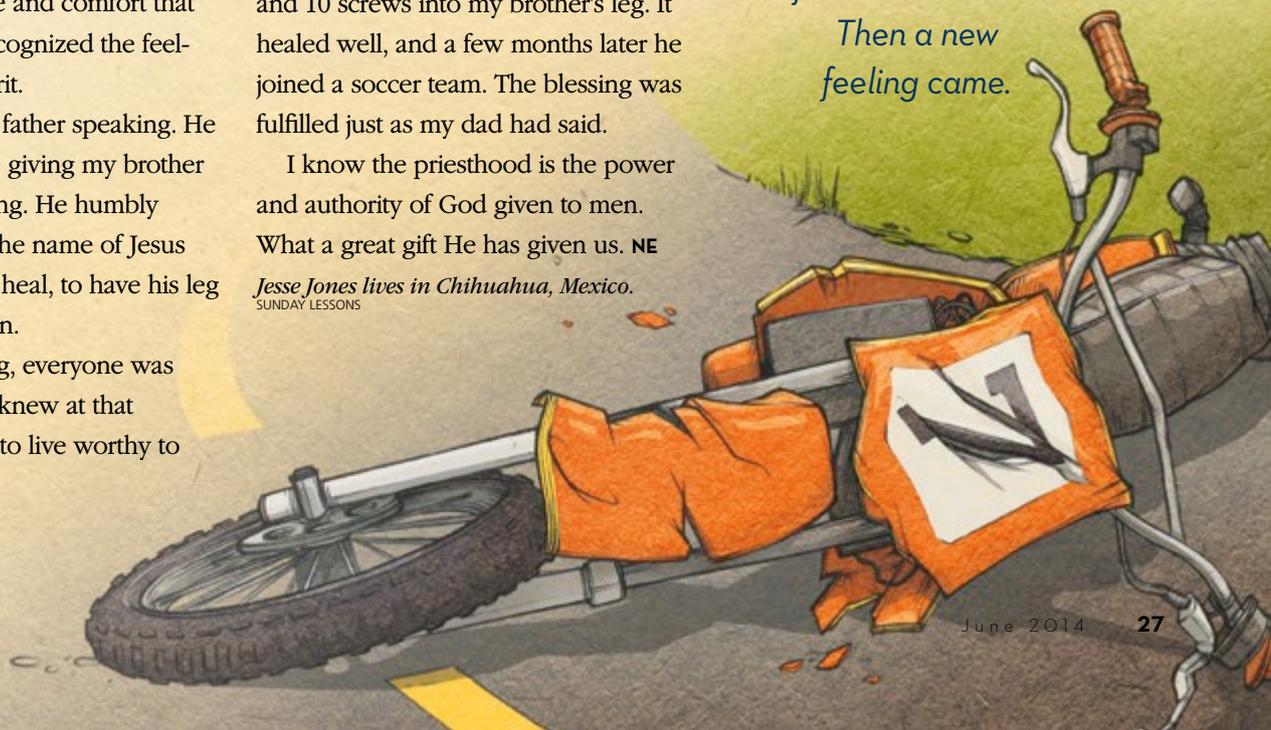
*Jesse Jones lives in Chihuahua, Mexico.*  
SUNDAY LESSONS



“When we receive the priesthood, we receive the authority to act in the name of God and lead in ways of truth and righteousness. This authority is a vital source of righteous power and influence for the benefit of God's children on earth and will last beyond the veil.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Doctrines and Principles Contained in the Articles of Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 47.

*After my brother's accident, I was afraid of what I would see. Then a new feeling came.*





# USING STORIES TO TEACH ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD

.....  
*How can you  
turn a simple  
story into a  
powerful  
teaching  
tool?*

By Heidi McConkie

Imagine this scenario: You join a group of friends who are eagerly digging into lunch and are engrossed in conversation. As you swirl a mouthful of spaghetti onto a plastic fork, your buddy Anton turns to you and asks, “So what makes Mormonism different from other Christian religions?”

As you pause to ponder his question, you feel prompted to share your knowledge of the priesthood. But you’re a little worried because you’re pretty sure that Anton has never heard anything about the priesthood before. You want to help him understand what it means for men to hold God’s power and show him how they use it to serve and bless others. But how do you do it? Well, you might share a story.

### WHY USE STORIES

Stories are a powerful way to teach. That’s one of the reasons the Savior shared parables—simple stories that the people He taught could relate to.

One of the benefits of teaching with stories is that it allows people to learn as much as they are spiritually ready to understand. For example, when Anton asks you about what makes the Church unique, if he is just curious, then your story will help him have a basic knowledge of what the priesthood is. But if he is really interested in learning about the gospel, pondering your story can become fulfilling and spiritually enlightening as he learns on a deeper level about how the priesthood works.

### WHAT STORIES TO USE

The best stories are short and simple. Don’t distract Anton with details that may be interesting but that don’t support what you’re trying to teach.

That’s not to say that the story has to be boring. Pick something that Anton will relate to. Suppose he loves to play basketball; he might enjoy a story about a boy who was injured while playing a sport and received a priesthood blessing. A good story like that will not only teach about the priesthood, but it will also capture his interest. The Spirit can guide you in selecting an appropriate story to share.

Be careful though. It can be tempting when sharing a

story to embellish the details or tell an experience from a friend of a friend that you don’t know is true. Make sure you’re honest in what you share.

### WHERE TO FIND STORIES

Whether you realize it or not, you’re probably a walking, talking collection of priesthood experiences. Have you been baptized and confirmed? Have you performed proxy ordinances in the temple? Have you received a blessing or been set apart for a calling? If so, you have a story to share.

It’s a great idea to write down your priesthood experiences as they occur. Later, you can refer back to your journal to find stories to share. Family history is another great resource—your ancestors may have had an experience that you could share. The scriptures and general conference are also great places to find stories. Who could forget about Moses parting the Red Sea? The priesthood makes waves. Literally.

As you collect stories, you’ll feel more prepared when opportunities to share the gospel arise. The Holy Ghost can help you recall what you’ve studied: “For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say” (D&C 100:6).

### WHEN TO TELL STORIES

Sharing your experiences doesn’t have to be scripted. Most of your opportunities to tell others about your experiences—regarding the priesthood or another gospel topic—will come in casual conversation with friends, just like the conversation with Anton.

The Holy Ghost can help you identify teaching moments and guide you to know whether to give a quick answer or to share a story. If you do choose to share a story with someone, be sure to start by providing background information and inviting him or her to look for certain principles. After sharing the story, ask what it means to your listeners instead of telling them. The purpose of sharing an experience isn’t to dominate a conversation or talk about yourself; effective priesthood stories teach others about the Savior and create opportunities for further conversations about the gospel.

## TWO GREAT EXAMPLES

Now that you know why it's important to share stories, let's look at two examples. The story below tells of an experience from one young woman's life. The story at the right is an example of a short and sweet priesthood experience shared in general conference, which is practically

exploding with fantastic stories on all kinds of gospel topics, including the priesthood.

Check out what makes each story great and discover tips for effectively sharing stories yourself.

*Heidi McConkie lives in Delaware, USA.*

1  
EXAMPLE

### HEALED FROM PAIN

1 "When I was young, I had an expander (an orthodontic appliance) in the top of my mouth. One day I developed an infection and my gums swelled up around it. I was in terrible pain, and neither the dentist nor the orthodontist knew what was wrong or how to fix it. All they could do while they tried to figure it out was to give me pain medicine. I stayed home sick from school and spent most of the time sleeping. Every time the medicine wore off, I woke up in pain and cried until the next dose of medicine kicked in.

2 "My mom asked my dad (a priesthood holder) to call one of our home teachers. He came over and helped my father give me a healing blessing. After

the blessing, the pain never woke me up from sleep again. The swelling went down and I was able to stop taking the pain medicine. When I went back to the dentist, he was astonished and still couldn't understand what had been wrong or how it healed. He was a member of our stake, so my mom told him I'd had a priesthood blessing, and then he understood why I was better.

"Ever since that experience, I've had a strong testimony of the true power of the priesthood. Whenever my testimony gets a little shaky, I can look back on this experience and remember what a real miracle it was. I know the Lord loves me and that it was His power that made me better."

Rachel M., Utah, USA



#### 1 GIVE SPECIFIC DETAILS

Notice that Rachel describes specifics from before the priesthood blessing; this will be important to show the contrast of the healing after the blessing.

#### 2 SPEAK TO YOUR AUDIENCE

If you were speaking with nonmembers, you'd want to tell a little more about what priesthood and home teacher mean.

#### 4 TESTIFY OF TRUTH

She concludes her story by sharing a simple but powerful testimony.

#### 3 DESCRIBE CAUSE AND EFFECT

She shares how she was healed by priesthood power. Notice how she explains that her recovery puzzled the dentist. This demonstrates that her healing was a result of the blessing and a gift from our Heavenly Father.

**1 FOCUS YOUR BEGINNING**

Did you notice how focused this is? When you're telling a story, just cut to the chase! Your listeners will appreciate it, and you'll help them know what to look for as they hear the story.

**2 SET THE STAGE**

Check out how this sentence sets the stage for the entire story without giving away the ending. That's classy storytelling.

**5 INVITE ACTION THROUGH DETAILS**

By showing how members of the quorum became actively involved, he helps listeners understand that the priesthood is a principle of action. He also gives ideas for how others can help in their quorums.

**2 EXAMPLE** **HELP IN A TIME OF CRISIS**

**1** "There are many ways bishops and quorum members can help to relieve the suffering and anxiety of the unemployed. Phil's Auto of Centerville, Utah, is a testament of what priesthood leadership and a quorum can accomplish. Phil was a member of an elders quorum and worked as a mechanic at a local automobile repair shop. Unfortunately, the repair shop where Phil worked experienced economic trouble and had to let Phil go from his job. He was devastated by this turn of events.

**2** "On hearing about Phil's job loss, his bishop, Leon Olson, and his elders quorum presidency prayerfully considered ways they could help Phil get back on his feet. After all, he was a fellow quorum member, a brother, and he needed help. They concluded that Phil had the skills to run his own business. One of the quorum members

**3** offered that he had an old barn that perhaps could be used as a repair shop. Other quorum members could help gather needed tools and supplies to equip the new shop. Almost everyone in the quorum could at least help clean the old barn.

"They shared their ideas with Phil; then they shared their plan with the members of their quorum. The barn was cleaned and renovated, the tools gathered, and all was put in order. Phil's Auto was a success and eventually moved to better and more permanent quarters—all because his quorum brothers offered help in a time of crisis.

**4** Priesthood quorums can and must make a difference."

**6** Bishop Richard C. Edgley, former First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, "This is Your Phone Call," *Ensign*, May 2009, 54.

**3 BALANCE DETAILS**

Now that's a great balance of details—enough to explain the situation but not so many as to distract the listeners from the main point of the story.

**4 BE CONCISE**

In just a couple of sentences, Bishop Edgley captures the essence of brotherhood in a priesthood quorum.

**6 DON'T OVERDO IT**

See how he points out the blessings that came through the priesthood. There's not dramatic fanfare or extra detail, but this story shares a powerful message.

**7 TIE IT ALL TOGETHER**

Bishop Edgley's closing ties the whole story together and reminds us of the main point of the experience.

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION**

- THINGS TO PONDER FOR SUNDAY**
- How has the priesthood blessed your life?
  - What experiences could you share with others to help them better understand the priesthood?

- THINGS YOU MIGHT DO**
- Write in your journal about an experience you've had that has strengthened your testimony of the priesthood.
  - Share your experience in family home evening, in church, or online at [lds.org/go/storyNE6](https://www.lds.org/go/storyNE6).

**THINGS I WILL DO**

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# COMING UNTO CHRIST

AS A QUORUM



## OUR INSTRUCTOR STOPPED THE VIDEO AND ASKED, “HOW MANY MEMBERS OF OUR QUORUM AREN’T HERE TODAY?”

By Caden Lundquist

Recently we had a lesson in teachers quorum, and our leader asked us, “What is a quorum?” I’d had lessons about this before, but this time I felt the Spirit telling me the message was important and I needed to listen and apply it.

We answered that a quorum is a group of priesthood holders who rely on each other and stick together. The instructor explained that quorum members have a responsibility to help and lift each other. He then showed us a video about a ward in Florida that started with just one young man who invited his friend, who then invited a friend, who then invited a cousin, etc., until there were 26 active young men in the ward.

Our instructor stopped the video and asked, “How many members of our quorum aren’t here today?” We listed six or seven. He asked if we had any idea why they weren’t at church. After we had given our answers, he asked, “Who has reached out to one

of these boys to ask why he doesn’t come or to let him know we miss him?” I raised my hand, thankful that I had just had a conversation with one of these quorum members in the past week. However, it struck me that I’d had the conversation with only one quorum member—not six or seven.

Our leader continued, “A quorum helps each other out, right? So then doesn’t it make sense that we would all want to help each other to be here and to be working toward the same goal of eternal life?” I really pondered that question, and I suddenly felt a responsibility, as president of my quorum, to get my missing quorum members back to church and activities.

We decided as a quorum to focus on helping each quorum member come unto Christ. I want to help them feel the happiness of participating in the gospel because I know that it brings me so much happiness. I felt prompted to put more time and energy into helping my quorum members—that’s my duty as a priesthood holder and quorum member. I also felt strongly that, as president of the quorum, I have priesthood keys for a reason. Heavenly Father trusts me to help my brothers.

I am thankful that the Spirit spoke to me so strongly and directly during the lesson. Now I’ve committed to act on the prompting I received to be a better leader, friend, and disciple of Christ. **NE**

*Caden Lundquist lives in Utah, USA.*

### HELP YOUR QUORUM

You can help quorum and class members feel welcome and comfortable by planning activities according to their interests and needs. Here are some things to consider as you reach out to your friends.

Who is missing?  
.....  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are their interests?  
.....  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do they need to know or feel?  
.....  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What’s your plan?  
.....  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Download more planning sheets at  
[lds.org/go/planNE6](https://lds.org/go/planNE6).



**See the Video**  
Watch the video mentioned in this story at [lds.org/go/FloridaNE6](https://lds.org/go/FloridaNE6).



# Lily's PERSONAL Progress

*Lily, a young woman with Down syndrome, is learning, serving, and growing through Personal Progress.*

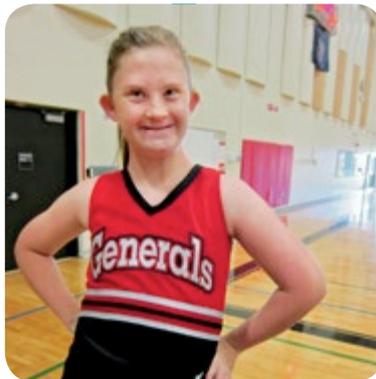
By Becky Young Fawcett

**L**ily S. of Utah, USA, had a busy ninth grade year. As a cheerleader, she participated in parades, football games, basketball games, and cheer camps and clinics. But the path to Lily's cheerleading career was not an easy one.

As soon as Lily found out about her junior high school's cheerleading tryouts, she knew she wanted to be a part of the team. For three weeks, Lily practiced with a former cheerleader to learn cheers and dance routines. She also spent hours making up her own cheer. After weeks of practice and a tough audition process, Lily made the team—and the Young Women Personal Progress program had helped.

Because of Personal Progress, Lily has participated in many activities where she learned to set goals and work hard to achieve them—skills that definitely helped her reach her cheerleading goals. Because of her Down syndrome, however, Lily sometimes needs to modify experiences and projects. The *Personal Progress* booklet says, “You may adapt experiences and projects according to your personal circumstances, interests, and needs with the prior approval of a parent, a Young Women leader, or another adult” ([2009], 7).

With the help of her parents and Young Women leaders, Lily is figuring out when and how to adapt Personal Progress to meet her needs. But whether a project is adapted or not, Lily, her parents, and her leaders make sure that every experience and project provides Lily with opportunities to grow.



Personal Progress helped Lily reach her cheerleading goals.



For a Virtue value experience, Lily learned the importance of being temple worthy.



Coloring pictures helps Lily to remember important scriptures.

### Remembering with Pictures

Because of her disability, Lily is unable to memorize scriptures or long passages. So, with the approval of her mom, Lily has decided to listen to an audio version of the scriptures instead and then color a picture that represents what she’s supposed to memorize. Then she discusses the importance of the verse with a parent or leader and hangs the picture where she can see it and remember what she learned.

Lily also colors pictures to remember scriptures that she reads but doesn’t need to memorize. For Virtue value experience number three, Lily and the other young women in her ward read Alma chapter 5 together and talked about being worthy to enter the temple. Lily colored a picture of the Salt Lake Temple to remember what she learned. “I know I can go to the temple,” she says. “I like doing baptisms for the dead.”

### *Serving Her Neighbor*

Lily is also able to complete many Personal Progress experiences and projects without adapting them. For example, one of the value experiences for Good Works is to spend three hours serving outside of your family. For this project, Lily and her mom cleaned up a neighbor's yard. After completing the project, Lily felt stronger. She says, "It was hard work and I was happy when it was over, but I am glad that I did it!"

Lily was also able to serve when she completed her Divine Nature value project. For this project, she decided to babysit for free so that a couple could attend the temple the day before their child with Down syndrome underwent a major medical procedure.

Lily's mom took Lily to the family's house and stayed with Lily while the parents were gone. "I was a little scared at first," says Lily, "but then I started playing with the kids, and they were really nice."

After Lily spent the evening playing with the children, she got them in their pajamas, helped them brush their teeth and hair, and read them a bedtime story. Lily's mom sat back and read a book, letting Lily do her job. Through this experience, Lily learned about service and about caring for and interacting with others. "I felt happy after I babysat. I learned I could do something I hadn't tried before."

*"It helps me      it helps me      and it helps me*  
**SERVE... READ, LEARN"**



For Lily's Individual Worth value project, she swam in Special Olympics.



For Young Women in Excellence, Lily displayed her Special Olympics medals.

### *Understanding Her Worth*

At a Young Women in Excellence event in her ward, Lily was recognized for completing her Individual Worth value project. For this project, Lily participated in Special Olympics. She competed in three track-and-field events and three swimming events. She worked very hard to prepare for her competitions and learn the proper techniques.

When Lily first started learning how to throw a rubber javelin for a track-and-field event, it was a bit tricky. But Lily practiced hard, and when the day of the event came, Lily was not nervous at all because she knew just what to do. When the results came in, Lily earned the gold medal!

Lily's participation in Special Olympics helped her learn that she can do hard things, that she can develop her talents, and that she has great worth.



### *A Program for Progress*

Through Personal Progress, Lily is learning to cook and handle money, and she is also learning the importance of going to church, reading her scriptures, saying her prayers, and going to the temple. “It’s a good program,” Lily says. “It helps me serve people, it

helps me read, and it helps me learn.”

Former Young Women general president Elaine S. Dalton taught something similar: “Personal Progress is not a program that is separate and apart from your life. It is a tool that you can use to draw closer to Heavenly Father and our Savior, serve

others, be anxiously engaged in good works, learn leadership skills, develop relationships with others, and prepare for temple covenants” (“Introduction to Personal Progress,” *New Era*, Sept. 2011, YW1). This is true for all young women, including Lily. **NE**

*Becky Young Fawcett lives in Utah, USA.*



## *Tips* FOR ADAPTING PERSONAL PROGRESS

The *Personal Progress* booklet says, “You may adapt experiences and projects according to your personal circumstances, interests, and needs with the prior approval of a parent, a Young Women leader, or another adult” ([2009], 7). If you need to adapt Personal Progress, here are some things to think about.



- Remember that each project and experience is different. Consider each requirement individually to decide if it will work with your personal circumstance.
- Rather than focusing on what you can’t do, think about things you can do or things you would like to learn.
- Before adapting an experience or project, consider whether you might be able to complete the requirement described in the *Personal Progress* booklet with the help of a friend, family member, or leader.
- Counsel with your parents and leaders to help them understand your talents and abilities as well as areas where you want to learn and grow.
- If you need to adapt a project, focus on the skills or traits that the experience or project is trying to help you develop. Ask yourself, “What should I be learning from this, and what can I do to learn this?” Then be creative in identifying projects that would give you similar experiences.
- Get approval from either your parents or leaders before you adapt an experience or project.
- Be creative. What things do you love doing? What are your gifts? Form your experiences and projects around those things so you are doing something you enjoy and are able to accomplish.
- Be aware that many Church materials are available in accessible formats such as audio and large print. See [lds.org/disability/materials](http://lds.org/disability/materials) to learn more.



By Elder  
Anthony D. Perkins  
Of the Seventy

# Tithing Provides INNER STRENGTH

*Decide now to pay an honest tithe. Doing so will help you learn that the Lord keeps His promises.*

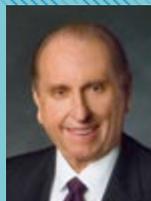
**P**resident Thomas S. Monson teaches that “the honest payment of tithing provides a person the inner strength and commitment to comply with the other commandments.”<sup>1</sup> I was fortunate to gain a testimony of this principle while still a young man.

When I was 14 years old, I began my first job, earning 2 U.S. dollars per hour as a construction laborer. The paycheck for my first week totaled 80 dollars. I wanted to buy an eight-track tape stereo, which was the newest music technology at the time. The full-function model I wanted cost 320 dollars. I excitedly shared with Mom and Dad my intent to purchase the stereo after completing four weeks of work.

## More Than Four Weeks

My parents wisely taught, “It will take more than four weeks to earn enough money to buy that music player. You should express gratitude

to God for His many blessings by paying 10 percent of your income as tithing. You will need to pay the government about 10 percent in taxes. And you should learn while young to obey the counsel of prophets in preparing financially for the future, including your mission; we suggest you set aside 30 percent of your earnings in a savings account.”



### HE WILL OPEN A WAY

“All of us can afford to pay tithing. In reality, none of us can afford not to pay tithing. The Lord will strengthen our resolve. He will open a way to comply.”

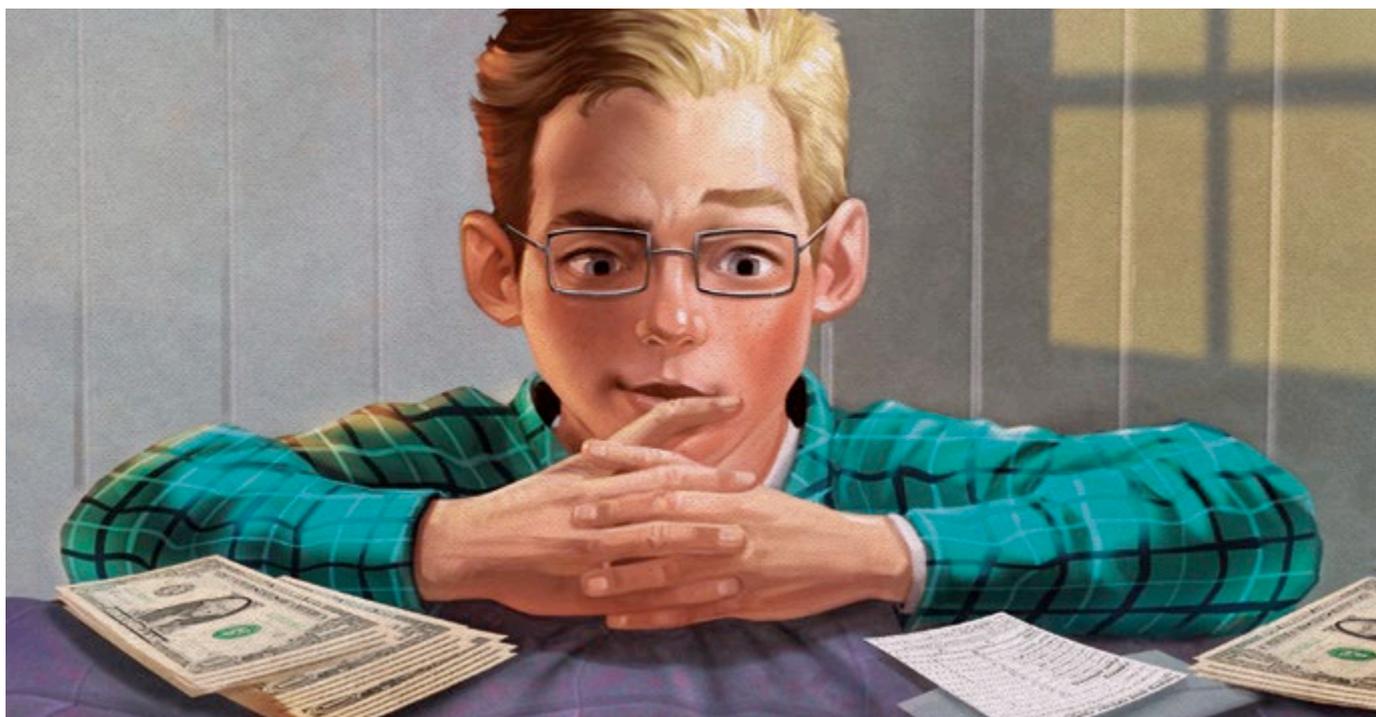
President Thomas S. Monson, “Be Thou an Example,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 44.

My teenage mind quickly calculated that if I did as my parents taught, I would have only 40 dollars each week to spend, which meant I would have to work at least two months to purchase my desired stereo. I found myself at a critical decision point—would obtaining material possessions be my priority, or would I sacrifice to pay tithing and set aside savings?

## Pay Tithing First

*For the Strength of Youth* counsels: “Pay [tithing] first, even when you think you do not have enough money to meet your other needs. Doing so will help you develop greater faith, overcome selfishness, and be more receptive to the Spirit.”<sup>2</sup>

I decided at age 14 to pay an honest tithing for the remainder of my life. I determined to follow the prophet in saving money for my mission and future education. This experience also taught me to distinguish between wants and needs. I wanted the newest



technology, but I did not need it. So I decided to buy a much less expensive model with fewer functions, and it was still performing well when I left on my mission.

### Promises Kept

As I learned through paying tithing that the Lord keeps His promises, my faith grew stronger and so did my desire to keep His other commandments. I learned that if I contributed a generous fast offering, He would answer my prayers and guide me continually (see Isaiah 58:6–11). I learned that if I read the Book of Mormon, He would manifest the truth of it to me by the power of the Holy Ghost (see Moroni 10:4–5). I learned that if I obeyed the Word of Wisdom, He would give me health, wisdom, and knowledge and that I could “run and not be weary” (see D&C 89:18–21). And I learned that if I kept the law of chastity, the Holy Ghost could be my constant

companion and the Savior would give me confidence to one day stand unashamed in His presence (see D&C 121:45–46).

Another way paying tithes and offerings has increased my inner strength is through temple covenants. *For the Strength of Youth* teaches, “In order to enter the temple, you must be a full-tithe payer.”<sup>3</sup> When I enter the holy temple, I feel God’s presence and His love. I testify that in temple ordinances, we receive “power from on high” (D&C 95:8) to cheerfully meet and overcome the challenges of mortality.

### A Blessing in Store

Paying tithes and offerings has increased my faith that the Lord fulfills His promises. Through the prophet Malachi, He declared, “Bring ye all the tithes . . . and prove me now herewith, . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there

shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10).

Throughout my life, even during financial trials early in my marriage, God always opened the windows of heaven so that our family received the temporal necessities of life. I testify that through obedience to the law of tithing, your faith will grow into a great source of strength in your life.

I invite each youth—and every member—to hearken unto Jesus Christ and His prophets by paying a full tithe and a generous fast offering throughout your life. I promise that the Lord will strengthen you and prosper you in accomplishing your righteous desires according to His holy purposes. **NE**

#### NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Be Thou an Example,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 44.
2. *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 38.
3. *For the Strength of Youth*, 38.

# Be Calm

By Jeffrey R. Moss

*I learned an important lesson when I crashed my bike.*

It was my second week in the mission field. I was fresh out of the missionary training center, ready and willing to face anything that came my way.

One night we rode our bikes along a slightly icy road and then came to some trolley tracks that were part of the road. My companion made it past them, but by the time he looked back to warn me, it was too late. My bike tire caught in the track, and I flew off my bicycle and slid about three feet.

I panicked. I knew I'd been hurt, so I checked my head, my arms, my knees—all were sore. Then I checked my face and discovered that some of my teeth had been knocked out. I sat on a cold, dark street wondering why this happened to me. What had I done wrong? Did the Lord not want me to serve? Questions and concerns raced through my mind as my companion sat by me and offered words of comfort. Nothing seemed to help.

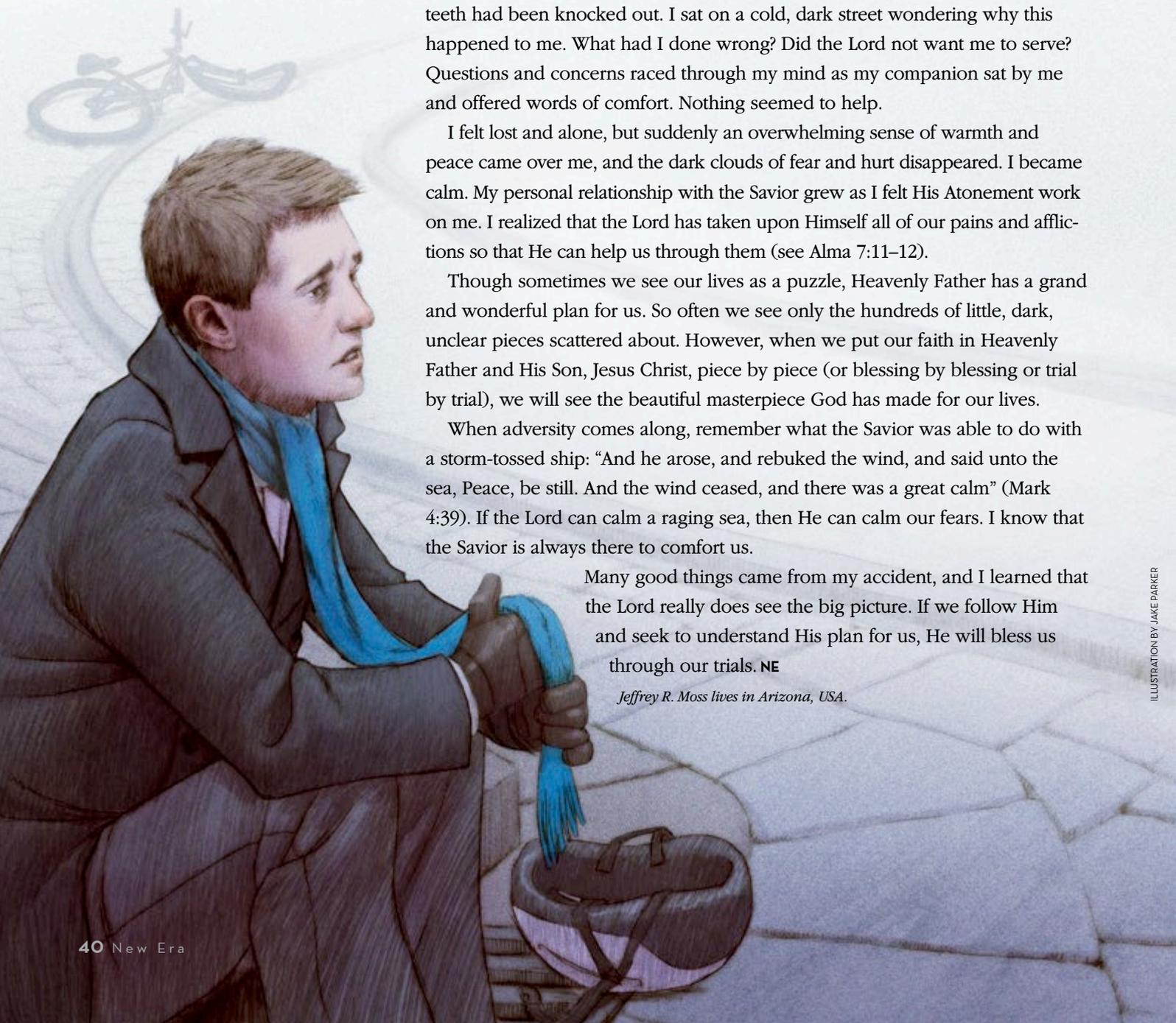
I felt lost and alone, but suddenly an overwhelming sense of warmth and peace came over me, and the dark clouds of fear and hurt disappeared. I became calm. My personal relationship with the Savior grew as I felt His Atonement work on me. I realized that the Lord has taken upon Himself all of our pains and afflictions so that He can help us through them (see Alma 7:11–12).

Though sometimes we see our lives as a puzzle, Heavenly Father has a grand and wonderful plan for us. So often we see only the hundreds of little, dark, unclear pieces scattered about. However, when we put our faith in Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, piece by piece (or blessing by blessing or trial by trial), we will see the beautiful masterpiece God has made for our lives.

When adversity comes along, remember what the Savior was able to do with a storm-tossed ship: “And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm” (Mark 4:39). If the Lord can calm a raging sea, then He can calm our fears. I know that the Savior is always there to comfort us.

Many good things came from my accident, and I learned that the Lord really does see the big picture. If we follow Him and seek to understand His plan for us, He will bless us through our trials. **NE**

*Jeffrey R. Moss lives in Arizona, USA.*





My parents and others have **offered to pay the full cost** of my mission, so I don't need to save any of my own money, right?

It is good and honorable for parents or other family members to sacrifice to help pay the cost of young people's missions. Nevertheless, Church leaders have encouraged missionaries to work and sacrifice to pay for at least part of their missions themselves. For instance, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, "Prospective missionaries . . . ought to have a job and save money for their missions. Every mission president would concur with me that the missionary who has worked and saved and helped pay for part or all of his or her mission is a better-prepared missionary" ("How to Prepare to Be a Good Missionary," *New Era*, Mar. 2007, 9).

As you pray and counsel with your parents and priesthood leaders about this question, rather than thinking of how little you need to do, perhaps it would be best to think of how much you're able to do to help finance your mission. **NE**

## Who will be on the earth during the Millennium, and what will they be doing?

The Millennium is the 1,000-year period of peace and righteousness following the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, who will reign over the earth during that time (see Articles of Faith 1:10).

Those remaining on the earth during the Millennium will be the good people

of the earth—those who were righteous and just, regardless of their religion. This includes those who will be on the earth at the time of the Second Coming as well as those who will be resurrected at that time and other times throughout the Millennium. The wicked will not remain on

the earth and will not be resurrected until after the Millennium.

So, what will people do during these 1,000 years? We know that a main focus will be to continue the work of salvation—helping people come unto Christ. Church members will share the gospel with those remaining who have not received it in its fulness. Family history and temple work will be especially important and will link the

entire family of man all the way back to Adam and Eve.

A thousand years is a long time, so it's safe to assume that people will likely do a wide variety of things that are "virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy" (Articles of Faith 1:13) but that have not necessarily been mentioned in any of the revelations. For more on the Millennium, see *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 103–4. **NE**



## The Priesthood

You'll be studying about the priesthood in your Sunday classes and quorums this month. As you study and discuss the priesthood, you may ponder these questions: How does the priesthood bless all of us? Where does priesthood authority come from? How does priesthood power become active in our lives?

To find some answers to these questions and learn more about the priesthood, see recent conference talks by Elders Dallin H. Oaks ([lds.org/go/priesthoodNE6](http://lds.org/go/priesthoodNE6)) and Neil L. Andersen ([lds.org/go/powerNE6](http://lds.org/go/powerNE6)) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Give yourself an easy reminder to prepare for your Sunday lessons on the priesthood. Just place these cards in your scriptures, locker, or bedroom. You can also download or share them online at [lds.org/go/cardsNE6](http://lds.org/go/cardsNE6).

BACKGROUND TEXTURES BY ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK



*We*  
**CAN ALL ENJOY  
 THE FULL BLESSINGS**  
*of*  
**PRIESTHOOD POWER**  
*through*  
**KEEPING THE COVENANTS  
 WE HAVE MADE**  
*at*  
**BAPTISM AND IN THE TEMPLE.**

Bonnie L. Oscarson  
Young Women general president  
March 2014 General Women's Meeting



DIRECT WOMEN AS  
WELL AS MEN,  
AND



AND

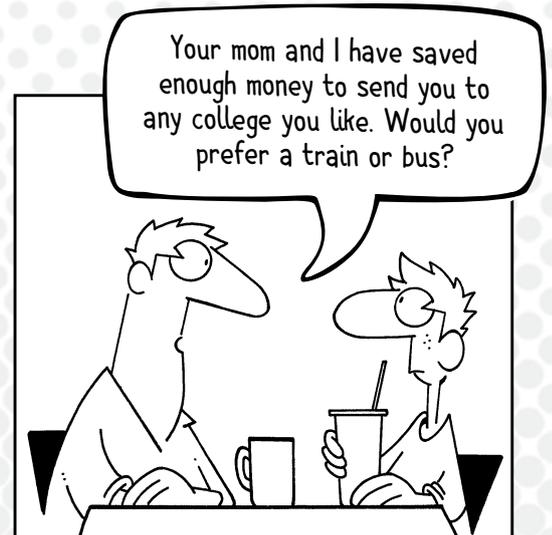
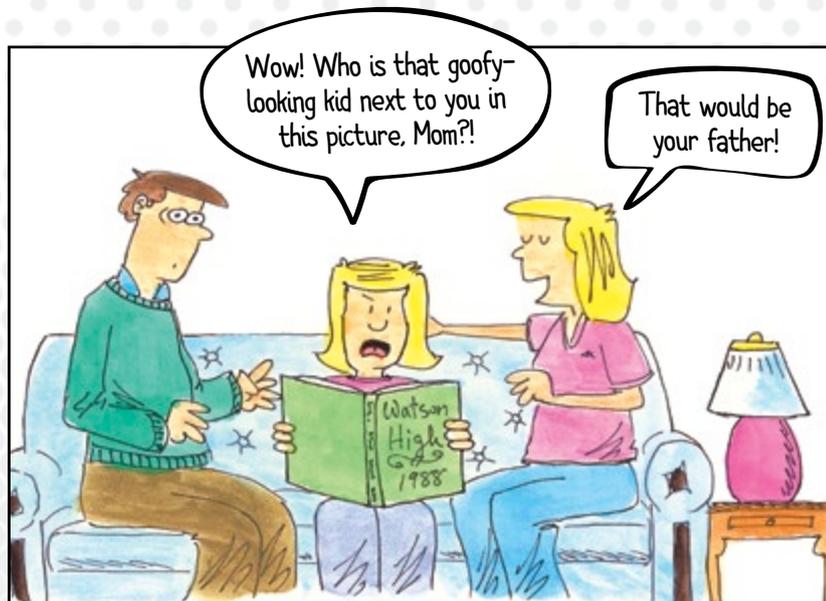


PERTAIN TO WOMEN  
AS WELL AS MEN.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles  
April 2014 general conference

**ALL KEYS**  
*— of the —*  
**PRIESTHOOD**  
*are held by the*  
**LORD**  
**JESUS CHRIST,**  
*whose priesthood*  
*— it is. —*

Elder Dallin H. Oaks  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles  
April 2014 general conference



# “What am I supposed to think about during the sacrament?”

**A**lthough we stand as witnesses of Jesus Christ at all times, in all things, and in all places (see Mosiah 18:9), sometimes the influences in the world around us compete for our attention. The sacrament gives us a chance to focus our thoughts on the Savior without distractions.

During the sacrament, you can think about the meaning and beauty of the ordinance. Partaking of the tokens of the Savior’s body and blood can help you reflect on His infinite and atoning sacrifice. When you take the sacrament, you are renewing your baptismal covenant. As you do so, you can recommit yourself to always remember Him and keep His commandments.

You can improve your sacrament experience by preparing yourself spiritually. During the week, consider studying general conference talks or passages of scripture that help you focus on the Savior’s sacrifice and your own discipleship. During the sacrament hymn and prayers, focus on the words you sing and hear, and contemplate their meaning.

During the sacrament, take time to think about the changes you are making in your personal life to become more like Jesus Christ. After partaking of the sacrament worthily, you can feel clean and pure, just as you did on your baptism day. **NE**

## Turn Your Thoughts to the Atonement

During the sacrament, my thoughts turn to Jesus Christ and His Atonement. It is difficult for me to express how I feel during the sacrament when I think about the Atonement of Jesus Christ. I know that Jesus Christ was chosen to be our Redeemer. I know He lives.

*Nephi B., 20, Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo*

## Think of Jesus Christ



During the sacrament I think about what the Savior went through so we can repent of the mistakes we have made.

I also think of all the blessings He has given me and of the amazing miracles He has performed and will perform. We are so blessed to be able to partake of the sacrament so that we can repent of our sins and commit to do better.

*Andee B., 13, Utah, USA*

## Ponder the Words of Sacrament Hymns



The sacrament hymns teach what we should think about during the sacrament. For example, my favorite sacrament

hymn, “In Humility, Our Savior” (*Hymns*, no. 172), says, “Let me not forget, O Savior, / Thou didst bleed and die for me / When thy heart was stilled and broken / On the cross at Calvary.” Remembering the words of sacrament

hymns during this sacred ordinance helps me feel peace and increases my gratitude for Jesus Christ's Atonement.

*Austin B., 15, Alberta, Canada*

### Remember and Recognize

The purpose of the sacrament is to renew our covenants with our Heavenly Father and to be washed clean of the sins we have repented of. During the sacrament, we remember Christ's sacrifice for us and ponder how we are applying it in our lives. I try to think about what I have done during the past week and how well I have kept my covenants with my Father. I recognize the sins I have committed and focus on how I can use the Atonement to overcome them. When I do this, the sacrament is an uplifting and spiritually strengthening experience.

*Abigail P., 14, Arizona, USA*

### Keep Your Mind from Wandering



I have a little card tucked inside my scriptures that I pull out every Sunday during the sacrament. It's bookmarking Mosiah 18, where Alma sets forth the baptismal covenant. The card has little notes, such as "Be grateful for the Atonement," written on it to help me remember the purpose and holiness of the sacrament. Reviewing the notes helps me keep my mind focused on the purpose and sanctity of the sacrament.

*Alisha M., 19, Texas, USA*

### Give Thanks for Blessings



During the sacrament we should think about how great the sacrifice was that our Savior made for us and have our hearts full of gratitude. When I take the sacrament, I like to thank Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, for the blessings I have received.

*Elen S., 16, Paraíba, Brazil*

### Remember the Last Supper



We should think about the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the importance of partaking worthily of the symbols of His body and His blood. We can also think about the time when He blessed the bread and wine with His Twelve Apostles.

*Jonás A., 18, Morelos, Mexico*

### Reflect on Your Covenants

When I was younger, the only thing I thought about during the sacrament was



### SET ASIDE THE WORLD

"When I was a child, beautiful music was played during the passing of the

sacrament. The Brethren soon asked us to stop that practice because our minds were centered on the music rather than on the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Savior. During the administration of the sacrament, we set aside the world. It is a period of spiritual renewal as we recognize the deep spiritual significance of the ordinance offered to each of us personally. If we were to become casual in partaking of the sacrament, we would lose the opportunity for spiritual growth."

**Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "As Now We Take the Sacrament," *Ensign*, May 2006, 41.**

how I could be quiet. Now that I am a priesthood bearer, I understand that for the sacrament to have meaning and help me grow spiritually, I need to reflect during it. I think about the Savior's Atonement and how He showed love for us. I also think about how taking the sacrament can strengthen my faith and desire to fulfill my baptismal covenant.

*Levi F., 19, Abia, Nigeria*

## UPCOMING QUESTION

"One of my friends wants to **try** something bad **just once**. How can I help her understand that's **not a good idea?**"

Send your answer and photo by July 15, 2014.

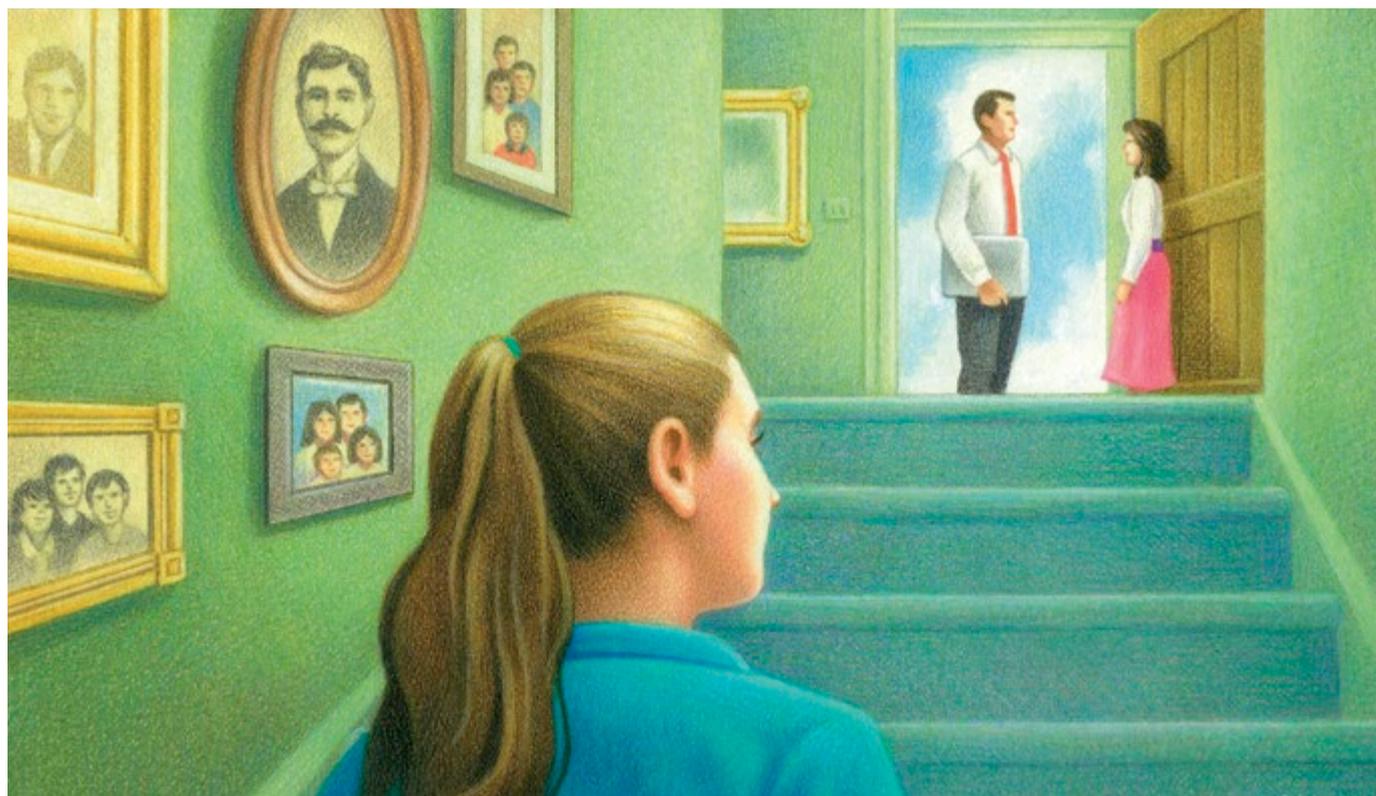
Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org), click "Submit Your Work," sign in with your LDS Account, and then select "New Era."

You can also write to us at [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org) or

New Era, Q&A, just once  
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

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



## 400+ NAMES FOR THE TEMPLE

“**M**addie! Come upstairs! Brother Eldredge is here to teach you how to find a name!”

I groaned. Ever since our ward made a goal for all of the youth to find a name to take to the temple, I was trying to stay under the radar. I trudged upstairs. Brother Eldredge helped me log in and showed me how FamilySearch worked. As he showed me how simple it was to search and find names, a thought came to me that maybe doing FamilySearch wasn't all that bad. Brother Eldredge finished helping me and then left.

I kept going through the steps, and within 15 minutes I had found and reserved a family name. At that moment, a feeling of comfort washed over me, and I felt as though I had been given a big hug. But I didn't stop there. I wanted to find more, so I did. Within the next hour, I had found 20 names. With every name I found, I felt the presence of someone new. That night, as I said my prayers, I knew that I was doing a great work.

The next day was a holiday from school, and I was bored. A little thought came into my mind that I should start using FamilySearch. With that thought in mind, I said a prayer

and then searched for names for a good three hours. By the end of the day, I had 130 names. Over the course of the next few weeks, I took an hour here and there to find names. It became a habit. After about two months, I had a little over 400 names. It wasn't something I wanted to make a big deal about. I did it because I felt like I was doing something good and something for my ancestors. Doing family history became a blessing. I think everyone should do it.

**Madison L., Utah, USA**

## “DO YOU LOVE ME?”

**A**t the age of 14, I moved from the Bay Area of California, USA, to St. George, Utah.

Traveling to a different state started as an exciting adventure, but once my family arrived and I started attending a new school, I quickly became lonely. My loneliness led to very unhealthy thoughts and feelings. I began to question whether my family loved me and even thought of suicide.

One Sunday I was really struggling and was wondering if there was even such a thing as love in the world. At church that same Sunday, my father spoke in sacrament meeting and told the congregation that if they had a question—any question at all—then

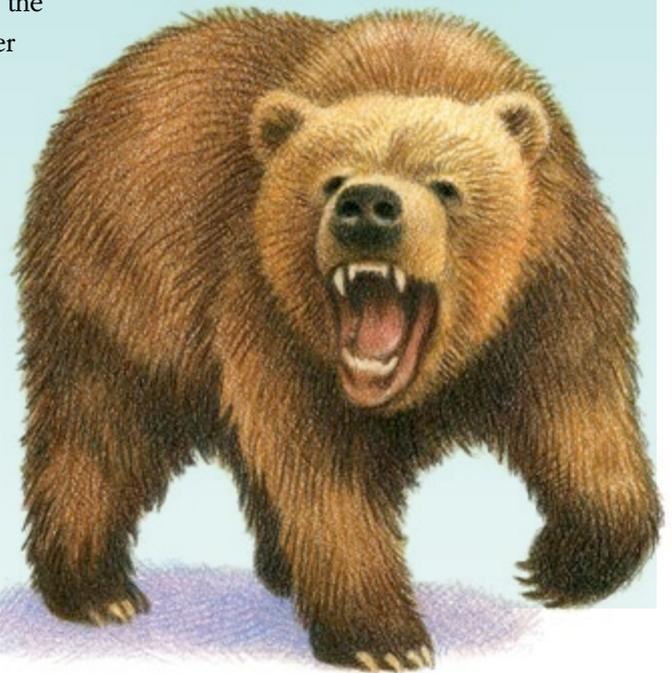
## SAVED BY A PROMPTING

I was feeling down one day at Young Women camp, so I decided to sit in the wooded arena where we gathered for skits. I sat there for about 10 minutes when I had the sudden thought to leave and go back to my cabin. At first, I ignored the idea and just remained where I was. The longer I sat, the more uneasy I felt, and the stronger the urge to go became.

Finally, I obeyed the prompting. I walked back up to my cabin and hung out with a few of my friends and some of the cabin leaders. Not more than 10 minutes later, everyone was forced to enter the cabins because there was a grizzly bear in the area. We found out later that the bear was spotted in the same place I'd been sitting moments earlier. I was so relieved that I had been prompted to move and that I had obeyed

the prompting. I knew the Lord was watching over me. Then and there I could feel the love that God has for me. I knew that He knew me, and that was such a relief, especially since I had been feeling so sad earlier.

**Meghan M., California, USA**



they could ask God and He would give them an answer. That night, I humbly prayed before Heavenly Father as I never had done before. I told Him how lonely and sorrowful I was and told Him that I felt hopeless.

At this time, I felt that I only needed one question answered: “Heavenly Father, do You love me?” Although it seemed difficult to put this question in

my prayer, I asked, desiring to know the truth with every beat of my heart. The answer came through the Spirit, and an overwhelming feeling of calm and peace filled my soul. To this day I cannot explain the depth of Heavenly Father's love that I felt that night. Knowing that God loves me unlocked my testimony of everything else.

**Christopher B., Utah, USA**



By President  
Henry B. Eyring  
First Counselor in  
the First Presidency

## HOW TO RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST

With all of our uniqueness, we all have some things in common. We are all in the probationary test of mortality. And, wherever we live, that test will become increasingly difficult.

The key for each of us will be to accept and hold the gift we have been promised by God. After you were baptized, authorized servants of God promised you that you could receive the Holy Ghost. The Lord also promised that those who have accepted the gift of the Holy Ghost in their lives would not be deceived (see D&C 45:56–59).

Most of you have felt the effects of that promise being fulfilled in your lives. You have felt the quiet confirmation in your heart and mind that something was true. And you knew that it was inspiration from God. You

feel peace, hope, and joy when it speaks to your heart and mind that something is true.

Now, if you and I were visiting alone (I wish we could be), where you felt free to ask whatever you wanted to ask, I can imagine your saying something like this: “Oh, Brother Eyring, I’ve felt some of the things you have described. The Holy Ghost has touched my heart and mind from time to time. But I will need it consistently if I am not to be overcome or deceived. Is that possible?”

It will not be easy. But it is possible.

There will be at least three requirements. First, **have faith** in our Heavenly Father and in His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Second, **be clean**. Third, **have pure motive**. If you want to receive the gifts of the Spirit, you have to want them for the right reasons. Your purposes must be the Lord’s purposes.

The path to receiving the Holy Ghost is to exercise faith in Christ unto repentance. We can **become clean through** qualifying for the effects of **the Savior’s Atonement**.

The covenants offered in baptism by authorized servants of God bring that cleansing. We renew our pledge to keep those covenants each time we **partake of the sacrament**. And the peace we all seek is the assurance that we have received forgiveness for our sins of omission or commission.

The Savior is the One who has been given the right to grant that

forgiveness and to give that assurance. If you have difficulty in feeling the Holy Ghost, you might wisely **ponder** whether there is anything for which you need to **repent and receive forgiveness**.

If you have felt the influence of the Holy Ghost, you may take it as evidence that the Atonement is working in your life. For that reason and many others, you would do well to **put yourself in places** and in tasks **that invite the promptings of the Holy Ghost**. Feeling the influence of the Holy Ghost works both ways: the Holy Ghost only dwells in a clean temple, and the reception of the Holy Ghost cleanses us through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. You can **pray with faith** to know what to do to be cleansed and thus qualified for the companionship of the Holy Ghost and the service of the Lord. And with that companionship you will be strengthened against temptation and empowered to detect deception. **NE**

*Adapted from a Church Educational System fireside given on September 10, 2006.*



### Share Your Experiences

Share *your* experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other teens by going to [lds.org/go/receiveNE6](https://lds.org/go/receiveNE6).

PURE

*Christlike*

LOVE

FLOWING

FROM

TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS

CAN

*change the world.*

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles  
April 2014 general conference

## WHAT'S ONLINE



### RECOGNIZING THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT

You'd never expect to learn a foreign language in a day or without time, study, and practice. And learning to understand the language of the Spirit is no different. Sister Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, shares nine ways to help us recognize the voice of the Spirit in our lives at [lds.org/go/SpiritNE6](https://lds.org/go/SpiritNE6). Learn more in pages 2-22 inside this issue as well.



### AN ANSWERED PRAYER

Actor. Comedian. Monk. François Virely of France had many different experiences, but he still wasn't happy. That all changed when he came across the joyful, smiling faces in the profiles on [mormon.org](https://mormon.org). He prayed to meet people from the LDS Church and received an overwhelming response. Want to know what happened? Watch [lds.org/go/prayerNE6](https://lds.org/go/prayerNE6).

## CHOOSE TO FOLLOW CHRIST



What are you doing to come unto Christ? The choices you make every day can help you come unto Him and understand the Atonement better. Watch youth around the world share their testimonies as they talk about how they're coming unto Christ at [lds.org/go/comeNE6](https://lds.org/go/comeNE6).

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
 OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS