

MARCH 2016

THE

New Era

Testimonies of CHRIST

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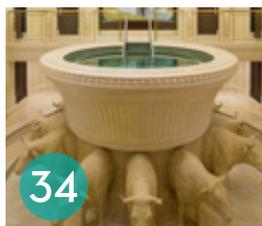
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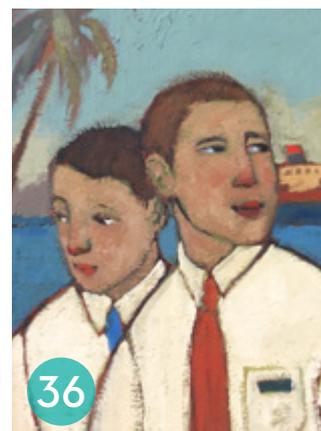
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By Elder
M. Russell Ballard

Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

Our Savior's ATONEMENT

*If we could truly understand the Atonement of the Lord
Jesus Christ, we would realize how precious is one
son or daughter of God.*

In January 2004 our family suffered the tragic loss of our grandson Nathan in an airplane crash. Nathan had served in the Russian-speaking Baltic Mission. He loved the people and knew it was a privilege to serve the Lord. Three months after I officiated at his eternal marriage to his sweetheart, Jennifer, this accident took his life. Nathan's being taken so suddenly from our mortal presence has turned each of our hearts and minds to the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. While it is impossible for me to put into words the full meaning of the Atonement of Christ, I pray that I can explain what His Atonement means to me and our family and what it might also mean to you and yours.

The Savior's precious birth, life, Atonement in the Garden of Gethsemane, suffering on the cross, burial in Joseph's tomb, and glorious Resurrection all became a renewed reality for us. The Savior's Resurrection assures all of us that someday we too will follow Him and experience our own resurrection. What peace, what comfort this great gift is which comes through the loving grace of Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of all mankind. Because of Him we know we can be with Nathan again.

There is no greater expression of love than the heroic Atonement performed by the Son of God. Were it not for the plan of our Heavenly Father, established before the world began, in a very real sense, all mankind—past, present, and future—would have been left without the hope of eternal progression. As a result of Adam's transgression,

mortals were separated from God (see Romans 6:23) and would be forever unless a way was found to break the bands of death. This would not be easy, for it required the vicarious sacrifice of one who was sinless and who could therefore take upon Himself the sins of all mankind.

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Thankfully, Jesus Christ courageously fulfilled this sacrifice in ancient Jerusalem. There in the quiet isolation of the Garden of Gethsemane, He knelt among the gnarled olive trees, and in some incredible way that none of us can fully comprehend, the Savior took upon Himself the sins of the world. Even though His life was pure and free of sin, He paid the ultimate penalty for sin—yours, mine, and everyone who has ever lived. His mental, emotional, and spiritual anguish were so great they caused Him to bleed from every pore (see Luke 22:44; D&C 19:18). And yet Jesus suffered willingly so that we might all have the opportunity to be washed clean—through having faith in Him, repenting of our sins, being baptized by proper priesthood authority, receiving the purifying gift of the Holy Ghost by confirmation, and accepting all other essential ordinances. Without the Atonement of the Lord, none of these blessings would be available to us, and we could not become worthy and prepared to return to dwell in the presence of God.

I believe that if we could truly understand the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, we would realize how precious is *one* son or daughter of God. I believe our Heavenly Father's everlasting purpose for His children is generally achieved by the small and simple things we do

for one another. At the heart of the English word *atonement* is the word *one*. If all mankind understood this, there would never be anyone with whom we would not be concerned, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, or social or economic standing. We would strive to emulate the Savior and would never be unkind, indifferent, disrespectful, or insensitive to others.

If we truly understood the Atonement and the eternal value of each soul, we would seek out the wayward boy and girl and every other wayward child of God. We would help them to know of the love Christ has for them. We would do all that we can to help prepare them to receive the saving ordinances of the gospel.

When I think of my grandson Nathan and how precious he is to us, I can see and feel more clearly how our Heavenly Father must feel about all of His children. We do not want God to weep because we did not do all we could to share with His children the revealed truths of the gospel. I pray that you will seek to know the blessings of the Atonement and that you will strive to be worthy to serve the Lord in the mission field. It was Jesus who said, "If . . . you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be *one* soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!" (D&C 18:15; emphasis added). Not only that, but great shall be the *Lord's joy* in the soul that repenteth! For precious unto Him is the *one*.

Our Heavenly Father has reached out to us through the Atonement of our Savior. He invites all to "come unto Christ, who is the Holy One of Israel, and partake of his salvation, and the power of his redemption" (Omni 1:26). He has taught us that it is through our faithful adherence to gospel principles, through receiving the saving ordinances that have been restored, through continual service, and by enduring to the end that we can return to His sacred presence. What possible thing in the whole world is remotely as important as to know this?

Sadly, in today's world, a person's importance is often



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judged by the size of the audience before which he or she performs. That is how media and sports programs are rated, how corporate prominence is sometimes determined, and often how governmental rank is obtained. That may be why roles such as father, mother, and missionary seldom receive standing ovations. Fathers, mothers, and missionaries “play” before very small audiences. Yet, in the eyes of the Lord, there may be only *one size* of audience that is of lasting importance—and that is just *one*, each one, you and me, and each *one* of the children of God. The irony of the Atonement is that it is infinite and eternal, yet it is applied individually, one person at a time.

Never, never underestimate how precious is the *one*. Remember always the simple admonition of the Lord: “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Always strive to live worthy of the sacred full blessings of the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. In our sorrow over the separation from our dear Nathan has come the peace that only the Savior and Redeemer can give. Our family has turned to Him, one by one; and we now sing with greater appreciation and understanding:

*Oh, it is wonderful that he should care
for me*

Enough to die for me!

Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!

(“I Stand All Amazed,” *Hymns*, no. 193.)

May you give to others and receive for yourselves every blessing the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ offers. **NE**

From an April 2004 general conference address.

MAKING FRIENDS THAT STICK

Pepper can help you make friends.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Flat dish
- ▶ Pepper
- ▶ *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet
- ▶ Balloon
- ▶ Dry, clean hair



They say you catch more flies with honey, but when you're trying to make new friends, you definitely want to use pepper.

Or at least when you're trying to teach your family about making friends.

Everyone wants friends—the kind of friends you can talk to, have a good time with, and trust to be there for you. They definitely add spice to life! (Get it? Because pepper is a spice.) But sometimes making good friends is a bit harder than making bad jokes about pepper. Don't worry. With a balloon and a dash of pepper, you and your family will see how making friends can be easier.

1. Start by talking to your family about the importance of good friends. How can friends help us? Why is it important to have friends? What kind of people do you want to have as your friends?

Pour some pepper onto the plate. Explain that the pepper represents people around us at church, at work, and at school—our potential friends.

2. Blow up the balloon and tie it closed. Explain that the balloon represents each of us as we choose our friends.

3. Ask your family what they can do to attract the kinds of friends they want. The *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet has some great ideas!

“To have good friends, be a good friend. Show genuine interest in others; smile and let them know you care about them. Treat



everyone with kindness and respect, and refrain from judging and criticizing those around you. Do not participate in any form of bullying. Make a special effort to be a friend to those who are shy or lonely, have special needs, or do not feel included.”¹

4. As your family members make suggestions on how to make good friends, rub the balloon against your dry hair. Rubbing the balloon against your hair represents all the things you do to be a good friend and to make good friends. The more suggestions your family makes, the more you can rub the balloon against your hair. (You’re going to give yourself a great hairdo, too.)

5. Now it’s time to make friends! Slowly bring the balloon

close to the pepper on the plate. The pepper will leap up and stick to the balloon. Slowly pull the balloon away to show that the pepper is still sticking. You may notice that not all the pepper sticks to the balloon right away. You can bring the balloon close to the pepper again to see more pepper fly up to the balloon. It’s the same with friends. Making friends can take time and sometimes you need to try reaching out to others a few times.

Sticking with Good Friends

Just like the static attracts the pepper to the balloon, your kindness, thoughtfulness, and trustworthiness will attract good friends to you. When making friends takes time, remember that you don’t need everyone to like you, and sometimes people just

don’t click. So don’t give up when you feel like you don’t have a lot of friends right away.

But remember: friendship means thinking about and serving others. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “Friendship should never be offered as a means to an end; it can and should be an end unto itself.”²

Get to know people. Learn about what they love and are good at. Help them feel at ease. Finally, don’t forget: to have a good friend, you need to be a good friend, too. **NE**

NOTES

1. *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 16.
2. M. Russell Ballard, “Doctrine of Inclusion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 37.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID STOKER; BACKGROUND ILLUSTRATIONS BY ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK





If you're not sure what you should repent of and when, here are some answers.

EIGHT MYTHS ABOUT REPENTANCE

Repentance isn't easy, and sometimes it's painful. But you are up to the task. It requires change and humility, and you can do it! Here are some common myths about repentance and some really good answers.

MYTH #1: *I still remember my sin, so I must not have been forgiven.*

“Satan will try to make us believe that our sins are not forgiven because *we* can remember them. Satan is a liar; he tries to blur our vision and lead us away from the path of repentance and forgiveness. God did not promise that *we* would not remember our sins. Remembering will help us avoid making the same mistakes again. But if we stay true and faithful, the memory of our sins will be softened over time.”¹

—President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency

MYTH #2: *I still feel guilty, so I must not have been forgiven.*

“For those who are truly repentant but seem unable to feel relief: continue keeping the commandments. I promise you, relief will come in the timetable of the Lord. Healing also requires time.”²

—Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

MYTH #3: *Bad thoughts just come into my mind, so there's nothing I can do about it.*

“Some bad thoughts come by themselves. Others come because we invite them by what we look at and listen to. Talking about or looking at immodest pictures . . . can stimulate powerful emotions. It will tempt you to watch improper [videos] or movies. These things surround you, but you must not participate in them. Work at keeping your thoughts clean by thinking of something good. The mind can think of only one thing at a time. Use that fact to crowd out ugly thoughts. Above all, don't feed thoughts by reading or watching things that are wrong. If you don't control your thoughts, Satan will keep tempting you until you eventually act them out.”³

—Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

MYTH #4: *God can't love me anymore because of my mistakes.*

“God loves all of His children, and He will never cease to love and to hope for us. The plan of our Heavenly Father is clear, and His promises are great: ‘For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world . . . might be saved’ (John 3:17).”⁴

—President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

MYTH #5: *My sins are so bad that I can't be forgiven.*

“However many chances you think you have missed, however many mistakes you feel you have made or talents you think you don't have, or however far from home and family and God you feel you have traveled, I testify that you have *not* traveled beyond the reach of divine love. It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ's Atonement shines.”⁵

—Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

MYTH #6: *I've stopped committing a serious sin, so I don't need to see the bishop. I can just pray and be fine, or just tell my parents.*

“The Lord has declared that the bishop is a common judge in Israel (see D&C 107:72, 74). He has the responsibility to determine the worthiness of the members of his ward. By ordination and righteous living, the bishop is entitled to revelation from the Holy Ghost regarding the members of his ward, including you.

“The bishop can help you through the repentance process in ways your parents or other leaders are unable to provide. If the sin is serious enough, he may determine that your privileges in the Church should be restricted. For example, as part of your repentance

process, he may ask you to refrain from partaking of the sacrament or exercising the priesthood for a period of time. He will work with you and determine when you are worthy again to resume those sacred activities.”⁶

—Elder C. Scott Grow of the Seventy

MYTH #7: *I can't talk to the bishop because he'll look down on me.*

“I promise you he will not condemn you. As a servant of the Lord, he will be kind and understanding as he listens to you. He will then help you through the repentance process. He is the Lord’s messenger of mercy to help you become clean through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”⁷

—Elder C. Scott Grow

MYTH #8: *I did it again, so I don't deserve to be forgiven. Maybe I can't change.*

“Sometimes in our repentance, in our daily efforts to become more Christlike, we find ourselves repeatedly struggling with the same difficulties. As if we were climbing a tree-covered mountain, at times we don’t see our progress until we get closer to the top and look back from the high ridges. Don’t be discouraged. If you are striving and working to repent, you are in the process of repenting.”

“At this very moment, someone is saying, ‘Brother Andersen, you don’t understand. You can’t feel what I have felt. It is too difficult to change.’

“You are correct; I don’t fully understand. But there is One who does. He knows. He has felt your pain. He has declared, ‘I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands’ [Isaiah 49:16]. The Savior is there, reaching out to each of us, bidding us: ‘Come unto me’ [3 Nephi 9:14]. We can repent. We can!”⁸

—Elder Neil L. Andersen

AFTER CONFESSING, YOU'LL FEEL BETTER

You might worry about what your bishop will say, what he will think of you. Your worries won’t prove to be true, though. He only wants to help you. He won’t judge or condemn you. Your bishop will understand. And after confessing, you’ll feel a million times better, and when you’re clean, it’s amazing. If you have a problem, take care of it now. The sooner you do, the sooner you’ll be clean and have joy.

Molly Jeanette T.



DON'T NEED TO SEE THE BISHOP?

Some time ago I sinned, then said a prayer and thought I had truly repented. One day I felt a great feeling in my heart that I should have a very honest conversation with the bishop. I talked to the bishop, and he guided me where I should improve. I fasted and offered fervent prayers. This time I felt I had truly repented. I know Heavenly Father cares for us and that the Atonement of Christ gives us true forgiveness when we repent and confess our sins.

Awrellyano Gomes da S.

NO MATTER HOW BIG THE SIN, YOU CAN ALWAYS REPENT

Jesus Christ endured the Atonement for us so that we could repent of our sins. The prophets have said countless times that no matter how big or small the sin, you can always repent. The Savior wants you to repent, and He wants to help you. But He can't force His way into your life; you have to let Him in and let Him know through prayer that you want or need Him in your life. Through all my trials I know God loves me.

Madison B.

YOU CAN DO IT

To those who have fallen, pick yourself up. You have leaders and people who love you and want you to be the best you can be. You can do this together. Always remember Jesus Christ loves you and is with you every step.

Michael Lee T.

REPENTANCE TRANSFORMS YOU

To have the opportunity to feel forgiven is something very precious to me. You literally feel freed from a heavy weight in your heart, and you feel loved and comforted. If it's a challenge to change, it is worth trying. It totally transforms you into another person, the person God wants you to be, the person you came to earth to fight to become, and even better! Have courage!

Rodrigo Octavio A.

GOD WANTS YOU TO REPENT

Repentance—what a marvelous gift from our Father in Heaven. He has given us the chance to become like Him through the Atonement of Christ. He *wants* us to repent, to come unto him. Like Corianton, we will all make mistakes, some more serious than others, but we ALL make them. Also like Corianton, we can repent and change our life. (See Alma 39–42.) Heavenly Father loves us enough that He wants us to return to Him. No matter what you've done, there's a path back to peace and happiness. **NE**

McKayla J.

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Point of Safe Return," *Ensign*, May 2007, 101.
2. Neil L. Andersen, "Repent . . . That I May Heal You," *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 42.
3. Richard G. Scott, "Making the Right Choices," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 37.
4. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Point of Safe Return," 99.
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, "The Laborers in the Vineyard," *Ensign*, May 2012, 33.
6. C. Scott Grow, "Why and What Do I Need to Confess to My Bishop?" *New Era*, Oct. 2013, 28.
7. C. Scott Grow, "Why and What Do I Need to Confess to My Bishop?" 29.
8. Neil L. Andersen, "Repent . . . That I May Heal You," 41.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

THINGS TO PONDER FOR SUNDAY

- What is the role of repentance in the plan of salvation?
- What things can keep us from fully repenting of our sins?

THINGS YOU MIGHT DO

- Read scriptures about repentance and make note of what is consistently taught about it.
- Share your feelings about the importance and availability of complete repentance at [lds.org/go/repentNE316](https://www.lds.org/go/repentNE316).

ANSWERS TO YOUR TOP DATING QUESTIONS

By Charlotte Larcabal

Church Magazines

Ah, dating. That's one topic everyone loves to talk about, right? We talked to lots of youth and even asked about dating on Facebook, to find out your questions or concerns. Ashley R. even posted on Facebook that boys "intimi-DATE" her. (Clever, Ashley.)

Here are the top questions you asked about dating, along with answers from other youth! So, have a look at what other teenagers are saying about dating.



Why can't we date until we're 16?

"The prophets say it's best to not go on dates until we're 16, and even then, to go on group dates. It's for our own safety and protection, and we're not really mature enough for dating until an older age."

Ashlynn H., 14, Texas, USA

"Maturity is a big factor. When we're older, we better know how to speak to people and keep up a conversation."

Seth B., 18, Colorado, USA

"We are encouraged by prophets and apostles to wait until we're older to date. The stress of breaking up when young can be traumatizing."

Tyson B., 13, Utah, USA

"It's a Church standard. Waiting until we are older helps protect us from being tempted to do bad things."

Hannah H., 13, Alabama, USA

Why is it not a good idea to steady date as a youth?

"It's not a good idea to steady date in high school because it limits the people you can meet."

Hunter W., 15, Washington, USA

"You don't get to meet other people and there is a higher risk of participating in immoral behavior."

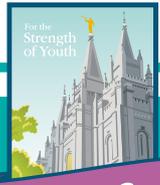
Violet W., 15, Utah, USA

"When you're younger, you want to hang out with different kinds of people so that you can explore different options. Later, when you're ready to think about marriage, you'll have an idea of the kind of person you want to stick with."

Wendy F., 16, Utah, USA

"We can get too attached to one person and not be able to meet and get to know other people."

Tyson B., 13, Utah, USA



DATING



How do you encourage a guy to ask you out?

“People ask me all the time why I don’t have a boyfriend, and I just tell them that the prophet has suggested that we don’t steady date before our missions. I don’t want to be the person that makes it harder for someone else to go on a mission. So, I try to build really good friendships with people, but I don’t steady date anyone because I want myself and those I date to be completely worthy to serve missions without anything holding us back.”

Sarah M., 17, Colorado, USA

“I tell people I won’t steady date or go one-on-one until I’m at an age when I want to be married, like after high school. While I’m in high school I’m still trying to prepare myself, focus on my studies, and discover my identity. When I’m older I’ll be a step closer, a littler wiser, to being able to be committed to someone else.”

April B., from Facebook

“Talk to him, dress modestly, and smile!”

Bailey K., 14, Utah, USA

“You can be assertive in telling a guy that you would like to go on a date with him, and see what he does with that information. For most guys who don’t ask girls out because they fear rejection, it will be music to their ears.”

Jordan J., from Facebook

“Make yourself stand out in a good way and talk to the boy you would like to ask you out.”

Zach H., 15, Utah, USA

What kind of dates are fun?

“I strongly recommend going on dates that will allow you to communicate with one another, get to know more about each other, and strengthen the relationship you share. For example, a picnic is a great way to bond. Walks or hikes give opportunities to appreciate what’s around you. Athletic activities such as bowling are very enjoyable. Think simple. The littlest activities can be the most fun!”

Melania M., 14, Ontario, Canada

“I like fun things. I love doing spontaneous things like going on hikes or going to the arcade. I like it when the date is cheaper so I don’t feel weird that they spent a bunch of money on me when we’re just friends.”

Sarah M., 17, Colorado, USA

What do I talk about?

“The important thing is to comment and ask questions, therefore causing a conversation to occur. Open up to him/her about your thoughts/feelings on a subject and then ask theirs. In return, ask thoughtful questions about their responses. If you can’t think of a topic, look at the first thing you see and branch off of it (i.e.: a flower, ‘My family’s garden has some awesome beets in it this year. Do you have a garden?’). These tricks were what got me through many awkward moments.”

Katie, from Facebook

“Starting a conversation and continuing it with your date can be tough. When it comes to communication I recommend finding out about the person’s interests to see what you have in common with him or her. For example, favorite things. Talk about the gospel and how much you love it. Don’t be afraid to express yourself through words. Talk about goals and future plans. Talk about family and friends. Or even past memories. Even crack a joke once in a while. Remember that one topic can lead to another, creating a consistent conversation!”

Melania M., 14, Ontario, Canada

“My mom once gave me advice for talking during stake dances when you get to those awkward moments when there isn’t anything to talk about but the song is still going, and I have found it works well for those same moments at dinner. She said that you can ask the most random questions like, ‘What color is your toothbrush?’ Or ‘If you had to pack one suitcase and leave right now, where would you go and why?’ Something random and fun and conversational.”

Stacie, from Facebook



People often assume you're in a relationship after one date. How can I casually date different people without hurting anyone's feelings?

"I think the best way is to make your date understand that you aren't ready and don't want a relationship at the moment."

Zach H., 15, Utah, USA

"It is so hard to casually date without getting a bad reputation. I tell people I can't date until I'm 16 and that I plan to keep things casual by group dating."

Alli C., 14, Alabama, USA

"Explain to the people you date that a date is an activity to let you get to know each other better. Dating exclusively is for furthering your relationship status and for progressing towards marriage or being a couple, and we're not ready for that. Explain your standards of dating. You can even use the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet."

Corbin J., 17, Washington, USA

Can I date people who aren't LDS?

"Only date nonmembers who have the same values and standards. It is also a good way to share the gospel."

Tessa J., 14, Washington, USA

"Yes, as long as you keep your standards and make sure that your nonmember friend knows what your standards are."

Violet W., 15, Utah, USA

"You can date nonmembers to become friends, but remember that you want to marry someone who is worthy to enter the temple."

Tyson B., 13, Utah, USA

"Yes, but they really need to have the same standards as I do."

Alli C., 14, Alabama, USA

"As long as you keep your standards and let them know your expectations, it's okay to date nonmembers. You can create a good missionary experience out of spending time with nonmembers. Just be careful about what their influence can do to you."

Corbin J., 17, Washington, USA



When is it OK to kiss?

"If you can't date until you're 16, you probably shouldn't be kissing either. And when you do, it should be a quick kiss."

Tessa J., 14, Washington, USA

"This is a very tough question because situations are different for everybody. It changes from culture to culture but these are some general guidelines. I wouldn't kiss for the sake of kissing. I wouldn't kiss anyone if it is something that changes my character for the worse. I am trying to keep the commandments and be a good person. If kissing becomes an obstacle in the way of celestial glory, I won't participate."

Corbin J., 17, Washington, USA



Take It from Me:

“LOVE”

CAN WAIT

“Romance” isn’t worth going against the prophet’s counsel.

Name Withheld

Ashley* sweetly said good-bye and walked inside.

I still couldn’t believe my luck. Beautiful Ashley was *my* girl.

We were the perfect pair. Everybody said so. Late night walks, secret gifts . . . it was perfect. And nothing could *ever* tear us apart.

There was one *tiny* problem: I was 14 and she was 13.

But this was *love!* We were in love, so did age really matter?

Besides, it’s not like we were really “dating.” We were just two kids who happened to like each other and express it. It started with flirting and shy smiles, and then we held hands. But we were in control. And we were the cutest couple. Everyone said so.

I spent every waking moment with Ashley: at school, at Mutual, and at

church. She lived only a few blocks away, so I even sneaked over to her house to spend more time with her. Everything was fantastic—but really, it wasn’t.

Our leaders and parents warned us not to date before we were 16, but I just figured they didn’t really understand our situation. We were good kids, and we were keeping the law of chastity, so the whole “no dating” thing wasn’t *really* for us, right? We were meant to be!

Turns out, we weren’t. Before long, Ashley found someone else and left me

BACKGROUND TEXTURE BY ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

shattered. She stopped talking to me and lied about me to my friends, and I was heartbroken. So heartbroken that it threw me into a deep depression.

My thoughts turned dark, and I cried almost every night. I started ditching church to avoid Ashley.

I refused to talk to my parents, ignored my friends, and drifted away from

Heavenly Father. I felt completely alone and hopeless. It took a year of struggling, but slowly I began to feel better

and happier, and I began to return to God as well.

No matter what I'd believed, I *wasn't* an exception to the rule. I'd ignored the prophet's counsel to not date before 16 or pair off exclusively or get physical too early, and there were consequences. I unlocked my heart and got too attached before it was time for me to love someone in

My life would have been much easier and happier if I had just lived the dating standards.

that way. I became too emotionally dependent before my emotions were fully developed. I missed out on a lot because I was so caught up in "love" and then too caught up in my sadness.

For the Strength of Youth teaches, "When you begin dating, go with one or more additional couples. Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person. Developing serious relationships too early in life can limit the number of other people you meet" ([2011], 4).

My life would have been much easier and happier if I had just lived the dating standards. Maybe my leaders didn't know about my situation, but the Lord did. The Lord perfectly understands every situation

we are in. And He is the one giving us standards to live by. He is the one advising us to not date before we are 16 and to not steady date until we're ready to consider marriage.

Even after I turned 16, I was careful to get to know lots of people and to not steady date. And sometimes it was still tough! It's hard to resist the urge to jump into a relationship, especially

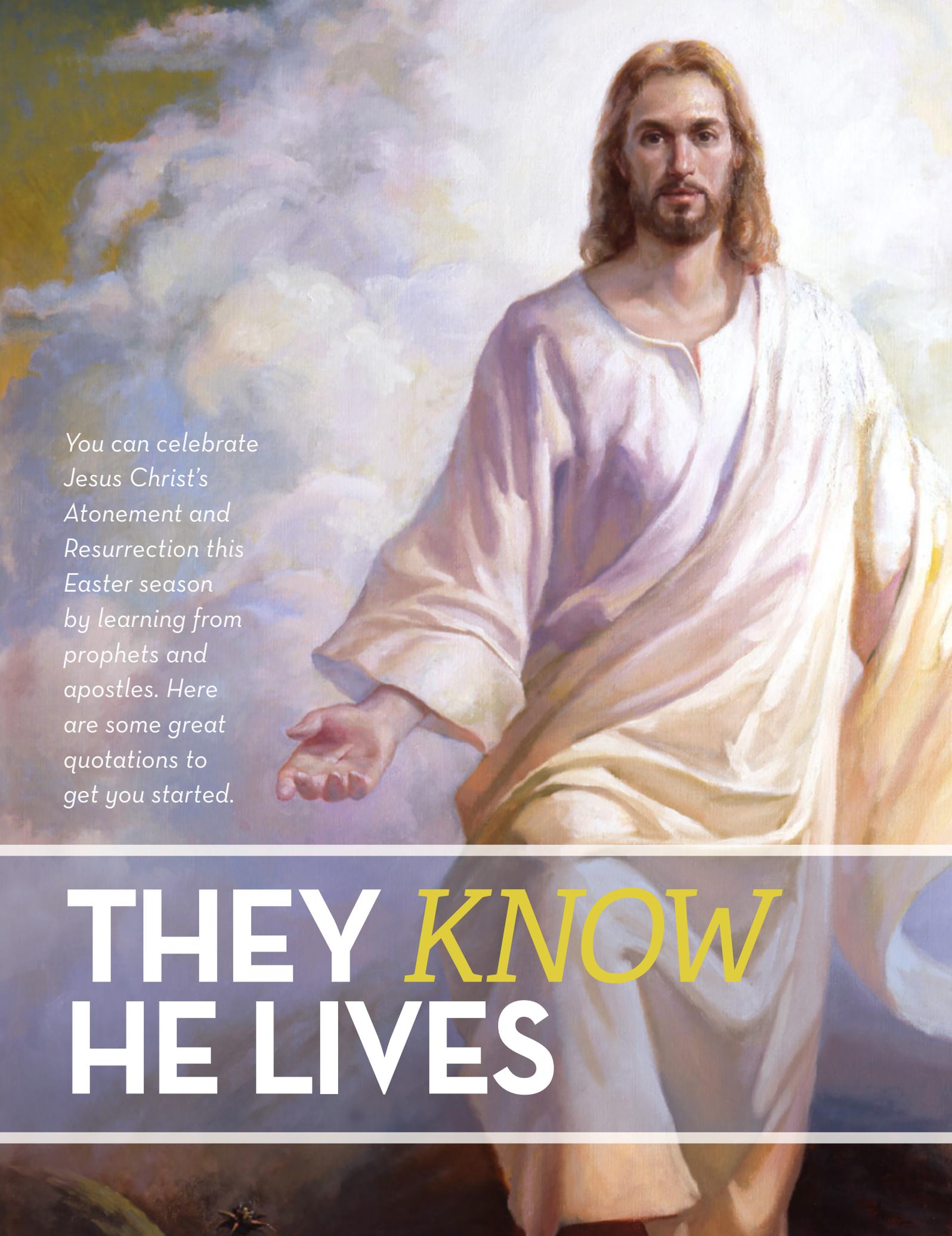
when you find out your crush likes you back! It's even harder to do the right thing when you're already in a relationship. But now is the time to lock your heart. I know that no matter how hard it is to end or stay out of romantic relationships, it is always worth it to keep the standards the Lord has given us.

I used to think of these standards as walls keeping me in a cage, but I learned that commandments are more like guardrails keeping us safely on the right path and away from the cliff. You never hear anyone say, "Wow. I wish this guardrail weren't here so that I could fall off this cliff!"

I try to remember that the Lord is in control. He has a plan for you and me, and if we choose to follow it, our lives will be so much better. **NE**

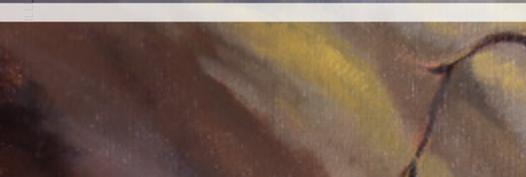
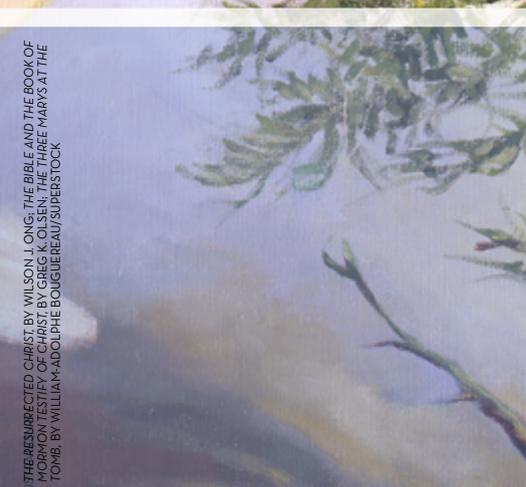
The author is currently serving a mission in Arizona, USA.

* Name has been changed.



*You can celebrate
Jesus Christ's
Atonement and
Resurrection this
Easter season
by learning from
prophets and
apostles. Here
are some great
quotations to
get you started.*

**THEY *KNOW*
HE LIVES**



THE RESURRECTED CHRIST BY WILSON J. ONG, THE BIBLE AND THE BOOK OF MORMON TESTIFY OF CHRIST BY GREG K. OLSEN, THE THREE MARYS AT THE TOMB BY WILLIAM-ADOLPHE BOUGUEREAU/SUPERSTOCK



No words in Christendom mean more to me than those spoken by the angel to the weeping Mary Magdalene and the other Mary...

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?”

“He is not here, but is risen” [Luke 24:5–6].

Our Savior lived again. The most glorious, comforting, and reassuring of all events of human history had taken place—the victory over death. The pain and agony of Gethsemane and Calvary had been wiped away. The salvation of mankind had been secured. The Fall of Adam had been reclaimed.

The empty tomb that first Easter morning was the answer to Job’s question, “If a man die, shall he live again?” [Job 14:14]. To all within the sound of my voice, I declare, If a man die, he shall live again. We know, for we have the light of revealed truth.

President Thomas S. Monson, “He Is Risen!” *Ensign*, May 2010, 89.



As you bind up the wounds of those in need and offer the cleansing of His Atonement to those who sorrow in sin, the Lord’s power will sustain you. His arms are outstretched with yours to succor and bless the children of our Heavenly Father, including those in your family.

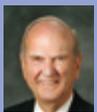
President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Come unto Me,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 24.



We must never lose our sense of awe and profound gratitude for the eternal sacrifice of the Son of God.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Gift of Grace,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 107.





For the Atonement of the Lord and His gift of resurrection—for this sublime message of Easter—thanks be to God!

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Thanks Be to God,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 78.



Our Savior’s Atonement does more than assure us of immortality by a universal resurrection and give us the opportunity to be cleansed from sin by repentance and baptism. His Atonement also provides the opportunity to call upon Him who has experienced all of our mortal infirmities to give us the strength to bear the burdens of mortality. . . . The healing and strengthening power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement is for all of us who will ask.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Strengthened by the Atonement of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 64.



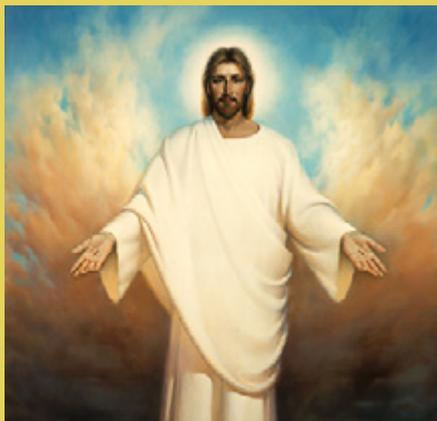
As we approach the Easter season, may we show our love and appreciation for the Savior’s atoning sacrifice through our simple, compassionate acts of service to our brothers and sisters at home, at church, and in our communities.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Finding Joy through Loving Service,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 49.



Oh, if I had the voice and trump of an angel that I could say to all mankind that He is risen and that he lives; that he is the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father, the promised Messiah, our Redeemer and Savior; that he came into this world to teach the gospel by example. His divine mission is directed to you and me to come unto him and he will lead us into life eternal.

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "What Think Ye of Christ?" "Whom Say Ye That I Am?" *Ensign*, May 1979, 79.



[On Easter] we celebrate the gift of victory over every fall we have ever experienced, every sorrow we have ever known, every discouragement we have ever had, every fear we have ever faced—to say nothing of our resurrection from death and forgiveness for our sins.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Where Justice, Love, and Mercy Meet," *Ensign*, May 2015, 106.



Trust and confidence in Christ and a ready reliance on His merits, mercy, and grace lead to hope, through His Atonement, in the Resurrection and eternal life.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Therefore They Hushed Their Fears," *Ensign*, May 2015, 47.



While we rejoice in the supernal significance of Gethsemane and Calvary, our focus has always been on the resurrected Lord.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "We Follow Jesus Christ," *Ensign*, May 2010, 84.



CHRIST VISITS THE NEPHITES BY MINERVA K. TEICHERT; CHRIST THE CONSOLATOR BY CARL BLOCH © 2004 BY INTELLECTUAL RESERVE, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED; THE THREE NEPHITES BY GARY KAPP; HE IS RISEN BY KEITH EDDINGTON; CHRIST APPEARING IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE BY ARNOLD FRIBERG



We can have ultimate trust and confidence in His power to overcome all else and grant us everlasting life.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ," *Ensign*, May 2014, 112.



I testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of all mankind. His life, His Atonement, His Resurrection, His awaited return are as sure and certain as the rising sun. His name be praised forever and ever.

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus," *Ensign*, May 2010, 111.



My testimony of Jesus Christ has been built from many special experiences in which I have come to know His great love for each one of us.

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "I Stand All Amazed," *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 90.



Heavenly Father sent His Son to the earth to atone for the sins of all mankind. Of these plain and precious truths I bear my testimony.

Elder Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Plain and Precious Truths," *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 92.



With all my heart I want to be a true follower of Jesus Christ. I love Him. I adore Him. I witness of His living reality. I witness that He is the Anointed One, the Messiah. I am a witness of His incomparable mercy, compassion, and love.

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Through God's Eyes," *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 94.

CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN OF THE BOOK OF MORMON, BY DEL PARSON
GARDEN TOMB, BY JON MCNAUGHTON





I'M FEELING . . .

These scripture cards can lift you up when you're down.

No matter how you're feeling, God knows you, loves you, and understands what you're going through. In fact, He loves you so much that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to perform the Atonement so you could overcome challenges, be happy, and return to live with Him again (see John 3:16). That may

not seem easy when you're feeling down, but there's a place you can go to find help: the scriptures.

The following cards describe great examples from the scriptures that show how God is always there for you. So whenever you're feeling sad, lonely, or frustrated, you can pull out these cards, turn to the scriptures listed, and know that God is with you.

AFRAID

Christ overcame everything, so I have nothing to fear.

Mark 4:36-41: The disciples were afraid when they were out at sea and caught in the middle of a wild storm. Christ calmed the storm with the command "Peace, be still." When I am afraid, I call on the Lord, and He will help me feel calm.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Isaiah 41:10
John 14:27
2 Timothy 1:7
Doctrine and Covenants 6:34

CONFUSED

The Lord knows how to solve every problem I face, so I can rely on His Atonement.

Joseph Smith—History 1:5-20: Joseph Smith felt confused about which church he should join. He asked God and got an answer, which led to the Restoration of the Lord's Church. When I'm feeling confused, I pray to God, and He'll answer me.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Luke 1:37
Mosiah 26:13
Ether 2:16-3:6
Doctrine and Covenants 58:4

SAD

Christ felt all the sadness I will have to experience, so He can comfort me.

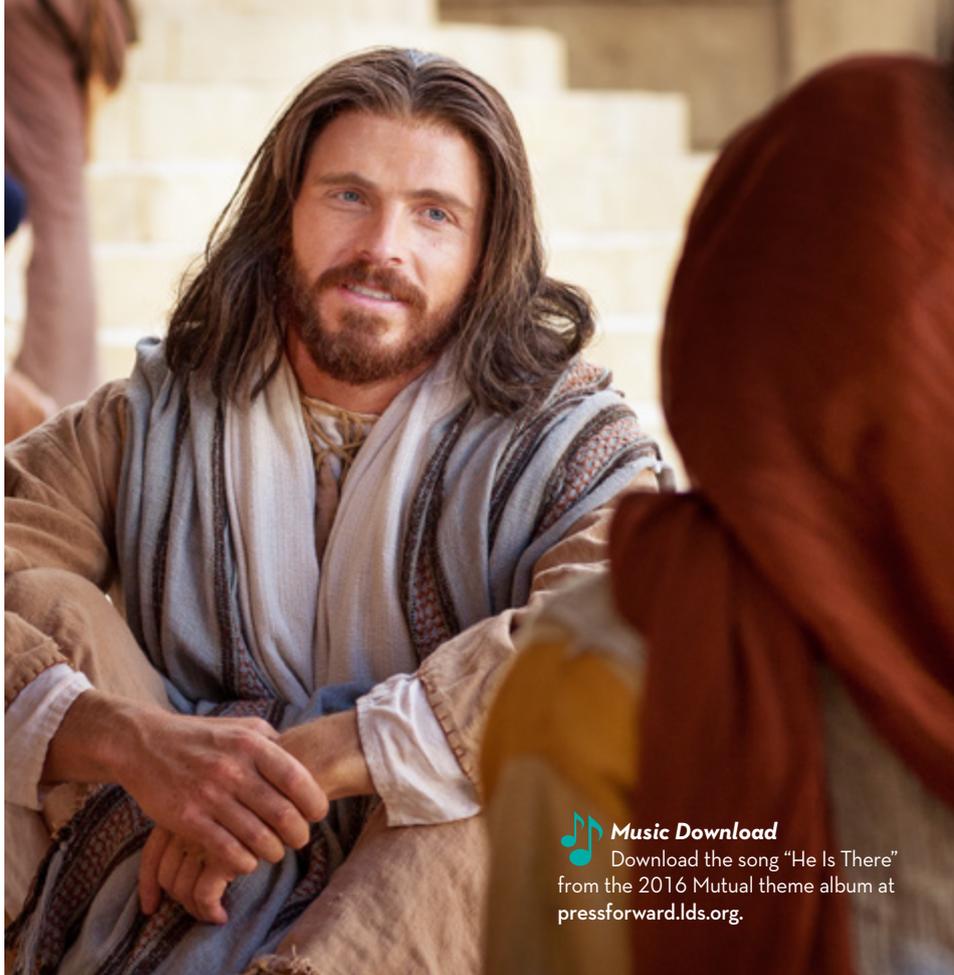
Doctrine and Covenants 121:1-9: While in Liberty Jail, Joseph Smith felt despair because members of the Church were suffering, and he was too. He prayed and received reassurance. God will be with me when I turn to Him for comfort.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

John 14:18
John 16:33
Alma 17:10
Doctrine and Covenants 122

PRESS FORWARD

Every day is a test. Because of His Atonement, Jesus Christ can strengthen you to press forward through anything.



 **Music Download**
Download the song “He Is There” from the 2016 Mutual theme album at pressforward.lds.org.

INSTRUCTIONS: Cut out these cards and hold them together with a loose-leaf ring, string, or ribbon. You may want to laminate them or keep them in a sheet protector to help them last. You can download more copies for friends or family at lds.org/go/feelingNE316.

GUILTY

The Savior took my sins upon Himself so that I can be forgiven and freed from sorrow and guilt.

Alma 36:16–21: Alma the Younger committed some serious sins, but he was still able to be forgiven and have his burden of guilt taken away. By repenting, I can have the peace Alma describes.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Revelation 3:19
2 Nephi 9:21–22
Alma 38:8–9
Moroni 10:32–33

DISCOURAGED

I can overcome discouragement as I seek to understand Christ’s Atonement and access His power.

Alma 26:27: Ammon reminds his brethren that when they were feeling discouraged, the Lord comforted them and promised to give them success. God makes that promise to me if I will turn to Him.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Matthew 11:28–30
Matthew 26:36–46
Alma 29:10–13
Moroni 7:33

OVERWHELMED

Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I can receive faith and strength to endure all things.

Mosiah 24:13–15: The people of Alma were slaves to a wicked taskmaster. They prayed and received strength to bear their burdens. When I’m overwhelmed, God will strengthen me too.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Alma 26:27
Alma 31:33
Alma 36:3
Doctrine and Covenants 24:8

DOUBTING

I can find answers to my questions in the gospel and trust the Savior to help me overcome any doubt.

James 1:5-6: James encourages me to ask God if I do not understand, but he gives the admonition to ask in faith. He understood that asking questions leads to a desire to understand, while doubt leads to unbelief.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Mosiah 4:9
Alma 32:28
Mormon 9:27
Doctrine and Covenants 6:36

SICK

The Lord knows how to succor me and because of Him I will one day be healed from all my sicknesses.

Luke 8:43-48: While on earth, Christ healed many people. I can be healed too. That healing may not come immediately or in this life, but He'll comfort me (a form of healing) and completely heal me in the Resurrection.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Matthew 4:23-24
Mark 9:14-27
Alma 7:11-13
3 Nephi 17:7-10



FRUSTRATED

Christ's grace can give me the patience to overcome frustration with myself and others.

2 Nephi 4:16-35: Even Nephi, as faithful as he was, got down on himself. When I'm trying to overcome my weaknesses, complete a task, or withstand temptations, I can find comfort in knowing that God will help me and provide peace.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Alma 34:41
Alma 38:4-5
Doctrine and Covenants 67:13
Doctrine and Covenants 98:12



WORTHLESS

Christ suffered for me because He loves me and knows of my infinite worth.

Luke 15:3-7: The parable of the lost sheep shows that the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, will do anything to recover one lost sheep. I'm worth so much to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ that They provided a way to return to Them and be like Them.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

John 3:16
John 15:13
Alma 24:14
Doctrine and Covenants 18:10-13

LONELY

Because Christ suffered the Atonement for me, I do not have to endure any trial alone.

Job 1:21-22: Job suffered terrible things, including the death of his children. He endured by relying on the Lord. When I turn to the Lord by coming to know Him, I will see that I'm never completely alone because He is with me.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Luke 22:39-44
John 16:32
Doctrine and Covenants 121:9-10
Doctrine and Covenants 121:46



HURT

Any hurt I feel can be healed through Christ's Atonement, and His love will inspire me to forgive others.

1 Nephi 7:6-21: Laman and Lemuel bound Nephi and threatened to leave him in the wilderness. Nephi prayed and, with the Lord's help, was freed and forgave his brothers. I can also pray, feel peace, and find strength to forgive.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Psalms 147:3
Isaiah 53:3-5
Luke 23:1-47
1 Nephi 19:9

WEAK

Christ's mercy and grace will give me strength to overcome challenges even when I feel weak.

Alma 2:27-31: When the Nephites were in battle, they turned to the Lord and He strengthened them. As I face all kinds of spiritual and emotional attacks, I might feel weak, but the Lord will strengthen me.

.....
Additional Scriptures:

Matthew 7:24-27
Mosiah 9:17-18
Helaman 5:12
Ether 12:27



HE CONQUERED DEATH

“Because of the sacrifice of our beloved Redeemer, death has no sting, the grave has no victory, Satan has no lasting power, and we are ‘begotten . . . again unto a lively hope by the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ’ [1 Peter 1:3; emphasis added].”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency,
April 2015 general conference



I KNOW THAT **MY REDEEMER LIVES**



After our parents abandoned us, we learned that Jesus Christ never would.

Name withheld

When I was 14, my dad left our family, and my mom was forced to flee the country. I was left with my three younger siblings, Ephraim, 9; Jonathan, 6; and Grace, 3 (names have been changed). Nothing could have prepared us for this sudden change. For the first time, we were alone.

Extended family soon offered to take each of us in, but if we went to live with them, we would be separated. It was a difficult decision. How could we reject their well-intentioned help? But at the same time, how could we give up years of playing, laughing, caring for one another, and watching each other grow?

Initially, my brothers and I turned down their help, thinking I could work to support us and we could stay together. But we knew that we could not provide the care our youngest sister needed, and so, with tears in our eyes, we let her go.

For the next few months, I worked as a building painter to buy food for my brothers and me. My income was insufficient to pay the bills for electricity and water, so we had to live without them.

Despite this trial and the gossip of others that accompanied it, our faith didn't waver. Every night, I would gather Ephraim and Jonathan around a lamp to read the Book of Mormon. I would trim the wick so that it would produce less smoke, but we would still have to clean our noses that had turned black by the time we finished reading. But it was worth it.

Reading the Book of Mormon brought us closer to Christ. After we read, we would kneel together and take turns saying our prayers. We asked for comfort for our problem that seemed

to be without a solution. We finished reading the Book of Mormon, and our faith in Jesus Christ grew stronger.

One day I came home tired from work and threw myself on our lower bunk bed. Looking up, I saw a paper posted under the bed above me. It said: "I Know That My Redeemer Lives!" My brother Jonathan had put it there. How close children are to the heavens that even a Primary child can be an instrument in sending a message from God to comfort a troubled heart and mind!

This testimony sustained me when I realized I just couldn't provide for our needs and we had to leave our home. Jonathan was taken to live with my mother's side of the family, but Ephraim and I chose to stay with our other grandparents because they were Church members. In their home we arose early to do chores before school and then cared for our grandfather late into the night. It was exhausting. However, the Lord was mindful of us, and we stayed close to the Church.

Every time I felt like giving up, I was reminded of the special moments I had had with my siblings as we read from the Book of Mormon surrounding a lamp. I know Christ was there beside us in those difficult times. From the moment our family members separated from one another, He did not forsake us. "I know that my Redeemer lives!"



HE GIVES US STRENGTH

"[The Son of God] can reach out, touch, succor, heal, and strengthen us to be more than we could ever be and help us to do that which we could never do relying only upon our own power."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease," *Ensign*, May 2014, 90.

Now, years later, I still have the picture of those words from above my bed in my heart and mind. That message has helped my brother Ephraim and me in our years of service as full-time missionaries and in striving now to live celestial marriages.

I could have missed a lot in my life had I doubted instead of trusting Christ. No matter how difficult life is, it has never been too difficult for the Savior, who suffered in Gethsemane. He can sustain one's life with one sentence. He knows everything from the beginning to the end. His comfort is more powerful than any heartache this life can bring. Through His Atonement, there is no permanent problem—only constant hope, grace, peace, and love. Believe me, I know! I know that my Redeemer lives! **NE**
The author lives in the Philippines.

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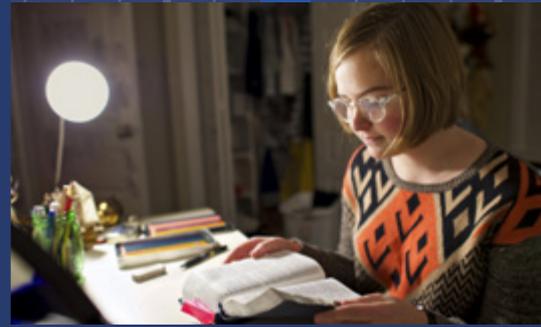
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By Mackenzie Brown



10 WEEKS **OF** TOTAL FITNESS



THESE YOUNG WOMEN LEARNED THAT

THERE'S MORE TO FITNESS THAN JUST EXERCISE.

The Laurel youth camp leaders (YCLs) gathered around their camp director, some with an excited gleam in their eye, others exchanging concerned glances. While they had come to this meeting to talk about the theme for this year's Young Women camp, none of them had expected the "Fit Challenge."

And while they might have been intimidated when they got the challenge, close to a year later these young women are still grateful for their experience in service, life balance, and spiritual and physical fitness.



**DO AND BE
YOUR
VERY BEST**

“Feeding the spirit while neglecting the body, which is a temple, usually leads to spiritual dissonance and lowered self-esteem. . . .

“No matter what your current status, the very moment you voluntarily choose honest, joyful, daily repentance by striving to simply do and be your very best, the Savior’s Atonement envelops and follows you, as it were, wherever you go.

Elder Jörg Klebingat of the Seventy, “Approaching the Throne of God with Confidence,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 35, 37.



THE CHALLENGE

The Fit Challenge was extended to the 100+ young women in their stake in Washington, USA. The young women, leaders, and even the high councilors pledged that every week for the 10 weeks before camp they would:

- ▶ **READ THEIR SCRIPTURES EVERY DAY.**
- ▶ **EXERCISE FOR 20 MINUTES THREE DAYS A WEEK.**
- ▶ **COMPLETE A SERVICE ACTIVITY ONCE A WEEK.**
- ▶ **GO EIGHT HOURS STRAIGHT WITHOUT USING THEIR ELECTRONIC DEVICES ONCE A WEEK.**

At the end of every week, they emailed the camp director some thoughts about their experiences that week and reported on the goals they completed.

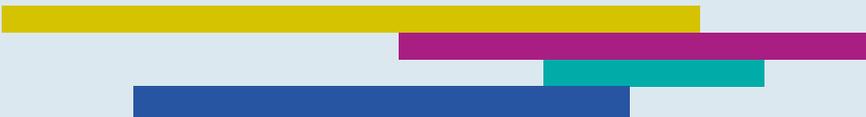
The theme for the camp was “Fit for the Kingdom,” a line taken from the hymn “More Holiness Give Me” (*Hymns*, no. 131). The activities before and during camp taught the young women that we should all be spiritually

and physically healthy in order to return to Heavenly Father. In addition to the Fit Challenge, everyone was going to run a 5K at camp, instead of the traditional hike, with the YCLs helping to give out water and direct people along the trail.

“I was a little freaked out [after the announcement] because I am not an athletic person whatsoever,” Kendra C., one of the YCLs at camp, said. “I’m terrible at sports. I’m just not coordinated enough to do it.”

After the initial “freak-out,” Kendra decided to at least try the Fit Challenge so she could keep up with the other young women when they ran the 5K. Though she didn’t suddenly come to love physical activity, she was surprised to realize that exercise was actually fun for her.

“I had to find something I enjoyed,” Kendra said. “Exercise shouldn’t be something that you don’t look forward to, that you’re afraid of. Finding something you like, whether it be dancing, walking or running, or playing a sport, is key. For me, yoga and Pilates make me feel really good.”



GETTING OVER NERVES

Hailey B., 15, was also nervous about the 5K. She had always come in last in mile-long races at school, and she didn't have much hope that this time would be any different. But when she was able to improve her time and finish in the middle of the pack, she felt on top of the world.

"I finished the 5K in the middle of the group, which I was happy about," Hailey said. "Now I figure I can finish other hard things in my life too—like school."

Elena R., 13, also felt nervous about camp but for a different reason. She was excited to accept the Fit Challenge and to share what she was doing with her friends at school, but she was worried they might make fun of her. She invited one of her friends who is not a Church member to participate in the Fit Challenge with her, and to her surprise, the friend accepted. The two finished the challenge and went to camp together.

"I just felt like this would be a really great opportunity for her to learn about the gospel," Elena said. "I was really excited that she was reading the Book of Mormon every day. I thought Young Women camp would be a great time to learn about the Church because we'd be around girls our age who are part of the Church."



CONTINUING THE CHALLENGE

Though the Fit Challenge ended after Young Women camp, the young women in the stake have kept the habits they learned during the challenge.

"On a Friday afternoon an opportunity came up to go visit a new girl in our ward," Emma H., 15, said. "No one wanted to do it, including me. But I think the idea of helping someone else and sacrificing my time was something I was more used to after the Fit Challenge and more used to saying yes to. I said I'd go, and I went and had a super great visit with one of the Beehives. We got her to come watch the general women's session of conference with us. It was cool because she seemed to have wanted us to come by."

"When you are asked to do something, whether it's by a leader in your ward or your stake or a prompting from Heavenly Father, you should act on that," she continued. "Try something new, work a little harder to be a little better. Those practices can really change your life if you let them."

The young women found that the 10-week Fit Challenge and Young Women camp helped them make and keep good habits.

"Every day I've been reading my scriptures and not focusing on worldly things for a few minutes," Josette P., 16, said. "Just spending a little bit of time on it before I go to bed has made me feel closer to the Lord."

Kendra agreed. "The Fit Challenge has really helped me," she said. "I've started Running Start [a concurrent college-in-high-school program], so I have to balance a lot of activities. I think the challenge prepared me for it—like keeping up with homework but also finding time to serve, take a break from technology, and get my seminary reading done.

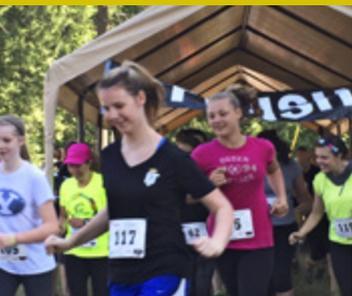
"When you're spiritually and physically fit, you can be more prepared to go out and serve others, like your neighbors around you. I think it's very important to be both." **NE**

Mackenzie Brown lives in Utah, USA



Planning for Camp

For ideas in planning your own Young Women camp experience, visit lds.org/go/campNE416.





Why We Do BAPTISMS FOR THE DEAD

A lot more goes on during baptisms for the dead than we see.

If you've done baptisms for the dead before, you've probably felt some of the blessings of temple worship: you feel less stressed, more focused, and more filled with

peace and faith. The blessings you can receive from going to the temple are incredible, but temple worship is about more than just the blessings *you* receive. Sometimes it's hard to remember the other person involved in your temple worship, but he or she is more than a name on a blue or pink slip of paper. When you are

baptized or confirmed by proxy for (in behalf of) someone, you are helping a real person.

So what do you know about these people who have died? And why is it so important for you to be baptized and confirmed for them? The scriptures give lots of information about the postmortal life.



TEMPLE WORK: NO GREATER BLESSING

"What a marvelous thing that is that you, an ordinary boy or girl, can stand in the place of some great man or woman who at one time lived upon the earth but who is now powerless to move forward without the blessing that you can give to him or her. . . . There is no greater blessing. . . . And it will be your privilege and your opportunity and your responsibility to live worthy to go to the temple of the Lord and there be baptized in behalf of someone else."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910-2008), "Inspirational Thoughts," *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 4.

1 Physical Death

Because of the Fall of Adam, everyone born on earth experiences death (see Moses 6:48). At death, a person's spirit is separated from the body, and their spirit goes to the spirit world to await resurrection.

2 The Spirit World: Paradise and Spirit Prison

The spirit world is divided into paradise and spirit prison. The people who were baptized and stayed faithful in their mortal life go to paradise. This is a place of rest, peace, and joy. Jesus Christ visited and taught the spirits in paradise between His death and Resurrection (see D&C 138:18–27).

Good people who died without gospel knowledge go to spirit prison. This is also where those who were disobedient or wicked in their mortal lives go. Righteous spirits teach the gospel to these people, and they then have the chance to accept the gospel and repent (see D&C 138:28–37). Without a body, though, they can't get baptized or participate in the other ordinances necessary to receive eternal life. (See Alma 40:14.)

3 Proxy Ordinances

Fortunately, Heavenly Father is merciful, loving, and just, so He provides a way for all His children to be saved. This is where you can help. When you perform proxy ordinances for people, they have the chance to accept these ordinances. You can do for them what they can't do for themselves on their path to eternal life. These repentant souls can “be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God” (D&C 138:58; see also verse 59). And you can experience the great joy that comes from helping someone in spirit prison receive these essential ordinances.

4 Resurrection

Through Jesus Christ's Resurrection, everyone born on earth will overcome physical death and be resurrected (see 1 Corinthians 15:22). Jesus taught, “Because I live, ye shall live also” (John 14:19). During the Resurrection, everyone's spirits will be reunited with their bodies. This means everyone—those who lived wickedly, those who lived righteously, and those who repented and received ordinances by proxy after death.

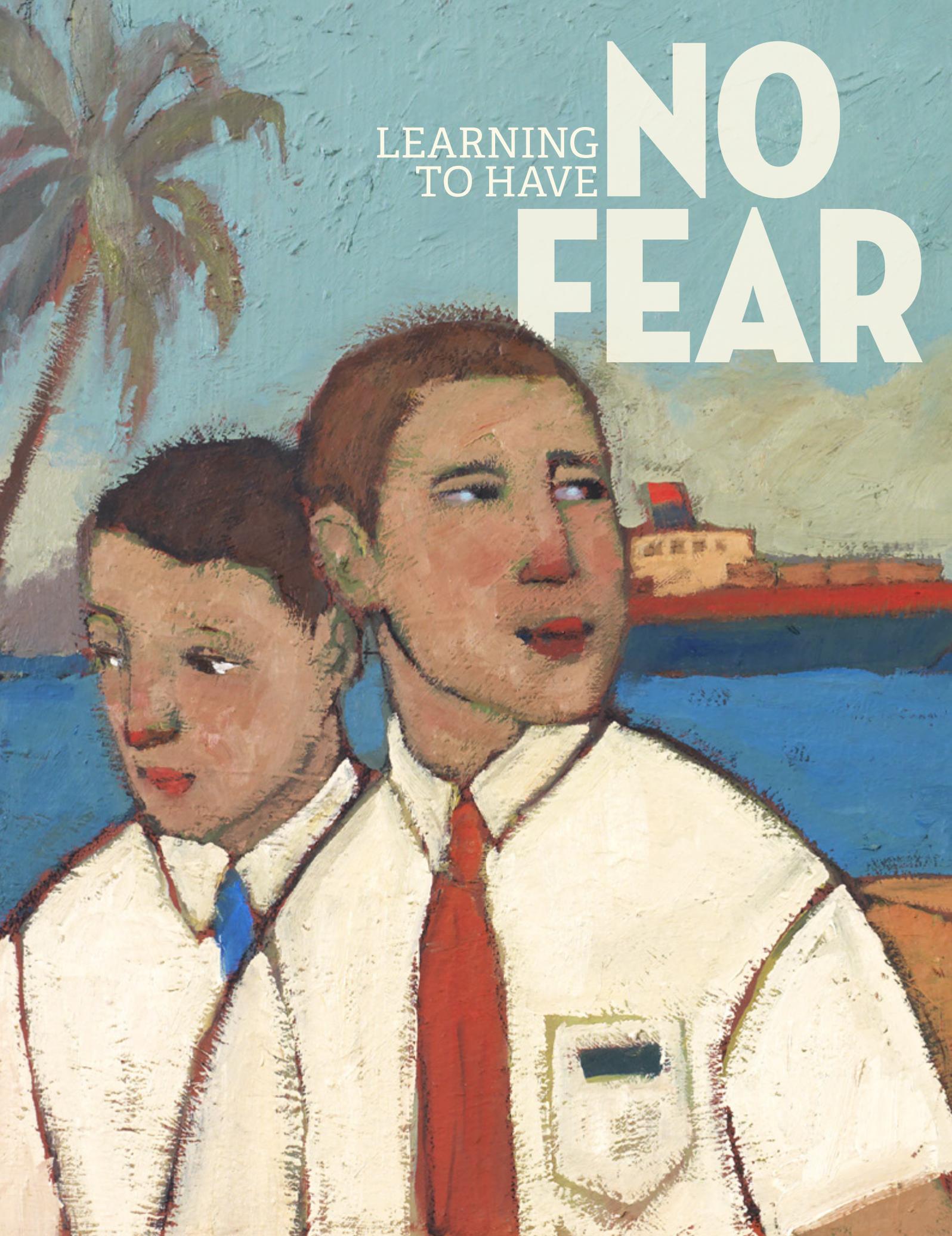
5 Judgment

Once everyone has been resurrected, each person will meet with God and be judged “according to their works” (3 Nephi 27:15), including their acceptance of ordinances (see 3 Nephi 27:16–20). Only those who have received the gospel ordinances (whether in person or through temple work) and kept the covenants that go with those ordinances will have eternal life.

Because you are a living mortal and a worthy holder of a temple recommend, you have the incredible opportunity and responsibility to help your fellow children of God on their path to eternal life. *You* are a central part of God's plan. **NE**

LEARNING
TO HAVE

NO FEAR





By Elder Larry S. Kacher
Of the Seventy

When you've earned the Lord's trust, you can go forward with courage and confidence because His Spirit will be with you.

When I was called to Tahiti on my mission, I remember thinking, “What am I going to do there?” I was a new member of the Church. I didn’t know a lot about the gospel. I hadn’t read the Book of Mormon cover to cover, though I knew it was true. And I would have to learn two languages: Tahitian and French.

I felt inadequate.

Thankfully, I had two things going for me: I knew how to work, and I knew how to obey. Knowing how to work came from my father; knowing how to obey came from the gospel.

So when I got to my mission, I worked hard and I obeyed. As a result, the Lord blessed me with some wonderful experiences, and He taught me to rely on the Spirit. In the process, He also taught me patience, because I was not the most patient missionary. If I had a senior companion who didn’t want to work hard, even though I was the junior companion, I would say, ‘C’mon, let’s go! We’ve got to work!’”

When I became a senior companion, I thought, “Finally, I’ve arrived. I can control the work now.”

But my mission president assigned me a companion who didn’t want to work. By that point in my mission, thankfully, I had learned enough that I knew I had to love my companion, be kind to him, and be patient with him. I knew I couldn’t push him.

One night in the little village of Fare on the island of Huahine, we were at an investigator’s home. Instead of teaching, my companion was playing a board game with a family member and I was sitting there alone, feeling that nobody wanted to listen to me. It was my first assignment as a senior companion, and I felt that I was failing.

My companion began opening his notebook of pictures. The Polynesians loved the pictures, and as they swarmed around him to look at them, we would teach and testify to them.

As I was having these thoughts and feelings, an outpouring of the Spirit came into my heart. I knew I was not alone. That stayed with me the whole night—not just for a moment. When I awoke the next morning, the feeling was still with me. I knew Heavenly Father loved me. I knew He cared about me. I knew He was with me. Knowing that gave me the strength I needed.

That was a key experience for me. My mission president knew that I needed to have experiences that would humble me and help me recognize my dependence on the Spirit. From that point on I had an incredible mission.

Guided by the Spirit

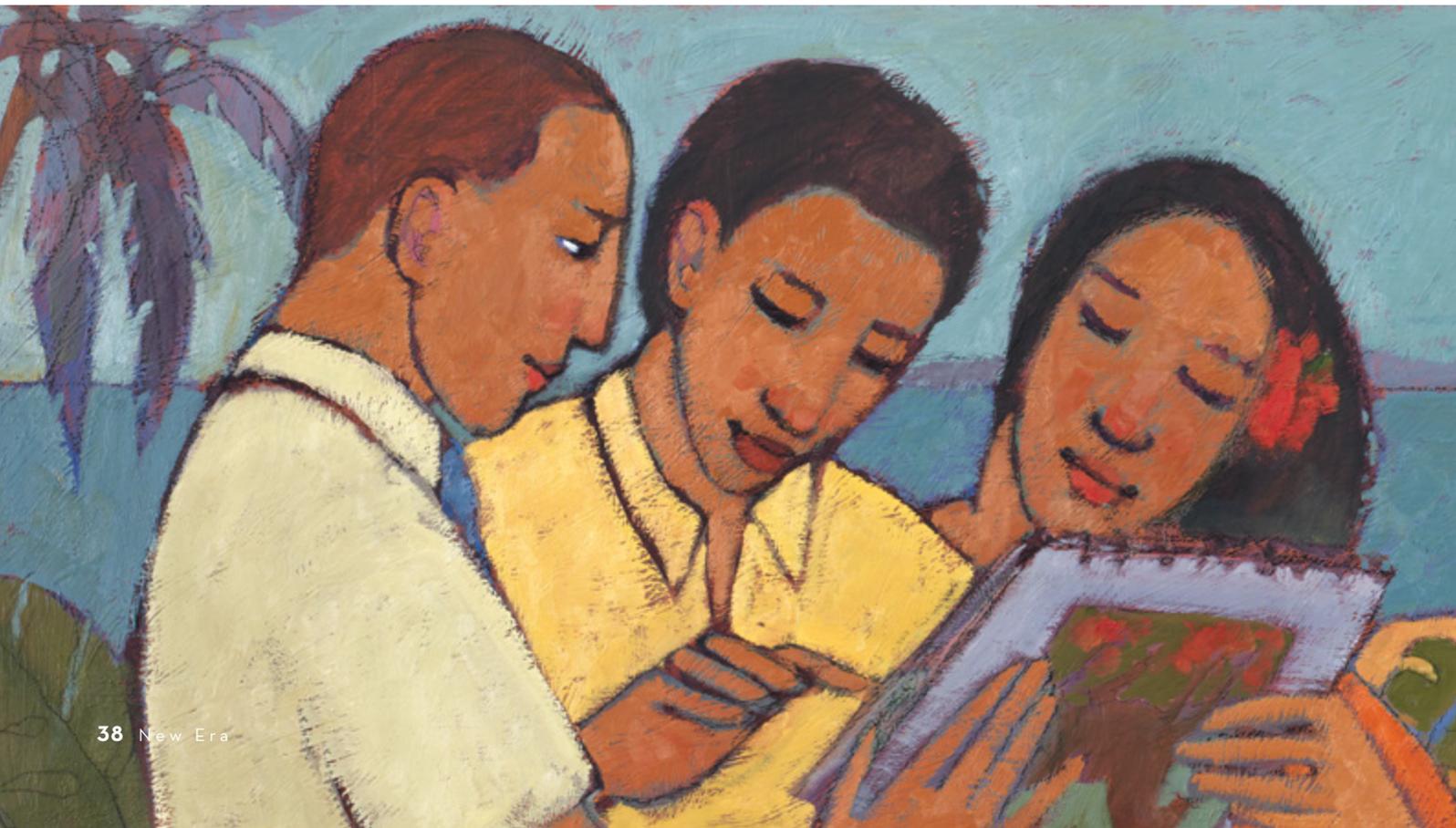
In the islands of Tahiti, it's difficult for the mission president to keep track of his missionaries all the time because he sends them to far-reaching islands. Missionaries were often left on their own, so our mission president needed to know he could trust them.

One experience that stands out to me occurred when the mission president called

me into his office one day and said, "Elder Kacher, we have all these islands in the Marquesas where there are no members of the Church. I want you and your companion to get on the cargo ship that takes supplies to all the little islands. Then, when you stop at each port, I want you to go out for however long you have before the ship leaves and bear testimony of the Restoration of the gospel. I want you to do this for the next 30 days."

The cargo ship would stop at two or three different ports on each island and stay there anywhere from half an hour to a day, depending on the size of the town. I was honored that my mission president would ask us to do that, but I remember getting to the first port and feeling fear, anxiety, and great responsibility. I wondered how we could do what he asked.

At first we kind of fumbled along. We were really unsure of how to proceed and didn't do very well at the first port or two. But then we had a feeling that we should do something else. We felt inspired to use the notebook of pictures the Church had just



introduced of the Restoration and other gospel topics.

As we would go to shore, my companion began opening his notebook of pictures. The Polynesians loved the pictures, and as they swarmed around him to look at them, we would teach and testify to them.

We did that for 30 days, village after village. I don't know how many times we taught lessons and testified, but after those 30 days, I came to understand what it meant to be guided by the Spirit, and I no longer had any fear.

If somebody made fun of me—and many people did—it didn't matter. I knew I was doing God's work and that He was watching over us. My ability to feel and act under the influence of the Spirit grew, as did my confidence. I was never the same after this experience.

During those 30 days, we made several visits to the six habitable islands of the beautiful Marquesas. Today, where the Church once had no members, we have branches.

Obedience Brings Blessings

In a talk to mission presidents about obedience, Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1928–2015), said: “Willing obedience is the foundation of trust. One trusted of the Lord has access to His inspiration to know what to do and, as needed, divine power or capacity to do it.”¹

This is something we taught our missionaries when my wife, Pauline, and I presided over the Switzerland Geneva Mission from 2000 to 2003. And it's something I have felt and experienced throughout my life—not just as a missionary.

When you understand the relationship between obedience and being trusted by the Lord, you can accomplish great things. And when you've earned the Lord's trust, you can go forward with courage and confidence because His Spirit will be with you.

Obedience brings another blessing: safety. As President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, declared, “We find safety and security . . . in honoring the covenants we have made and living up to the ordinary acts of obedience required of the followers of Christ.”²

Obedience helps keep you safe from the things of this world. Safety from the world coupled with trust from the Lord make a powerful combination for all of us—not just youth. **NE**

NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, “The Power of Obedience” (address given at the seminar for new mission presidents, June 24, 1999), 1, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
2. Boyd K. Packer, “These Things I Know,” *Ensign* May 2013, 7.



CAN I CARE FOR THE POOR AND NEEDY?

Jesus Christ is the perfect example of how we should serve others. But can you care for others as He did?

CAN I REACH OUT TO SOMEONE?

YES

GOT IT!

Give a compliment, invite them somewhere, or just ask them about themselves. Christ often focused on individuals who needed Him.
(See John 4:7-30.)

Prayerfully think about who might need a kind word or a friend.

NO ONE COMES TO MIND.

Practice looking outside of yourself. Oftentimes the people who need your love the most are the ones who go unnoticed.
(See Luke 10:30-37.)



DO I HAVE EXTRA TIME?

YES

I HAVEN'T MOVED IN 3 HOURS.

Service project anyone? Get off the couch and use your free time for something awesome!
(See Romans 12:10-11.)

No matter how busy you are, there's always time to think of others. So, how much time?

I CAN SPARE A FEW MINUTES.

Waiting for a class to start? Dinner not quite ready yet? Look around and see who needs your time.
(See Philippians 2:4.)



HAS THE LORD BLESSED ME WITH TALENTS?

YES

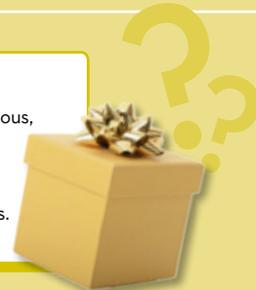
THAT'S EASY!

The best way to use your abilities is to help others. How did Christ use His talent for storytelling?
(See Matthew 13:34.)

How can I use my talents to help others?

UHH ...

Some talents aren't as obvious, like listening or being kind, but they can still uplift others. You DO have a gift you can use to serve others.
(See D&C 46:11.)



DO I HAVE MATERIAL THINGS TO GIVE?

YES

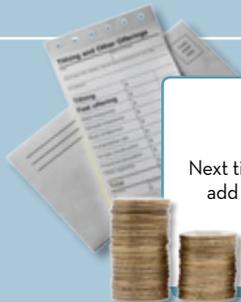
I HAVE A JOB. I CAN SPARE SOME MONEY.

Next time you hand in your tithing, add a little extra for fast offering or humanitarian aid.
(See Isaiah 58:6-12.)

What can I give?

I HAVEN'T WORN THIS COAT IN A WHILE.

Gather up any clothes, gadgets, or food you can do without and give them away.
(See Matthew 25:34-40.)



How should I respond to emotional drama among my friends?

If someone is truly hurting emotionally, it's good to be kind, compassionate, and caring. But sometimes the “drama” is best left alone. Instead, you can take the opportunity to teach correct principles.

For instance, if gossip is the source of the drama, you shouldn't participate in it. Set an example of good friendship by refusing to talk negatively about people behind their backs. You might even tell your friends that they shouldn't gossip either. Sometimes drama has to do with two people who are feuding for whatever reason and are trying to force others to take sides. Again, just leave it alone and try to teach true principles of friendship and forgiveness. Drama often has to do with boyfriend-girlfriend relationships. This is a good opportunity to tactfully suggest to your friends why it's a good idea not to steady date until you're really ready to think seriously about marriage (see more on pages 12 and 16).

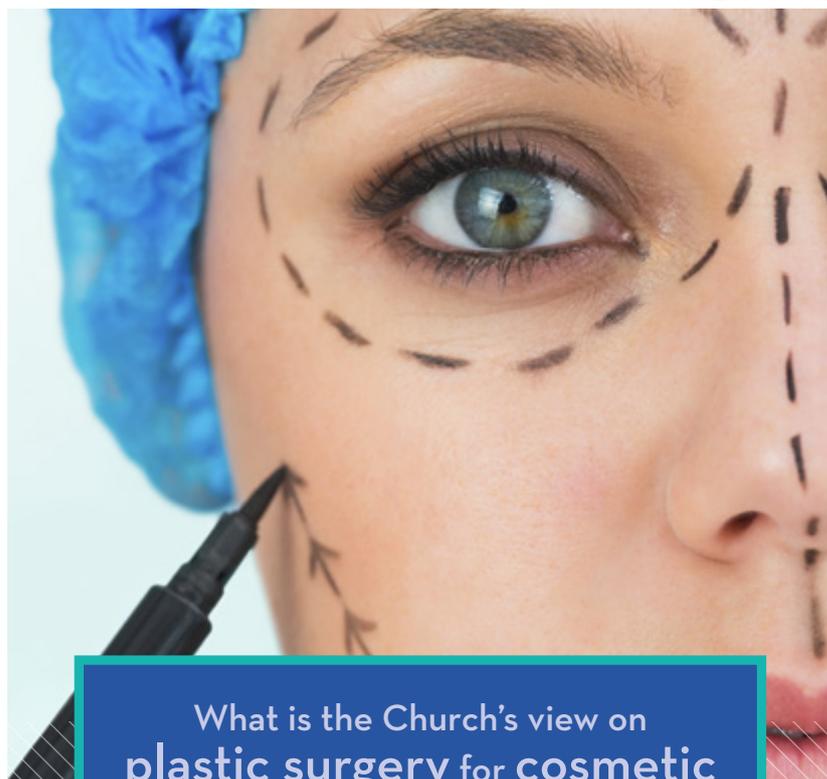
To sum up: be kind, but don't get sucked into the drama; teach true principles instead. **NE**

What is the Church's view on plastic surgery for cosmetic purposes?

The Church has no official position on cosmetic plastic surgery in general, but Church leaders have taught principles that can guide us in such matters. For instance, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said: “I plead with you young women to please be more accepting of yourselves, including your body shape and style, with a little less longing to look like someone else. . . .

“ . . . In too many cases too much is being done to the human body to meet . . . a fictional (to say nothing of superficial) standard. . . .

“In terms of preoccupation with self and a fixation on the physical, this is more than social insanity; it is spiritually destructive And if adults are preoccupied with appearance—tucking and nipping and implanting and remodeling everything that can be remodeled—those pressures and anxieties will certainly seep through to children. . . . One would truly need a great and spacious makeup kit to compete with beauty as portrayed in media all around us” (“To Young Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 29–30). **NE**



“I know God has forgiven me for past sins, but how can I forgive myself?”

Have you ever burned your finger on a hot stove and watched the healing process? At first the burn may be painful and ugly to look at. But in time the wound is healed, new skin appears, and the hurt fades. However, you remember the pain and will avoid touching a hot stove in the future.

Repentance is kind of like that. It may take time to heal from the experience and the pain of past sins, but because of Jesus Christ’s Atonement, that healing can come. Sometimes it takes time and effort to forgive yourself, but as you do, the memory will help remind you not to sin again.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) wrote: “Those laden with transgressions and sorrows and sin may be forgiven and cleansed and purified if they will return to their Lord, learn of him, and keep his commandments. And all of us needing to repent of day-to-day follies and weaknesses can likewise share in this miracle.”¹

Through the Savior’s Atonement, you have the power to do all things that God wants you to do—even forgive yourself.

As you sincerely repent, keep your life clean, continue to obey the commandments, and come to know for yourself of the Savior’s mercy, the pain you feel when you remember your past sins will fade. You will find healing and the sweet peace of forgiveness. **NE**

NOTE

1. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 368.



Pray to Forgive Yourself

Forgiving yourself is never easy, even if Heavenly Father has forgiven you. Sometimes you have to pray a little harder to ask for the strength to forgive yourself. Other times you have to talk it out with a leader or parent.

Miranda J., 14, California, USA



Focus on Doing Your Best

Forgiving yourself is a big part of the repentance process. Once God has forgiven you for your sins, the scriptures say that a big part of fully repenting is forsaking your sins, which means distancing yourself as far as possible from them. Focus on being the best person you can be now instead of dwelling on the past. I think once you’re focused on only doing good and living righteously, you’ll be able to forgive yourself.

Lincoln L., 15, California, USA

Do Not Cause Yourself Misery

If you have messed up, as we all have, do not cause yourself any more misery. Repentance is a beautiful thing. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ we all can be clean. We can



be forgiven, we can learn to forgive ourselves, and we can put the past behind us. How blessed we are to have second chances. How blessed we are to know we can start all over and be provided the strength to do so through the Holy Ghost.

Alexandrea R., 21, Utah, USA



Ask God for Help

If you pray to be forgiven and feel forgiven, you should pray to be comforted, and you will feel comforted. I know the Holy Ghost is a great companion and can help you with anything that you are struggling with. Also, if you still have a hard time forgiving yourself, you can ask for a priesthood blessing.

Simon S., 14, Indiana, USA



Follow the Right Path

When you're driving through a tunnel, it's dark. You might feel like you're going in the wrong direction and it can be scary, but when you see a peek of light at the end, you get a feeling of comfort and relief. This can relate to the gospel. If we get lost, scared, or headed in the wrong direction we can turn to

our Savior, Jesus Christ, for forgiveness and comfort. He is there to forgive us for those sins we repent of and help us get back on the right path so we can live with Him again. If we can remember the commandments and the gospel in our daily lives, we can live with our Savior and have everlasting happiness and joy. Our Heavenly Father and Savior want nothing more than for us to make it to the celestial kingdom and live with Them again.

Emilee N., 15, Utah, USA

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



HEALING TAKES TIME

“For those who are truly repentant but seem unable to feel relief: continue keeping the commandments.

I promise you, relief will come in the timetable of the Lord. Healing also requires time.

“If you are concerned, counsel with your bishop. A bishop has the power of discernment. He will help you.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen, “Repent . . . That I May Heal You,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 42.

UPCOMING QUESTION

“How do I make good friends? I try to be nice, but they turn me away.”

Send your answer and photo by April 15, 2016.

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

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



The Atonement of Jesus Christ

We're imperfect, and so are the circumstances of our lives. We all experience guilt, loss, pain, inadequacy, and more. But we also all have hope for forgiveness, strength, and salvation through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

As you study and discuss this topic at home and in church, you may ponder these questions:

- How does the Savior's Atonement affect me from day to day?
- What feelings do I have when I think of the Savior's sacrifice?

For some thoughts related to these questions, read the scriptures listed in the Topical Guide under "Jesus Christ, Atonement through" and "Grace." You'll also find teachings on the Savior's Atonement in October 2015 general conference talks at conference.lds.org, such as "Strengthened by the Atonement of Jesus Christ" by Elder Dallin H. Oaks (go to lds.org/go/strengthNE316).

Share These Cards

Give yourself an easy reminder to think about this month's theme. Just place these cards in your scriptures, locker, or bedroom. You can also download or share them online at lds.org/go/cardsNE316.

Christ is always near,

waiting and willing to help us when we pray for help and are willing to repent and come unto Him.

Elder M. Russell Ballard
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
October 2015 general conference

No matter what losses, wounds, and rejection we have suffered, His grace and healing are mightier than all.

Truly, yoked to the Savior we can say with confidence,

"It will all work out."

Sister Neill F. Marriott
Second counselor in the Young Women general presidency
October 2015 general conference



RYAN STOKER



JON CLARK



KEVIN BECKSTROM



IDEA BY HYRUM SUTTON, ARTWORK BY VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY



MOM! WAKE UP!

My mother and I arose early on a wintry Saturday morning to drive two hours to my all-day volleyball tournament. I quickly became absorbed by the music and games on my iPod.

With music streaming through the headphones and my eyes looking down at my game, I heard a distinct voice urgently say, “Aubrey. Aubrey. Help. Look up.” The voice was audible through the sound in my headphones, and I was confused. As I looked up, I realized our car had gone off the road and was speeding down a grassy median. I looked over at my mom; she had fallen asleep at the wheel!

I screamed, “Mom! Mom! Wake up!” She immediately awoke, grabbed the steering wheel, and tried to gain control of the car. Luckily, the car eventually slowed to a stop. We sat in silence and disbelief for several minutes.

I explained to my mom that I had felt prompted to look up. In amazement, we both knew what had happened. That prompting from the Holy Ghost had probably saved our lives. He was the one who warned me about the danger and instructed me to help. I will never forget this experience or the prompting that I felt that day.

Aubrey S., North Carolina, USA

PRESSURE FROM A PEER'S PARENT

When I was 16, one of my best friends had a small birthday celebration in her basement with a few close friends. After a while my friend's mom came down with a bottle of champagne. She filled the glasses and gave each of my friends a glass.

"No, thank you. I don't drink," I said when she came to me.

I thought that would be the end of it.

I had always prepared myself for "peer" pressure, and I thought that as an adult, her mom would understand. I was wrong. She was very persistent that I join in with the toast.

I was stunned. I didn't know what to say. I thought I had been clear. I just stood there confused. I hadn't planned on pressure from a parent. There was a moment of silence that seemed to go on forever but was only a few seconds. And then my friends literally encircled me and stepped in front of me and told my friend's mom that I don't drink.

Because I had never been shy about my standards, my friends knew my standards. None of my friends are Church members, but they all come from good families. They are good friends who help me keep my standards even when I'm in tough situations.

Symony G., Georgia, USA

STRENGTHENED IN MY YOUTH

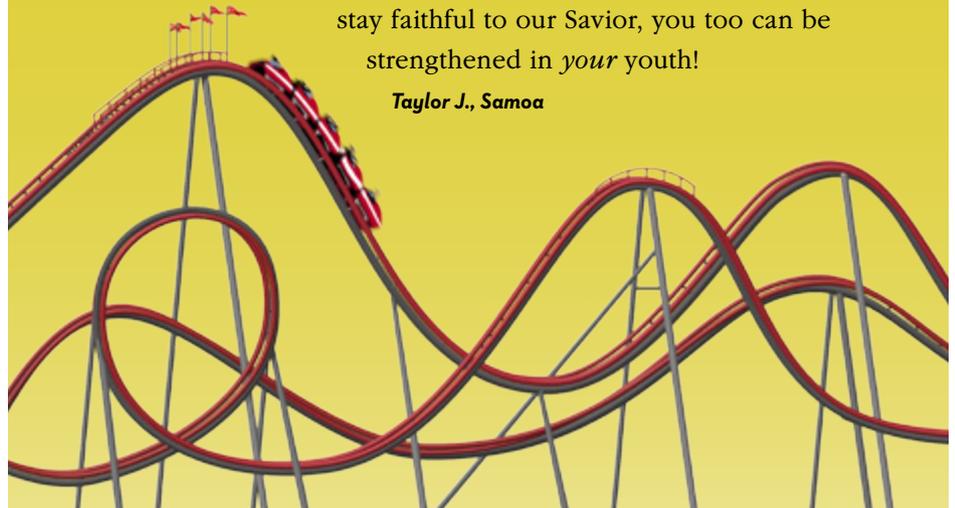
Knowing my *For the Strength of Youth* booklet from cover to cover is one thing, but keeping the standards from cover to cover is something else entirely. For me, upholding the standards has been a physical and emotional roller coaster.

There have been times when I have been tempted by the adversary, and it is only through faith in our Savior, promptings from the Holy Ghost, and my loving family members and friends that I have been strengthened in my youth.

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we are examples to others, but most important, we are servants of the Lord. The things our Heavenly Father asks us to do in *For the Strength of Youth* are not easy, but we must try our best to not

waver in the fight against temptation. If you stay faithful to our Savior, you too can be strengthened in *your* youth!

Taylor J., Samoa



PROMPTED TO SHARE

As I was walking back from a *Preach My Gospel* activity with my group at Especially for Youth (EFY), I saw a man at a picnic table all by himself. I was walking back to my room, and I felt prompted to go talk to him. Shyly I went over there with my friends. We talked to him for just five minutes. It was such an amazing missionary experience to share a little bit about the gospel with someone.

The rest of the week we saw him every day! We just talked to him and shared whatever we had talked about that day in our classes with him. We ended up giving him a Book of Mormon that we had all written our testimonies in. A year later I learned that the man was baptized! I am so grateful for the opportunity I had to teach the gospel to him with the help of my friends.

Susie B., Arizona, USA



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

HOW TO BUILD UNITY

We live in many different circumstances. We will come from every nation and many ethnic backgrounds into the kingdom of God.

We know from experience that joy comes when we are blessed with unity. Heavenly Father cannot grant it to us as individuals. The joy of unity He wants so much to give us is not solitary. **We must seek it and qualify for it** with others. It is not surprising then that God urges us to **gather** so that He can bless us. He wants us to gather into families. He has established classes, wards, and branches and commanded us to meet together often. In those gatherings, which God has designed for us, lies our great opportunity. **We can pray and work for the unity** that will bring us joy and multiply our power to serve.

In addition to ordinances, there are principles we are following as a people which are leading to greater unity.

1. Revelation. Revelation is the only way we can know how to

follow the will of the Lord together. It requires light from above. The Holy Ghost will testify to our hearts, and to the hearts of those gathered around with us, what He would have us do. And it is by keeping His commandments that we can have our hearts knit together as one.

2. Be humble. Pride is the great enemy of unity. You have seen and felt its terrible effects. Happily I am seeing more and more skillful peacemakers who calm troubled waters before harm is done. You could be one of those peacemakers, whether you are in the conflict or an observer. One way I have seen it done is to search for anything on which we agree.

3. Speak well of each other. Think of the last time you were asked what you thought about how someone else was doing in their service in your family or in the Church. I can **promise** you a feeling of **peace and joy** when you speak generously of others in the Light of Christ.



HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?

The Lord wants us to love our brothers and sisters, even if people are not the same as we are. We need to bring our brothers and sisters back to church. If we love them and pray for them, they may come back to church and back into our Lord's arms.

Samuel S., 16, Arizona, USA

With the unity I see increasing, the Lord will be able to perform what the world will think of as miraculous. The Saints can accomplish any purpose of the Lord when fully united in righteousness. **NE**

From an October 2008 general conference address.

**THE SAVIOR HAS THE POWER TO
SUCCOR—TO HELP—EVERY MORTAL
PAIN AND AFFLICTION. SOMETIMES HIS
POWER HEALS AN INFIRMITY, BUT . . .
SOMETIMES HE SUCCORS OR HELPS BY
GIVING US THE STRENGTH OR PATIENCE
TO ENDURE OUR INFIRMITIES.**

Elder Dallin H. Oaks
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
October 2015 general conference



WHAT'S ONLINE



FollowHim.mormon.org

FINDING NEW LIFE *in Christ*

Whether we've lost a loved one or wonder if there will ever be freedom from sorrow or guilt or pain—for us and for others—we can turn to the Savior. Because of His Atonement and Resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ is able to heal *every* pain, understand *every* heartache, and overcome *every* loss. As King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He has risen from the grave and gives all of us life. No matter what we're experiencing, we can find new life in Him.

To celebrate His victory over sin and death, the Church has created a new video at FollowHim.mormon.org (available after March 13). Join in the social media conversation around it this Easter using #Hallelujah and share how you and those you love have found new life in Jesus Christ.



EVERYONE YOU LOVE SHALL BE MADE ALIVE IN CHRIST.

#Hallelujah

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

