

STAND OUT



“I hope nobody thinks I’m weird.” This thought has probably crossed all of our minds before. It’s scary to think about, right? Not fitting in. Being different. Could there be anything worse than that?

Actually, could there be anything better than that? Being yourself while upholding your standards and being different from the rest of the world is one of the greatest accomplishments you could ever achieve! In fact, in his worldwide devotional for youth this past June, President Nelson invited us all to “stand out; be different from the world.”

Every day, we see and hear about lifestyle choices that are completely different from our own. Sometimes even our friends may make choices that don’t align with our standards, and they may give us puzzled looks when they don’t understand why we don’t do or say certain things. When this happens, the pressure to fit in can definitely get heavy. But that’s the key word here: fitting in. Fitting in can be seen as different from belonging.

Fitting in can mean changing yourself and your standards to be like everyone else, while belonging can mean being loved and accepted for who you are, including your standards that are different from the world’s. Strive for belonging, for friends who love you for who you are—your differences and all. As President Nelson said, “Embrace being different!”

Though some may not fully understand why you do or you don’t do certain things, you never know how your example will affect others. Your friends may notice a certain peculiarity about you when you keep your standards high and when you make good choices.

“Therefore, the Lord needs you to look like, sound like, act like, and dress like a true disciple of Jesus Christ,” said President Nelson. You can live differently from the rest of the world! We don’t usually have to do anything extravagant to stand out—just living as a true disciple of Christ is enough to share light with others. “And if you are sometimes called ‘weird,’ wear that distinction as a badge of honor and be happy that your light is shining brightly in this ever-darkening world!” said President Nelson.

So there’s no reason to worry about being different. You were born to stand out. You have a brilliant purpose. As President Nelson taught, “With the Holy Ghost as your companion, you can see right through the celebrity culture that has smitten our society. You can be smarter than previous generations have ever been. . . . Set a standard for the rest of the world!” **NE**