



GOALS, GROWTH, AND FAMILY TIME

Spencer's Duty to God goals strengthened his family and drew them closer to words of living prophets.

By Janet Thomas

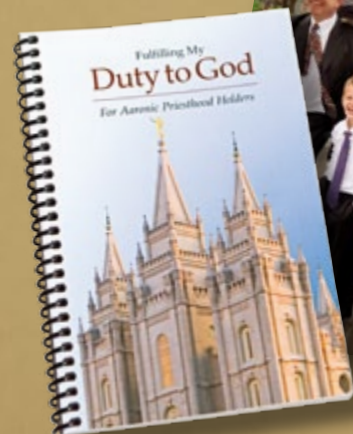
One day last summer, Spencer J. was riding home from a summer vacation with his parents and family when he decided that the time in the car was perfect for planning some of his goals for the upcoming year. He and his family came up with a great list of goals that would help him plan for school, work on getting in better shape, and fulfill his duty to God.

INDIVIDUAL GOALS

His goals for school included working hard to get straight A's, befriending people at school who seem lonely, and tutoring a student who is struggling in classes. He also

wanted to run for an Arizona State President of Student Government, which he was later elected to. That goal could have been intimidating because he had to give a speech in front of 2,000 people. But, as Spencer says, "It would be an awesome experience to talk to other states about what they are doing with their student governments."

Spencer wanted to get in better physical shape. He decided to make a goal to ride his bike at least four miles about three days a week to prepare for a mission. Then he listed that he would like to run two miles at least once a week. He also would participate with the track and tennis teams.



As a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood, Spencer worked with his quorum leaders to set a goal to help make the sacrament more meaningful by being prepared to bless the sacrament, saying the prayers with more feeling, and inviting others who don't often participate in the blessing of the sacrament to bless it with him.

Carrying out these personal goals has made Spencer happier, healthier, and more prepared for the challenges and opportunities he will face in the future.

A FAMILY GOAL

After Spencer set his individual goals, he and his parents came up with a great plan. As a family, they study scriptures together, but they also wanted to review the talks given at general conference. His parents offered him the chance to be the leader in those discussions. He would choose the talk from the most recent conference, and every Sunday they would spend about 20 minutes talking about it. Spencer says, "I read the selected article in the *Ensign* beforehand. Then I prepare questions for people to answer. It gives me the opportunity to lead in the family, sort of practice for becoming a dad. It's kind of cool."

This family study fulfills his Duty to God goal for "Pray and Study the Scriptures" during the priest year. He follows the Duty to God pattern:

- **LEARN:** He arranges for a Sunday afternoon time for the presentation. He gathers information to support the talk he has chosen to present.
- **ACT:** He reads the talk from the *Ensign* or watches the videos of the talks online and prepares discussion questions.
- **SHARE:** He presents his discussion and questions to his family.

This experience to fulfill his Duty to God goal has helped Spencer stay on track. He says, "The project has affected us a lot. Now that it is a Duty to God goal, I'm more motivated to do it. My family has been more persistent."

For the family, Spencer's project has strengthened them. The plan they made together while driving in the car has proven to be a move forward for them all. **NE**



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