

NOVEMBER 2014

THE **New Era**

General Conference

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General Conference IS FOR YOU

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President
Thomas S. Monson

VIDEOS AND QUOTES

Share designed quotes and short video highlights from President Monson's conference addresses at lds.org/go/1141, lds.org/go/1142, lds.org/go/1143, and lds.org/go/1144.

CHOOSING TO BE DISCIPLES

Guided Safely Home

“The lighthouse of the Lord beckons to all as we sail the seas of life. Our purpose is to steer an undeviating course toward our desired goal—even the celestial kingdom of God. A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder, never likely to reach home port. To us comes the signal: chart your course, set your sail, position your rudder, and proceed. . . .

“Our Father provided the sun, the moon, and the stars—heavenly galaxies to guide mariners who sail the lanes of the sea. To us, as we walk the pathway of life, He provides a clear map and points the way toward our desired destination. He cautions: beware the detours, the pitfalls, the traps. We cannot

be deceived by those who would lead us astray, those clever pied pipers of sin beckoning here or there. Instead, we pause to pray; we listen to that still, small voice which speaks to the depths of our souls the Master's gentle invitation, ‘Come, follow me’ [Luke 18:22]. . . .

“Ours is the responsibility to be worthy of all the glorious blessings our Father in Heaven has in store for us. Wherever we go, our priesthood goes with us. Are we standing in holy places? Please, before you put yourself and your priesthood in jeopardy by venturing into places or participating in activities which are not worthy of you or of that priesthood, pause to consider the consequences.



“We who have been ordained to the priesthood of God can make a difference. When we maintain our personal purity and honor our priesthood, we become righteous examples for others to follow.”

Ponder the Path of Thy Feet

“I am certain we left our Father with an overwhelming desire to return to Him, that we might gain the exaltation He planned for us and which we ourselves so much wanted. Although we are left to find and follow that path which will lead us back to our Father in Heaven, He did not send us here without direction and guidance. Rather, He has given us the tools we need, and He will assist us as we seek His help and strive to do all in our power to endure to the end and gain eternal life.

“To help guide us we have the words of God and of His Son found in our holy scriptures. We have the counsel and teachings of God’s prophets. Of paramount importance, we have been provided with a perfect example to follow—even the example of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—and we have been instructed to follow that example. . . .

“As we examine the path Jesus walked, we will see that it took Him through many of the same challenges we ourselves will face in life. . . .

“. . . Jesus walked the path of disappointment. . . .

“Jesus walked the path of temptation. . . .

“Jesus walked the path of pain. . . .

“Each of us will walk the path of disappointment, perhaps because of an opportunity lost, a power misused, a loved one’s choices, or a choice we ourselves make. The path of temptation too will be the path of each. . . .

“Likewise shall we walk the path of pain. We, as servants, can expect no more than the Master, who left mortality only after great pain and suffering.

“While we will find on our path bitter sorrow, we can also find great happiness.

“We, with Jesus, can walk the path of obedience. . . .

“We, like Jesus, can walk the path of service. . . .

“Jesus walked the path of prayer. . . .

“As we strive to place Christ at the center of our lives by learning His words, by following His teachings, and by walking in His path, He has promised to share with us the eternal life that He died to gain. There is no higher end than this, that we should choose to accept His discipline and become His disciples and do His work throughout our lives. Nothing else, no other choice we make, can make of us what He can.”

May We Care for Others

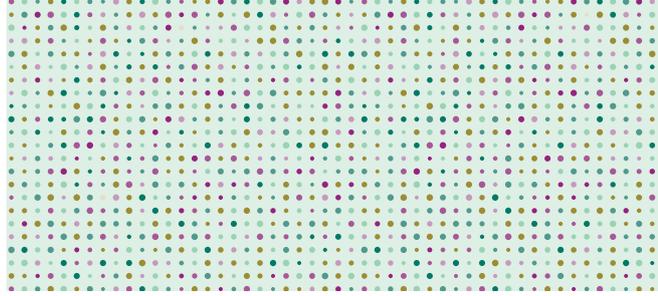
“There are those who struggle every day with challenges. Let us extend to them our concern, as well as a helping hand. As we care for each other, we will be blessed.

“May we remember the elderly and those who are homebound. As we take time to visit them, they will know that they are loved and valued. May we follow the mandate to ‘succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees’ [D&C 81:5].

“May we be people of honesty and integrity, trying to do the right thing at all times and in all circumstances. May we be faithful followers of Christ, examples of righteousness, thus becoming ‘lights in the world’ [Philippians 2:15].”

“General conference was really special to me. I felt the Spirit so strongly listening to President Monson. The talks on Sunday morning about following the prophet really stuck out to me. I have a strong testimony of President Monson and that following his counsel will bless us.”

Jack B., 14, Alberta, Canada



told him he could. God the Father and His Beloved Son appeared in a grove of trees. They answered the question that was beyond Joseph's power to resolve.

"Not only was he then called of God to establish the true Church of Jesus Christ, but with it was restored the power to invoke the Holy Ghost so that revelation from God could be continuous. . . .

". . . Heavenly Father hears your prayers. He loves you. He knows your name. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and our Redeemer. He loves you beyond your ability to comprehend.

"God pours out revelation, through the Holy Ghost, on His children."

The Preparatory Priesthood

"The Lord's plan for His work is filled with preparation. He prepared the earth for us to experience the tests and the opportunities of mortality. . . .

"Just as the time we have been given to live in mortality is to prepare to meet God, the time we are given to serve in the Aaronic Priesthood is an opportunity to prepare us to learn how to give crucial help to others. Just as the Lord gives the help we require to pass the tests of mortal life, He also sends us help in our priesthood preparation. . . .

"All of us in the priesthood have an obligation to help the Lord prepare others. There are some things we can do that could matter most. Even more powerful than using words in our teaching the doctrine will be our examples of living the doctrine.

"Paramount in our priesthood service is inviting people to come unto Christ by faith, repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost. . . .

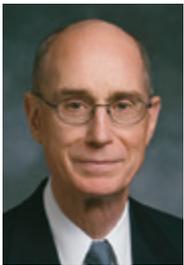
"In priesthood preparation, 'show me' counts more than 'tell me.'"

REVELATION AND SERVICE

Continuing Revelation

"We all know that human judgment and logical thinking will not be enough to get answers to the questions that matter most in life. We need revelation from God. And we will need not just one revelation in a time of stress, but we need a constantly renewed stream. We need not just one flash of light and comfort, but we need the continuing blessing of communication with God.

"The very existence of the Church stems from a young boy knowing that was true. Young Joseph Smith knew that he could not of himself know which church to join. So he asked of God, as the book of James



President Henry B. Eyring
First Counselor in the First Presidency

VIDEOS AND QUOTES

Share designed quotes and short video highlights from President Eyring's conference addresses at lds.org/go/1145 and lds.org/go/1146.



Cape Town, South Africa

General Conference
IS FOR YOU



task of a minute, an hour, or a day. It is not once and done. The process of gathering spiritual light is the quest of a lifetime. . . .

“ . . . This spiritual light is within the reach of every child of God. It will enlighten your mind and bring healing to your heart and joy to your days.”

“Lord, Is It I?”

“As you hear or read the words of the ancient and modern prophets, refrain from thinking about how the words apply to someone else and ask . . . : *‘Lord, is it I?’* . . .

“ . . . Those who learn of the Savior and desire to be like Him, those who humble themselves as a little child and seek to bring their thoughts and actions into harmony with our Father in Heaven—they will experience the miracle of the Savior’s Atonement.”

Living the Gospel Joyful

“Part of our challenge is, I think, that we imagine that God has all of His blessings locked in a huge cloud up in heaven. . . . In reality, Heavenly Father is constantly raining blessings upon us. It is our fear, doubt, and sin that, like an umbrella, block these blessings from reaching us.

“His commandments are the loving instructions and the divine help for us to close the umbrella so we can receive the shower of heavenly blessings. . . .

“Do you suppose it matters to our Heavenly Father whether your makeup, clothes, hair, and nails are perfect? Do you think your value to Him changes based on how many followers you have on Instagram or Pinterest? . . .

“He loves you not only for who you are this very day but also for the person of glory and light you have the potential and the desire to become.”



President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

TESTIMONY AND JOY

Receiving a Testimony of Light and Truth

“God Himself—the Lord of Hosts who knows all truth—has given His children the promise that they can know truth for themselves. . . .

“He will speak to them in dreams, visions, thoughts, and feelings.

“He will speak in a way that is unmistakable and that transcends human experience. . . .

“ . . . The answers to your prayers will come in His own way and in His own time, and therefore, you need to learn to listen to His voice. . . .

“ . . . This personal testimony of the gospel and the Church is the most important thing you can earn in this life. . . .

“ . . . Most often gaining a testimony is not a

VIDEOS AND QUOTES

Share designed quotes and short video highlights from President Uchtdorf’s conference addresses at lds.org/go/1147, lds.org/go/1148, and lds.org/go/1149.



APOSTLES SPEAK TO US



THE REASON FOR OUR HOPE

“Those who will repent and forsake sin will find that His merciful arm is outstretched still. Those who listen to and heed His words and the words of His chosen servants will find peace and understanding even in the midst of great heartache and sorrow. The result of His sacrifice is to free us from the effects of sin, that all may have guilt erased and feel hope....”

“The mercy and grace of Jesus Christ are not limited to those who commit sins either of commission or omission, but they encompass the promise of everlasting peace to all who will accept and follow Him and His teachings. His mercy is the mighty healer, even to the wounded innocent....”

“If we are not aware of what the Savior’s sacrifice can do for us, we may go through life carrying regrets that we have done something that was not right or offended someone. The guilt that accompanies mistakes can be washed away. If we seek to understand His Atonement, we will come to a deep reverence for the Lord Jesus Christ, His earthly ministry, and His divine mission as our Savior....”

“... No matter how large the organization of the Church becomes or how many millions of members join our ranks, ... the true success of the gospel of Jesus Christ will be measured by the spiritual strength of its individual members. We need the strength of conviction that is found in the heart of every loyal disciple of Christ.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



FINDING LASTING PEACE AND BUILDING ETERNAL FAMILIES

“Our journey through life has periods of both good times and bad. Each presents different challenges. How we learn to adjust to the changes which come along depends on the foundation on which we build. The gospel of our Lord and Savior provides a sure and solid foundation. It is constructed piece by piece as we gain knowledge of the Lord’s eternal plan for His children. The Savior is the Master Teacher. We follow Him....”

“Many in our worried society understand that the disintegration of the family will bring only sorrow and hopelessness into a troubled world. As members of the Church, we have the responsibility to preserve and protect the family as the basic unit of society and eternity. The prophets have warned and forewarned about the inevitable and destructive consequence of a deterioration of family values.

“As the world continues to watch us, let us be certain that our example will sustain and support the plan the Lord has designed for His children here in mortality. The greatest teaching of all must be done by righteous example. Our homes must be holy places in order to stand against the pressures of the world. Remember that the greatest of all the blessings of the Lord come through and are given to righteous families.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“I especially liked Elder Oaks’s talk when he talked about not compromising our values. Recently I have been struggling with how the world’s view on the family and marriage has been falling apart and how it seems to be that I am the only one who’s supporting the values of the family. Having this talk addressing these problems in my life has calmed my fears and given me peace for the future.”

Katelyn B., 16, Utah, USA



SUSTAINING THE PROPHETS

“My dear brothers and sisters, if the Restoration did anything, it shattered the age-old myth that God had stopped talking to His children. Nothing could be further from the truth. A prophet has stood at the head of God’s Church in all dispensations, from Adam to the present day. Prophets testify of Jesus Christ—of His divinity and of His earthly mission and ministry. We honor the Prophet Joseph Smith as the prophet of this last dispensation. And we honor each man who has succeeded him as President of the Church....

“... All leaders in the Lord’s Church are called by proper authority. No prophet or any other leader in this Church, for that matter, has ever called himself or herself. No prophet has ever been elected. The Lord made that clear when He said, ‘Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you’ [John 15:16]. You and I do not ‘vote’ on Church leaders at any level. We do, though, have the privilege of sustaining them.

“... Man’s ways remove people from office or business when they grow old or become disabled. But man’s ways are not and never will be the Lord’s ways. Our sustaining of prophets is a personal commitment that we will do our utmost to uphold their prophetic priorities. Our sustaining is an oath-like indication that we recognize their calling as a prophet to be legitimate and binding upon us.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



LOVING OTHERS AND LIVING WITH DIFFERENCES

“Even as we seek to be meek and to avoid contention, we must not compromise or dilute our commitment to the truths we understand. We must not surrender our positions or our values.

The gospel of Jesus Christ and the covenants we have made inevitably cast us as combatants in the eternal contest between truth and error. There is no middle ground in that contest.

“... Loving-kindness is required, but a follower of Christ—just like the Master—will be firm in the truth....

“... Followers of Christ should be examples of civility. We should love all people, be good listeners, and show concern for their sincere beliefs. Though we may disagree, we should not be disagreeable. Our stands and communications on controversial topics should not be contentious. We should be wise in explaining and pursuing our positions and in exercising our influence. In doing so, we ask that others not be offended by our sincere religious beliefs and the free exercise of our religion....

“When our positions do not prevail, we should accept unfavorable results graciously and practice civility with our adversaries. In any event, we should be persons of goodwill toward all, rejecting persecution of any kind, including persecution based on race, ethnicity, religious belief or nonbelief, and differences in sexual orientation.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



STAY IN THE BOAT AND HOLD ON!

“At the beginning of [a river rafting] trip, one of the experienced river guides reviewed important safety instructions, emphasizing three rules that would ensure the group’s safe travel through the rapids. ‘Rule number one: stay in the boat! Rule number two: always wear a life jacket! Rule number three: always hold on with both hands!’ ...

“... How do we stay on the Old Ship Zion?

“... We need to experience a continuing conversion by increasing our faith in Jesus Christ and our faithfulness to His gospel throughout our lives—not just once but regularly. ...

“... Remember rules two and three: always wear a life jacket, and hold on with both hands. The words of the Lord are found in the scriptures and the teachings of the apostles and prophets. They provide us counsel and direction that, when followed, will act like a spiritual life jacket and will help us know how to hold on with both hands. ...

“Sometimes faithful Latter-day Saints and sincere investigators begin to focus on the ‘appendages’ instead of on the fundamental principles. That is, Satan tempts us to become distracted from the simple and clear message of the restored gospel. ...

“The important questions focus on what matters most—Heavenly Father’s plan and the Savior’s Atonement. Our search should lead us to become kind, gentle, loving, forgiving, patient, and dedicated disciples.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



MAKE THE EXERCISE OF FAITH YOUR FIRST PRIORITY

“We must take time to actively exercise our faith. Such exercise invites the positive, faith-filled power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ into our lives.

“Our Father in Heaven has given us tools to help us come unto Christ and exercise faith in His Atonement. When these tools become fundamental habits, they provide the easiest way to find peace in the challenges of mortality. ... I have chosen to discuss four of these tools. ... Consider evaluating your personal use of each tool; then seek the guidance of the Lord to determine how you could make better use of each one of them. ...

“Prayer ...

“Scripture Study ...

“Family Home Evening ...

“Temple Attendance ...

“These four tools are fundamental habits for securing your life in the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Remember our Savior is the Prince of Peace. Peace in this mortal life comes from His atoning sacrifice. When we are consistently praying morning and night, studying our scriptures daily, having weekly family home evening, and attending the temple regularly, we are actively responding to His invitation to ‘come unto Him.’ The more we develop these habits, the more anxious is Satan to harm us but the less is his ability to do so.”

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



“Elder Ballard’s talk hit me hard. We jump out of the boat because it looks like fun. Staying in the boat will ensure our safety.”

Chelsea N., 18, Kansas, USA



ETERNAL LIFE—TO KNOW OUR HEAVENLY FATHER AND HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST

“As a boy, I used to gaze into the starry sky and ponder and feel [God’s] presence. I thrilled to explore the magnificent beauties of God’s creations—from tiny insects to towering trees. As I recognized the beauty of this earth, I knew that Heavenly Father loved me. I knew that I was a literal spiritual offspring. . . .

“How did I know this? you might ask. . . .

“My own testimony grew as I learned about Heavenly Father and the Savior from the teachings and testimony of my parents, teachers, the scriptures—which I read diligently—and especially the Holy Ghost. As I exercised faith and obeyed the commandments, the Holy Ghost testified that what I was learning was true. This is how I came to know for myself. . . .

“You too can seek our Heavenly Father and ‘this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have [testified]’ [Ether 12:41] in the scriptures and in this general conference. As you seek a personal witness—your personal revelation—you will discover that Heavenly Father has provided a special way for you to know the truth for yourself: through the third member of the Godhead, a personage of spirit we know as the Holy Ghost. . . .

“... When we build our house upon [Jesus Christ], the rains of the latter days may descend, the floods may come, and the winds may blow, but we will not fall. We will not fail, for our home and our family will be founded upon Christ.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



ARE WE NOT ALL BEGGARS?

“Down through history, poverty has been one of humankind’s greatest and most widespread challenges. Its obvious toll is usually physical, but the spiritual and emotional damage it can bring may be even more debilitating. In any case, the great Redeemer has issued no more persistent call than for us to join Him in lifting this burden from the people. . . .

“Given the monumental challenge of addressing inequity in the world, what can one man or woman do? The Master Himself offered an answer. When, prior to His betrayal and Crucifixion, Mary anointed Jesus’s head with an expensive burial ointment, Judas Iscariot protested this extravagance and ‘murmured against her’ [see Mark 14:3–5].

“Jesus said: ‘Why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work. . . .

“*She hath done what she could*’ [Mark 14:6, 8; emphasis added].

“‘She hath done what she could!’ What a succinct formula!

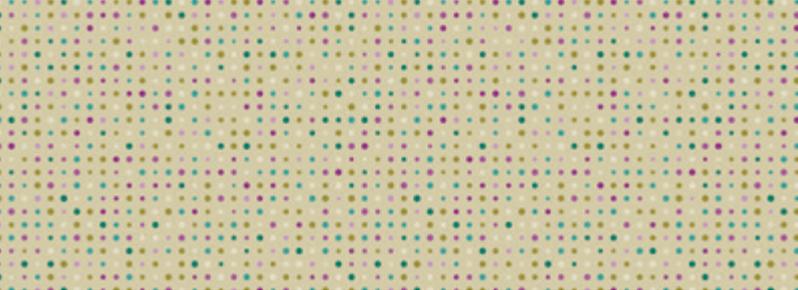
“So how might we ‘do what we can’? . . .

“For one thing, we can . . . cease withholding our means because we see the poor as having brought their misery upon themselves. . . .

“... We should also pray for those in need. . . .”

“... Although I may not be my brother’s keeper, I am my brother’s brother, and ‘because I have been given much, I too must give’ [*Hymns*, no. 219].”

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



"I felt that the talks were focused on my pathway to going on my mission. Every talk was focused on love and service. If we keep these two things in our life, we can feel God's love and bring other heavenly siblings back to our loving Father in Heaven."

Glenn T., 18, Idaho, USA



COME AND SEE

"My message is directed specifically to individuals who are not members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I will address a fundamental question many of you may have: 'Why are Latter-day Saints so eager to tell me about what they believe and to invite me to learn about their church?' ...

"Devoted disciples of Jesus Christ always have been and always will be valiant missionaries. A missionary is a follower of Christ who testifies of Him as the Redeemer and proclaims the truths of His gospel.

"The Church of Jesus Christ always has been and always will be a missionary church. The individual members of the Savior's Church have accepted the solemn obligation to assist in fulfilling the divine commission given by the Lord....

"...Our eagerness to declare this message is not merely the result of a sense of spiritual duty. Rather, our desire to share the restored gospel of Jesus Christ with you is a reflection of how important these truths are to us....

"The invitations we extend to you to learn about and test our message grow out of the positive effects the gospel of Jesus Christ has had in our lives. Sometimes we may be awkward or abrupt or even relentless in our attempts. Our simple desire is to share with you the truths that are of greatest worth to us."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



CHOOSE WISELY

"When we allow rationalizations to prevent us from temple endowments, worthy missions, and temple marriage, they are particularly harmful. It is heartbreaking when we profess belief in these goals yet neglect the everyday conduct required to achieve them....

"Sometimes it feels like we are drowning in frivolous foolishness, nonsensical noise, and continuous contention. When we turn down the volume and examine the substance, there is very little that will assist us in our eternal quest toward righteous goals....

"...Many choices are not inherently evil, but if they absorb all of our time and keep us from the best choices, then they become insidious....

"...I encourage everyone, young and old, to review goals and objectives and strive to exercise greater discipline. Our daily conduct and choices should be consistent with our goals. We need to rise above rationalizations and distractions. It is especially important to make choices consistent with our covenants to serve Jesus Christ in righteousness....

"... We appreciate a good sense of humor and treasure unstructured time with friends and family. But we need to recognize that there is a seriousness of purpose that must undergird our approach to life and all our choices. Distractions and rationalizations that limit progress are harmful enough, but when they diminish faith in Jesus Christ and His Church, they are tragic."

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"I felt the Spirit reaffirm to me that President Monson is a true prophet of God and that the Apostles and other General Authorities are also called of God."

Rachel W., 16, Georgia, USA



FREE FOREVER, TO ACT FOR THEMSELVES

"When things turn bad, there is a tendency to blame others or even God. . . . In spiritual matters some suppose that men and women need not strive for personal righteousness—because God loves and saves us 'just as we are.'"

"But God intends that His children should act according to the moral agency He has given them, 'that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment' [D&C 101:78]. . . ."

"... The real manifestation of God's love is His commandments. . . ."

"Misunderstanding God's justice and mercy is one thing; denying God's existence or supremacy is another, but either will result in our achieving less—sometimes far less—than our full, divine potential. A God who makes no demands is the functional equivalent of a God who does not exist. . . ."

"In matters both temporal and spiritual, the opportunity to assume personal responsibility is a God-given gift without which we cannot realize our full potential as daughters and sons of God. Personal accountability becomes both a right and a duty that we must constantly defend. . . ."

"... We must exert ourselves, repent, and choose God for Him to be able to act in our lives consistent with justice and moral agency. My plea is simply to take responsibility and go to work so that there is something for God to help us with."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



JOSEPH SMITH

"Joseph Smith is the Prophet of the Restoration. . . . The importance of Joseph's work requires more than intellectual consideration; it requires that we, like Joseph, 'ask of God' [James 1:5]. . . ."

"Each believer needs a spiritual confirmation of the divine mission and character of the Prophet Joseph Smith. This is true for every generation. Spiritual questions deserve spiritual answers from God. . . ."

"To the youth listening today or reading these words in the days ahead, I give a specific challenge: Gain a personal witness of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Let your voice help fulfill Moroni's prophetic words to speak good of the Prophet. Here are two ideas: First, find scriptures in the Book of Mormon that you feel and know are absolutely true. Then share them with family and friends in family home evening, seminary, and your Young Men and Young Women classes, acknowledging that Joseph was an instrument in God's hands. Next, read the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Pearl of Great Price or in [the *Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith*] pamphlet, now in 158 languages. You can find it online at LDS.org or with the missionaries. This is Joseph's own testimony of what actually occurred. Read it often. Consider recording the testimony of Joseph Smith in your own voice, listening to it regularly, and sharing it with friends. Listening to the Prophet's testimony in your own voice will help bring the witness you seek."

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



ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS

How do I get along with people who have such different beliefs and values from mine?



"In so many relationships and circumstances in life, we must live with differences. Where vital, our side of these

differences should not be denied or abandoned, but as followers of Christ we should live peacefully with others who do not share our values or accept the teachings upon which they are based. The Father's plan of salvation, which we know by prophetic revelation, places us in a mortal circumstance where we are to keep His commandments. That includes loving our neighbors of different cultures and beliefs as He has loved us. As a Book of Mormon prophet taught, we must press forward, having 'a love of God and of all men' (2 Nephi 31:20)."

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

What should I tell people who say there's no one right or wrong way to live and believe?



"To those who believe anything or everything could be true, the declaration of objective, fixed, and universal truth feels like coercion—'I shouldn't be forced to believe something is true that I don't like.' But that does not change reality. Resenting the law of gravity won't keep a person from falling if he steps off a cliff. The same is true for eternal law and justice.

Freedom comes not from resisting it but from applying it. That is fundamental to God's own power. If it were not for the reality of fixed and immutable truths, the gift of agency would be meaningless since we would never be able to foresee and intend the consequences of our actions."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"I was really looking forward to general conference. I got to watch it with my cousins. All the talks were especially great! They really cleared questions I had. My hand got so tired from writing so many awesome quotes. I can't wait until next general conference. My favorite was President Uchtdorf's talk. It inspired me to get on top of my scripture study. As soon as I got home, I started reading."

Mikaela J., 13, Utah, USA

People sometimes
**attack the Prophet
Joseph Smith.**

**How can I gain a strong
testimony of him?**



“A testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith can come differently to each of us. It may come as you kneel in prayer, asking

God to confirm that he was a true prophet. It may come as you read the Prophet’s account of the First Vision. A testimony may distill upon your soul as you read the Book of Mormon again and again. It may come as you bear your own testimony of the Prophet or as you stand in the temple and realize that through Joseph Smith the holy sealing power was restored to the earth. With faith and real intent, your testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith will strengthen. The constant water balloon volleys from the sidelines may occasionally get you wet, but they need never, never extinguish your burning fire of faith.”

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



“During general conference I was able to ponder difficult questions I’ve wondered about for a long time—about my spirituality, school, and friends. I was given answers I couldn’t have received anywhere else.”

Kendra F., 16, Utah, USA

**What should I do to
help the poor?**



“I don’t know exactly how each of you should fulfill your obligation to those who do not or cannot always help themselves.

But I know that God knows, and He will help you and guide you in compassionate acts of discipleship if you are conscientiously wanting and praying and looking for ways to keep a commandment He has given us again and again.”

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



**What does it mean to
take the name
of Jesus Christ
upon us?**



“That is a solemn commitment to submit ourselves to His authority and to do His work, which includes receiving for ourselves every saving ordinance and covenant.”

Elder James J. Hamula of the Seventy





“Elder Scott stressed four things: pray, study the word of God, have weekly FHE, and go to the temple. We should give up things to do them. This will be hard, but I’m challenging myself to do as he said and come closer to God.”

Amelia S., 15, Arizona, USA

What if I have questions and doubts about the Church?



“Having questions and experiencing doubts are not incongruent with dedicated discipleship. Recently, the Council of

the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stated: ‘We understand that from time to time Church members will have questions about Church doctrine, history, or practice. Members are always free to ask such questions and earnestly seek greater understanding.’¹

“Remember, Joseph Smith himself had questions that began the Restoration. He was a seeker and, like Abraham, found the answers to life’s most important questions.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

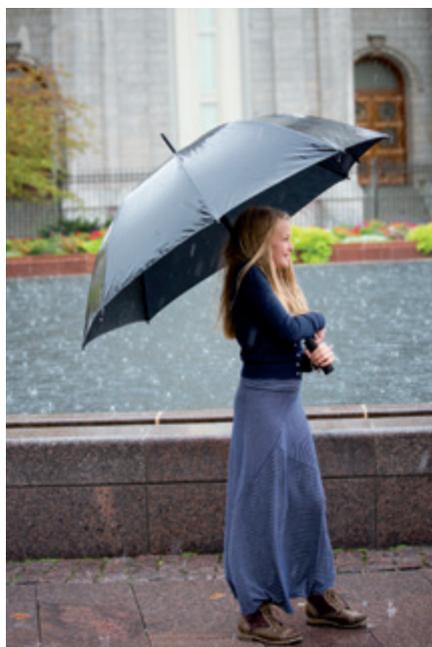
What can I tell people who ask why they can’t go into the temple?



“Because we come to the temple to receive *eternal* blessings, it should not surprise us that a higher standard is required to qualify for those blessings. . . . Elder Nelson taught: ‘Because the temple is the house of the Lord, standards for admission are set by Him. One enters as His guest. To hold a temple recommend is a priceless privilege and a tangible sign of obedience to God and His prophets.’²

“World-class athletes and university doctoral students spend hours and days and weeks and months and even years of preparation. Daily drops of preparation are required of them to come out on top. Likewise, those who wish to qualify for exaltation in the celestial kingdom are expected to live a higher standard of obedience that comes by practicing the virtue of obedience day by day and drop by drop.”

Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president



Why does life have to be so full of trials?



“We came to mortal life precisely to grow from trials and testing. Challenges help us become more like our

Father in Heaven, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ makes it possible to endure those challenges. I testify that as we actively come unto Him, we can endure every temptation, every heartache, every challenge we face.”

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

What do I need to do to be worthy to receive revelation?



“That personal revelation of acceptance, for which we all long, does not come easily, nor does it come simply for the

asking. The Lord gave this standard for the capacity to receive such witnesses from God. It is a guide for anyone seeking personal revelation, as we all must.

“Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

“‘The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion’ [D&C 121:45–46].”

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

NOTES

1. First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles letter, June 28, 2014.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Personal Preparation for Temple Blessings,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 33.



“While watching conference I was so happy. The Spirit was clearly there, and I found it a solace to the confusing world around me. I found answers to my prayers. Elder Bednar’s talk, though directed to those who are not members, gave me a new perspective on what nonmembers are thinking. We really need to put ourselves in their shoes and try our best to understand them.”

Rachel O., 15, Alberta, Canada

Do I really need to obey all of God’s commandments?



“I think God knows something we don’t—things that are beyond our capacity to comprehend! Our Father in Heaven is an eternal being whose experience, wisdom, and intelligence are infinitely greater than ours. . . .

“... He not only *knows* what is best for you; He also anxiously *wants you to choose* what is best for you.

“... If you truly believe the great mission of our Heavenly Father is to exalt and glorify His children and that He knows best how to do it—doesn’t it make sense to embrace and follow His commandments, even the ones that appear difficult? Should we not cherish the light posts He has given that guide us through the darkness and the trials of mortality? They mark the way back to our heavenly home!”

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

What do I tell people who ask me why we are always talking about our religion with others?



“When we invite you to attend church with us or to learn with the full-time missionaries, we are not trying to sell you a product. As members of the Church, we do not receive prizes or bonus points in a heavenly contest. We are not seeking simply to increase the numerical size of the Church. And most importantly, we are not attempting to coerce you to believe as we do. We are inviting you to hear the restored truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ so you can study, ponder, pray, and come to know for yourself if the things we are sharing with you are true.

“... Our invitations to you are not an attempt to diminish your religious tradition or life experience. . . . Just as Jesus beckoned two of His disciples to ‘come and see’ (John 1:39), so we urge you to come and see if the restored gospel of Jesus Christ enlarges and enriches that which you already believe to be true.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



WHAT ABOUT YOUR Patriarchal Blessing?



“At the end of the 1980s, . . . life was good [for me and my family], and everything seemed to be as it should be—until one day an old friend came to visit us.

“At the conclusion of his visit, he made a comment and asked a question that unsettled my convictions. He said, ‘Carlos, everything seems to be going well for you, your family, your career, and your service in the Church, but—’ and then came the question, ‘if you continue to live as you are living, will the blessings promised in your patriarchal blessing be fulfilled?’

“I had never thought about my patriarchal blessing in this way. I read it from time to time but never with the intent of looking toward the blessings promised in the future and evaluating how I was living in the present.

“After his visit, I turned my attention to my patriarchal blessing, wondering, ‘If we continue to live as we are living, will the promised blessings be fulfilled?’ After some pondering, I had the feeling that some changes were necessary.”

Elder Carlos A. Godoy of the Seventy

“I loved conference! I loved that the leaders could give talks in their own language.”

Olivia C., 15, Kentucky, USA

SHE WAS BEING TOO Hard on Herself



“While presiding over the Ukraine Kyiv Mission, I once asked one of my most faithful sisters why she was always so hard on herself, why she was always beating herself up over the smallest things. Her answer was a classic example of someone listening to the wrong voice as she replied, ‘So no one can beat me to it.’

“Brothers and sisters, my counsel to this sister missionary is my counsel to you: acknowledge and face your weaknesses, but don’t be immobilized by them, because some of them will be your companions until you depart this earth life. 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. Living in this manner, you can truly ‘always retain a remission of your sins’ (Mosiah 4:12) every hour of every day, every second of every minute, and thus be fully clean and acceptable before God *all the time.*”

Elder Jörg Klebingat of the Seventy

“My seminary teacher challenged us to listen to conference with a specific question in mind and to pray about it before and during conference. During Elder Godoy’s talk I received a very specific answer to my question. It testified to me that all those who speak in conference are divinely inspired and they are speaking with God’s Spirit.”

Susanna B., 16, Utah, USA



FOOTBALL, GOALS, AND *Distractions*



“Meaningful study and preparatory work experience were always at the top of my father’s recommended priorities. He appreciated that extra-curricular activities like debate and student government might have a direct connection with some of my important goals. He was less certain about the extensive time I spent participating in football, basketball, baseball, and track. . . .

“ . . . Our high school football coach informed me that the Stanford football coach wanted to have lunch with Merlin Olsen and me. Those of you who are younger may not know Merlin. He was an incredible all-American tackle on the Logan High School football team where I played quarterback and safety and returned kickoffs and punts. . . . Merlin was ultimately the third overall pick in the National Football League draft and played in an amazing 14 consecutive Pro Bowls. He was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1982.

“The lunch with the Stanford coach was at the Bluebird restaurant in Logan, Utah. After we shook hands, he never once made eye contact with me. He talked directly to Merlin but ignored me. At the end of the lunch, for the first time, he turned toward me, but he could not remember my name. He then informed Merlin, ‘If you choose Stanford and want to bring your friend with you, he has good enough grades and it could probably be arranged.’ This experience confirmed for me that I should follow my dad’s wise counsel. . . .

“My intent is not to discourage participation in sports. . . . When used wisely, they enrich our lives. . . .

“Our daily conduct and choices should be consistent with our goals.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“At general conference they spoke a lot on the importance of having our own testimonies of the prophets. I gained my own testimony and had personal revelation that the prophets speaking are the prophets of God and that He has picked them to help teach and guide us.”

Courtney R., 14, Arizona, USA

HOW DID SHE *Know?*



“About a year ago I was on assignment in Beirut, Lebanon. While there, I learned about a 12-year-old girl, Sarah. Her parents and two older siblings had converted to the Church in Romania but were then required to return to their homeland when Sarah was just 7 years of age. In their homeland there was no Church presence, no organized units, no Sunday School or Young Women program. After five years this family learned of a branch in Beirut and, just before I arrived, sent their 12-year-old daughter, Sarah, accompanied by older siblings, to be baptized. While there, I gave a devotional on the plan of salvation. With some frequency Sarah raised her hand and answered the questions.

“After the meeting, and knowing of her almost nonexistent Church exposure, I approached her and asked, ‘Sarah, how did you know the answers to those questions?’ She immediately replied, ‘My mother taught me.’ They did not have the Church in their community, but they did have the gospel in their home.”

Tad R. Callister, Sunday School general president



WORDS
TO LIVE BY

“We challenge all youth to avoid bullying, insults, or language and practices that deliberately inflict pain on others. All of these violate *the Savior’s command to love one another.*”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“Stay focused on [the] simple things, and avoid becoming distracted.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“The ordinance of the sacrament has been called ‘one of the most holy and sacred ordinances in the Church.’ It needs to become more *holy and sacred* to each of us.”

Elder James J. Hamula of the Seventy

“Become more like the Savior by caring for the poor and needy, by faithfully keeping the law of the fast, and by contributing a generous fast offering.”

Bishop Dean M. Davies,
Second Counselor in the
Presiding Bishopric

“When we assist [Jesus Christ] in His mission of saving souls, we too will be rescued in the process.”

Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong of the Seventy



“Choose TO CONVERSE with your Father in Heaven often.”

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

“In all things we should remember that being ‘valiant in the testimony of Jesus’ [D&C 76:79] is **the great dividing test between the celestial and terrestrial kingdoms.** We want to be found on the celestial side of that divide.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“To be strong in living the gospel, there is **nothing more important than** receiving and strengthening our own **testimony.**”

Elder Craig C. Christensen of the Presidency of the Seventy



“**COVENANTS** with God help us to know who we really are. They **CONNECT** us to Him in a personal way.”

Jean A. Stevens, first counselor in the Primary general presidency

“The Atonement of Jesus Christ provides the cleanser necessary to be made pure and clean, the soothing salve to heal spiritual wounds and remove guilt, and the protection that enables us to be faithful in times both good and bad.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“Providing an example of righteousness can help to ILLUMINATE an increasingly dark world.”

President Thomas S. Monson

“*The HOME is the IDEAL forum for teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.*”

Tad R. Callister, Sunday School general president

“The question is not, ‘Is there room for honest, sincere inquiry?’ but rather, ‘Where do I turn for truth when questions do arise?’ ‘Will I be wise enough to hold fast to what I know to be true in spite of a few questions I might have?’ I testify there is a divine source—One who knows all things, the end from the beginning. All things are present before Him.”

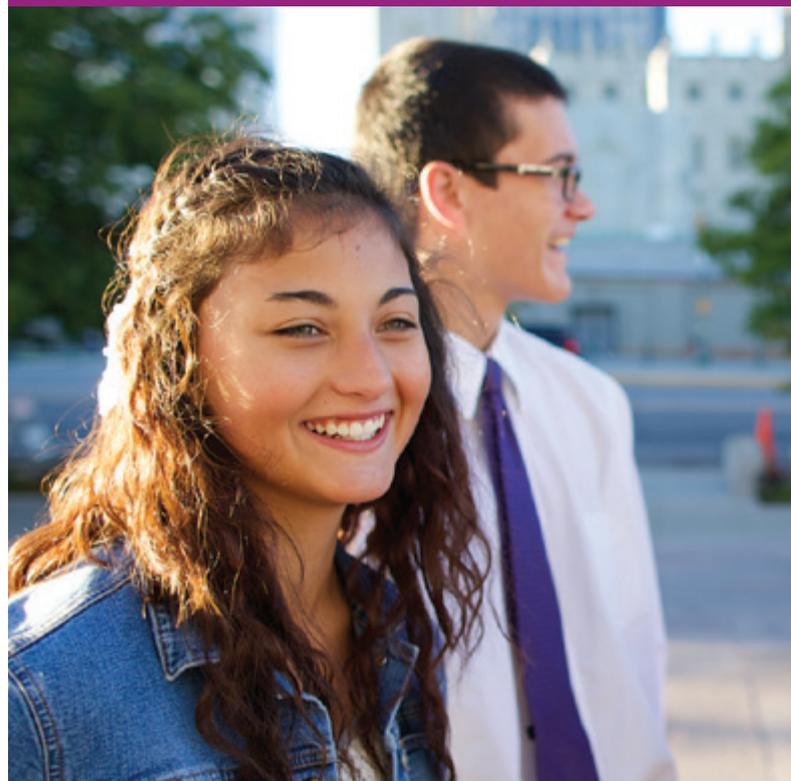
Elder Larry S. Kacher of the Seventy

“Just because things are going well does not mean that we should not from time to time consider whether there might BE SOMETHING BETTER.”

Elder Carlos A. Godoy of the Seventy

“Placed around the world, **temples** have their own **unique look** and **design** on the outside, but **inside** they **all contain** the **same eternal light, purpose, and truth.** . . . We too as **daughters of God** have been placed **all around the world**, like temples, and we each have our own **unique look** and outward **design**, like temples. We also have a **spiritual light within us**, like temples. This spiritual light is a **reflection** of the **Savior’s light.**”

Neill F. Marriott, second counselor in the Young Women general presidency





“WHEN PEOPLE TRY TO SAVE FACE WITH MEN, THEY CAN UNWITTINGLY LOSE FACE WITH GOD. Thinking one can please God and at the same time condone the disobedience of men isn’t neutrality but duplicity, or being *two-faced* or trying to ‘serve two masters’ (Matthew 6:24; 3 Nephi 13:24).”

Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Presidency of the Seventy



“Like partaking of the sacrament, attending meetings, reading the scriptures, and saying personal prayers, doing *family history* and *temple work* should be a regular part of our personal worship.”

Elder Allan F. Packer of the Seventy

“Each member serves as a testimony of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We are at war with the forces of the adversary, and we need each and every one of us if we are going to succeed in the work the Savior has for us to do.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“Our wounded souls can be healed and renewed [through the sacrament] not only because the bread and water remind us of the Savior’s sacrifice of His flesh and blood but because the emblems also remind us that He will always be our ‘bread of life’ and ‘living water’ [John 6:48; 4:10].”

Cheryl A. Esplin, second counselor in the Primary general presidency

"I would like to share six practical suggestions that, if heeded, will dissipate these evil voices and restore to you the kind of peaceful assurance and spiritual confidence that is yours to have if you only want it. . . .

"1. Take responsibility for your own spiritual well-being. . . .

"2. Take responsibility for your own physical well-being. . . .

"3. Embrace voluntary, whole-hearted obedience as part of your life. . . .

"4. Become really, really good at repenting thoroughly and quickly. . . .

"5. Become really, really good at forgiving. . . .

"6. Accept trials, setbacks, and 'surprises' as part of your mortal experience."

Elder Jörg Klebingat of the Seventy

"According to the world's standards, following the prophet may be unpopular, politically incorrect, or socially unacceptable. **BUT FOLLOWING THE PROPHET IS ALWAYS RIGHT.**"

Carol F. McConkie, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency

"The invitation to **'follow Him'** . . . is not a passive invitation; it is **an invitation to act.**"

Elder Eduardo Gavarret of the Seventy



"The *holy scriptures* and the *talks given* at general conference are an *effective mirror* we can hold up for *self-examination.*"

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



"The love of Jesus Christ must be our guide if we are to become aware of the needs of those we can help in some way. The teachings of our Lord, Jesus Christ, show us the way. And that is how our personal ministry begins: **discovering needs, then tending to them.**"

Elder Hugo E. Martinez of the Seventy

THE
SAVIOR'S
EXAMPLE
PROVIDES
A FRAMEWORK
FOR
EVERYTHING
THAT WE DO,
AND
HIS WORDS
PROVIDE
AN
UNFAILING
GUIDE.

President Thomas S. Monson
October 2014 general conference

THE *living*
LORD
LEADS HIS
living
CHURCH!

Elder Russell M. Nelson
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
October 2014 general conference

*Spiritual
questions*
DESERVE
*spiritual
answers*
FROM GOD.

Elder Neil L. Andersen
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
October 2014 general conference

..... TO KNOW
WHAT THE VOICE
..... of the
DIVINE
SOUNDS AND FEELS LIKE,
.....

READ
His words,
STUDY
the scriptures, and
PONDER
them.

..... *
Elder Richard G. Scott
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
October 2014 general conference



“The living Lord leads His living Church! The Lord reveals His will for the Church to His prophet. Yesterday, after we were invited to sustain Thomas S. Monson as President of the Church, we also had the privilege to sustain him, the counselors in the First Presidency, and members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators. Think of that! We sustain 15 men as prophets of God! They hold all the priesthood keys that have ever been conferred upon man in this dispensation. . . .

“The Church today has been organized by the Lord Himself. He has put in place a remarkable system of governance that provides redundancy and backup. . . . Senior leaders are constantly being tutored such that one day they are ready to sit in the highest councils. They learn how to hear the voice of the Lord through the whisperings of the Spirit.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, October 2014 general conference



“As we strive to place Christ at the center of our lives by learning His words, by following His teachings, and by walking in His path, He has promised to share with us the eternal life that He died to gain. There is no higher end than this, that we should choose to accept His discipline and become His disciples and do His work throughout our lives. Nothing else, no other choice we make, can make of us what He can. . . .

“We read in Proverbs the admonition, ‘Ponder the path of thy feet’ [Proverbs 4:26]. As we do, we will have the faith, even the desire, to walk the path which Jesus walked. We will have no doubt that we are on a path which our Father would have us follow. The Savior’s example provides a framework for everything that we do, and His words provide an unfailing guide. His path will take us safely home.”

President Thomas S. Monson, October 2014 general conference



“Study the word of God in the scriptures and the words of the living prophets. We talk to God through prayer. He most often communicates back to us through His written word. To know what the voice of the Divine sounds and feels like, read His words, study the scriptures, and ponder them. Make them an integral part of everyday life. . . .

“Don’t yield to Satan’s lie that you don’t have time to study the scriptures. Choose to take time to study them. Feasting on the word of God each day is more important than sleep, school, work, television shows, video games, or social media. You may need to reorganize your priorities to provide time for the study of the word of God. If so, do it!”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, October 2014 general conference



“Joseph Smith is the Prophet of the Restoration. His spiritual work began with the appearance of the Father and the Son, followed by numerous heavenly visitations. He was the instrument in God’s hands in bringing forth sacred scripture, lost doctrine, and the restoration of the priesthood. The importance of Joseph’s work requires more than intellectual consideration; it requires that we, like Joseph, ‘ask of God’ [James 1:5]. Spiritual questions deserve spiritual answers from God. . . .

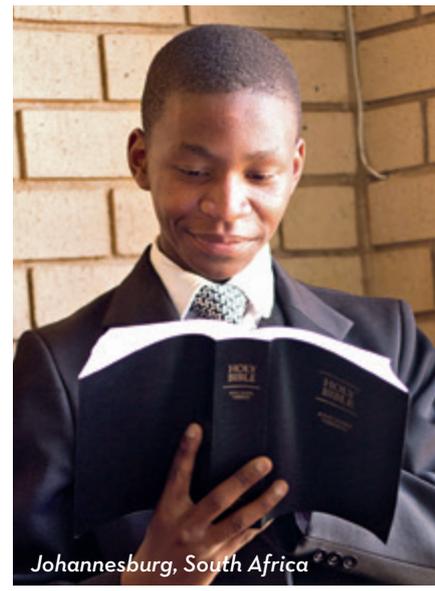
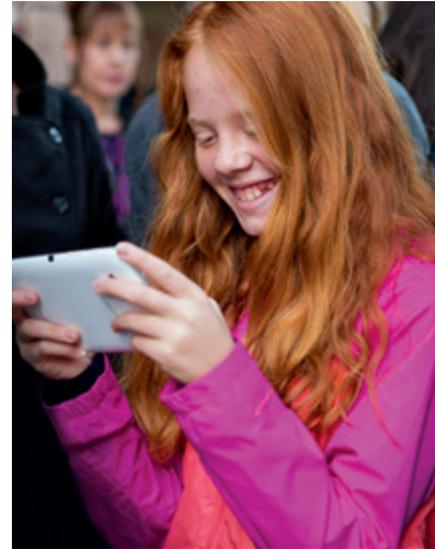
“Each believer needs a spiritual confirmation of the divine mission and character of the Prophet Joseph Smith. This is true for every generation. Spiritual questions deserve spiritual answers from God.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, October 2014 general conference

KEEP THE CONFERENCE FEELING ALIVE

Conference may be over, but you can keep the inspiration a part of your life. This list will help you experience each talk again before the next conference arrives.

November 2-8	President Thomas S. Monson ("As we listen, may our hearts be touched and our faith increased.")	President Boyd K. Packer ("A testimony of the hope of redemption is something which cannot be measured or counted. Jesus Christ is the source of that hope.")
November 9-15	Elder Lynn G. Robbins ("Trying to please others before pleasing God is inverting the first and second great commandments.")	Cheryl A. Esplin ("The Spirit heals and renews our souls. The promised blessing of the sacrament is that we will 'always have his Spirit to be with [us].'"")
November 16-22	Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong ("In order to assist the Savior, we have to work together in unity and in harmony. Everyone, every position, and every calling is important.")	Elder D. Todd Christofferson ("It is God's will that we be free men and women enabled to rise to our full potential both temporally and spiritually.")
November 23-29	President Dieter F. Uchtdorf ("Your personal testimony of light and truth will not only bless you and your posterity here in mortality, but it will also accompany you throughout all eternity.")	Elder Dallin H. Oaks ("As followers of Christ we should live peacefully with others who do not share our values or accept the teachings upon which they are based.")
November 30-December 6	Elder Neil L. Andersen ("Jesus Christ chose a holy man, a righteous man, to lead the Restoration of the fulness of His gospel. He chose Joseph Smith.")	Tad R. Callister ("When all is said and done, the home is the ideal forum for teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.")
December 7-13	Elder Jörg Klebingat ("By applying the Atonement of Jesus Christ, you can begin increasing your spiritual confidence today if you are willing to listen and act.")	Elder Eduardo Gavarret ("The Lord invites us using various verbs: 'Come unto me,' 'Follow me,' 'Walk with me.' In each case it is an invitation to act.")
December 14-20	Elder Jeffrey R. Holland ("Rich or poor, we are to 'do what we can' when others are in need.")	Elder L. Tom Perry ("It is the gospel of Jesus Christ that provides the foundation upon which we can find lasting peace and build eternal family units.")
December 21-27	Elder Quentin L. Cook ("Refuse the evil, and choose the good" [Isaiah 7:15].")	Elder Craig C. Christensen ("Learning for ourselves that the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is true can be one of the greatest and most joyful experiences in life.")
December 28-January 3	Bishop Dean M. Davies ("As followers of the Savior, we have a personal responsibility to care for the poor and needy.")	President Dieter F. Uchtdorf ("We must put aside our pride, see beyond our vanity, and in humility ask, 'Lord, is it I?'"")
January 4-10	President Henry B. Eyring ("In priesthood preparation, 'show me' counts more than 'tell me.'")	President Thomas S. Monson ("We look heavenward for that unflinching sense of direction, that we might chart and follow a wise and proper course.")
January 11-17	President Henry B. Eyring ("Human judgment and logical thinking will not be enough to get answers to the questions that matter most in life. We need revelation from God.")	Elder Russell M. Nelson ("Our sustaining of prophets is a personal commitment that we will do our utmost to uphold their prophetic priorities.")
January 18-24	Carol F. McConkie ("To be in harmony with heaven's divine purposes, we sustain the prophet and choose to live according to his words.")	Elder Robert D. Hales ("God and Christ are literally a Father and a Son—separate, distinct, individual beings who are wholly unified in Their purpose.")
January 25-31	Elder James J. Hamula ("The ordinance of the sacrament needs to become more holy and sacred to each of us.")	President Thomas S. Monson ("As we look to Jesus as our Exemplar and as we follow in His footsteps, we can return safely to our Heavenly Father.")
February 1-7	Elder M. Russell Ballard ("If we keep our focus on the Lord, we are promised a blessing beyond comparison.")	Elder Richard G. Scott ("Despite all of the negative challenges we have in life, we must take time to actively exercise our faith.")
February 8-14	Elder Carlos A. Godoy ("If we continue to live as we are living, will the promised blessings be fulfilled?")	Elder Allan F. Packer ("Family history and temple work should be a regular part of our personal worship.")
February 22-28	Elder Hugo E. Martinez ("The love of Jesus Christ must be our guide if we are to become aware of the needs of those we can help in some way.")	Elder Larry S. Kacher ("Examine your choices by asking yourself the question, 'Are my decisions firmly planted in the rich soil of the gospel of Jesus Christ?'"")
March 1-7	Elder David A. Bednar ("The Church of Jesus Christ always has been and always will be a missionary church.")	President Thomas S. Monson ("May we all ponder the truths we have heard, and may they help us to become even more valiant disciples.")
March 8-14	Linda K. Burton ("May we prepare to worthily receive saving ordinances drop by drop and keep the associated covenants wholeheartedly.")	Jean A. Stevens ("When daughters of God focus on the temple and on their sacred covenants, God is able to send blessings in personal and powerful ways.")
March 15-21	Neill F. Marriott ("We must stand firm in our faith and lift our voices to proclaim true doctrine.")	President Dieter F. Uchtdorf ("Trust in the saving power of Jesus Christ; keep His laws and commandments. In other words—live the gospel joyful.")



WALTZING with the WIDOWS

By Benjamin Harrison



The phone rang.

They wanted me to dance.

This wasn't going to be a regular Wednesday night.

The phone rang. I picked it up. “Benjamin? This is Sister Adams. I’m organizing an activity night for the widows in the ward and was wondering if you’d be willing to help out. The activity is dancing, but don’t worry, you don’t really need any experience. It’s just for fun.”

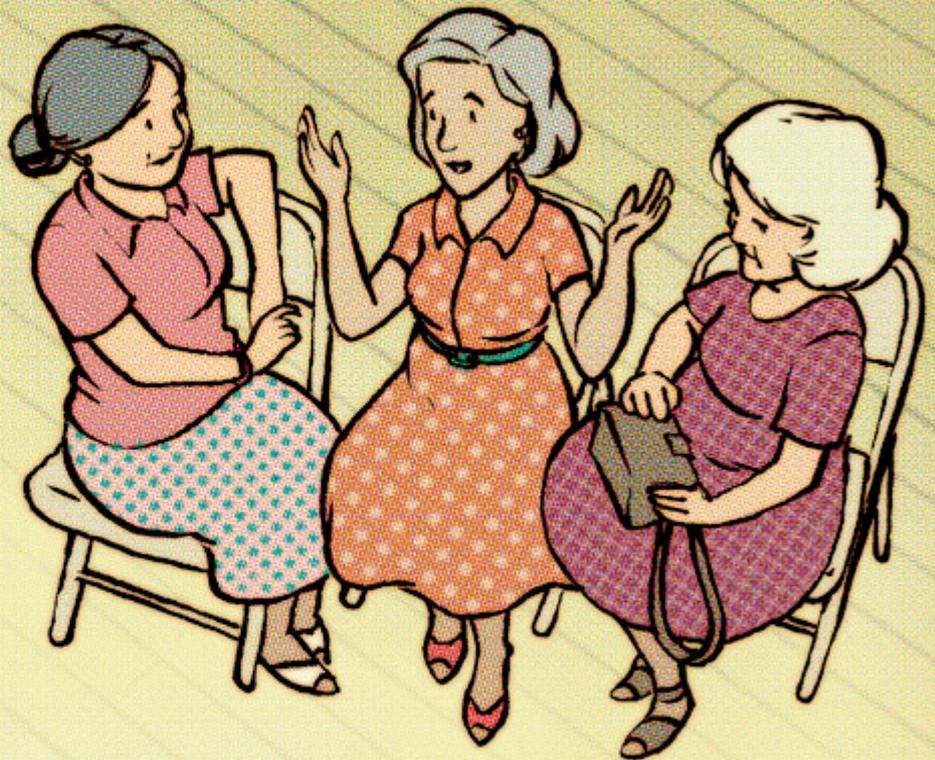
Fun? Silently wishing I’d never picked up the phone, I replied, “Well, Sister Adams, I don’t even know the basics—I mean, I can waltz, but that’s about it.”

“That will be perfect, Benjamin. I’m also calling some other priests, so you won’t be the only one. The activity starts at seven next Wednesday, OK?”

“OK, Sister Adams. I’ll be there.”

“Great,” I sarcastically muttered to myself as I hung up the phone.

During the week I almost forgot about my dancing engagement.



Almost. When Wednesday night rolled around, I didn't feel any particular desire to hurry as I prepared for the activity. I arrived late and went to the gym, where the dance was being held. As I opened the door, I saw rows upon rows of old women sitting in metal folding chairs. Then my attention turned to the dance floor, where one solitary priest was awkwardly moving to the triple-meter beat of the waltz, widow in hand.

"Kevin, where are the rest of the priests?" I asked, walking up to him as he finished his dance.

"They aren't here. We're the only ones."

"Great," I muttered as I moved toward the rows of widows. "Hello, ma'am. Would you like to dance?" I inquired of one of the widows.

"Oh, no thank you. My legs can't take the exertion. But I'm sure Harriett would like to. Harriet," she called to one of her companions, "come dance with this young man!"

All the widows urged Harriett forward.

"All right, all right," she said.

She took my hand, and I led her to the floor. "Now be careful," she said. "I have some lung problems, and my hips don't work very well."

"I'll be very careful," I assured her, smiling.

"You know, I met my husband on the dance floor," she said as we started to waltz slowly.

"Really? What dance?"

"The fox-trot," she said. "He was dashing. And what a dancer."

We finished our dance, and I took her back to her seat. "Thank you for the dance. You are a lovely dancer," she said.

"Thank you," I said, grateful for the somewhat ill-founded compliment.

I found that I enjoyed myself more than I thought possible. All the dances went the same way—most ladies making a witty remark about knee replacements or scoliosis, telling stories of their husbands and better days of youth, and giving me very sweet compliments as we finished.

I left the Church building, replaying the widows' stories in my head. I laughed out loud at their wit, and I was awed by their wisdom. I shook my head and chuckled. "What a charming group of women," I thought. "I would do it again in a heartbeat." **NE**

Benjamin Harrison lives in Utah, USA.



SHOW LOVE THROUGH SIMPLE ACTS OF KINDNESS

"The love the Savior described is an active love. It is not manifested through large and heroic deeds but rather through simple acts of kindness and service. . . . Great things are wrought through simple and small things. . . . Our small and simple acts of kindness and service will accumulate into a life filled with love for Heavenly Father, devotion to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a sense of peace and joy each time we reach out to one another."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Finding Joy through Loving Service," *Ensign*, May 2011, 47, 49.




SUNDAY LESSONS
.....
This Month's Topic:
**Spiritual & Temporal
Self-Reliance**

Discover the many ways you can help those in need.



== *Giving* ==
**MORE
THAN**
==
Just Money

By Mindy Raye Friedman
Church Magazines

Does it seem like you're always having lessons and discussions about how you can help the poor and needy? You know it's important, but as a teenager you don't have much money to give to the poor, and you're always stretching to find ideas for service projects. After all, there are only so many widows in your ward who need help weeding or mowing the lawn!

When we think of people who are poor and needy, we often think about those who have temporal needs—things like a lack of food or clothing or the physical ability to take care of themselves or their things. But there are also people who are poor in spirit or who have other needs. President Thomas S. Monson says that we are “surrounded by those

in need of our attention, our encouragement, our support, our comfort, [and] our kindness” (“What Have I Done for Someone Today?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 86). So helping the needy is not just about giving people money or raking their leaves.

Sometimes the best way you can help someone is just by listening, smiling, or sharing the gospel. The person you may be best able to serve could be that young woman in your class who is feeling alone or the young man in your quorum who needs to be invited to an activity.

One young woman decided after reading her patriarchal blessing that she wanted to do something grand to help the poor and needy. After unsuccessfully trying to give aid to some people she saw on the street, she thought she’d failed. Then she got home and found her brother crying because he’d been teased at school. After taking him out for ice cream and listening to his troubles, she learned a lesson. “The poor are just as likely to be in your home as on the streets,” she says. “There are all sorts of needy people in the world—those who need food and shelter, of course—but also those who need love, counsel, and encouragement.” (Read the rest of her story at [lds.org/go/needyNE11](https://www.lds.org/go/needyNE11).)

Have you had experiences like that? President Monson says that those needing our help can be “family members, friends, acquaintances, or strangers” (“What Have I Done?” 86). Is there a person who could use your attention, encouragement, or other help? How can you know who it is and when help is needed? And what can you do to help?

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggests: “In your

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Things to Ponder for Sunday

- How can being self-reliant help you be more effective at helping those in need?
- Why does the Lord want us to serve others?
- How have you felt when you’ve had the opportunity to help others?

Things You Might Do

- Accept Elder Ballard’s invitation to pray daily for and then look for opportunities to serve.
- Make a Duty to God or Personal Progress goal to help someone in need. For service ideas, visit [lds.org/go/serviceNE11](https://www.lds.org/go/serviceNE11).
- Share how you’ve helped the poor and needy by commenting at church, on social media, or in a comment at [lds.org/go/needyNE11](https://www.lds.org/go/needyNE11).

morning prayer each new day, ask Heavenly Father to guide you to recognize an opportunity to serve one of His precious children. Then go throughout the day with your heart full of faith and love, looking for someone to help. . . . If you do this, your spiritual sensitivities will be enlarged and you will discover opportunities to serve that you never before realized were possible” (“Be Anxiously Engaged,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 31).

Those opportunities to serve may include helping with financial or temporal needs, but they may also include simple acts of kindness. The important thing is that you have a sincere desire to serve and that you keep your eyes, ears, and heart open so that you can recognize *your* opportunities to help the poor and needy, whatever their needs may be. **NE**



HELPING THE NEEDY THROUGH LOVE

“Love is expressed in many recognizable ways: a smile, a wave, a kind comment, a compliment. Other expressions may be more subtle, such as showing interest in another’s activities, teaching a principle with kindness and patience, visiting one who is ill or homebound. These words and actions and many others can communicate love.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Love—the Essence of the Gospel,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 93.

OUR GREATEST

COACH

By Matthew Garrett

Sports teach a lot of life lessons: how to be part of a team, how to work toward a common goal, and how to handle success and failure, to name just a few. We also learn that behind every great team is a great coach. At times, the coach goes largely unnoticed. The coach doesn't actually play on the court or field, so many people watching sports fail to recognize the coach's strategy.

Similarly, at times we may not notice Heavenly Father's preparation and dedication to creating the perfect plan for our lives. But Heavenly Father is always there to teach and help us get in better shape so that we may win a great reward.² When we think of our Father in Heaven, we should remember the things He does for us.

"DISCIPLINE IS NOT
A SPECTATOR SPORT."¹

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY CODY BELL







FULFILL YOUR PERSONAL PLAN

“The Lord has placed currents of divine influence in your life that will lead you along the individual plan He would have you fulfill here on earth. Seek through the Spirit to identify it and carefully follow that direction that the Lord has put in your life. . . . Oh, how I would encourage you to weave deeply into the fabric of your soul the recognition that your life now is a part of a much bigger plan the Lord has for you. . . . What you decide to do now will affect how well you fulfill that divine, personal plan He has for you.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “He Lives,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 87.

HE IS ALWAYS TEACHING

A great coach knows that teams never stay the same; they get better or worse every day. A successful coach consistently trains and prepares his team. The Lord has said that we must be prepared³ and follow His instructions if we want to succeed. This instruction entails lasting life lessons. A coach is a teacher and is dedicated to helping team members correct mistakes so they can strive for perfection.⁴ We receive direction that helps us improve each day. Heavenly Father and the Savior have given us the path to follow.

HE HAS A GAME PLAN

A good game plan can define a great coach. Our Heavenly Father always has a perfect game plan prepared for us to accomplish our righteous goals.⁵ Just as a coach must know which plays to run and when, Heavenly Father knows all the details of our lives and what we need.⁶ We may not see the big picture, but He has perfect timing and perspective.⁷ Just as a great coach is able to make changes during the game and anticipate what the other team will do, Heavenly Father, who knows all, helps us make necessary adjustments throughout our lives so that we can do better each day and have all things work for our good.⁸

work because he knows every second that passes is a second closer to the end of the game—and to reaching the ultimate victory. Our Father in Heaven encourages us to persevere and endure so that we can be worthy of eternal life with Him.⁹

HE IS AWARE OF EACH PLAYER'S NEEDS

A caring coach knows the players on the team. And no one loves us, knows us, or cares for us as much as Heavenly Father. He knows that people learn and develop talents in different ways, so he will adapt our training experiences to get the most out of each of us. Through clear communication, our Heavenly Father is willing and eager to help all of His children strengthen their weakness¹⁰ and become their very best—the people He knows they can become.

HE NEVER LETS US QUIT

Even if the game is nearly over and the outcome seems certain, a great coach never lets a team quit. He pushes the team to the end and expects hard

HE KNOWS WHEN TO CALL TIME-OUT

In the game of life, we need to take a time-out





from the demands of the world to regroup spiritually. We also need warm-ups, halftime, post-game reviews—consistent opportunities to refocus and receive instruction about what we are doing well and what we need to improve on. Like a dedicated coach watching us in a game or practice, Heavenly Father knows how we are performing.¹¹ He knows what we can handle.¹² He also knows that we may lose focus and need to rest, and He has given us the Sabbath to remind us weekly of what is most important.¹³ We can also stop to reflect on our lives at any time,¹⁴ and we can pray to Heavenly Father, who will teach us through the Spirit what we need to do to improve.

HE INSPIRES AND MOTIVATES

Heavenly Father wants us to succeed and return and live with Him.¹⁵ Like a coach who passionately roots for the players, Heavenly Father is always there to motivate, inspire, and cheer for us, especially when we face our toughest opponents.¹⁶

HE PROMOTES UNITY

Coaches know that team members are most likely to succeed when they work together. They know that for a group of individuals to be a unified team, they must trust and understand one another. Players must be able to depend on one

another to fulfill their assignments and be at the right place at the right time. Team members must also be able to effectively communicate and work together toward a common goal, where everyone is needed to play his or her part.¹⁷ No player is above the team. We are all “sons and daughters unto God,”¹⁸ and He has commanded us to help and teach our brothers and sisters so that we may grow and progress together and be united.¹⁹

HE MAKES PRACTICE JOYFUL

While training and conditioning are necessary in sports and in life, practice does not have to be miserable. A great coach makes practice fun and productive. Learning should be enjoyable, not agonizing. As we learn and grow, Heavenly Father wants us to find happiness and enjoy each day, not suffer through life.²⁰

HE ALWAYS HELPS US WIN

Every game ends, and ultimately only one team

will be victorious. This is true in the game of life, and we know that God’s team will be the winning team. Heavenly Father devotes all His time, energy, and love to His children, and He has promised to be with us always.²¹ If we remain faithful players on His team and listen to His divine instruction, we will win “a great victory”²² and receive the ultimate reward, even His kingdom and all that He has.²³ **NE**

Matthew Garrett lives in Washington, USA.

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Way of the Disciple,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 77.
2. See Mosiah 4:27.
3. See Ezekiel 38:7.
4. See Matthew 5:48.
5. See 1 Nephi 3:7.
6. See D&C 38:2.
7. See Isaiah 55:8.
8. See D&C 90:24; 98:3.
9. See D&C 14:7.
10. See Ether 12:27.
11. See Alma 26:36–37.
12. See 1 Corinthians 10:13.
13. See Mosiah 13:16–19; D&C 59:9–19; see also Mark 2:27–28.
14. See Mosiah 4:30; Alma 13:28.
15. See 2 Nephi 26:33; Moses 1:39.
16. See Isaiah 41:10; D&C 61:36.
17. See 1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Romans 12:4–5.
18. D&C 76:24.
19. See D&C 38:27; 109:7.
20. See Psalm 118:24; Ecclesiastes 5:18–19; John 16:33; D&C 68:6; 78:18.
21. See Matthew 28:20.
22. 2 Samuel 23:10, 12.
23. See D&C 84:38.



A stylized illustration of a hand holding a pie, with a speech bubble containing the title 'Real Talk'. The background is a warm orange and yellow gradient with a dashed line border.

A

By Tiffany Horne

Real Talk

WITH DAD

DAD KNEW MORE ABOUT WHAT I WAS GOING THROUGH THAN I THOUGHT.

School was out for Thanksgiving break, but I was not looking forward to it. I was struggling at school, and I wasn't thrilled with the idea of being surrounded by family members who were in the mood for holiday cheer. It seemed to me that I didn't have a whole lot to be thankful for.

"Who is it?" my dad called from the kitchen as I came in the front door after school.

"It's me," I called back.

He came to give me a hug and invited me to help him make pies. I'd been hoping he would just tell me to relax, but all he said was, "I really could use your help."

At first the task was tedious—one cup of this, two teaspoons of that. I'd never talked a lot with my father. I could ask him to help me with my homework, or he could tell me to do the dishes. But it seemed that deeper conversations just didn't happen between us. So we went on working side by side until he asked a simple question: "How's school going?"

I started talking about how school was *really* going—my frustrations, my worries, the things I

liked, and the things I didn't like. I talked and he listened. After I was done, it was his turn. He told me stories of his high school days and how he had experienced some of the same frustrations and delights. He gave me advice that I actually needed to hear.

We discovered that we didn't have any bananas for the banana cream pie. "I guess I'll have to run to the store," my dad said.

"Can I come with you?" I asked. He agreed. Off we went, singing to the radio at the top of our lungs the whole way. I don't remember ever having such a fun time on a trip to the grocery store.

The pies were all gone after a few days, but I will never forget talking with my dad while making them. It was the first time that I realized that my dad was just a person like me, the first time I saw that in addition to being my father, he could also be a friend. I learned to appreciate my whole family more and the small memories we create each day. I went back to school with a newfound motivation. For some reason, I felt like I had so much to be thankful for. **NE**

Tiffany Horne lives in Utah, USA

MAKING ROOM FOR HOLY PLACES

NO MATTER WHERE YOU LIVE, YOU CAN STAND IN A HOLY PLACE.

By Joshua J. Perkey
Church Magazines



So, how many young men or young women would fit in your classroom? 10? 20? How about 5?

What if you didn't even have a room to meet in for Sunday classes? That's the situation some young women from Iceland found themselves in a few years ago. The Church rents rooms in a building there, and at first the young women had to meet in the foyer. That wasn't the best environment

for a class, so after some renovations they turned a closet into a classroom.

Still, "the room was tiny and empty. It was impersonal," recalls Karolina G., 18. "We decided as a class that we wanted to make the room *our* room. We wanted to feel the Spirit just by being there, to make it a holy place. So we did. We picked pictures and made our own poster with the Young Women theme on it."

The result? The room may be small—the five youth and their two leaders barely fit—and it may be cold in the winter and very hot in the summer, *but* “the room is now a place where you can feel the Spirit,” Karolina says. “I’ve had many spiritual experiences in there. We’re squeezed in, but we’ve become closer. We’ve become a little family. I love this room!”

These young women made their classroom a holy place. But that’s not the only way they’ve tried to “stand in holy places, and be not moved” (D&C 87:8). Their advice? You can make any place holy. It has to do with what you do, how you live, and how

much effort you put into it. Here are ideas that have worked for them.

First, they make an effort at home. “I try to make our home beautiful so the Spirit can dwell among us,” Karolina says. “We have pictures of the temple in almost every room. One I made myself. It’s a reminder of what my highest goal is.”

“Home is where we can teach and love one another by small and simple things,” says Karolina’s sister, Elin, 16. “Doing so invites the Spirit, which brings peace and love.”

They also study the scriptures. “The Book of Mormon is the one book I can read and feel peace immediately,” Karolina says.

“I can feel the truth behind the words as I study them.”

“The Book of Mormon is my favorite book,” says Berglind, 14, Karolina’s and Elin’s youngest sister. “I try to read it every day. I know it’s true.”

Angelica W., 15, adds, “The Book of Mormon has helped me through a lot of hard times. I know it’s true and that if you truly search it, you’ll come to know that it’s true also.”

How these young women live when they’re not at home is just as important. Elin says, “My friends often try to get me to swear or wear dresses that are too short or do other things that are against my standards. But I



know if we do our best, the Lord will do the rest. You need good experiences to stand tall in the light of Christ.”

“I know why we have those standards,” Karolina adds, “and I got a testimony of them a long time ago. I keep the standards because



KAROLINA



ELIN



BERGLIND



ANGELICA



ELISABETH

I know they help me.” When her friends challenge her, “I remind myself of the reason for the standards. Then it’s no problem to keep them.”

“I keep the standards with the help of other members,” says Elisabeth W., 13. “When I make mistakes, my older sister, Angelica, helps me through them.”

Of course, no effort to stand in holy places would be complete without a focus on the temple. “The temple is a very special place for me,” Elin explains. “I’m so grateful for the things I can do in the temple. I know how important it

is, and it makes me happy to know that I can help others who have passed away by doing baptisms and confirmations for them.”

“The temple is a holy place where everyone can go and feel peace in their hearts,” Berglind says.

“The Spirit is so strong there, and it’s a peaceful place,” Angelica says. “The temple shows us how much our Father in Heaven loves us.” **NE**



It was my one chance to try out for the school play. Why did the temple trip have to be at the same time?

By Jessica Holmes

During my junior year in high school, I was very involved with my drama club and was getting ready for an audition. There was only going to be one play that year, and I was auditioning for the lead role, so I worked really hard to get ready for the tryouts. As the day of the audition drew near, I felt more and more excited.

On a Sunday before my audition, my Young Women leader announced an upcoming temple trip. We would be going to the Manhattan New York Temple, which was unusual for our ward, because it was about three hours away. She told us that in the next few days, she would need to know who was planning on coming. Then she announced the date of the trip. My heart sank. It was the

same day as my audition. I wasn't sure what I was going to do. If I went on the temple trip, I might not be able to audition to be in the play.

I know that going to the temple is important, and I always look forward to going on temple trips with my ward. I love feeling the Spirit and taking time to be out of the world. At the same time, I loved performing with my drama club and being a part of a show with my friends.

It took me longer than I expected to make my decision. At first, I decided to skip the temple trip and go to the audition instead. I convinced myself that because there was only one show that year and because there would be more temple trips, it would be OK to miss just one trip to the temple—I would just go to the next one. After I made that

—THE— *Answer* —BOOK—

We knew the Book of Mormon held answers. But did it hold an answer for a family that would lose financial support by joining the Church?



By Michael Frazier

“I can’t wait to see Maria and her family today,” I mentioned to my companion on the way to their home. “Yeah, me too. Just a few days until they’re baptized!” he replied.

Maria and her children had been investigating the Church for several months. We had witnessed much of their conversion process and had seen the excitement on all of their faces as they talked about making their baptismal covenant with God.

We arrived at Maria’s door and knocked. She answered but she was not her usual cheerful self. Her smile had been replaced by a look of sadness.

“Come in,” she muttered and showed us to the living room. The children—Maria, Carlos, Ricardo, and Marisol—all seemed depressed. Their shoulders drooped, and they wouldn’t look us in the eye.

“I don’t know if we’re going to be baptized,” Maria said to the floor.

“Why not?” I asked in surprise.

Maria explained that she had received an ultimatum from her ex-husband, Ishmael: Either she said good-bye to us or she could say good-bye to his money.

We tried to explain to Maria that God would provide for her and the children even if Ishmael didn’t, that they would not be left destitute if they obeyed God’s commandments. However, when we left, the whole house still felt defeated by Ishmael and his threat.

What could we do to help Maria and the children stick with their decision to be baptized? How could we build their faith?

We prayed that night and the next morning. Then as we began our companionship study a thought came to our minds. Our mission president had taught us that the answer to any problem could be found in the scriptures, and especially in the Book of Mormon. We decided to focus our Book of Mormon studies that morning on Maria.

We were reading in Alma 20. Here, Ammon and Lamoni meet Lamoni’s father en route to free Ammon’s brethren

from prison. Lamoni knew his father would be upset with him for becoming a Christian. He was afraid of what his father might do.

The comparison seemed obvious. Maria had been converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now a man with substantial influence over her well-being was upset. How would she respond?

We returned to Maria's house to share this story. Maria let us in, and we began to teach. We had Maria read:

"Now the father of Lamoni commanded him that he should slay Ammon with the sword. And he also commanded him that he should not go to the land of Middoni, but that he should return with him to the land of Ishmael" (Alma 20:14).

As Maria read we helped her see how king Lamoni's father was like her ex-husband, Ishmael:

"Ishmael doesn't like us or what we teach, does he?"

"No." Yes.

"He wants you to forget us and follow him to the land of Ishmael, right?"

No. "Yes," she laughed.

"Well, let's see how Lamoni responds."

Maria read: "But Lamoni said unto him: I will not slay Ammon, neither will I return to the land of Ishmael, but I go the land of Middoni that I may release the brethren of Ammon, for I know that they are just men and holy prophets of the true God" (v. 15).

"Maria, do you believe that we represent Jesus Christ and that what we teach is true?" we asked.

No. "I do," she replied.

"Do you believe that by being baptized you are doing what God wants you to do?"

No. "Yes," she said.

"Do you believe that God will provide for you and your family even if Ishmael will not?"

No. "I know He will."

"Then what will you say to Ishmael?"

"I'LL TELL HIM THAT HE CAN DO WHATEVER HE WOULD LIKE, BUT WE'RE GETTING BAPTIZED!"

Carlos, Ricardo, and Marisol all cheered. We were amazed to see the transformation. Before there was despair. Now there was joy.

Maria did boldly tell Ishmael that she was being baptized, and a few days later Maria, Carlos, Ricardo, and Marisol made that covenant with God and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Ishmael did not carry out his threat. Instead he continued to visit his children and help provide for their needs. Perhaps his heart was softened by Maria's faith just as the heart of Lamoni's father was softened by Lamoni's faith.

There *are* answers to our problems in the scriptures. Alma did not necessarily have Maria in mind when he wrote about Lamoni's encounter with his father, but I was amazed at how well it applied to her situation, even down to the name Ishmael. I know that the scriptures can help us respond with courage to difficult situations, buoy us up in times of despair, and guide us in times of darkness. **NE**

Michael Frazier lives in Utah, USA.

MORMONAD

MAKE A YOU TURN



Headed in a dangerous direction?
Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ,
you can break the cycle of sin.

VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY



"Hey, where are all of my belts?"

"I'm trying to teach him to speak, but all he wants to do is text."



JON CLARK

"I want to go out with your brother, but I don't want him to know I want to go out with him! You can tell him, but don't tell him! Maybe you can hint, but don't hint! You know what I mean?"



"Maybe I should write all this down."

RYAN STOKER



"Yeah, I can see how a failure to do any of my chores would exclude me from getting any allowance this week. So, do I at least qualify for vacation pay?"

ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

“Sometimes I feel bored at church. What can I do to enjoy going to church more?”

With all the time you spend in school, perhaps going to church for three hours on Sunday may feel overwhelming some weeks. But there are ways to make it a great experience.

Remember, Church members “meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls [and] to partake of bread and [water], in remembrance of the Lord Jesus” (Moroni 6:5–6). Going to Church meetings on Sunday is one way you can ponder the truths of the gospel and feel renewed spiritually. This will happen as you prepare. Remember that you—not the speakers or teachers—control your experience. Taking that kind of responsibility will change how you view Church meetings—and what you feel. The more you put into your preparation for Sunday meetings, the more you’ll get out of them.

To help you on Sunday itself, consider what youth from a seminary class in Ohio, USA, suggested: be willing to learn and listen to the people who are teaching, pray for help and guidance, take notes, read along with the scriptures in class, bring a friend, and think about Jesus Christ.

When we do these things, Sunday meetings can become a delight and a source of strength to help us through the week.

For more ideas, read “How to Never Have a Boring Church Class Ever Again” at [lds.org/go/classNET1.NE](https://www.lds.org/go/classNET1.NE)



Come with a Question

Come with a question in your heart each week. You can think of it on

Sunday or by preparing for it the entire week before. When you are at church, listen for the answer to your question.

Anna G., 18, Utah, USA

Be Actively Involved

Share your testimony on fast Sunday, contribute to a Sunday lesson by sharing a personal story, or write bullet points about the talks and thank the people who gave them. Look for the message in each talk or lesson meant especially for you by listening to promptings of the Spirit. Try writing down three things that touched you that day as a result of going to church. Keeping a “church journal” will show you how much you need Church meetings and the blessings they give you.

Kaylee S., 14, California, USA



Be Friendly

Be friendly to the people around you. When you enthusiastically say hello to that one lady

you’ve met but have never talked with, your day and hers will be so much brighter. Being friendly can also help you feel the Spirit, especially when you pay close attention to what the speakers and teachers are telling you.

Amory M., 15, Utah, USA

Think of the Scriptures

I think of scriptures that go along with the talks or testimonies being given. I look them up and write them down in my notebook and use that as a chance to get closer to my Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. It also gives me an opportunity to ponder on those verses during the week and to better understand the scriptures and apply them in my life.

Jared C., 12, Colorado, USA



Take Notes

I often take notes or sketch drawings on what the talks are about because

it makes it easier for me to pay attention.

Marshal O., 12, Maine, USA

Be Engaged and Try to Relate

Be engaged in the lessons and talks at church. Try to relate to what the speakers and teachers are telling you. Sometimes the lessons aren't as exciting as you hope, but the teachers work hard on them. Listen not only to the speakers but also to the Spirit. By doing this, you could get something out of the lesson or talk that you may not have otherwise noticed. Going to church will help you strengthen your testimony and give you inspiration.

Ashlyn W., 13, Colorado, USA



Pray for the Spirit

Pray that you can have the Spirit with you.

Pray for the speakers to give you inspiration or

answers so that you can focus. Seek to open your ears and heart.

Ramsay H., 18, Arizona, USA



Listen to the Speakers

Come to church with a pen and a notebook.

Take notes on what the

speakers talk about. Then, when you get home, you can review your notes. You never know when the speakers will say something that could help you in your life.

Julia A., 12, Colorado, USA

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



WORSHIP THE LORD

“We do not go to Sabbath meetings to be entertained or even solely to be instructed. We go to worship the Lord. It is an individual responsibility, and regardless of what is said from the pulpit, if one wishes to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, he may do so by attending his meetings, partaking of the sacrament, and contemplating the beauties of the gospel. If the service [meeting] is a failure to you, you have failed. No one can worship for you; you must do your own waiting upon the Lord.”

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895-1985),
“The Sabbath—A Delight,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1978, 4-5.

UPCOMING QUESTION

“What can I do
when I feel
like I don't fit
in at church?”

Send your answer and photo by December 15, 2014.

Go to newera.lds.org, click “Submit Material,” enter your LDS Account, and then select “New Era.”

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



WHY SERVE A MISSION?

I was stumped by the question. A night at the movies with a friend had somehow turned into a one-hour discussion about religion. We'd discussed our beliefs and read Bible verses, and now my friend had posed this question:

"Why are you going to serve a mission?"

I'd been preparing for my mission all my life, and now, somehow, I couldn't come up with a good answer. Why would I give up two years of my life—college, scholarships, friends, family—for a mission? It didn't seem logical from a worldly point of view.

I don't remember my answer from that night, but whatever it was, it didn't satisfy me. I pondered the question over and over again for the next several months.

One day I was chatting online with a friend. She'd met with the missionaries but wasn't really feeling the Spirit, and another friend of ours kept encouraging her to listen to the missionaries. She asked me why our friend was so eager, and I told her, "Well, if you had something in your life that meant everything to you, you would be a pretty bad friend if you didn't try to share it with others!"

Suddenly, my answer started to come to me. As I lay in bed that night, I remembered a time when I'd felt the Holy Ghost very strongly. I'd been struggling with a decision; I'd finally prayed about it and felt an overwhelming sense of joy and peace, knowing that everything would work out. I realized how much I wanted everybody to feel that same feeling. I thought about how if you discovered a cure for cancer, you wouldn't just hide it in a laboratory—you'd share it with the world! I understood that the gospel was a "cure" for all of life's problems, so why wouldn't I want

to share it with others? I realized that nothing the world offers can ever measure up to the wonderful opportunity of serving the Lord and sharing the gospel with others.

Dan R., Idaho, USA

BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE

One summer I decided to read the Bible. I was worried that I would find it boring, but I tried to read it every morning.

For several years, a quote from President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, had hung on the bulletin board over my desk: “Be strong and of good courage. You are truly royal spirit daughters of Almighty God. You are princesses, destined to become queens. Your own wondrous story has already begun” (“Your Happily Ever After,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 127). I love this quote and have it memorized.

One day I stumbled on the phrase “be strong and of a good courage” in Deuteronomy 31:6! Recognizing it from President Uchtdorf’s quote, I highlighted the verse. I finished Deuteronomy that day and felt satisfied.

The next morning I began reading Joshua. In chapter 1 it says, “Be strong

“YOU ALREADY KNOW IT IS TRUE”

While working on my Personal Progress, I came across a goal that required me to read the Book of Mormon (Virtue value project) and invited me to pray afterward to know if it’s true.

Over several months I read the Book of Mormon. When I finished, I eagerly went to my room, kneeled at my bed, and asked God to let me know if it’s true.

Nothing happened.

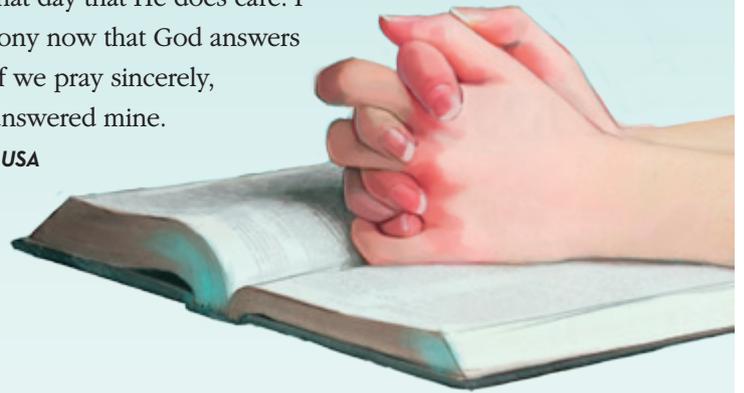
I rephrased the question several times and still felt nothing.

The next Sunday during fast and testimony meeting, a sister told a story about when she’d followed Moroni’s invitation to pray to know if the Book of Mormon is true. She didn’t receive an answer, so she prayed again and again. As the days passed, she worried about whether the Church was really true. Finally, she felt the Spirit speak to her mind: “You already know it is true.”

As I listened, I realized that God was answering my prayer through this woman’s testimony.

I learned that day that He does care. I have a testimony now that God answers our prayers, if we pray sincerely, because He answered mine.

Annika C., Utah, USA



and of a good courage” (Joshua 1:6). I marked this scripture, noting the coincidence in my scripture journal.

A moment later, I found the phrase “be strong and of a good courage” again in verses 9 and 18! To me, the repetition of this phrase was a connection between the Old Testament and today. It must be important if the Lord’s servants are still giving us the same counsel today.

As I continued to read the Old

Testament, I found several more verses with that same phrase. These verses are spread out and keep me eager to read my scriptures in the hope that I might find more.

This simple experience helped me to be diligent about my scripture study. It made the Old Testament interesting to me. And it became my personal goal to always “be strong and of good courage.”

Makenna K., Arizona, USA



Someone **texted me** an **inappropriate picture** of themselves and **keeps asking** for one of myself. **What should I do?**

First of all, you should talk to an adult about this, such as a parent (yours, his or hers, or both) or a school administrator. Most teens don't like to take this step, but it may be the only way to get your message across. Besides, texting those kinds of photos of minors is often illegal. Second, someone who has the nerve to ask you to do such a degrading thing needs a response from you that is unmistakably clear. So, though you shouldn't respond to the message, if you see the person, say it as plainly as you know how. Perhaps something like this: "I will never, ever, ever do this, and for you to even suggest that I would tells me how little you think of me." Or maybe this: "Back off. I'm a child of God and know my true worth." Pray for help and respond as the Spirit directs. **NE**

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA SMITH

You're right to want to change this expectation, since, as *For the Strength of Youth* says, you should "plan dating activities that are . . . inexpensive" ([2011], 4). In addition, according to Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "As dates become . . . more elaborate, this seems to create an expectation that a date implies seriousness or continuing commitment" ("Dating versus Hanging Out," *Ensign*, June 2006, 12–13). And as a teenager, a serious, committed relationship shouldn't be what

you're looking for. It's all about having fun and getting to know each other—simple goals that are not necessarily best served by an elaborate or expensive production.

So, how do you work against expectations but still make a good impression? (1) You could discuss your group's general plans with your date and ask for her input. (2) As you talk about your plans, be enthusiastic about them, particularly about the time you'll spend getting to know each other and having fun together in the group. (3) Show respect

The **girl I asked** to a school dance is **expecting a fancy, expensive date**. How do I **change her expectations** and **still make a good impression?**

and courtesy to your date before and during the date (and afterward, too, of course) so that she knows how she'll be treated when she's with you and your group and will look forward to that feeling rather than just the dress, food, photos, flower, and

whatever other outward trappings she might expect.

None of this is to say that you can't make it a special and memorable experience, but keeping it simple is wiser, safer, and ultimately more fun. For some ideas for inexpensive dates, visit lds.org/go/datesNE11. **NE**

Simply
knowing the truth

WILL NOT

change your world
unless you

TURN
knowledge
INTO
ACTION.

Elder Eduardo Gavarret
Of the Seventy
October 2014 general conference

WHAT'S ONLINE



#ShareGoodness

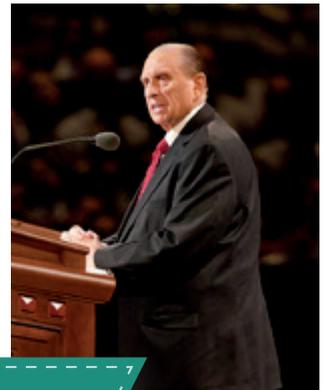
SHARING GOODNESS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

In August, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles invited us to flood the earth with positive messages through social media (go to lds.org/go/shareNE11). Want ideas on how to do that? Go to social.lds.org. You can learn more about how to #ShareGoodness by watching lds.org/go/goodnessNE11.



FACE-TO-FACE EVENT: NOV. 25, 6:30 P.M. MST

Looking for a youth activity idea? Join youth worldwide as Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson (Young Women general president) and Brother David L. Beck (Young Men general president) host a live online Q&A session with pop violinist Lindsey Stirling. Learn more at lds.org/go/Nov25, and then join in with your ward, family, or friends. You can even submit your own questions—just visit lds.org/go/NovQA.



GENERAL CONFERENCE MESSAGES

Reviewing the messages from general conference is just a click away. You can read, download, watch, listen to, and share the full talks at conference.lds.org.

