

RIVAL BANDS,

One day at a band competition,
I realized I wasn't as alone as I'd thought.

SAME BELIEFS



By Nolan Krawczak

I play baritone sax in my high school's marching band. One day we got on buses to go to our last competition of the season, and everyone was excited and ready to compete. We put everything we had into our final show, and it was one of our best performances. We were soon done and were waiting quietly in line with other bands to receive our awards when one of my friends behind me started to make conversation. Before long we were having a great time—talking, laughing, and joking around—while we waited to take the field again for the awards ceremony. I looked around and saw that other bands started doing the same.

One of my friends told a joke, but the punch line had a cuss word in it. I asked him to cut it out, and when everyone asked why, another one of my friends stepped in and said it was because I was Mormon and didn't like

to hear that type of language. I was relieved to see that my good friend knew about my standards and was willing to stand up for them. But I was still a little embarrassed that I was the one to ruin the fun everyone was having telling jokes, so I turned around to go join another group of friends.

Right as I turned, I heard someone to the right of me yell, "Hey! I'm Mormon too!" I glanced over to see a member of another band smiling at me. We started to talk and were soon explaining to groups of friends in both bands what our standards are and why we have them. As more and more people joined to ask questions and hear our answers, I was starting to feel overwhelmed by the questions being thrown at us—not because they were hard questions but because there were so many!

I felt a tap on my shoulder. Thinking it was another question, I continued answering the current question. I felt the tap again, so I turned and saw yet another young man from a different band smiling at me. "Are you guys talking about Mormonism? Dude! I'm Mormon too!" I couldn't believe it! We all soon

gathered up the Mormons in each of our bands to share our testimonies and experiences with everyone in the crowd. It was so fun to be surrounded by people I knew shared my same standards and beliefs and to teach others about the gospel.

I know if we're ever in a bad situation where we think the Spirit can't be there, then it's important to remove ourselves from that place. In my case, I was able to change my situation without compromising my standards to make it one where the Spirit *could* dwell. I also know if you feel alone, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are always there for you and can help give you the courage you need. That day, I was blessed with friends who knew my standards and stood up for me as well as new friends who shared my standards. I'm truly blessed to be surrounded by so many people who believe as I do, such as my family and my Sunday School teachers, and I know Heavenly Father had a huge part in that. I know that there are always people around me who can and will comfort me in times of need. **NE**

The author lives in Washington, USA.



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