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Cover: Really Seeing the Gospel, p. 24
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The Lord’s hastening of His work requires us continuously to learn, to change, and to press forward with faith in the Savior.

\[ \text{A PATTERN IN ALL THINGS} \]

In a revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith in June of 1831, the Lord declared: “I will give unto you a pattern in all things, that ye may not be deceived; for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations” ( Doctrine and Covenants 52:14).

Interestingly, the Lord gave us “a” and not “the” pattern for all things. I do not believe the Lord is suggesting with the language “a pattern in all things” that He has only one pattern to be used in every situation. Rather, the Lord’s way includes a variety of patterns that can be employed to achieve different spiritual objectives.

Our ultimate goal in any learning and teaching experience should be to determine and use the pattern or patterns that best meet our needs and achieve the desired learning results.

\[ \text{THE HOLY GHOST IS THE TEACHER} \]

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead and a Revelator, a Teacher, a Comforter, a Sanctifier, and He brings all things to our remembrance (see John 14:16–17, 26; 3 Nephi 27:20). Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, “The Office of the Holy Ghost in His ministrations among men is described in scripture. He is a teacher...
Inviting the Holy Ghost to be the teacher is a central purpose in all of the Lord’s patterns for learning.
Learning by Faith Requires Both the Heart and a Willing Mind.

sent from the Father; and unto those who are entitled to His tuition He will reveal all things necessary for the soul’s advancement.” Inviting the Holy Ghost to be the teacher is a central purpose in all of the Lord’s patterns for learning and teaching.

A learner who exercises moral agency and acts in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost—and thereby invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning with and by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. In the sincerity and consistency of our faith-inspired action, we indicate to our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ our willingness to learn and receive instruction from the Holy Ghost.

Consider how missionaries help investigators to learn by faith. Making and keeping spiritual commitments, such as studying and praying about the Book of Mormon, keeping the commandments, and attending Church meetings require an investigator to exercise faith and to act. This principle also applies to all members, including parents, teachers, and leaders.

Teaching, exhorting, and explaining—as important as they are—can never convey to an investigator, a child, a student, or a member a witness of the truthfulness of the restored gospel. Only as their faith initiates action and opens the pathway to the heart can the Holy Ghost deliver confirming witnesses. Missionaries, parents, teachers, and leaders obviously must learn to teach by the power of the Spirit. Of equal importance, however, is the responsibility they have to help others learn for themselves by faith.

The learning I am describing reaches far beyond mere cognitive comprehension and the retaining and recalling of information. The type of learning about which I am speaking causes us to awaken unto God (see Alma 5:7), to put off the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19), to change our hearts (see Mosiah 5:2), and to be converted unto the Lord and to never fall away (see Alma 23:6). Learning by faith requires both the heart and a willing mind (see Doctrine and Covenants 64:34) and is the result of the Holy Ghost carrying the power of the word of God both unto and into the heart. Learning by faith cannot be transferred from an instructor to a student, from a missionary to an investigator, through a lecture, a demonstration, or an experiential exercise; rather, a student must exercise faith and act in order to obtain the knowledge for himself or herself.

A Pattern for Learning and Teaching

1. Prepare to learn. If you attend your Sunday School class and listen to your teacher present a topic, that is good. But if you have worked and prepared, if you are thinking about things your teacher has invited you to read, ponder, and pray about before class, there can be a powerful outpouring of the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost becomes your teacher. Preparation invites revelation.

2. Interact to edify. I want to draw your attention to this verse. “Appoint
among yourselves a teacher, and let not all be spokesman at once; but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege" (Doctrine and Covenants 88:122).

This is one of the Lord's powerful patterns for learning and teaching. May I suggest another way of looking at this verse: "Appoint among yourselves a teacher." Who is the teacher? The Holy Ghost. Could it be that if you want the Holy Ghost to be the teacher, then "let not all [speak] at once, but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all"? The only one that can produce that edification is the Holy Ghost.

Interacting to edify invites revelation. Presently in the Church, we are learning and applying ever more spiritually sensitive, rigorous, and demanding patterns of learning and teaching. Will we always do what we have always done and get the same results that we have always gotten, or will we repent and learn and change and teach increasingly the Lord's way?

3. Invite to act. Just one simple question helps to achieve this goal. What will you do with what you have learned? Acting upon revelation invites more revelation.

I pray we will keep pace with the Lord's hastening, that we will not just simply do what we have always done with His hastening and follow the patterns He has set forth for our growth and learning. NE

From an address given at the seminar for new mission presidents on June 25, 2014.

NOTE
YOUR AGENCY IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR.
Keeping God's commandments brings freedom. To somebody who hasn't gained a testimony of that truth, such a statement might sound confusing. After all, if one of your neighbors walked up and handed you a list of things you had to do (or could not do), that might feel like less personal freedom.

However, keeping God's commandments really does make you free—free from the negative consequences of sin and free to enjoy the blessings that come from righteousness.

Breaking God's commandments, however, leads to captivity. One way to think of captivity is a loss of agency. It's hard to make many choices for your life if you're in captivity.

We know from the scriptures that Satan “sought to destroy the agency of man” (Moses 4:3) in the premortal life. We also know that he didn't win that war and that you were on the winning side!

The tricky part is that Satan is still trying to rob you of your agency. But have no fear. You can win this war too.

LIVING IN CAPTIVITY

In the Book of Mormon, Jesus taught, “Ye must watch and pray always, lest ye be tempted by the devil, and ye be led away captive by him” (3 Nephi 18:15).

Becoming captive to the devil sounds terrifying! Yet when you do imagine such a fate, do you tend to think mostly in terms of final judgment? There's actually a more immediate type of this captivity. And it's often quite subtle.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “People can become enslaved or put themselves in bondage not only to harmful, addictive substances but also to harmful, addictive philosophies that detract from righteous living” (Oct. 2013 general conference).

Have no fear. You can win this war too.

Becoming enslaved to addictive substances like harmful drugs or nicotine is easy to understand. But what about becoming enslaved in a habit of lying? With only a single lie, it's easy to become caught in a trap of your own making.

Or how about simply not doing the daily acts of righteousness (prayer, scripture study, etc.) that God asks of us? Does that also result in a loss of agency?

Yes, it does. Here's one way to think of it. What happens to athletes or musicians if they completely stop practicing? Answer: they soon lose the ability to play at their best. While that might not seem like a loss of agency, it truly is. The athlete or musician who fails to work at their skill will no longer be able to make as many choices with how to use that skill. By decreasing their abilities, they can now do less than they did before. Their options become reduced.

In a similar way, you truly can't be your best self without the companionship of the Holy Ghost. You need His help every single day. It's one of the greatest gifts you can hope to receive in this life, and daily righteous living is how you obtain that gift.

FINDING TRUE FREEDOM

The Apostle Paul taught, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1). In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin taught, “And under this head ye are made free, and there is no other head whereby ye can be made free. There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ” (Mosiah 5:8).

True freedom comes from following Christ. So choose to be free!
When Abel went missing, the Lord asked his brother Cain where he was. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” responded Cain.

In other words, Cain basically said, “How should I know? Watching out for him isn’t my job.”

Jesus Christ, in contrast, teaches us a much different message about caring for others. He said that we should treat other people the way we want to be treated, which includes helping each other, caring for each other, and watching out for each other (see Luke 6:31).

There are people all around you who are struggling with something. You may be struggling with hard times yourself. Whatever the case may be, you can make a difference by choosing to follow Jesus Christ.

**Safety-Pin Friends**

One group of friends found an unusual way to reach out to each other. They came from different family situations and backgrounds, but they all cared about each other and wanted to strengthen their friendship.

One of their friends was having a particularly hard time at home. She told them she sometimes wished she could disappear but kept her feelings hidden behind a smile because she was worried that others would judge her.

Her friends wanted her to know that she was safe with them and that the world was a better place because she was in it. So they came up with a plan: they would wear safety pins. Each of them wore a safety pin on their clothes each day to remind her, and each other, that they were committed to creating a safe, secure, trustworthy friendship—and that they wanted each other to stick around.

Years later, this young woman still remembers her safety-pin friends and is grateful for the security she felt knowing that they cared about her.
What Can You Do?

No, you don’t have to wear a safety pin to support your friends. But you can ask yourself what you can do to watch out for your friends, strengthen those who might be struggling, and be a safe friend for whoever needs your help.

“We, of all people, should be better at loving people instead of judging them. We, of all people, should be more inclusive,” Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said. “‘Have compassion, making a difference’ (Jude 1:22)—that’s what we should do.”

So what can you do to help those around you? Below are some ideas that might get your creative juices flowing.

• Pray and ask God for help. This seems simple, but it can be a powerful tool. God knows your friends perfectly. He knows you perfectly and can help you be a compassionate friend.

• Keep your eye out for signs that your friends might be struggling.

• Find small, personal ways to serve. As Sister Linda K. Burton, former Relief Society General President, once said, “First observe, then serve.”

What do they need? Then you can help someone in a unique, personal way.

• Remember that being a loving, supportive friend does not mean you are responsible for the actions of others. You are also not responsible for their happiness.

• Come up with something fun you can do with your friends, like wearing safety pins, to remind each other to be supportive. Some youth made goofy socks and committed to be “seekers of courage, kindness, and service” (which creates an acronym for socks).

Another group checked in with each other using colors representing how they were feeling. If someone was feeling too “purple” one day, for example, the other friends knew that person needed extra love.

• Don’t limit your friends! Jesus befriended people that the rest of the world despised. When you reach out to include others—especially those who are having trouble making friends—you are following His example.

Life can be tough sometimes. But you are strong, and you are powerful. Your kindness and thoughtfulness can change someone’s life. Your friends need you! Seek the Lord’s guidance, and He will support you through your trials and help you make the world a better place.

The author is a member of the Church’s suicide-prevention committee.

NOTES
1. Interview with Elder Renlund on Jan. 23, 2018.

READ MORE
Read “Ambassadors of Hope” in last month’s issue to find out how one group of youth in Utah brought an extra dose of hope to their high school.
THREE BOOKS SHARED

THE BOOK OF MORMON
Another Testament of Jesus Christ

JESUS THE CHRIST

A Marvelous Work and a Wonder
I prayed to know if the Church is true, and then I discovered Heavenly Father had already been answering my question.

By Kevin Ludlow

As I entered the chapel, I quickly realized that no one was wearing a T-shirt and cargo pants like I was. When my soon-to-be-missionary friend had invited me to hear him speak, I assumed he was talking about a party or an open house, not a sacrament service. The meeting I was observing was unlike any church meeting I’d ever attended, and I had attended quite a few.

A trip to Israel when I was 14 had sparked my interest in religion. Over the next few years, I visited many different churches and heard a variety of pastors and teachers express their views. As passionately as they spoke, I still felt like there were some basic answers I was not hearing, including who Jesus Christ really is.

After high school graduation, I worked with a young man who was a recently returned missionary. One day we began talking about religion, and I was amazed by how much he knew about the Savior. “Where did you learn all that?” I asked. A few days later, he presented me with a copy of Jesus the Christ by Elder James E. Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Not long after that, he changed jobs and I didn’t see him again.

I was almost finished reading the book when I heard that an LDS friend of mine was going on a mission. I called him and told him what I was reading. He was the one who had invited me to church on that Sunday when I showed up in a T-shirt.

So, there I was at the meeting, feeling out of place in my casual clothing. As I looked around, I noticed families sitting together. I had not seen many children in other churches. I also noticed that everyone, not just the choir, sang the hymns. Young men passed the sacrament. Regular members spoke instead of a pastor. I liked what I saw.

I began to feel a greater desire than ever to learn about Jesus. I enjoyed my friend’s talk and his excitement about serving as a missionary. Later I told my friend how jealous I was of him because he was going to be a missionary like Paul in the New Testament. I told him how much I would like to do something like that.

He said, “I have a book that will help you prepare, and I want you to have my copy.” It was a book by another Apostle in the Church called A Marvelous Work and a Wonder.

I studied that book along with the Bible. Through this study, I got answers to many questions, as well as a desire to pray. Based on what I’d read about Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:5–19), I felt sure that God would also answer my prayer.

I knelt by my bedside and called out to God with all my heart and soul. I told Him that I was seeking the truth, and then I waited for my heavenly messenger. Nothing happened. I tried again. Still nothing. Finally, I simply asked God if the things I was reading and studying were true.

After my prayer, I began thinking of all I had learned. While reading the two books my LDS friends had given me, I had discovered answers. That felt good. Ever since I went to Israel, I’d...
wanted to know more about Jesus. Now I did. That felt good, too. Suddenly I realized God was answering my prayer. He loved me enough to send friends and books to tell me about the Restoration of the gospel, and I felt good. How would I feel if the Lord had literally told me the same thing? I would feel the same way. That was my answer.

Full of excitement, I wanted to call my friend, but he was on his mission, so I called his mom instead. I awkwardly explained that I had read the book her son had given me and that I would like to find out how I could join their Church. She was silent for a long time, and then she started to cry. Through her joyful tears she told me how to contact the missionaries.

A few weeks later I called my friend's mom again. This time it was to invite her and her family to my baptism. Along with the other books I'd read, I had now read the Book of Mormon and gained a testimony of its truthfulness. I invited my own family to attend my baptism as well. My twin brother came into town the night before. He didn't understand why I wanted to get baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He asked a lot of questions, especially about the Book of Mormon. The only things he'd ever read about the book were false and negative. I stayed up most the night attempting to answer his questions.

The baptism was beautiful. This time I didn't show up in a T-shirt and cargo pants. This time I was in a white shirt and tie, and I felt totally comfortable and at home. Four months later my twin was still asking questions. I told him that I was happy to talk to him about it but that ultimately he would have to ask God for himself. A few weeks later he came to me and said: "I asked, and now I know the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was a prophet. How do I get in touch with the missionaries?"

Imagine my joy a month later when I had the opportunity of baptizing my twin brother. We both served missions; I was called to Chile and my brother to Mexico. Like Paul of old, we are trying to give back a little of what we received. NE

The author lives in Oregon, USA.
“I exhort you to study the messages of this conference frequently—even repeatedly—during the next six months.”

President Russell M. Nelson,

“Let Us All Press On,”

Apr. 2018 general conference.
By Jess Verzello

“WHY DO YOU ALWAYS move all the dirty dishes to the right side of the sink?” my friend once asked me. I thought for a moment and replied, “I guess it’s because my mom does the same thing, and I learned it from her.”

Has this ever happened to you? OK, maybe you don’t have a weird thing about where the dirty dishes go, but knowing why you do something can be surprising. This habit I picked up from my mom might be small, but there are other things I do that have a much bigger reason behind them—like living the gospel.

Think about why you live the gospel: Why do you go to church every Sunday? Why obey the Word of Wisdom? Why wait until you’re 16 to start dating? Why take the time to serve and minister to others? Thinking about what motivates you to live the gospel can make it easier to choose the right. Here are some examples of ways to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and a few reasons why.

WORSHIP shows your love and reverence for Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (see Doctrine and Covenants 20:19, 29; 2 Nephi 25:29).

THE WORD OF GOD guides you to righteousness, happiness, and eternal life (see 2 Nephi 31:20; Joseph Smith–Matthew 1:37).

HEALTH is a blessing of obedience as you care for your mind, body, and spirit (see Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–21; Galatians 5:21).

HOPE lifts you up as you have faith in the Savior and His Atonement (see Joel 3:16; Ether 12:4; Moroni 8:26).

YOUTH MEANS YOU! As you stand for truth and righteousness, others will see your light and follow (see Alma 37:35; 1 Timothy 4:12).

HAPPINESS is the result of living righteously and comes through Jesus Christ (see Galatians 5:22; Mosiah 2:41; Alma 41:10–11).

WORTHINESS qualifies you to make and keep covenants and receive blessings (see Mormon 9:29; 2 Nephi 9:18).

YOKED WITH CHRIST. You are never alone. As you humbly seek help from your Redeemer, He will make your burdens light (see Matthew 11:29–30; Galatians 5:1).

YEARNING Elder D. Todd Christofferson has taught, “If we yearn to dwell in Christ and have Him dwell in us, then holiness is what we seek, in both body and spirit” (Oct. 2017 general conference).

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YEARNING Elder D. Todd Christofferson has taught, “If we yearn to dwell in Christ and have Him dwell in us, then holiness is what we seek, in both body and spirit” (Oct. 2017 general conference).
Simply knowing the gospel is true isn't enough. I know that obeying the Word of Wisdom will keep my body and spirit healthy, but I have to live it to receive those blessings. I have to act on what I know. But how? When you feel a purpose behind living the gospel, consider how you can turn that knowledge into action.

**THE HOLY GHOST** will teach and guide you to know what is true if you listen intently (see John 14:26; Moroni 10:5; Doctrine and Covenants 121:45–46).

**HEARKEN** means listening and obeying the voice of the Lord (see 2 Nephi 26:8; Doctrine and Covenants 84:46–47).

**OBEY** all of God's commandments (see Doctrine and Covenants 93:1; 1 Nephi 3:7; John 14:15).

**ORDINANCES** of the gospel (baptism, sacrament, temple) bring you closer to God and are essential for salvation (see Articles of Faith 1:3–4; Ezekiel 11:20).

**OFFER** your time, talents, and tithes as a gift and sacrifice to the Lord (see Omni 1:26; Doctrine and Covenants 128:24).

**WORKS** are the actions you do every day. Choosing to do good works shows God's influence in your life and can be a light to others (see Moroni 7:5; Doctrine and Covenants 137:9; Matthew 5:16).

**WITNESS** or testify of the Savior and His restored gospel through your words and by example (see Mosiah 18:8–9; Ether 5:4).

**WALK WITH GOD** and be open to the promptings that He sends you. Show your love for Him by trusting in Him (see Micah 6:8; 4 Nephi 1:12).

**CONCLUSION**

It may not always be easy to live the gospel of Jesus Christ, but you can do it! Hold on to your reasons for choosing righteousness, especially when life gets hard. Then take that purpose and turn it into action. As you try to live the gospel with more purpose, you will be immeasurably blessed. NE

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*
I was in the middle of the Forbidden City in Beijing, China. Only minutes before, I had been surrounded by friends and teachers, but I was suddenly completely and utterly alone.

I immediately understood the danger I was in. A solitary 15-year-old American stood out like a sore thumb in the bustling palace museum. I had come to China with other high school classmates on a school-sponsored trip, and our teachers and guides had warned us numerous times about the possible dangers of touring a foreign country if we were not careful.

I walked around the area, pushing through crowds of tourists—Chinese and foreigner alike—and stood on my tiptoes trying to look for the matching
red and white shirts that each member of our group wore. But I saw nothing. Somehow, my group had slipped away without me and I had no idea what direction they had gone in. I sat down and watched the entrances and exits. Ten minutes passed, then 30, then 45. No one from my group appeared.

Someone grabbed my hand. I looked up to see a short woman with slightly crazed eyes and long fingernails. She pulled at my hand. “Follow me,” she said in broken English. “Pretty girl, follow me.”

I felt a sinking feeling in my stomach. “Get back,” I yelled, pulling my hand back. Before she could grab it again, I raced through an exit and entered another section of the city.

I ran for a while until I was even more lost than before. I sat on a nearby step, away from the groups of people, and started to cry. I knew a few words of Chinese but certainly not enough to get directions back to our hotel, somewhere on the other side of the sprawling city of Beijing. And at this point, I was not even sure where an exit was.

Amid tears, I started to pray. I admitted that I had been foolish to wander from the group, even for a moment, and I pleaded with Heavenly Father to help me find a way back to my group.

I stood up and walked back in the general direction I had come from. I did not receive any immediate revelation—and I was unsure of what that revelation would sound or feel like even if I did receive it. I had felt the Spirit before, a warm feeling after serving someone or hearing a talk in church, but I had never felt anything specific—certainly not directions on where to go. I started walking forward uncertainly, continuing the prayer in my heart.

I finally reached a fork in the road. I started to go right when I heard a voice whisper, “Stay.”

The voice was so soft that I almost disregarded it completely as one of my own thoughts. But it contained a sureness that I certainly didn’t feel at the moment. “Sit on that bench,” the voice said. I looked up and saw a bench in the middle of the fork. I went over and sat down. Only three minutes later, a familiar white and red shirt appeared in the crowd and waved toward me. It was our tour guide for the day.

I jumped up from the bench I was sitting on. I was so happy I almost hugged the woman.

“We have been looking for you for an hour!” she said. “Where were you?”

As she led me back to my group, I explained to her where I had been, starting with my separation from the group and ending with my decision to sit down instead of going right at the fork in the road.

“You’re very lucky,” she said. “If you had gone right at that turn, it would have taken you in the opposite direction from the rest of the group. The city is so big, I would never have been able to find you.”

I left China a few weeks later, managing to not get lost again during the trip, but I have thought back many times to the moment when I heard the voice of the Spirit whisper to me. It was not the kind of prompting I had received before, but it is what the Lord knew I needed in order to avoid going down a wrong path. I also recognized how easy it would have been to ignore it if I had not been listening.

Since that day, I have heard the Spirit many times in many different ways, warning me of both physical and spiritual danger. Sometimes I have seen the consequences of following or disobeying that voice like I did that first day in the Forbidden City. More often, I haven’t been able to see the results. But I have learned that when I humble myself and am willing to listen, the Lord will help me recognize the Spirit’s promptings and He will guide me back to where I need to be.

With Him, I am never alone. NE

The author lives in Utah, USA.
MY QUARTERBACK QUESTION

You are facing big decisions in your life. How do you make them?

By Elder S. Gifford Nielsen
Of the Seventy

Learned important lessons about life through playing sports, whether I was shooting hoops with a friend or playing on basketball and football teams. One of the lessons I learned was how to make decisions. For example, I grew up loving to play basketball more than football and played college basketball for two years. When I was given the opportunity to participate in college football, I knew I had to commit to one or the other, and I had questions about what I should do.

Many of you are asking questions of your own: Where should I go to school? What should be my major? When should I go on my mission? How do I pay for my mission? Who am I supposed to marry? How can I help my friends? How do I work through my challenges? How do I strengthen my testimony of the restored gospel? Is Jesus Christ there for me? How do I stand up for my values? There are so many questions.

Ask God

The only way I know how to make big decisions in life is to do exactly what Heavenly Father and the Savior invite us to do: ask Them. Then record the impressions you receive.

One of my favorite scriptures in the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 32:9, teaches this principle: “But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul.”

My parents taught me that when I needed to make a big decision in my life, I should get out a piece of paper and a pencil, draw a line down the middle of the paper, and then write down the pros on one side and the cons on the other. After that, I was taught to call upon Heavenly Father to help inspire my thoughts. I learned to keep writing the pluses and minuses on both sides of the paper about the decision I was making, and to take my time. I found that as I did this with patience, it was amazing to see how the Lord revealed thoughts that were not originally there to help me with the process. Finally, when I made my decision, I went to the Lord again in prayer and took time to just listen, so I could sense if He agreed with my decision.

Trust God

We don’t always understand what the Lord is revealing at the time that He’s giving us inspired thoughts. If you had asked me before I sought heaven’s help about my decision, and I had been told to stop playing basketball and
learned important lessons about life through playing sports, whether I was shooting hoops with a friend or playing on basketball and football teams. One of the lessons I learned was how to make decisions. For example, I grew up loving to play basketball more than football and played college basketball for two years. When I was given the opportunity to participate in college football, I knew I had to commit to one or the other, and I had questions about what I should do.

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to start playing college football, I would have thought, “Are you crazy? Why would I do that?” But that was the prompting the Lord gave me. Even though I didn’t know why, I knew by the confirming feeling in my heart that I was doing what the Lord wanted me to do. I had gone through a process that allowed me to have confidence in my choice. That knowledge helped me through some rough times.

I had done well as our high school quarterback and was also the captain of the basketball team. I enjoyed the victories and learned from the defeats, but for the first time in my life I failed when I started playing football at BYU. I struggled in football, and I questioned myself: “Did I make the right choice?” I had to answer: “Yes, I made the right choice; I had a confirmation.” But the harder I tried, the worse it got. Through it all, I turned to prayer and leaned on the scripture: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

After I went through more hard knocks, challenges, and tests, everything came together, and we started winning football games. With that success, I learned to trust the coach, my teammates, and myself as I gained confidence and became accountable for my responsibilities.

**HOW TO USE THE PROCESS**

From those experiences, I came to know the power of prayer. You can come to know the power of prayer in your life. You need to know that Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ, are willing and ready to help you, but you have to go through the process of finding an answer. I promise that if you seek earnestly and humbly, you will find answers to your questions.

Doctrine and Covenants 88:63–64 gives us a pattern to follow. The Lord extends invitations followed by promises. “Draw near unto me” is the invitation; “and I will draw near unto you” is the promise. The invitation: “Seek me diligently”; the promise: “Ye shall find me.” The invitation: “Ask”; the promise: “and ye shall receive.” “Knock” is the invitation, and the promise is “it shall be opened unto you.” In verse 64 it says, “Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, that is expedient [necessary] for you.”
I have repeated that pattern many times in my life. For example, when I had the opportunity to play professional football in the National Football League, I turned again to prayer for guidance. I asked Heavenly Father for help because I was the only member of the Church on the team, and I knew I needed to be able to work with my teammates and to get along with them. I received the answer that I should tell them what I believe in and that everything would be OK.

When I let my teammates know about my beliefs, they began to understand and have respect for my standards. In many cases they wanted to know more, and I found the answers to their questions by studying the scriptures. These friends were always there to support and encourage me.

You may be tested to see what's inside of you, and others may test you to see how firm you are. When you choose to build your life upon the foundation of the Savior and build your testimony by praying, feasting on the words of Christ, and choosing good friends, you can rise above temptations that come your way. People are looking for leaders with integrity, and as you choose to be obedient, you can become strong, powerful leaders that our world needs.

WE CAN CHOOSE

We live in an interesting time filled with peer pressure, difficult choices, temptations, and challenges of every kind. Sometimes it can feel overwhelming, but because of Jesus Christ’s Atonement, we are free forever. We can know good from evil, act for ourselves, and not be acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:26–27). How do you feel when you make righteous choices? How do you feel when you make unrighteous choices? We must learn how to make virtuous decisions while still being an athlete, an officer, a musician, a student, a family member, or a friend. In every situation we face, we can choose to do what is right.

The world will constantly tell you to choose a path different from the one the Lord wants you to pursue. Who will you follow? I have found that happiness comes only from following the Lord and His servants. It comes back to trusting in the Lord with all our hearts. We can do all things with His help. Many people tell you that you can’t be humble and have great success. I say that there is nothing more powerful than being humble and submissive to the Lord. You are then led, guided, and directed from heaven. And with His help, you can accomplish anything.

WHOM IS ELDER NEIENSEN?

Born in Provo, Utah, on October 25, 1954.

Attended Provo High School, where he was the quarterback. He also led the Bulldogs to the 1973 state basketball championship.

Married Wendy Olson in April 1975. They have 6 children and 25 grandchildren.

Received his Bachelor’s Degree in 1977.

Selected by the Houston Oilers in the third round of the 1978 NFL draft. Played six seasons as Quarterback for the Oilers.

After leaving the NFL, was the Sports Director at CBS affiliate KHOU in Houston for 25 years.

Has served in numerous Church callings, including seminary teacher, elders quorum president, Young Men president, Sunday School president, counselor in a mission presidency, bishop, stake president, and Area Seventy.

Sustained as a General Authority Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 6, 2013.
I plopped down on my couch and immediately started reading the New Era. I flipped through the pages, eagerly reading all the inspiring stories and messages. But one page stood out. On the “Questions and Answers” page for the July 2017 New Era, at the bottom of the page, the upcoming question said, “How can I motivate myself to do the things I ought to do but often don’t—like personal prayer, scripture study, and homework?”

That question seemed to hit me in the face. I was facing that very same question; it seemed to follow me wherever I went.

Once upon a time, I had the motivation, that was for sure. But I had it for the wrong reason. I was too focused on outward things rather than actual spiritual growth. I would have to force myself to pray. I would have to force myself to do homework. All this pressure without the spiritual component was leaving me tired, and my forced motivation left me.

That’s when I couldn’t motivate myself anymore. That’s when I sought the answer to how to have a desire for the right kind of motivation.

But before that realization, I gave up. I avoided scripture study, procrastinated it, and, oops, forgot about it and didn’t do it that day. Scripture study and prayer became painful. I felt like I was a failure for not doing my scripture study. I was stuck in a negative cycle—just how Satan wanted me to be.

I knew that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ wanted prayer and scripture study to be a positive experience for me. I had a question that I couldn’t seem to find the answer to: “How do I get out of this negative cycle?”

I started small, and with the help of others, I learned about the right motivation.
I tried to move beyond words such as oughtta, shoulda, coulda, woulda. These words put pressure on me and distracted me from the joy of pursuing spiritual growth. Jesus Christ expected my growth, not perfection. After, there was a time where I felt like I should stop praying. Satan would tell me I wasn’t worthy to pray because I gave up. He wanted me to cut myself off from Heavenly Father’s love and communication. This is one of his traps! In 2 Nephi 32:8 it says: “If ye would hearken unto the Spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray; for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray.”

I learned that Heavenly Father wanted to hear from me. He welcomed me home, like the prodigal son. I had distanced myself from God, and I learned that no matter what, He would always have His hand stretched forth.

I allowed myself time. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ did not want me to run faster than I could run, or eventually I would’ve collapsed. I realized that Heavenly Father wanted me to have patience with my process of perfection, and growth.

I began with the end in mind when I felt the pressure of praying, reading scriptures, and doing homework. My dad taught me this. Sometimes we get to do things we don’t necessarily want to do, but we do these things to get where we want to be.

In the beginning, Satan said he would save everyone; he sought to destroy our agency (see Moses 4:1–3). But I do have agency, and I want to return to my Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ.

I’m glad that Heavenly Father allows us our agency. I know that He wants me to feel the happiness of the gospel. I’m still learning how to not let Satan in my head, and I’m not perfect at it. But that’s what the gospel is all about, right? It’s about learning, growing, and becoming like Jesus.

I hope I can become like Jesus Christ, my Savior, one day. This is who I want to be. Now I can tell myself, “I’ll be who I choose to be, not who I’ll have to be.” I feel like that’s the message Heavenly Father has sent to me.

The author lives in Utah, USA.
REALLY SEEING THE GOSPEL

By Jess Verzello
Imagine that at 13 years old you move 6,700 miles (10,782 kilometers) across the world to a new home and a new family. You have to learn a new language and culture and eat unfamiliar foods. And you can't physically see any of it.

You might be thinking, “How could anyone do something so hard?” Well, meet Conner—a cool, carefree, and cheerful teen from Wuhan, China.

**AN INCREDIBLE TALENT**

Conner was raised in a foster home in China. When he was six years old, his foster family discovered that he had an incredible ear for music. And being blind didn’t stop him from pursuing his musical talent. He took piano lessons and began attending a special school for the blind.

But just a month before he turned 14, his foster father showed up at Conner’s school and pulled him out of class. “He said that I was going to be adopted and that I needed to go home right away,” Conner says. His friends, family, and teachers got together the next day and said their goodbyes as a new chapter began in Conner’s life.
A NEW FAMILY

Conner found himself half a world away in Herriman, Utah. His new family included Dad (Jeremy), Mom (Christianne), six new sisters, and three new brothers. And Conner wasn’t the only child from China—six of his new siblings had been adopted from there as well.

Christianne explains, “People say that our kids are so lucky to have a family, but Conner had to leave everything that was familiar to him—a foster family who loved him, food, culture, friends—to come to this family that he didn’t know. It was a huge change, and we feel very blessed to have Conner and all the kids in our home. They’re a gift.”

A DESIRE TO KNOW

Conner’s new family got up every Sunday morning, put on their nice clothes, and went to church. “At first, church was really hard,” Conner says. Sitting for three hours with no idea what was going on wasn’t easy. “I wanted to know what they were talking about.”
But he began to understand and feel a desire to learn more about the gospel. His parents called the mission president and asked if Conner could have Mandarin speaking missionaries teach him the discussions. And it just so happened that a sister missionary, Sister Jin, was available to teach him.

On their first visit, Sister Jin and Conner were talking to each other in Mandarin when they suddenly started jumping up and down with huge smiles on their faces. They were from the same town in China! "Finding out that they’re from the same city, love the same foods, and knew the same places was so special," said Christianne.

"I'm so lucky," said Conner, "I had a great missionary who taught me everything about Jesus. And when I started to learn about Him, I was so happy. I didn't know anything about Him. My mom taught me how to pray, then Sister Jin taught me simple things. It just started with wanting to learn the gospel."
Conner was learning so many new, wonderful things, but he had a hard time understanding a key principle. “There’s just so many people,” he says. “How could God know everything about me?” So he asked the missionaries.

Sister Jin and her companion prayed to know how they could show Conner that Heavenly Father cares about him personally. Inspiration hit. Conner had recently shared with them how he felt homesick for China and missed his favorite Wuhan noodles.

The missionaries prayed, asking Heavenly Father to help them find these noodles. A couple hours before their next lesson with Conner, Sister Jin and her companion felt impressed to walk to an area they didn’t regularly visit. Not long after they got there they were approached by a Chinese family. It turned out they were from Wuhan, too!

Sister Jin told them about Conner and how he missed his homeland. The family went to their car, pulled out a bag full of Wuhan noodles, and asked Sister Jin to give them to Conner.
Later, during their lesson with Conner, Sister Jin told him, “Conner, Heavenly Father knows you and He loves you, and He even knows what your favorite food is.” Then she handed him the bag.

“When she gave me the bag of noodles, it was very special,” Conner says. “I really felt the Spirit and knew in that moment that God really knows me.”

A BRIGHT FUTURE
Conner was soon baptized and sealed to his family in the Salt Lake Temple. “I have a great family. I don’t say that a lot in front of people, but it’s true—it’s always a party! I feel like I chose this family. I waited a long time for them. Everything is so good now.”

Now that he’s 17 and a priest, Conner blesses the sacrament alongside his quorum members. “It’s cool to bless the sacrament. My brother Taylor helps me. I love to bless the sacrament and see everybody have the bread and water and become clean. Because that’s what it’s for—to help us to become clean.”

Conner’s testimony of the gospel is strong and pure. He loves to pray, ask for blessings when he needs help with something, and study his scriptures. “I can read even when all the lights are out!” he jokes.

After high school, Conner wants to serve a mission and then go to BYU or Julliard. “I would love to be a piano teacher or just perform.”

Getting there won’t be easy, but Conner believes in exercising his faith—and doing something about it. “Life is difficult sometimes,” he says. “You just have to have fun with it even when it’s hard. If you have a hard time, talk to Heavenly Father, and He can give you advice or let other people help you. Try to be happy every day, even when it’s hard.”

The author lives in Utah, USA.
My grandfather never accepted the gospel when he was alive. Why would it matter now?
By Christopher C. Deaver

Growing up, I often heard my dad tell stories about his father. Dad had converted to the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and been baptized when he was a young boy, and he always seemed to hold out the hope that his father, my grandfather, might join the Church. However, for whatever reason he and my grandfather didn’t get along well. And despite Dad’s many efforts to teach my grandfather, he never seemed all that interested.

Years later, when I was serving a full-time mission in Peru, my dad passed away after a sudden stroke. It was a difficult time for me, but knowing that we were sealed as a family in the temple brought me unspeakable peace and reassurance. When I returned home from my mission, I was excited to share the gospel with everyone in my extended family who was not a Church member—including my grandfather. But sadly, as soon as I was back at college, my grandfather became ill and was on his deathbed. At that time, my grandmother heard him calling out to my Dad, “Tom, Tom, Tom!” as his spirit passed out of this world. Despite their disagreements in the past, my grandfather’s heart had turned to that of his son.

When I heard about his passing, though, I couldn’t help but be sad and frustrated that my grandfather hadn’t been baptized in this life. So when my sister suggested a year later that we go to the temple and do ordinances for my grandfather, I had mixed feelings. Why would it matter now if he hadn’t accepted it when it was right here for him?

But I prayed about doing my grandfather’s work in the temple, and my heart softened. I knew I needed to do it. When I went to the temple and was baptized for him, something happened to me in that font: I felt the Spirit come into my heart along with a sense of forgiveness and love that I didn’t know I had for my grandfather. My heart was truly turned to him. I felt the truth of the promise that “he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers” (Doctrine and Covenants 2:2). It was real.

I don’t know whether or not my grandfather will accept the ordinances of the gospel, but I know that my heart was turned to his through the miracle of the Savior’s gospel. I

The author lives in California, USA.

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**HIS CHANCE, Right?**

**By Christopher C. Deaver**

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**How Your Heart Can Be Turned To Your Fathers**

Do you want to learn more about your ancestors and make sure their temple work is done but don’t know where to start? FamilySearch.org is a great place to begin. You can find information, reserve names to take to the temple, share documents, photos, and stories, and index records.

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I don’t think it’s any 14-year-old girl’s dream to find herself in a dusty barn, hoisting a rusty shovel, cleaning out a smelly horse stall. But there I was after school every day until I was old enough to get a different job.

It definitely wasn’t my ideal situation to work during high school, but I understood then that if I ever wanted a job I actually liked—one that didn’t involve cleaning up after animals—I needed college, and to go to college, I needed money. I knew that for me, education was the right step toward a (hopefully) fulfilling career.

The nice thing is that the path I chose is just one of several that can help you learn to work and provide for your own needs. This is called becoming temporally and spiritually self-reliant. As you consider your options, try to choose the path that you feel will best prepare you.

These stories are from people who were your age just a few years ago. By following the examples of these young adults, you can find your own path toward successful self-reliance.

CONSIDER THE NEEDS AROUND YOU

By Oudom Piseth, Cambodia

In order to achieve my goals, I always tell myself that working hard is very important, but another way to excel is by working smart. After my mission in England, I returned to Cambodia and looked at the job market. I looked at things like the length of training to get each job and the cost of training.

I found that the training program to be a clothing merchandiser is short but challenging, and not many people were doing it. I saw it was a good opportunity and decided to take it. I have now finished the program and am working as a merchandiser for a clothing company.

Finding the right career can be very hard, but I have the Savior to help me and lift me up.
Whether you go to college, seek employment, or learn a trade, you are developing an attribute that is essential for building the kingdom of God.

USE EDUCATION TO OPEN DOORS
By Iolanda Teixeira, Cape Verde, Africa

My mom always encouraged me with the phrase, “Education is the key to success.” I wanted a better future for myself and especially for my family, and to do this, I needed to continue my education. Without the money to go to college at the time, I applied for a scholarship to attend a vocational school to study computer systems and maintenance.

Throughout my studies I faced various challenges, but this did not stop me from moving forward with eyes fixed on better days. Prayer helped me a lot; I always seek counsel from the Lord. I have always been committed to my studies, and today I remain committed to my work, giving my best as a computer technician and a marketing assistant.
WORK NOW TOWARD THE FUTURE YOU WANT

By Ann-Sophie and Lawrence Cavin, Scotland, UK

Ann-Sophie: I always wanted to study at a university, but my plans about what to study changed a lot during my teenage years. After finishing high school, I volunteered in a hospital for six months. Since then I loved the idea of being a nurse, but I didn’t think I would be able to do it.

In my ward’s self-reliance class, we were asked to pick a job we would like to have even though we might not have the qualifications. I prayed about what to do, and nursing kept coming into my mind. I decided to follow the promptings of the Lord.

Pursuing this path hasn’t been easy. To get started, I researched the nursing program and what it would take for me to study. I talked to people who went through a similar process. The first time I applied to the nursing program, I was put on the waiting list. But I didn’t give up; I applied again and eventually got in. Sometimes you have to be patient and trust in the Lord as He has His own plan for you.

Lawrence: When I was younger, I set a goal to be the best I could be no matter what subject I studied or what job I had. I always tried to learn and improve to give myself the best chance for success.

I currently work as a manager for a clothing company, but I want to join the police force. In Scotland, you have to live in the country for three consecutive years before applying for the police. Since I was outside the country for two years serving a mission, I have to wait a few more months before joining.

Although this has been a big roadblock, I haven’t given up. I have a good job to provide for my family, and I have worked hard to make sure I get a good reference for future jobs.
Like these young adults, you will find that various paths can prepare you to take care of yourself and your future family. With that goal in mind, you can plan for success. Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “Let us do the best we can and cultivate a reputation for excellence in all that we do. Let us set our minds and bodies to the glorious opportunity for work that each new day presents” (“Two Principles for Any Economy,” Oct. 2009 general conference). As you focus now on learning and working, you will create habits that will help you feel more confident about the future. NE

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Editors’ note: Consider asking your bishop to introduce you to the self-reliance specialists in your stake. They can help you discover possibilities for your future education and work.

### DISCOVERING YOUR PATH

1. **KNOW YOURSELF**
   What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing? Answering these questions can help you identify a potential career that fits any skills, interests, and talents you already have.

   **HINT:** Consider asking your parents, teachers, and friends what talents they see in you. You might be surprised at what they say!

2. **KNOW THE WORLD AROUND YOU**
   What jobs are in demand where you live? Which companies are hiring? It’s wise to pick a career path in an area that is growing and will likely have opportunities in the future.

   **HINT:** Colleges, universities, or trade schools often know what skills are in demand and what industries are growing.

3. **KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NEXT**
   What preparation is required for the job you want? Where will you get the training and education you need? How will you pay for it? In order to achieve a long-term career goal, you’ll need to know how to get there.

   **HINT:** Consider talking to someone who is already doing what you want to do. Ask them questions. Most people enjoy giving advice and offering suggestions.
Do you “have a spirit of gratitude in all you do and say”? Take this quiz and think about how you can show gratitude to your family, friends, and Heavenly Father each day.

By Kimberly Smith

1. You don’t know how to do a math problem, so your dad shows you how to do it. You...
   a. Give him a big hug. You’re so glad he knows how to do math and is willing to help.
   b. Breathe a sigh of relief (that one was hard) and move on to the next problem.
   c. Get frustrated. It’s not fair that he can do these math problems so easily when they’re so hard for you.

2. Today is not your day. You were late for school, forgot about a test, and tripped in front of everyone at lunch. When you get home, you...
   a. Say a prayer. Though things were hard, you think of how Heavenly Father blessed you, thank Him for those blessings, and ask for help to get through the rest of the day.
   b. Try to forget about it, but that fall was just so embarrassing!
   c. Stay mad for the rest of the evening. Why does life have to be so hard sometimes?

3. Your mom makes dinner for you like she does most every night. You...
   a. Thank her and remind her how much she means to you. You decide to give her time to relax by doing dishes after dinner.
   b. Say, “Yes!” when you realize that your mom made you your favorite meal.
   c. Eat and run. You have a baseball game to get to.
It’s your 16th birthday, and you’re presented with your dad’s old beat-up car that runs great. You . . .

a. Shout, dance, give hugs all around, and ask Dad to go with you for your first drive. At the end of the day, you find your dad and tell him again how much it really means to you that he would give you his old car.

b. Get in and take it for a spin. When you’re at the end of the street, you have a dance party in your seat.

c. Try to act happy but inwardly cringe at the peeling orange paint and rusty bumper. You can’t be seen driving this thing; it will ruin your reputation!

Your friend Martha throws you a surprise party, forgetting that (1) you hate surprises and (2) on Thursdays you have soccer practice until five. When you come home from practice, you’re sweaty and gross in front of all your friends! You . . .

a. Tell Martha that she’s a great friend and thank her for throwing a party. That was so nice of her!

b. Smile and greet everyone and then serve up some cake.

c. Put on a happy face, but secretly you’re kind of mad. You’re exhausted and sweaty. Martha knew you had soccer practice. Why didn’t she think that through?

“Live with a spirit of thanksgiving and you will have greater happiness and satisfaction in life. Gratitude will turn your heart to the Lord and help you recognize His influence and blessings in your life. Even in your most difficult times, you can find much to be grateful for. Doing so will strengthen and bless you . . .”

“You . . . express gratitude to the Lord by the way you live. When you keep His commandments and serve others, you show that you love Him and are grateful to Him. Express your gratitude to others for the many ways they bless your life.”

For the Strength of Youth (2011), 18.
ONE SUNDAY...

the missionaries brought a family to church. They had a son my age, and my dad suggested that I go to church with him. They went to a different ward, so I stayed for three more hours to go to classes with him. And basically from then on, I went to two wards every Sunday.

I love church, so it’s pretty good to go for six hours. It’s easier when I can help someone else. When you don’t focus on yourself and you focus on someone else, it feels less tedious, more like service. Really focus on reaching out to the people around you. There are a lot of people who need your help who are never going to call out. And just being their friend can help them a lot. The more you reach out and serve others, the more you learn about yourself.

Benson O., 16, British Columbia, Canada.
I love to build rockets and learn French and Korean in my spare time. Recently, I felt inspired to help the firefighters fighting the fires in Colorado. I decided to make firefighter grab bags. The bags had water bottles, a bandana, a granola bar, antibacterial wipes, sunscreen, and hand sanitizer. Many people donated money and supplies toward my project. When I delivered the bags, a warm, calm feeling touched my soul. Seeing the appreciation in the eyes of the firefighters let me know how important service really is.

I spend my time paddleboarding, ice fishing, and raising show hogs and turkeys. Recently, I was crowned the Utah High School Rodeo Queen and first attendant at the National High School Rodeo Finals. Before my competition, I asked my father for a priesthood blessing. It gave me the peace and comfort I needed to relax and be myself. My Young Women medallion is as important to me as any of my favorite buckles and crowns. Earning my medallion taught me to set goals and work hard to achieve them.

McKardy K., 15, Utah, USA

Lindsay C., 15, Colorado, USA

For more stories about awesome youth from around the world, go to @LDSYouth on Instagram. Send your own photos and testimonies to newera@ldschurch.org.
Facts and Fun
See how well you know the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Match the following details with each person.

1. Russell M. Nelson
2. Dallin H. Oaks
3. Henry B. Eyring
4. M. Russell Ballard
5. Jeffrey R. Holland
6. Dieter F. Uchtdorf
7. David A. Bednar
8. Quentin L. Cook
9. D. Todd Christofferson
10. Neil L. Andersen
11. Ronald A. Rasband
12. Gary E. Stevenson
13. Dale G. Renlund
14. Gerrit W. Gong
15. Ulisses Soares

A. He first became friends with his wife in junior high school, when they were both student body officers.
B. His first job of sweeping out a radio repair shop led him to becoming a radio transmitter engineer as well as a radio announcer.
C. A salesman by profession, he now likes to joke with his wife that getting her to agree to marry him is “the greatest sales job I ever did.”
D. He loves hiking, backpacking, and travel and has been to all seven continents.
E. As a young boy living in New Jersey, he attended the Church meetings of their small branch in the living room of his own home.
F. As a teenager, after praying in the Sacred Grove for a confirmation of the truthfulness of the gospel and receiving no answer, he was filled with disappointment. When a powerful witness came a month later while he was reading the Book of Mormon, he realized, “We can’t dictate to God when, where, or how He will speak to us.”
G. He occasionally gave his future mother-in-law rides to Church activities on the handlebars of his bicycle. Of this practice he would later say, “It doesn’t hurt at all to be on good terms with the mother of the girl of your dreams.”
H. The prospect of having to learn Japanese for his mission gave him anxiety, but after six weeks in the MTC and with lots of prayer and hard work, he felt peace that he would learn the language. He ultimately lived nine years in Asia.
I. A gourmet cook by hobby, he once made a pizza for Elder Dale G. Renlund that was the best Elder Renlund ever tasted.
J. He left behind forever his career of being a heart doctor when he was called as a General Authority (hint: not President Nelson).
K. After serving a mission in Germany, he baptized his father into the Church.
L. A convert from less-active parents, he was baptized at age 16 with the rest of his siblings. His parents later returned to activity.
M. He grew up on a dairy farm and learned to work hard, including the chore of milking cows on Christmas morning before opening presents.
N. Initially disappointed at the location of his call to the Eastern States Mission (headquartered in New York City, USA), he knelt by his bed, prayed, and opened his scriptures. After reading about a door being opened “in this eastern land” in Doctrine and Covenants 100:3, he felt the Holy Ghost confirm that this is exactly where he needed to go.
O. As a young man, he once ran from one end of St. George to the other in 15 minutes to make it home by curfew.

Doctrine and Covenants 45:26 says that in the last days “men’s hearts shall fail them.”

Then it is a good thing the prophet is a heart surgeon!

Ooh! I like this verse!

Scripture marking technology has a long way to go!
Balancing Act

WHY COULDN’T THE MISSIONARY’S BICYCLE STAND UP ON ITS OWN?

To solve, first unscramble the mixed-up letters and write them in the spaces beneath each word. Then unscramble the letters from the two sets (circles and triangles) to find the answer.

1. R T D I
   □ □ □

2. Y T H U O
   □ △ □ □

3. L E H E W
   △ □ □ □

4. N I H T K
   △ □ □ □

Unscramble here:

IT WAS . . . □ □ □ □
   □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Answers on page 43.

After Preparation Come the Blessings

These twin brothers have decided it’s the last year they can go trick-or-treating with their little sister. They want to make sure she gets the maximum possible candy haul. Which proposed path will take them by the most homes?

Well, now we know for sure . . . Dribbling the ball beforehand doesn’t help to roll a strike.
Say You’re Sorry
When I’ve had an argument, I have found that saying you are sorry and admitting that you are wrong, even if you think or know that you’re right, helps bring peace back in the room. Then walk away, stay silent, change the topic, or find something to agree about. It doesn’t take long for the Spirit to come back.

Dylan M., 15, California, USA

Just Love
I’ve found that showing pure love to my family invites the Spirit to reside in our home. The prophet spoke of love as the catalyst that causes change and the balm that brings healing to the soul. A spirit of love brings safety and peace in the home.

Joseph C., 18, Arizona, USA

Talk to Your Family
If your family are not members of the Church, tell them how bad you feel when they argue and ask them to improve. If that does not work, pray and try again. If they are members, remind them that they are children of God and that they should avoid quarrels.

Carolina S., 19, Goiás, Brazil

“When we are unable to change the conduct of others, we will go about the task of properly governing ourselves. . . .

“In place of arguments and friction between family members, ours is to build, listen, and reason together.”


“How can I invite the Spirit into my home when people are fighting or arguing?”
Pray for the Spirit
Whenever family around are arguing, it’s difficult to feel the Spirit’s presence, but that doesn’t mean you won’t be able to feel it if you’re worthy. Say a prayer in your heart for an added measure of the Lord’s Spirit and pay extra attention to the promptings sent. Heavenly Father can help you feel peace and know how best to help bring that peace into your home.
Katie G., 17, Utah, USA

Try to Compromise
Talk with your family to solve the problem in a way that everyone benefits, or share a scripture or sing a hymn. You can also ask Heavenly Father for help to solve the problem. In this way, everyone will calm down and be able to solve the problem without shouting or violence. Surely the Holy Spirit will fill you all with peace and give everyone the desire not to fight again.
Luis F., 14, Playa del Carmen, Mexico

Is a testimony more than just feelings?

A testimony is what the Savior was talking about when He told Peter, “Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:17). It is knowledge from God revealed through the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost speaks in a voice we feel more than we hear, but it comes both “in your mind and in your heart” (Doctrine and Covenants 8:2; emphasis added)—our thoughts as well as our feelings.

The Prophet Joseph Smith described the spirit of revelation as a feeling of “pure intelligence flowing into you, [giving] you sudden strokes of ideas” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 132).

When we turn our minds and hearts—our thoughts, feelings, and desires—to God, He can speak to our minds and hearts with the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost. As He engages our spirits, certain feelings and thoughts seem to flow to us. This is the testimony He gives us.

Tell Us What You Think:

“How do I find friends with good standards?”
Send your answer and photo by November 15, 2018.

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

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

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.
I’ll be home in 20 minutes. Can you please load the dishwasher?

Sure, mom.

I better do this quick before mom gets home!

5:15 PM

... and a bit of this.

WHAT?!

NOOOO!!

MIKE!!

5:00 PM

5:01 PM

This is the one!

When Consequences Bubble Over

by Jess Verzello

art by Cam Kendell

“While you are free to choose your course of action, you are not free to choose the consequences. Whether for good or bad, consequences follow as a natural result of the choices you make.”

For the strength of youth (2011), 2–3.

Hey, mom.

Hi, Mike. Thanks for doing the dishes.

No problem.
On June 20, 2018, the First Presidency released new guidelines for interviewing youth. For instance, when you are interviewed, you have the option of bringing another person into the interview with you. Limited-Use Temple Recommend questions were also included with those guidelines. Have you thought about what is required of you to enter the Lord’s house?

At the April 1898 general conference, George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency announced that women could now be called to serve as missionaries. In 1898, Inez Knight and Jennie Brimhall were called and set apart as missionary to Great Britain. For more about their mission, see the online Church History article “They Can Bear Testimony, They Can Teach” at history.lds.org.

Currently, the Church has over 20,000 sister missionaries serving missions around the world.

This month marks 100 years since Joseph F. Smith had a vision, which we know as Doctrine and Covenants 138. On October 3, 1918, he learned more about the spirit world. He saw:

1. Righteous spirits in spirit paradise, including Adam, Eve, Moses, Isaiah, and many others.
2. The Savior teaching the gospel to these spirits between His death and Resurrection.
3. Appointed messengers teaching in the spirit prison who had not yet heard or accepted the gospel.

For more about this vision, see the online article “Joseph F. Smith and the Vision of the Redemption of the Dead” at ensign.lds.org.

1. Start out prayerfully.
2. Do what works best.
3. Be flexible, and let the Spirit lead.
KEEPING MY TRACTOR ON TRACK

MY FATHER SAT NEXT TO ME in the cramped cab as I pulled a plow behind the tractor to create furrows that would guide the water evenly through the field. Corrugating takes a long time, and the lines have to be perfectly straight. Craning my neck to see out the back window, I could already see my line was curving.

I didn’t know what to do. If I corrected, the field would have a series of S lines. If I let the curve continue, it would slowly become more pronounced. The water would never make it across the field, and much of the crop would quickly wither and die.

Pointing my tractor at the correct angle, my father told me to line up two shapes on the horizon with the tractor’s hood. He told me to make sure the three points overlapped from my point of view. As long as I kept those three points lined up, the tractor moved in a straight line.

After three hot days in the field, I gazed out over my finished work. Rows of straight lines met my eyes. When the field was completely corrugated and sown, the water flowed evenly across it. The alfalfa seeds would grow tall, strong, and green.

Just like I needed to align three points to create straight lines, we need to align ourselves with those things that are right. As we do so, we will point ourselves in the direction of the Savior, and we will have access to living water.

Heather W., Utah, USA

“Centering our lives in Jesus Christ and His gospel will bring stability and happiness to our lives.”


How can we align our lives in Christ?

1. Prioritize our time (see Matthew 6:19–20, 33; Ecclesiastes 3:1–8). When we put spiritual things before temporal things, we will be blessed to have the time to do the things we need to.

2. Serve others (see Mosiah 2:17; Matthew 22:36–39). As we focus on others, we feel God’s love and become more Christlike.

3. Keep the commandments (see Doctrine and Covenants 93:1; Mosiah 2:41; John 14:15). When we do what God asks us to, we can align our path with His.
PRESSURE MADE ME NOT WANT TO SERVE

AS A YOUTH, I wasn't planning on serving a mission, but people constantly bugged me about going. They reminded me that the Lord expected me to go. Those telling me to go on a mission meant well, but the pressure made me not want to go.

One day, the local missionaries had an emergency. As a result, a missionary would be left alone for the day. I was asked to stay with him until his new companion arrived. That night, after we had prayed and prepared for bed, my “companion” asked me if I was thinking about serving a mission. I told him no.

He replied, “When you feel like you should do it, then do it.” In other words, if the Holy Ghost prompted me to serve, I should go. I didn’t feel any pressure when he spoke, but I did feel the Spirit. The missionary’s words stayed with me and eventually helped me to find a job and save money for a mission.

On my mission, I developed a special closeness with Heavenly Father. I learned that when the Holy Ghost tells us it’s time to do something, we need to do it.

Leonardo Z., Argentina

HIT THE BRAKES!

ONE NIGHT, my friends and I piled into my minivan to go out to eat. All of us had a wonderful time hanging out. After a few hours, it was time to head home. When I put the key in the ignition, a thought popped into my head: “Let John drive.”

I thought that was weird, because I never let anyone else drive my van, so I ignored it. I started the van. The thought came again. “Let John drive.” I decided to listen. I stopped the van and gave the keys to my friend John.

A few minutes later, we hit a huge patch of water. Water shot up the sides of the van. I grabbed my seat. The van started to hydroplane. I was terrified. My friends shouted, “Hit the brakes, John! Hit the brakes!”

If I’d been driving, I would’ve listened to them. But John knew what to do. Instead of slamming on the brakes and making us spin out of control, John coasted through the water until we hit dry ground again. I’m so grateful that I listened to the quiet prompting of the Holy Ghost. Because I did, we all made it home safely.

Chantele S., Utah, USA
You live in challenging times. Values and standards honored for thousands of years are now being denied or cast aside. Selfishness is replacing service. Evil is being called good, and good is being called evil.

Though men’s hearts are failing them, you should take heart. There have always been challenging times. We, the generations of your predecessors, have survived daunting challenges, and so will you. The answer to all of these challenges is the same as it has always been. We have a Savior, and He has taught us what we should do. At the conclusion of His earthly ministry, He declared, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

What overcomes the world is the power of God, manifested through His Son Jesus Christ and given to us through the principles and doctrine of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the stressful circumstances that surround us, we must trust in God and His promises and hold fast to the vital gospel teaching of hope. As the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians:

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

“Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed”
(2 Corinthians 4:8–9).

When we trust in the Lord that all will work out, this hope keeps us moving. Hope is a characteristic Christian virtue. It will counter all current despairs. When you feel down, put faith and hope to work in your lives. While others may abandon progress, you of faith should hope on and press on with your education, your lives, and your families. As the Lord said to our early Church members, “Fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if you are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail” (Doctrine and Covenants 6:34).
Born in Provo, Utah, on August 12, 1932.

He graduated from The University of Chicago Law School in 1957 and taught law there for 10 years.

Dallin H. Oaks

When he was seven years old, his father died. He and his younger brother and sister were raised by his mother.

Became interested in radio while working his first job sweeping out a radio repair shop.

Met his first wife, June, while announcing high school basketball games as a college freshman.

Before he was 16, he obtained a radio operator’s license. He worked both as a radio announcer and engineer.

He was a justice on the Utah Supreme Court from 1980 until his call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1984.

Has 6 children and 29 grandchildren and 53 great-grandchildren.

“T was blessed with an extraordinary mother,” he says.

Sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on April 7, 1984.

Set apart as First Counselor in the First Presidency on January 14, 2018.


Married Kristen M. McMain on August 25, 2000, in the Salt Lake Temple.
At the worldwide youth devotional in June 2018, President Russell M. Nelson invited you to be a light to the world. And you just might be talking about that in seminary.

When have you shared the gospel? And what are you planning to do? The New Era wants your experiences. Send your stories to newera@ldschurch.org.