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A R E M A F U T U R E I S

The Lord has many wonderful blessings for you as you live your life.



By President
M. Russell Ballard
Acting President of the
Quorum of the Twelve
Apostles

MY DEAR YOUNG BROTHERS AND SISTERS, I want you to know that the Lord loves you and trusts you. The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles believe in you and pray for you often. You are the future of the Church, and the Lord has many wonderful blessings for you as you live your life.

Today, you do not know what a remarkable future is before you! To help you prepare for your future, I will discuss five very important issues we are faced with today.

1. BE STILL

It is important to be still and listen and follow the Spirit. We simply have too many distractions to capture our attention, unlike any time in the history of the world. We are often so busy and the world is so loud that it is difficult to hear the heavenly words “be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10; see also Doctrine and Covenants 101:16).

As an Apostle, I now ask you a question: Do you have any personal quiet time? As our world gets brighter, louder, and busier, we have a greater challenge feeling the Spirit in our lives. If your life is void of quiet time, would you begin to seek for some?

Remember what Elijah learned: “The Lord was not in the wind: . . . the Lord was not in the earthquake: . . . the Lord was not in the fire,” but the Lord spoke in the “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:11–12). If we are not careful, we can become distracted from hearing the “still, small voice.”

RIKABLE

BEFORE YOU!



2. FOCUS ON THE SAVIOR

Our use of technology is often appropriate and it can be a blessing, but when it begins to interfere with our relationships with friends and family—and even more importantly, with God—we need to make a change. For some, the adjustment will be slight; for others, it may be significant.

I worry that some of you check your smartphones during the most important gathering in the restored Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—our sacred sacrament meeting. In this important meeting we should be focusing on the Lord through praying, singing hymns, and partaking the emblems of His body and blood. You cannot connect to the Spirit during the presentation of the sacrament while looking at or sending a message on your smartphone. Surely, during those few minutes you can focus

on the Atonement of the Savior as you seek the Spirit of the Lord to bless you for the coming week.

3. VISIT THE TEMPLE OFTEN

One of the best places to connect with the Spirit is in the temple—the house of the Lord. I invite you to go to the temple. Go as often as you can. If you do not qualify for a limited-use temple recommend right now, visit the temple grounds. Nothing prevents you or anyone else from visiting the temple grounds. The Lord wants you to prepare yourself to be worthy of a temple recommend and come to the temple as soon as you can. Walking the grounds will plant in your heart a desire to get a recommend and attend the temple regularly.

If you choose, you can hear the still, small voice of the Spirit in the temple

or on its sacred grounds in ways you never will at the mall, in restaurants, and in public places. In fact, you will find that the temple is a wonderful place to receive answers to your prayers.

4. PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

The world in which we now live is moving very rapidly away from the teachings of Christ in its laws and its customs. As a result, Satan is working overtime to confuse God's sons and daughters and to divert the very elect from fulfilling their duty and receiving a fulness of the Lord's blessings.

Satan wants you to stop practicing the good habits you are learning at home, in seminary, and at church—such as having daily scripture study, praying daily, worthily partaking of the sacrament weekly, and giving genuine, heartfelt service. He also wants you to stand on the sidelines in today's important and crucial battles.

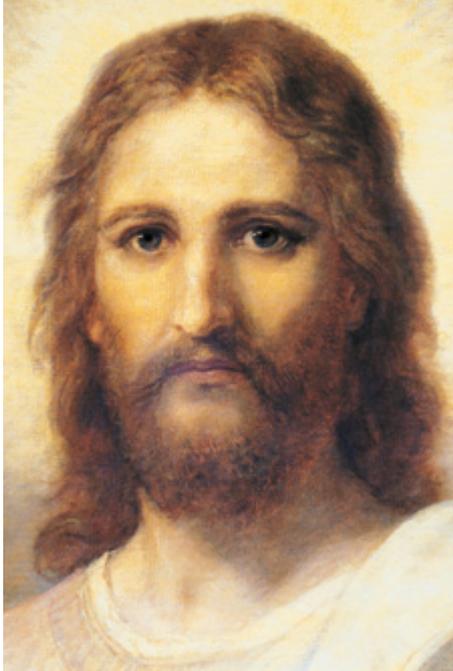
Paul invited us to “put on the whole armour of God.” He said, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:11–12).

As an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I invite you to “put on the whole armour of God” and join the battle today, like the sons of Helaman did so many years ago. Don't wait until you get married or start your lifelong career or get older. The Church needs our youth now. The Lord needs you now!

5. STAND UP FOR TRUTH

You will recall that 2,000 stripling warriors “entered into a covenant to fight





YOU ARE A GREAT AND IMPORTANT GENERATION, AND THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO BE ALIVE! THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT.

for the liberty of the Nephites” (Alma 53:17). The Church needs modern stripling warriors who have made a covenant “to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9).

The Book of Mormon describes these stripling warriors as follows:

“They were all young . . . , and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were . . . true at

all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted.

“. . . For they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him” (Alma 53:20–21).

These are challenging days—but no more challenging than the days of Helaman and his stripling warriors when they stood to defend their families and the Church. This is your time to step forward and join the ranks of other righteous and dedicated young men and young women

to stand and fight as modern sons and daughters of Helaman in the great battles of the last days.

The Lord wants you to become the modern stripling warriors who stand strong and united to defend the truth. Through various social media platforms, you can have gospel conversations with family and friends. You can be courageous and stalwart in sharing your thoughts and testimony of the things you are learning and feeling. As you do so, you stand as witnesses to the truth.

A GREAT TIME TO BE ALIVE!

You are a great and important generation, and this is a great time to be alive! The future is bright. Say to yourself, “I am helping the Lord as I reach out to share my testimony and to teach the truths God has revealed in these last days.”

May you never forget, in this journey you are on, you are precious, every one of you, to the future of preparing the world for that day when Jesus Christ will say, “It is enough,” and will return and rule and reign as the Savior, the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the Redeemer of the world, who I testify lives. **NE**

From a Church Educational System devotional for young adults given on May 4, 2014, in San Diego, California.



THE LAST DUCKLING

By Alexander Henriod

I grew up in an active, supportive family but never really believed in the things I was taught. It all just felt like something I had to check off my to-do list, like school or work.

I tried reading the scriptures and praying, but I never really had a personal witness.

Early in my teenage years I made some bad choices and started to feel frustrated with the way my life was going. When I turned to God, I felt like He was silent. I figured if there really were a God in heaven, He probably had more important things to do than worry about me.

One evening, I went to pick up my little sister from her friend's house. I texted her, but she didn't come out right away. Slightly annoyed, I entertained myself by looking around outside while I was waiting. Suddenly, a duck acting strangely caught my attention. It was making weird noises and pacing all around, so I went to investigate. The duck was flapping its wings over a large metal grate in the road, and when I looked through the grate, I saw 13 ducklings stuck in the mucky water. I promptly lifted the grate out of the way and began scooping baby ducks out of the smelly drain one by one.

With 12 out of 13 ducklings out of the sewer, I reached down for the last one, but when I went to pick him up, he bit me! I pulled my hand back and dropped him back into the water—this little guy was not having it. He had seen me grab his brothers and sisters and was determined to avoid me.

I watched as this last little duck swam into a small tunnel, far enough away that I couldn't reach him. Exasperated, I turned to leave, but glanced back at the mother duck and all the ducklings, waiting patiently for their little brother under a small tree. Concern hit me; I didn't want him to be separated from his family.

It was at that moment I noticed a manhole about 10 feet away in the middle of the street. "There's no way he could have swum that far," I thought. Expecting nothing, I lifted the grate out of the way and, to my surprise, saw the duckling directly beneath me. But it was much deeper than I could reach. Even when I tried using a tree branch, it was just too far away.

A young man happened to be driving by right at that moment, and he noticed me rummaging around the sewers. He looked concerned and asked if I was OK. I explained the

I LEARNED ABOUT GOD'S LOVE WHILE BEING LOWERED INTO A SEWER BY A STRANGER.



situation, and he agreed to hold my feet as I went headfirst into the manhole.

Reaching for the last duckling, I thought to myself how ridiculous this whole situation was. Here I am going out of my way to save this baby duck, and he stubbornly and ignorantly bites me and swims away. How could this creature be so blind to the literal saving hand that was reaching out to him?

Then, headfirst in a stinky manhole, it all hit me. I was just like that baby duck, and Heavenly Father, through His Son, Jesus Christ, was doing everything He could to save me! Finally, the duckling let me pick him up, and we managed to get both me and the duck safely out of the manhole.

My emotions whirred as I thought about all of the things Heavenly Father had done for me. He had blessed my life and my family; He had sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to perform an infinite Atonement so that I could return to Him; and He had arranged this little experience to help me understand His love and plan for me, in just the way I needed it. Heavenly Father had answered my prayers in a personal way, and at a time when I was ready for the answer. And in that moment, I knew He loved me. **NE**

The author is currently serving in the Florida Tallahassee Mission.

A GREAT (APOSTASY) HISTORY LESSON

By Heather Bergeson
Church Magazines

AN ANCIENT FALLING AWAY CAN HELP YOU KNOW HOW TO STAND STRONG TODAY.

With all the persecution that Christians suffered after the Savior's Resurrection and Ascension, the Thessalonian Saints figured the Second Coming would be happening soon. But Paul taught them that before Christ's Second Coming there would be a "falling away first" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). That falling away did occur. We refer to it as the Great Apostasy.

After people rejected and killed the Savior and His Apostles, the Lord's priesthood authority and His Church were lost from the earth. This continued until Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith in 1820 to begin the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel. Even though the fulness of the gospel wasn't on the earth during that time, we can gain a lot from studying this period.

LET'S LOOK AT SOME LESSONS FROM THE GREAT APOSTASY WE CAN APPLY TO OUR LIVES TODAY:

HISTORICAL POINT: As apostasy spread, many people began to think that God wasn't going to speak to His people anymore except through the scriptures that already existed. This false belief that the heavens were "sealed" caused many people to stop asking questions and seeking revelation. As a result, "[those] that [said], 'We have enough, from them [was] taken away even that which they [had]'" (2 Nephi 28:30).

LESSON #1: REVELATION IS KEY

PERSONAL APPLICATION: God will give us truth and knowledge when we ask. But we need to believe in Him and believe He answers prayers. We can show God that receiving personal revelation is important to us by asking questions and acting on the answers we receive. As we seek answers, He gives us knowledge and guidance.



HISTORICAL POINT: When Christ came to the earth, He ordained 12 Apostles and gave them the priesthood, with keys and authority to act in His name. But as wickedness spread and people rejected truth, these priesthood keys were taken from the earth.

LESSON #2: PRIESTHOOD KEYS ARE NECESSARY FOR SALVATION

PERSONAL APPLICATION: The priesthood and its keys are essential, because without them there is no way to receive saving ordinances and make eternal covenants. The authority and keys of the priesthood were restored through Joseph Smith so that these essential ordinances could once again be administered to members of Christ's Church (see Joseph Smith History 1:66-75).

LESSON #3:

FOLLOW LIVING PROPHETS AND APOSTLES

HISTORICAL POINT: Throughout history, the Lord has guided His people through living prophets and apostles. But during the Great Apostasy, when there was no one on earth with apostolic authority, there was no one to act as God's spokesman on the earth.



PERSONAL APPLICATION: Joseph Smith was the first prophet in this dispensation, and we have been blessed with living prophets and apostles ever since. Today, President Russell M. Nelson, his Counselors, and the Twelve Apostles have the keys and authority to direct the Church, and God guides them on how to best help Church members. As we sustain our leaders and follow their counsel, we can know that we are following God's direction.

LESSON #4:

HOW TO GUARD YOURSELF AGAINST APOSTASY

HISTORICAL POINT: The Great Apostasy had been prophesied in Old Testament times (see Isaiah 60:2; Amos 8:11–12). The prophecy was fulfilled as false teachings divided the people of the ancient Church. The doctrines that Christ taught became corrupted and many people didn't know how to find truth.



PERSONAL APPLICATION: After the Restoration brought an end to the Great Apostasy, God promised that there would never be a general apostasy from the truth again (see Doctrine and Covenants 65:2). But we still have to be careful and guard ourselves against personal apostasy.

Here are some things you can do to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ, remain strong in His Church, and progress along the covenant path:

- Learn how the Holy Ghost speaks to you and strive to always follow the promptings you receive from Him.
- Study and ponder each covenant you've made (or one day hope to make).
- Strive to obey the commandments and keep your standards high.
- Write down and act on counsel from Church leaders at general conference.
- Ponder the Savior's love for you as you partake of the sacrament.
- Seek to constantly strengthen your testimony through daily scripture study, prayer, and service.

See *True to the Faith* (2004), 13–14. **NE**

HIS AUTHORITY

"Priesthood is the means whereby the Lord acts through men to save souls. One of the defining features of the Church of Jesus Christ, both anciently and today, is His authority. There can be no true Church without divine authority."



Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2012 general conference (*Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 48).

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRYAN BEACH



Of all the things you might hear about pornography, here are a few that can really make a difference.

5 THINGS

WORTH KNOWING ABOUT

PORNOGRAPHY

By David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

You may feel like you know all you need to know about pornography: What it is. Why it's enticing. How widespread it's become. How habit-forming it can be. The bad consequences of viewing it. How you should turn away from it and stay away from it. (See *For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 12.)

But here are five other things that are really worth knowing about pornography.

1 WORLDLY WAYS OF JUSTIFYING PORNOGRAPHY ARE BOGUS.



In the world, pornography has become almost mainstream. A lot of people view it. Many of them justify it, saying, "It's normal." But when people say this, what are they actually saying?

They may simply be saying, "Everyone's doing it." That, of course, is not a persuasive defense. There are plenty of harmful things we would never do, no matter how many people are doing them.

They may also be saying that pornography is "natural." This, too, is less than convincing. We're taught that "the natural man is an enemy to God" and that we should "[yield] to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and [put] off the natural man" (Mosiah 3:19). "Natural" doesn't necessarily mean "good" or "right."

It's pretty clear that hyper-fueling our sexual desires with pornographic imagery is *not* a very natural thing. In fact, it's entirely artificial. It's a very new thing in the history of mankind that

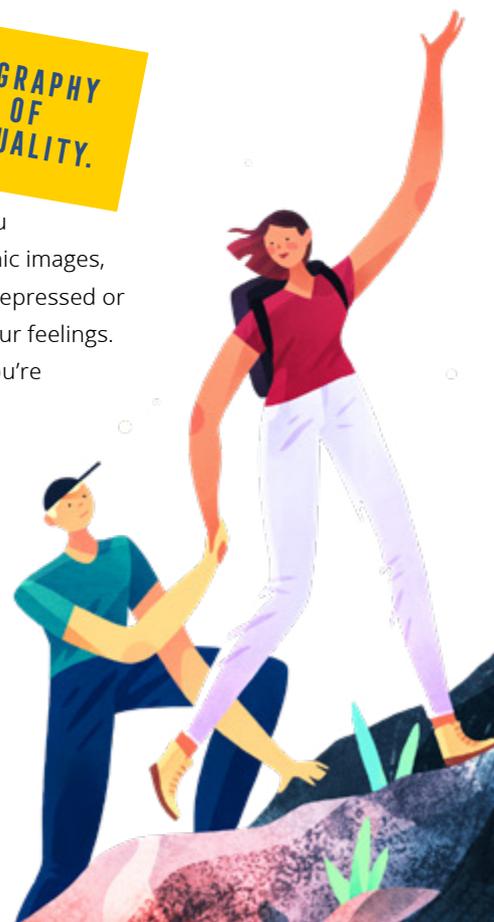
pornographic imagery has become so universally and instantly available. So, "natural" it is not. Our God-given sexual desires are natural enough. But just because we have those feelings doesn't mean that whatever we do with them is OK. We need to understand and control those feelings, not stoke them inappropriately.

Another thing the "pornography is normal" argument implies is that if you're against pornography, that makes you abnormal. Again, not true. There are plenty of good reasons to be against pornography (see below). There's nothing inherently weird or "off" about a person who speaks out against pornography and in favor of a higher standard.

2 BEING AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY MEANS BEING IN FAVOR OF LOVE AND HEALTHY SEXUALITY.

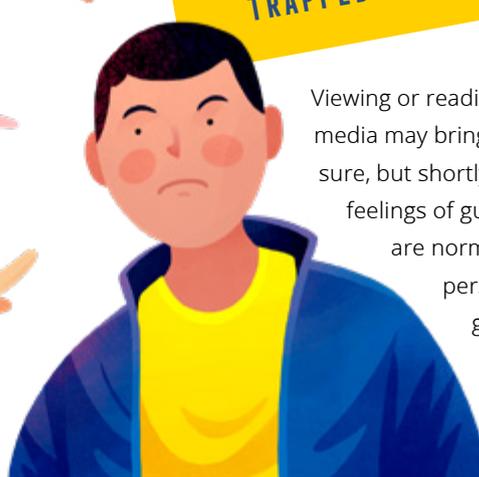
Sometimes when you tell people you want nothing to do with pornographic images, videos, or stories, they'll say you're repressed or sheltered, unhealthily bottling up your feelings.

But by opposing pornography, you're really standing up for God's plan of real love and healthy sexuality in marriage. In Heavenly Father's plan, a man and a woman are meant to bond together in a loving relationship that includes emotional and sexual intimacy. That's why Heavenly Father entrusts us with powerful feelings of attraction. He wants us to experience the joy of fully



loving and being loved. That's not repressive; it's sacred and beautiful. Pornography gets in the way because it does the opposite. It makes a mockery of this kind of relationship. It focuses on selfish indulgence and objectifying others. Again, sexual feelings and desires aren't evil; they just need to be kept in alignment with Heavenly Father's plan and laws, which He has given for our ultimate happiness and joy.

3 THE SHAME CYCLE IS ONE OF THE ADVERSARY'S TOOLS TO KEEP PEOPLE TRAPPED.



Viewing or reading pornographic media may bring temporary pleasure, but shortly afterward come feelings of guilt. These feelings are normal, because every person has been given a conscience, or the Light of Christ, so that we can know good from

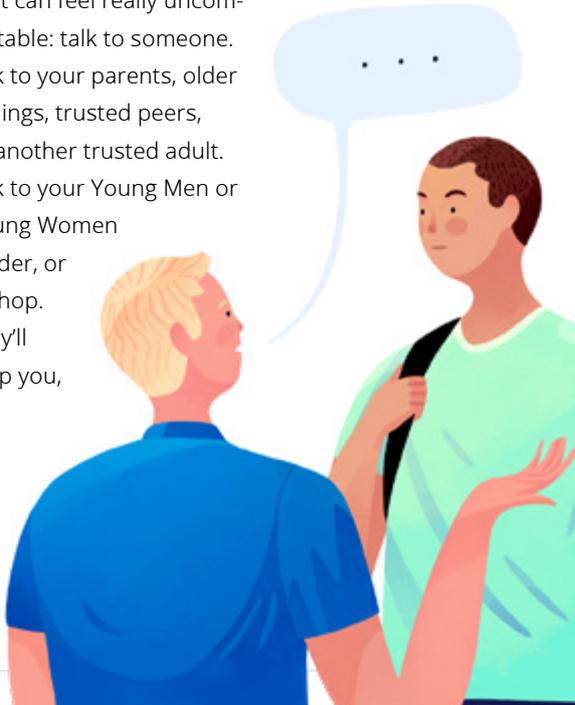
evil (see Moroni 7:16). Those who have the gift of the Holy Ghost have His warning voice, and they notice when He withdraws. But Satan tries to get us to either dull our spiritual sensitivity or transform our healthy feelings of guilt into destructive feelings of shame.

The difference between guilt and shame comes down to its focus. Guilt is focused on our relationship with God. The scriptures call it "godly sorrow," which "worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). It's a good thing because it can lead to real change. Shame, on the other hand, is focused on self—self-image,

self-regard, and what others think of us—rather than on how to draw closer to God. Instead of thinking, "I did something bad; I need to repent," we think, "I'm a bad person, and I can't change, and nobody could ever love me, including God, so I may as well stop trying." That's the cycle: sin can lead to shame, which can lead to self-loathing and despair, which can lead to continued sin.

The shame cycle can be especially strong with pornography. For example, one symptom of shame is embarrassment, which can lead people to hide what they've done, including (or perhaps especially) from parents, siblings, and priesthood leaders. That's what Satan wants. He doesn't want a pornography user to get help and repent. He wants to keep them trapped, and the shame cycle is one of his best tools for doing just that. But we can break the cycle.

4 THE SOONER YOU TALK TO SOMEONE, THE BETTER.



If you've been viewing pornography, one thing that will help you greatly is probably also something that can feel really uncomfortable: talk to someone. Talk to your parents, older siblings, trusted peers, or another trusted adult. Talk to your Young Men or Young Women leader, or bishop. They'll help you,



ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND'S COUNSEL: HOLD FAST

Let me offer a modest little formula that I have used in counseling over the years.

F IS FOR "FLEE." Leave the scene of the crime, get away from the temptation, put distance between yourself and the problem in any way possible. Like Joseph in the presence of Potiphar's wife, I say just run! And please, do not leave a forwarding address!

A IS FOR "ASK." Too many do not ask for help. Initially, anyone who is trustworthy can be asked to help—a parent, spouse, friend, Church leader, counselor, physician, and so on. Above all, ask God for help, pleading for the mercy and grace of the Almighty to aid you in this difficult task. I would ask and ask until my throat was hoarse. I would knock and knock until my knuckles were bloody.

S IS FOR "STRIVE." Pornography is not a simple problem and it will not be overcome easily. It will take work. But I believe virtually every problem in life will ultimately yield to persistent effort aided by divine assistance. It may take days, it may take years, it may take a lifetime, but I believe in the reward of persistent effort.

T IS FOR "TRIUMPH." I know people can win this war. I have seen them do it. You have to believe. You need to have and keep that hope always—to believe you can be victorious in this battle, that you can conquer this implacable foe.

When these temptations and tribulations come, I pray that you will assume personal responsibility and "hold fast," saying as one young prophet once said, "[I will] give place no more for the enemy of my soul" (2 Nephi 4:28).

Adapted from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Plague of Pornography" (Utah Coalition Against Pornography keynote address, Mar. 12, 2016), utahcoalition.org/elder-jeffrey-r-holland-the-plague-of-pornography.

not condemn you. The sooner you take this step, the sooner you can really start to heal and change. Yes, there may be consequences, including feeling some embarrassment, but any consequences are going to be better than letting the problem go on and get worse.

Some people tell themselves they'll quit pornography on their own first and *then* talk to someone about it. The longer it continues, the harder it is to quit. It's better to talk to someone.

If you find out that a friend has been viewing pornography, be loving and kind, but be firm in encouraging them to talk to their parents or another trusted adult, as well as their bishop. That's the best thing you can do for them.



5 THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE FOR SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BREAK AWAY FROM PORNOGRAPHY.

Nobody is *ever* too far gone. If you have a desire to change, Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost will help you. Though your path of healing may not be easy and will likely also include spiritual, physical, psychological, and social changes, the Savior will be there to lift and bless you. He has carried the burden of all of our sins—*all* of them, including the ones we can't seem to shake yet. Be patient with yourself, and rely on the Savior's healing power as you improve, step by step.

Whether you're struggling with pornography yourself or are aware of a friend or loved one who is struggling, remember the Savior's grace and mercy. There is *always* reason for hope. **NE**

For More Help

For more help dealing with pornography, go to addressingpornography.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and fightthenewdrug.org. See also Dallin H. Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," *New Era*, Oct. 2015, 2–7.

By Mariana M. Lara

I was living with my mom in a little town in Mexico where everyone knows each other. I knew right from wrong, but I was confused and the only active young woman in the whole town.

I wanted to fit in, so I did one thing that made sense back then: have a boyfriend. This was only one of the first mistakes I started to make. I started giving in to peer pressure and believing I was old enough to think and choose for myself, which meant becoming an inactive young woman who lived in darkness.

I lived in darkness for a year, with every passing day becoming darker. My poor decisions led to arguments

with my family, and I realized I couldn't keep living with them. But it wasn't until the death of a close Latter-day Saint friend that I realized something was missing. Unfortunately, I blamed God and the gospel. I stopped believing that blessings came from being obedient. I knew that if I didn't decide to start living the gospel, I would continue ignoring my connection with the Church and keep living in a worldly manner.

I was sitting on my bed in a dark room, crying and feeling sorry for myself when

I realized that I was afraid—afraid of being there alone with no one to talk to, afraid of not being able to fix all the wrongs I had done, afraid that no one was going to forgive me, especially God.

Eventually, I moved to Minnesota, USA, with my grandparents, who are not members of the Church. My stepdad flew with me, and my first Sunday there, we went to church, but only for



FRIENDS
Who **SHARED**
Their **LIGHT** with Me

sacrament meeting. By the end of the meeting I had already decided to leave the Church, but to my surprise, just when we were going to the car, we saw the bishop running to catch up to us. He asked us a few questions and invited us to come back next Sunday—and we did.

The next Sunday, just as sacrament meeting was ending, before I could stand up, I was surrounded by the young women from the ward—young women who would help me change my life.

I suddenly entered a completely different world: a world with a bishop and a Young Women president who cared for me and, most of all, young women who tried to live the gospel daily, who strived to live high standards and stand for the right. They shined so much that they could brighten the path before me.

That's when I realized what I had to do: "Let [my] light so shine before men, that they may see [my] good works, and glorify [my] Father which is in heaven" (see Matthew 5:16). And so I started by going to church and Mutual every week,

reading the Book of Mormon and praying every day, dressing modestly, using better language, going to the temple, and preparing myself to get my patriarchal blessing.

I had completely changed, but I didn't realize it until Young Women camp, when I felt the Holy Ghost and discovered that I had a testimony—a testimony that would remind me that God loves me, that He has a plan for me, and that He doesn't want me to be alone. A testimony so bright and strong that it changed me. A testimony to share and light not only my path but others'. A testimony that is not afraid to shine in the dark. **NE**

The author lives in Baja California, Mexico.



*I was feeling afraid
and alone. Then
I moved to
another country
and went to
church for the
first time
in a long time.*

ARE YOU LIVING A TEN-DOLLAR LIFE?

ARE YOU LOOKING AT THE **TEMPORAL VALUE** OF THINGS
OR THE **ETERNAL VALUE** OF THINGS?



By Bishop Gérald Caussé
Presiding Bishop

Years ago, when I was a stake president in Paris, France, I was told that President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) was coming to Paris for a couple of days and I was going to be his driver. I would pick him up at the airport and take him to his hotel so he could rest. The next day I would take him to do a number of visits. One visit he wanted to make was to a U.S. military cemetery, where his brother, who died of influenza during World War I, is buried.

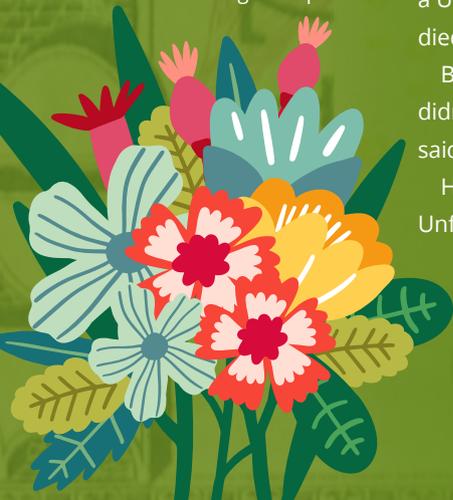
But when I picked up President Hinckley, he didn't look very tired. He held his cane up and said, "President Caussé! Let's go to work!"

He wanted to go to the cemetery right away. Unfortunately, I had arranged with the director to go there the next day, so when we arrived, it was closed and nobody was there.

The next day, we were so busy that we didn't have time to go back to the cemetery. That evening, President Hinckley handed me a \$10 (US) bill and said, "I'm so sorry I wasn't able to go to the cemetery. I would be very grateful if you could buy flowers and put them on my brother's grave."

I bought flowers, but I didn't use that bill. The following Sunday afternoon, I went with my family and put the flowers on the grave. We took a picture of our family in front of the grave with all the flowers and sent it to President Hinckley.

I still have that \$10 bill. It's in my scriptures. If I were to ask, "What is the value of this bill?" most people would say, "Ten dollars." But for me, it's worth far more. This bill *was* worth ten dollars, but for me, it's priceless now. It's a memory of a moment I had with a prophet of God.





GIVE YOUR LIFE ETERNAL PURPOSE AND MEANING

In our lives, there are a lot of things that have a very finite, temporal value. There are a lot of people who live what I would call a “ten-dollar” life. These are the kind of people who might say, “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die” (2 Nephi 28:7).

But the value of every minute of life here on earth has a tremendous impact that goes beyond this life into the eternities. The opposite of the attitude of “eat, drink, and be merry” is to “lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:20).

Here are just a few examples of placing eternal value on things:



THE TEMPLE.

For most people, it's just a beautiful building. *It is* beautiful, but for us, it's the house of the Lord, where we can receive ordinances and make covenants that allow our lives with our families to be eternal.

THE BOOK OF MORMON.

Most people would say it's just a book with a nice story. But for us, it's the word of God.

TITHING.

Most people would say, “That's money you give to your church.” For us, it's not just money. It's an expression of faith and obedience to the Lord's commandments. And it represents blessings we can receive when we're faithful.

THE WORD OF WISDOM.

A lot of people would say it's about physical health. That's true, but it's more than that. We know that if we follow the Word of Wisdom, the Spirit of the Lord will be with us.



10%





LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN.

Matthew 6:20

SEXUAL INTIMACY.

Most people think it's only physical pleasure. But between a man and woman who are married, and especially those who are sealed in the temple, it's more than that. It's about having a family and expressing love and unity within a marriage.



EDUCATION AND WORK

Most people would say it's how we have a comfortable life and meet our families' needs. But we believe it's also about building self-reliance, which is a spiritual principle. We can exercise our agency to become independent and help others.



FIND HARMONY BETWEEN THE TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL

The temporal and spiritual sides of our lives are closely intertwined, and we shouldn't try to separate them. The material aspects should be in service of eternal objectives.

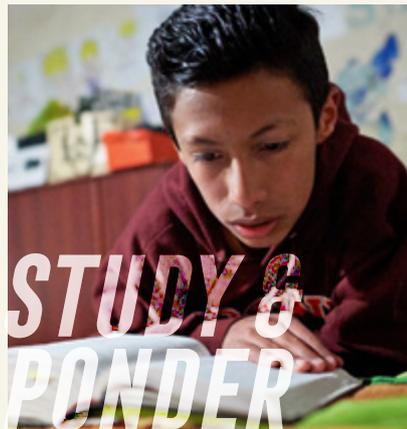
The Lord has said, "All things unto me are spiritual" (Doctrine and Covenants 29:34). He has also said that "man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy; and when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy" (Doctrine and Covenants 93:33–34). Our spirit without the body cannot be made perfect, and that's the reason there is a resurrection. Exaltation is in the harmonious relationship and unity between the temporal and spiritual.

MAKE DECISIONS WITH THE SPIRIT

Decisions about seemingly temporal or material things should be made with the Spirit of the Lord. The Lord has an eternal perspective. He knows everything from the beginning to the end. He loves us perfectly—even better than we love ourselves. Seeking His will, rather than our own, will make our lives happier and better. We can know His will through His Spirit, which comes through prayer, reading and pondering the scriptures, and counseling with our families.

So, how can we know His Spirit? The Lord has said:

"That which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness. That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day" (Doctrine and Covenants 50:23–24).



In other words, what edifies us, what builds us up, what brings us joy, what creates light in our lives is inspired from God. Sometimes even our own thoughts are inspired by God.

I've made decisions based on spiritual impressions when my intellect was saying to do something else. That has always proven to be superior to what my intellect would dictate.

For instance, after my wife and I decided to get married, we agreed to put an eternal perspective on our marriage—to always be active in the Church, to be married in the temple, and so on. Those choices have blessed us tremendously and given duration and depth to our marriage.

At one point in my life, I had a highly paid job with great responsibility and recognition. One day my wife said, "You are so busy in your work. You should pray and think about whether you should find a new job that would make you more available to serve the Lord." We prayed and received a confirmation by the Spirit that I should change jobs. But I was still a little resistant. When I prayed about it, I told the Lord the name of the only company I would consider working for if I quit my job.

Three weeks later, I contacted a recruiting agency and had an interview. In the end, the person said one of his clients had just requested a new director. It was the company I had mentioned

in my prayer. It's a small company that has such openings only every 10 years or so. It was a miracle.

I jokingly told my wife, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is I'm going to be hired by that company. The bad news is I think the Lord has something in store for me."

I signed on with that company on a Friday. On Saturday I was called as the stake president.

My wife and I placed greater value on the promptings of the Spirit and serving God than in material blessings or our intellectual satisfaction or social recognition. We sought the Lord's will and received spiritual confirmation that everything would be all right. That was one of the greatest experiences in my life.

SEE THE REAL VALUE

I've never regretted putting the spiritual above any other consideration. Sometimes it feels like a sacrifice, but I've learned that in the long run, this is the only thing that counts. Don't live a "ten-dollar" life. Aligning our lives with the purpose of our existence is a combination for joy and happiness, not only in this life but in the life to come. **NE**

WHY MISSIONARIES

Find out more about a missionary's purpose.

Every day, missionaries choose to do things that are quite different from what most people their age would normally do. So why do they do it?

First, they're motivated by "a love of God and of all men" in their hearts (2 Nephi 31:20). Secondly, their purpose is clear. It's stated clearly in the first chapter of *Preach My Gospel* and helps them focus on what's most important—the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let's look at each part of this missionary purpose statement to learn how it focuses everything they do on the Savior and His gospel.

"Invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end."—*Preach My Gospel* (2004), 1.

INVITE OTHERS TO COME UNTO CHRIST

By doing this, missionaries follow the Savior. "He inviteth . . . all to come unto him" (2 Nephi 26:33).

RECEIVE

To *receive* the gospel means to exercise one's agency to accept the invitation of His servants to hear His gospel and receive its ordinances (see Matthew 10:40; John 13:20; Doctrine and Covenants 39:5; 84:36).

RESTORED GOSPEL

Never forget, the Savior's gospel has been *restored*. Missionaries declare this truth. They teach about Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, modern revelation, and modern prophets. (See *Preach My Gospel*, 31–40.)



DO WHAT THEY DO

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST AND HIS ATONEMENT

This is the first principle of the gospel (see Articles of Faith 1:4). All progress in the gospel flows from faith in Jesus Christ, even if at first people just “exercise a particle of faith” or “desire to believe” (Alma 32:27). Teaching people in order to help them gain this faith is vitally important.

REPENTANCE

Repentance means aligning our attitudes and behaviors with God’s laws and commandments. It’s an important way we come unto Jesus Christ. Inviting people to repent shows that you love them.

BAPTISM

This is the first ordinance of the gospel. Through it, we make our first covenant with God, promising to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, always remember Him, and keep His commandments. Baptism is required for a remission of sins and to enter the celestial kingdom. (See John 3:5; Mosiah 18:9–10; Doctrine and Covenants 20:37.) Helping people toward baptism means helping them come unto Jesus Christ.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST

After baptism, another ordinance invites us to receive the Holy Ghost. In this way we are purified and can have His constant companionship if we are faithful and worthy.

ENDURING TO THE END

Enduring to the end with faith, hope, and charity allows us to have eternal life (see 2 Nephi 31:20). We are protected and guided through gospel teachings, covenants, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. By helping others to endure, missionaries help them stay on the path back to Heavenly Father.

UNDERSTANDING THEIR PURPOSE HELPS MISSIONARIES:

- Keep their work and their lives focused on Jesus Christ.
- Understand who has called them.
- Realize that their purpose is selfless—inviting and helping others and serving God. (Nowhere in the purpose statement does it mention them or what they get out of this. That’s instructive.)
- Know the ultimate reason behind every invitation they make.
- Understand why people need what they have to offer.
- Be motivated to do what it takes to reach people.

THE CAUSE

“When missionaries have internalized [their] purpose . . . , they will understand that **missionary work is not a program, it is a cause**—the cause of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Our Missionary Purpose” (address given at the seminar for new mission presidents, June 22, 2008), 2, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

When I was 17 years old, I faced heavy peer pressure at my high school. The friends that I did have didn't share my values. My friends and I participated in many appropriate activities together like playing basketball or football. But they also drank alcohol and smoked—two activities I didn't do with them.

One day a group of us was outside of our school studying for a test we would take later that day. With me were two of my closest friends, Juan and Francisco (names have been changed). At one point, someone got out lighters and cigarettes. I thought my friends had gotten bored with studying and had forgotten I was there. I learned I was wrong when they turned to me and said, "Now is the time for Hugo to learn how to smoke."

Before I even had the chance to react, Juan and Francisco leapt toward me and took me by the arms, one on



FROM BULLIES TO BAPTIZED



**By Elder
Hugo Montoya**
Of the Seventy

each side. They held my arms down as someone pressed a cigarette between my lips. My body immediately rejected this, and I spit the cigarette on the ground, far from me. Soon after, I felt the blow of a clenched fist squarely connect with my cheekbone. They threatened me, saying, “We’re going to light the cigarette again, and you’re going to learn to take the smoke. Don’t throw it on the ground. If you do, it’s not going to go well.”

In that moment, I knew I was in trouble. I closed my eyes and said a quick prayer asking for some type of help. As soon as I finished my prayer, our teacher’s car pulled up and parked near us. Our teacher got out of the car and asked us what we were doing. My friends released me. “We’re getting ready for the test,” they assured the teacher. We went into the school and took the test, and the situation ended.

In spite of how hard that experience was, I forgave my friends for what they did. I knew they didn’t understand my standards and my decision to live the Word of Wisdom, so I forgave them and chose not to have any bad feelings toward them. When we finished school, I left on my mission but continued to communicate with Juan and Francisco. I wrote them frequent letters sharing with them the gospel and my testimony of Jesus Christ. I invited them to repent and to attend church. To my great surprise, one of them actually went.

I had frequently invited my friends to Sunday meetings before, but none had accepted until now. Although I couldn’t attend with Juan, my brothers and my father were there to help him and fellowship him. My family accepted him, and Juan felt very comfortable at church.

He started changing little by little until he made the decision to get baptized. I was thrilled for him and even more thrilled when he told me he had learned to love Jesus Christ because of my letters. When I came home from my mission, I also stayed close with Francisco, and after some time, he and his wife also got baptized. Today, Juan and Francisco are still two of my closest friends.

These events marked my life. I learned that the best way to influence lives is to live righteously, love others, and reach out. The *For the Strength of Youth* booklet says, “To have good friends, be a good friend. Show genuine interest in others; smile and let them know you care about them.”¹ This is what the Lord helped me do with Juan and Francisco. Because of it, I have the two greatest friends I’ve ever

known, and now we’re working together to support the kingdom of God as members of the Church.

Always uphold the standards of the Church, even if you’re in a very difficult situation like I was. *For the Strength of Youth* instructs, “As you seek to be a

YOUR FRIENDSHIP AND RIGHTEOUS EXAMPLE WILL
BLESS YOUR FRIENDS AND GENERATIONS TO COME.

friend to others, do not compromise your standards. If your friends urge you to do things that are wrong, be the one to stand for the right.”² Even if it seems like everyone else is doing what’s contrary to the commandments, stay strong, because your example is powerful. Be the type of example that your friends can think of during their times of need. In some cases like mine, your friendship might be the thing that helps them learn, repent, and be converted. **NE**

NOTES

1. *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 16.
2. *For the Strength of Youth*, 16.



First Book of
NEPHI

Second Book of
NEPHI

Book of
JACOB

Book of
ENOS

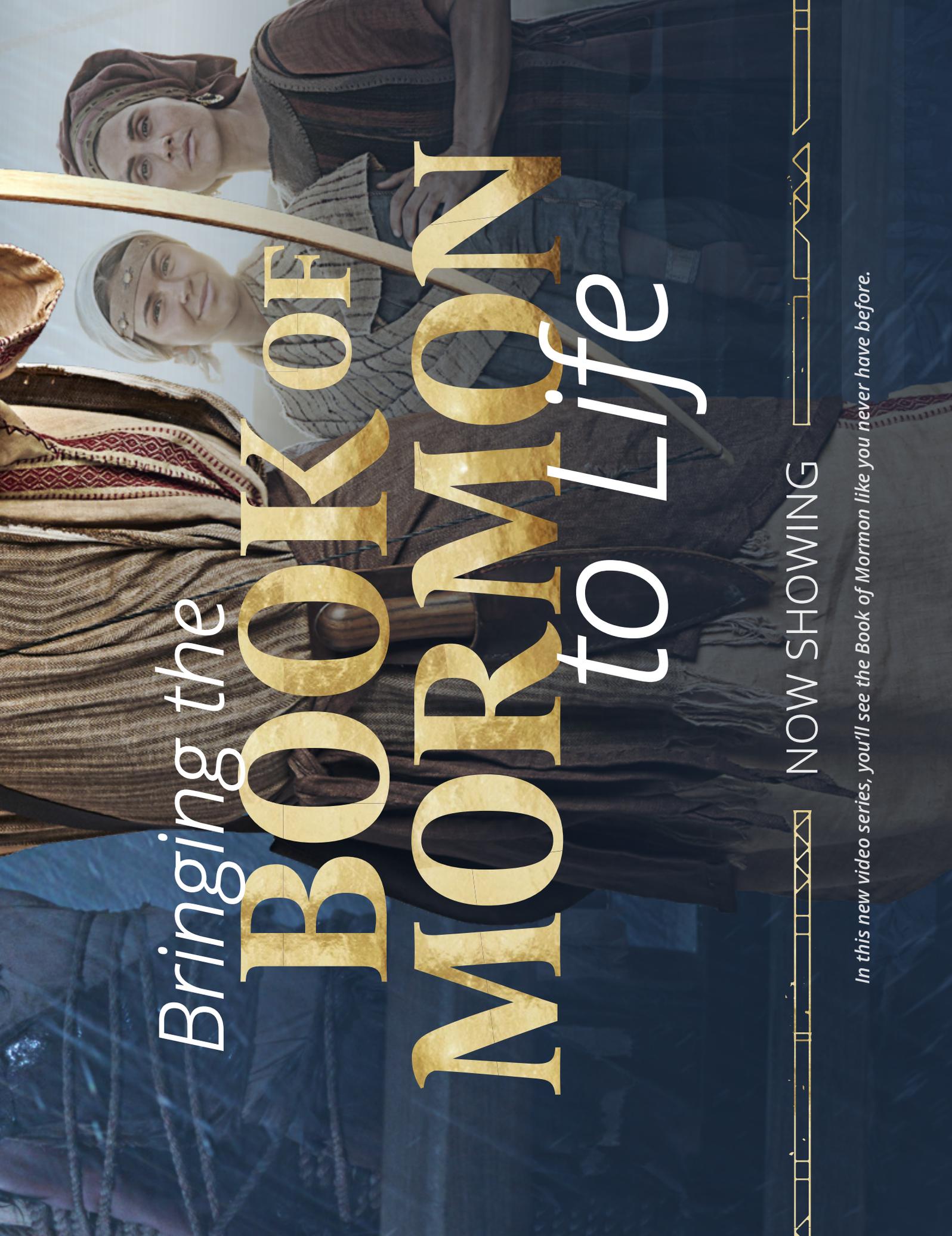
Book of
MOSIAH

Book of
ALMA

Book of
HELAMAN

Third
NEPHI

Book of
MORONI



Bringing the
**BOOK OF
MORMON** to
Life

NOW SHOWING

In this new video series, you'll see the Book of Mormon like you never have before.



By Joshua J. Perkey
Church Magazines

Imagine Nephi tied up to the mast of the ship he'd built to cross the ocean. Lightning flashes; thunder roars. Salt spray and mountainous waves crash against the ship and over the deck again and again.

Nephi, bound and unable to move, keeps a prayer in his heart. His wife, tears streaming down her face, cries out to Laman to let him go.

Laman refuses. He's had enough of Nephi trying to tell him to stop misbehaving. He'd rather drown than give in. But then she pleads, "Laman, at least let me give him some water!"

Laman finally relents as she goes to her husband to comfort him. Together they ask the Lord to sustain them in their trials as the rain beats upon them and the winds drive them back for four wretched days.

At last, finally overcome by fear, Laman

gives in and releases Nephi. The young prophet picks up the Liahona, prays to the Lord, and "the winds . . . cease, and the storm . . . cease[s], and there [is] a great calm" (1 Nephi 18:21; see also 1 Nephi 18:11–20).

Sound like a movie? It is!

It's one of the many scenes depicted in the new Book of Mormon Videos series. The videos are powerful and beautifully filmed. And they are inspiring!

But the scenes and stories aren't depicted just because they're amazing or extraordinary or even motivating. It's because the messages in the Book of Mormon have power to bring people to Jesus Christ. And because they're stories of real people and real families, they have a way of connecting with us on a personal level. As we watch the videos, we'll have a stronger desire to read and study the Book of Mormon and come unto Christ.



“They’re stories of real people and real families.”



The Videos Help Us Connect with Their Struggles

The scene where Nephi is tied to the ship was one of the most dramatic scenes to film. For the cast and crew, filming that scene helped them understand so much better what Nephi and his family actually went through on their journey.

Jackson VanDerwerken, 18, who plays Nephi, says, “Nephi spent four days on the boat without food or water, without knowing if he’d be untied from the mast, in the worst conditions you can imagine. While filming, I was tied onto the mast for only a few hours, with breaks and food. But the immense cold—just simulating that experience was almost unbearable. And I knew that I was going to be done at some point. Experiences like that really

bring the stories to life.” Jackson’s study of the Book of Mormon helped him prepare to be a missionary in Brazil, where he currently serves.

Eighteen-year-old makeup artist Drew Swasey felt similarly. “During the boat scenes, after every take we had to take Jackson down and put blankets on him so he didn’t get hypothermia.

“It made me realize that Nephi didn’t get a break—he didn’t get blankets, he didn’t get hot chocolate, he didn’t get people helping him out. He was up there for four days, and he probably thought he was going to die. That really strengthened my testimony and faith. I can’t stop thinking about it.”



THE POWER OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

“The Book of Mormon is an incomparable

treasure and the instrument of conversion that the Lord has designed and provided for our dispensation. I recognize it as the foundation of my own testimony of Jesus Christ, of the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith, and of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . May your lifelong study of the Book of Mormon deepen your conversion and lead you in a direct course to eternal life.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “How to Study the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Oct. 2011, 30.



“Experiences like that really bring the stories to life.”





The Book of Mormon Is a Story about Families

For many of the actors, filming the videos taught them about how the Book of Mormon is a story of families. Tatum Chiniqui, 19, plays Nephi’s wife. For her, that helped the Book of Mormon become more relatable.

“It’s been very powerful to know how the Book of Mormon started with a family that had problems—just like many of us have family problems—brothers and sisters who fight. Who doesn’t have challenges? And who doesn’t have things that are asked of them that they question?”

“It just made it so real. We all relate to it. We all have these same trials. And if we learn from their story, we can overcome them. If we turn to the Lord, we can learn exactly like they did.”

For several of the cast, filming one scene was particularly moving. It was

the passage in 2 Nephi 5 where Nephi flees into the wilderness with all those who will follow him to escape Laman and Lemuel, who want to kill him.

Isaac C., 12, who plays Nephi’s oldest son, says, “When Nephi’s family and his brothers and their families have to say goodbye to the families of Laman and Lemuel, I never thought that they would actually be sad about that. They would be sad about leaving their family.”

That same scene was really hard for Aleyna A., 12, who plays Lemuel’s daughter. She and another boy named Oliver hug each other in the video as they say goodbye. “We had to cry—I stayed and he left with Nephi. Being in it, living it, brought the tears out.”





It's also a Story about Real People

Another reason the videos are so powerful is that they help us better understand the people in the Book of Mormon.

Blake W., 14, plays Jacob, one of Lehi's sons. "Playing this character really helps me have a better understanding of the Book of Mormon," he says, "especially about Laman and Lemuel. You always just see them murmuring. But really, they were actual people. They were good at one time too. They could have stayed in Jerusalem, but they didn't. They stayed with their father. That helps me see them more as people and less as just the bad guys."



“The Lord can work through young people to fulfill His purposes.”

Filming helped Jackson see much deeper into Nephi’s life. The psalm of Nephi (2 Nephi 4) “has been the part of the scriptures that I’ve been the most able to relate to. It shows that Nephi isn’t perfect. I can relate to it because it really brings in the humanity of Nephi rather than seeing him as this righteous man who never made any mistakes. He confesses his sins right in the scriptures for our benefit.”

Playing Nephi helped Jackson better understand how “the Lord can work through young people to fulfill His purposes. He did it with Joseph Smith; He did it with Captain Moroni; He did it with Mormon.”



Many of the actors described how filming the videos helped them see how even a single verse can have power and tell a big story in just a few words.

Tatum says, “One of the most powerful scenes was when we filmed Ishmael’s death. We literally had to cry for three hours, just mourn over our father. It was exhausting for every one of us, but also very touching.

“I looked up the scene in the scriptures, and it was just one line. It was at this moment where I realized each verse in the scriptures is so powerful and so important—and how sometimes we gloss over the scriptures. But really we could miss so much by just skipping a verse.”

The Videos Draw You to the Book and to Christ

Ultimately, the power in both the videos and in the book is that they draw you closer to Jesus Christ. Tatum says, “As you watch this, know that we relate to Nephi, we relate to Sam, we can relate to Laman and Lemuel. But know that Heavenly Father knows each one of us. He does these things for us so we can return to Him. That’s what the scriptures are for. That’s why it’s important to read the scriptures and not just watch—He can speak to our minds through the Spirit. He loves us and He cares for each one of us.”

For Drew, the videos are awesome, but “the book is better. We’re just showing highlights. The book will always touch your hearts because it was written by prophets who were mouth-pieces of God.”

Blake agrees. “Really study it. When you study, you really can feel the message that the prophets are trying to convey.”

Watching the videos will inspire you, but reading the Book of Mormon is the key to strengthening your testimony, understanding God’s will, and gaining personal revelation.

As Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains, “These videos, these living representations of the written word, can indeed give a fresh appreciation and added insights, stimulate added thinking, and direct people back to the book so that they say, ‘I hadn’t thought of that. I need to study this further. I hadn’t grasped that concept, but now that I see this, I need to study and read more profoundly, more deeply.’” **NE**

How to Watch

You can watch the videos in the Gospel Library app, on ChurchofJesusChrist.org, and on the new Book of Mormon Videos YouTube channel.

Release Dates

- 1 Nephi–Enos, fall 2019
- Mosiah, Alma, 2020
- Helaman, 3 Nephi, 2021

A BRIGHT IDEA

By Laura Fuchs
Church Magazines

Imagine it's Saturday morning. Your room is a wonderfully comfortable dark cave. You are snoozing peacefully, knowing that your alarm wasn't even set. Even your dream is fantastic. Suddenly, light hits your face. Your blinds are thrown open. The light is turned on, and your little brother yells at you, "Wake up!"

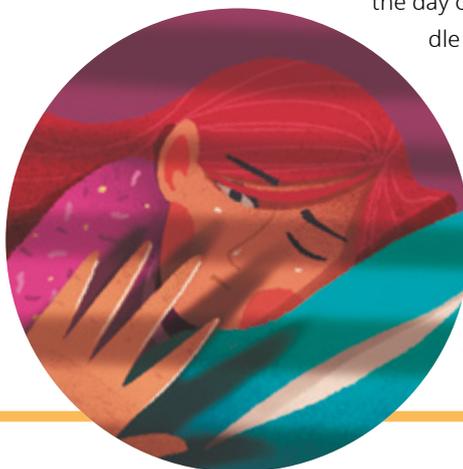
How are you feeling now?

If you are anything like me, you feel like a bear being woken up from a comfy hibernation—grumpy!

FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL

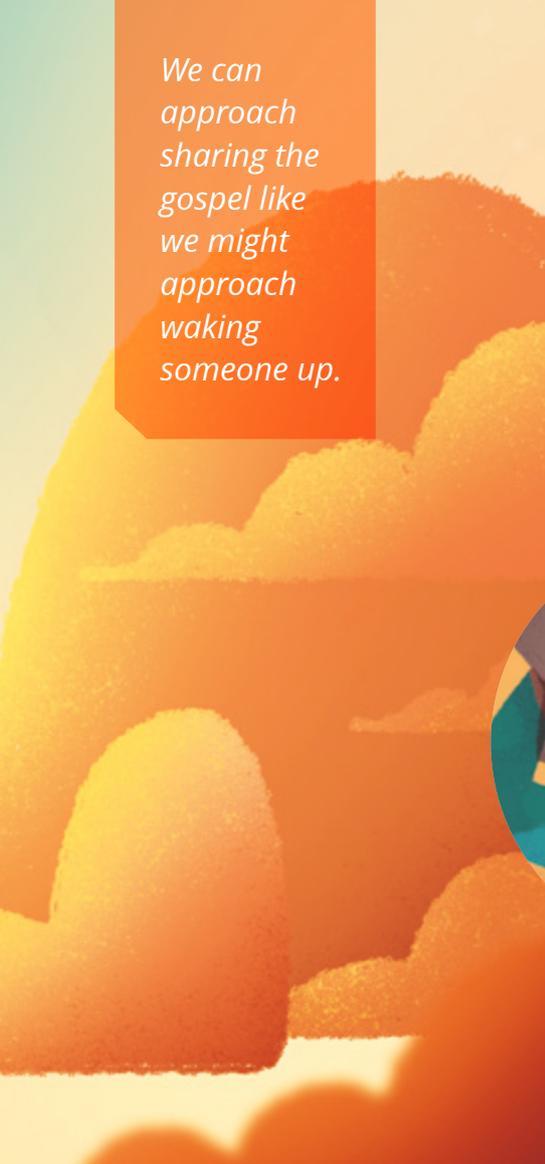
GRADUAL VS. SUDDEN BRIGHTNESS

When I first wake up, it takes me a minute to get adjusted to the light. Sometimes I will even close my eyes as I turn on the light, delaying the inevitable. It's not that I hate the light—it's just that it hurts when it comes all at once! Like going from inside a dark movie theater to outside in the middle of the day or like turning on a light in the middle of the night—it's an uncomfortable adjustment.



That's very different from when there's a gradual change—watching a sunrise for example, or slowly turning up the brightness on a screen. When the light changes slowly, it's much more pleasant.

We can approach sharing the gospel like we might approach waking someone up.



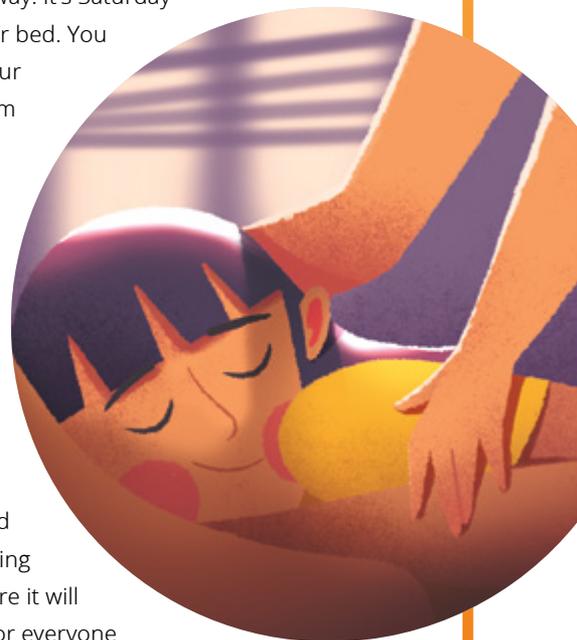
THE SLEEPY FRIEND

Can you think of someone who doesn't live the standards of the Church, has no interest in your beliefs, or is generally negative toward God? It's like this person is sleeping through the morning with the blinds closed, the curtains drawn, and a blanket pulled over their head. They seem not to want any light right now, and they're not prepared for you to come in with the sword of truth blazing! It isn't that your friend is a terrible person; it's that the sudden light would be uncomfortable to them. Being told that a comfy, dark room isn't the best place to be is kind of hard to believe when you're sleeping in on a Saturday morning. If you try and throw as much light as possible on your friend, they may react negatively—maybe find a pillow and throw it at you, ask you to leave, and generally show signs of feeling attacked.

A SOFTER APPROACH

Imagine the morning scene this way: It's Saturday morning and you're comfy in your bed. You hear the door open and smell your favorite breakfast food. Your mom comes in and softly tells you breakfast is ready. It's a bit of a different picture, isn't it? That's a softer approach.

Sometimes a bold, enthusiastic approach works great. There may be other times when a softer approach would be more effective. In such a case, go to your friend, be kind and gentle, learn about them, and make sure that you have something to offer them specifically. Odds are it will be a more pleasant experience for everyone involved. Kindness can do more good (and more missionary work) than you might think possible. Gently letting someone know there is something to wake up for can be much better than shouting about how happy you are in the light.



While there are times when it may be right for us to be bold, direct, and quick to share the gospel, there are other times when in our rush to share the gospel with others, we take the approach of that little brother who comes into the room, throws open the blinds, and yells at you to wake up. Because we see the light and the beauty of the gospel in our lives and we want so much to help others see it, we sometimes don't think about how ready they are to learn about the gospel.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RODRIGO CORDEIRO

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Now, that doesn't mean you have to enter every missionary experience keeping the light of the gospel dim. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1928–2015) explained how we can know what approach to take and when.

"Share principles that help those you love to press forward along the path to eternal life. Remember, we all grow line upon line. You have followed that same pattern in your understanding of the gospel. Keep your sharing of the gospel *simple*" (Apr. 2014 general conference [*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 34]).

Because every person is unique, every missionary opportunity should be unique too. That's why it's so important to understand where a person is at spiritually and share the amount of light with them that the Spirit directs. Together you will both grow to love and appreciate the light of truth.

THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE SON

If you yourself have been figuratively living in the dark or have been looking for more happiness and truth, know that the light of the gospel is truly beautiful. It might take time to adjust to, but the adjustment is worth it. Don't look at others and see their light and think it's impossible for you to reach that standard. Everyone gets light as they seek it. In time, you will come to bask in the light and love of our Savior, Jesus Christ, even if it seems daunting at first. **NE**

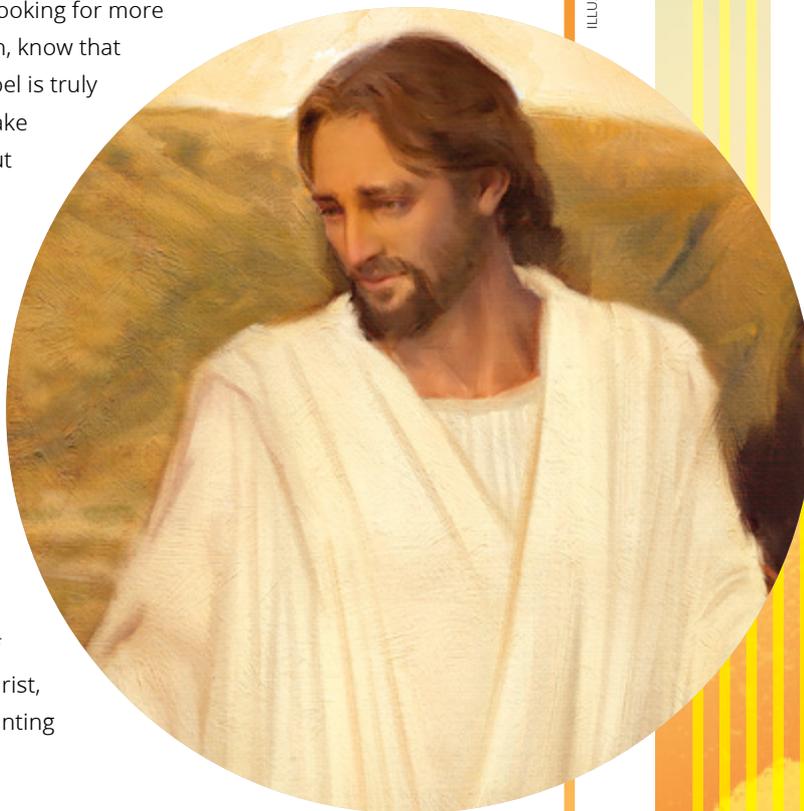


ILLUSTRATION BY BEN SOWARDS



SHARE IN NATURAL AND NORMAL WAYS

"You can be confident, courageous, and humble as you share [the gospel]. Confidence, courage, and humility may seem like contradictory attributes, but they are not. They reflect the Savior's invitation not to hide gospel values and principles under a bushel but to let your light shine, that your good works may glorify your Father in Heaven [see Matthew 5:15–16].

"There are many normal and natural ways to do this, from daily acts of kindness to personal testimonials on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter to simple conversations with people you meet."

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2019 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 17).

RAY OF REPENTANCE

WRITTEN BY LAURA FUCHS
ILLUSTRATED BY BETHANY STANCLIFFE



"The Savior has promised you forgiveness if you will humble yourself and make the effort that repentance requires. If you have sinned, the sooner you repent, the sooner you begin to make your way back and find the peace and joy that come with forgiveness."

For the Strength of Youth (2011), 28.

HOW TO AVOID



A SOCIAL MEDIA MESS

SOCIAL MEDIA CAN GET A
LITTLE STICKY, BUT YOU CAN KEEP
YOURSELF SAFE AND CLEAN.



By Charlotte Larcabal
Church Magazines

Imagine squeezing all the toothpaste out of the tube. (If you have younger siblings or were a curious toddler yourself, maybe you don't have to imagine.) You might gently roll up the tube, or maybe grab and squeeze with abandon. But once the toothpaste is out, it's extremely difficult (maybe impossible) to get it back in.

That sticky toothpaste mess is like the information you share from your technological devices. Once you send it, post it, or share it, your words or pictures are out there, and there's no way to get them back.

That's why it's so important to be wise and thoughtful about everything you put out there. Sexting, cyberbullying, or thoughtlessly oversharing can have monstrous consequences on our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. But that doesn't mean all technology is bad or that we need to fear it. Squeezing toothpaste all over the bathroom is a bad idea. But that doesn't mean you should throw out all toothpaste and swear off brushing your teeth forever.

With toothpaste and technology, it's all about how you use it.

Here are some things you can do to avoid dangers and use social media wisely.

REMEMBER YOUR ACTUAL LIFE IS OUTSIDE OF YOUR PHONE.

Limit the time you spend staring at a screen. You have a great life in an amazing world—outside of your phone. With too much messaging, gaming, and social media, you're in danger of missing it! Focus on more shared experiences than shared posts. Aim for talking instead of texting.

Studies show that social media and texting can be addictive, even more so than drinking and smoking!! Crazy, right? You might not have a full-blown social media addiction, but social media might have a stronger hold on you than you realized if you:

- Pull out your phone every time your hands aren't doing something else.

- Get in a bad mood when you don't see any new notifications or messages.
- Use social media to forget your personal problems.
- Use social media so much that it negatively affects your school work, relationships, or job.
- Get restless or agitated when you can't use social media or your phone.

Maybe it's time to focus on making connections in the world outside of your phone.

SEEK CONNECTION, NOT ATTENTION.

We all crave acceptance and belonging. That's normal, and we can fill those needs with genuine interaction. But many of us make the mistake of thinking that getting as much attention as we can will fill those needs. Whenever you're thinking about posting or sharing something, ask yourself if you are seeking to connect and uplift or to get attention and validation. Sure, sharing boastful, shocking, or sexual content can get you a lot of attention and make you feel important or wanted.

"ONCE YOU SEND IT, POST IT, OR SHARE IT, YOUR WORDS OR PICTURES ARE OUT THERE, AND THERE'S NO WAY TO GET THEM BACK."



“MAKE SURE THAT THE CHOICES YOU MAKE IN

THE USE OF NEW MEDIA ARE CHOICES THAT

EXPAND YOUR MIND, INCREASE YOUR OPPORTUNITIES,

AND FEED YOUR SOUL.”

But this kind of attention is shallow at best. In fact, constantly seeking attention and validation from others will weaken your sense of identity and confidence. True and lasting confidence comes only by deepening your understanding of your relationship with God.

KEEP YOUR FUTURE SELF AND FUTURE EMPLOYERS IN MIND.

Remember the toothpaste? Once you post or send something, it's out there. You no longer have control over who else might see or share it. Everything you post is permanent (even if you delete it). It can be copied and is searchable. Remember, there's always a chance that future employers, family, friends, enemies, and strangers will see it. That might not matter to you now, but what about 5 or 10 years from now? Would a future employer get a good impression of you from your social media pages? Would you want your future spouse or children to see your posts or messages?

CHECK YOUR MOOD.

Don't post when you're in a bad mood. It can be tough to think clearly or make good decisions when you're sad, angry, or upset. As James so wisely taught us, our tongues (and thumbs, today) can be incredibly hard to tame (see James 3:8),

especially when we're feeling a strong emotion. We've all said (or typed) things we wouldn't normally say or posted something we regretted later. So before you reply, post, or comment—check your mood.

BE KIND TO EVERYONE . . .

The Savior's commandment to do good to everyone—including those who aren't kind to you (see Matthew 5:44)—counts online, too. Always be respectful, even (and maybe especially) when you're talking about something controversial.

“On the subject of public discourse, we should all follow the gospel teachings to love our neighbor and avoid contention,” said President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency. “Followers of Christ should be examples of civility. . . . Though we may disagree, we should not be disagreeable. Our stands and communications on controversial topics should not be contentious.”² To follow Christ means to follow His example both offline and online.

BUT TRUST VERY FEW.

You can be kind to everyone without trusting everyone. Not everything online is true, and not everyone is who they say they are. Avoid talking to people you don't know, and never send your pictures

or information to someone you don't know. To stay safe, you can also:

- Check your privacy settings and make sure you're not posting personal information publicly.
- Disable location services on social media apps.
- Only accept friend or follow requests from people you know.

IT'S ALL IN HOW YOU USE IT.

As technology progresses, it's like a giant door keeps opening wider and wider, allowing us to share and receive more and more—both good and bad. But as President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught, technology can also help us be “a powerful force for good in the Church and in the world. . . . Make sure that the choices you make in the use of new media are choices that expand your mind, increase your opportunities, and feed your soul.”³

It's all in how you use it. **NE**

NOTES

1. See W. Hofmann, KD Vohs, and Roy F. Baumeister, “What people desire, feel conflicted about, and try to resist in everyday life,” in *Self-Regulation and Self-Control: Selected Works of Roy F. Baumeister* (2018), 256–266, doi.org/10.4324/9781315175775.
2. Dallin H. Oaks, Oct. 2014 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 27).
3. M. Russell Ballard, “Sharing the Gospel Using the Internet,” *Ensign*, July 2008, 58, 60.

A PICTURE OF SUCCESS



Sharing the gospel:

- All natural
- Totally normal
- 100% guilt-free

See Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2019 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 15–18).



YOUTH

Mobile phones are expensive in Chile,

but I set a goal in 2016 to earn enough money to buy one. For an entire year, I bought candy and *alfajores** wholesale and sold them to my friends at school. I saved everything I made. I didn't go out to lunch, and I didn't go to the movies.

I didn't want to ask my parents for a phone. I wanted to be able to say I earned it myself. My dad encouraged me. "Carol, keep it up," he would say.

I learned a lot. Nothing is free. Goals take effort, but we should never give up. When we earn things and realize how much work it takes to get them, we value them more.

I learned that I have to decide what I want to achieve and where I want to go. If I want to get married in the temple, I need to go to church and seminary and later institute and young single adult activities. And I need to date worthy young men. Achieving goals requires sacrifice now for something better later.

Carol, 15, Chile

* A traditional South American cookie.





Audralyn H., 13,
Wyoming, USA

Audralyn loves singing, swimming, and playing with her older brother. She has a rare disease called Sanfilippo Syndrome, which makes it hard for her to move on her own and speak. She uses her infectious giggle to make everyone feel loved and happy. Recently, the Young Women leaders and girls in her ward helped Audralyn earn her Young Womanhood Recognition. She was so excited! Through her example, those who know her have been inspired to be kind and show love to others.



Martín G., 11,
Barranquilla, Colombia

I felt sad when we moved from Bogotá to Barranquilla because I had to leave my family, friends, and school. But when I went to the Barranquilla Colombia Temple open house, I felt happy. I'd never been inside a temple before. I saw the baptistry, celestial room, and sealing rooms. It was cool to think that our ancestors can be sealed to us and we can see them again. I love the temple and am preparing to return again soon.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LESLIE NILSSON

FUN STOP

A Riddle Lie

On the first day of school at Emer High School (home of the Fighting Cumoms), it was discovered that someone had stolen the school mascot, Cory the Cumom, the night before. The school administrators suspected it was an inside job, so the police questioned the teachers about their activities on the previous night.

Mrs. Nimrah said she was out running with her husband. Mr. Shule said he was at home planning an event for T.A.M.A.R. (Teachers against Mocking and Reviling). Mr. Akish said he was home grading papers. And Mrs. Omer said she was home restoring furniture. The police immediately searched Mr. Akish's home and found Cory tied up in the garage. **How did they know it was Mr. Akish?**



SUMMER BIRD

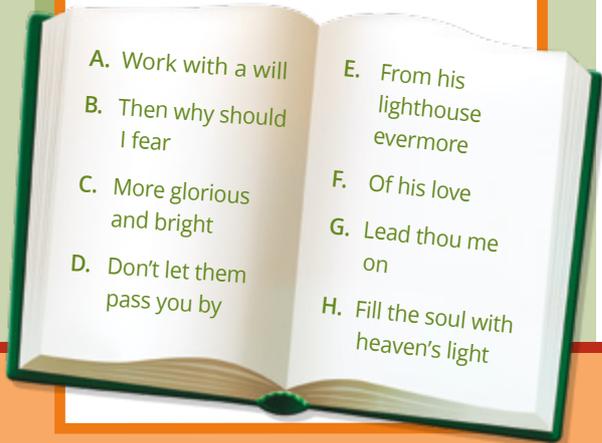
Answers on page 44.

A Bright and Sunny Challenge

With all the excitement buzzing over the new hymn collection in the works, let's first take a look back and see how well you know the current batch.

Can you correctly match up and finish these first hymn lines?

- 1. There is sunshine in my soul today . . . (227)
- 2. Improve the shining moments . . . (226)
- 3. You can make the pathway bright . . . (228)
- 4. Today while the sun shines . . . (229)
- 5. Lead, kindly Light, amid th'en-circling gloom . . . (97)
- 6. Teach me to walk in the light . . . (304)
- 7. The Lord is my light . . . (89)
- 8. Brightly beams our Father's mercy . . . (335)



An Apostolic Smile

Can you tell which Apostle this is by his smile?



IDEA BY: AARON J. ILLUSTRATED: ARIE VAN DE GRAAF

Halloween Party Tips

Have some Halloween fun with family and friends. **Ask them to fill in the blank spaces before reading the rest of the story.**

Before you _____ a Halloween party, you'll need to _____ a costume. You won't want to choose something too _____, but you also won't want it to be too _____. Since you'll likely stay at the party for _____, your costume should be _____ comfortable. Others will probably dress as _____ or _____ mythical creature (plural). When you get there, the activities might include bobbing for _____ or telling _____ ghost stories. Don't drink too much _____ punch or _____ too much _____ candy, or you might get _____. Remember to have fun and be _____—Halloween is the _____ time of year!



JON CLARK

How do I find friends with good standards?

“The compassion of Christlike friends deeply touches and changes our lives. We should well remember that the Lord often sends ‘blessings from above, thru words and deeds of those who love.’”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 1997 general conference (*Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 32).



Kindness Is Key

Show them love and be kind. Show that you care about them and their happiness. If they do not show that they care for you and aren't kind, you probably don't want to pursue that friendship.

Madi B., 15, Arizona, USA



Share the Gospel

You can find new friends with good standards by going to teach with the missionaries. They know quite a few young people who need a friend in the Church.

Elder Quintanilla, 20, Barbados Bridgetown Mission

Pray for Your Friends

I pray a lot to see if my friends are the right ones who can help me raise my standards and my testimony of Jesus Christ.

Imanol M., 18, Chihuahua, Mexico



God Will Help You

I have found that if I go out of my way to look for the people that show Christ's light, that has made all the

difference. Heavenly Father knows your desires and if you do your part, then He will answer those prayers.

Olivia T., 18, Utah, USA

Live Your Standards

Be an example of living your standards.

And if you have friends who do not have the same standards, show them that they are special in the sight of God. Jesus loved everyone and taught them to follow His ways.

Bernard B., 19, Palawan, Philippines

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



What is the Church's view on the environment?

God created the earth and declared His creations to be "very good" (see Genesis 1:1, 31). This earth was created to house God's children as part of His plan of salvation. The earth itself will be sanctified and receive a celestial glory (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:18–19).

God made the earth not only useful but also beautiful. The things of the earth "are made for the benefit and the use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart," as well as "to enliven the soul" (Doctrine and Covenants 59:18–19).

A key word in understanding our view on the environment is *stewardship*. It doesn't mean that people own the earth and can exploit it however they like but rather that we are accountable for how we use its resources (see Doctrine and Covenants 104:13–15). Though "there is enough and to spare" (Doctrine and Covenants 104:17), God wants us to use the earth's resources wisely (see Doctrine and Covenants 59:20).

We should honor God by appreciating His creations, expressing gratitude for them, and striving to keep them beautiful. We should conserve resources, protect nature, and avoid pollution and waste.

More on the Environment

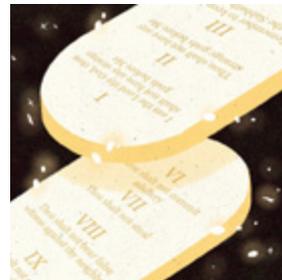
For more on the Church's view on the environment, including how the Church practices conservation, see "Environmental Stewardship and Conservation" at [topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://topics.churchofjesuschrist.org) or in Gospel Topics in the Gospel Library app.

Tell Us What You Think:

"How do I get over feelings of loneliness?"

Send your answer and photo by November 15, 2019.

Go to newera.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and click "Submit Your Work." Sign in with your Church 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. Or email it to us at newera@ChurchofJesusChrist.org.



How Can I Share the Gospel with Others?

- **First**, we can all pray for the desire to help with this vital part of the work of salvation. All efforts begin with *desire*.
- **Second**, we can keep the commandments ourselves. Faithful, obedient members are the most persuasive witnesses of the truth and value of the restored gospel.
- **Third**, we can pray for inspiration on what we can do in our individual circumstances to share the gospel with others.

From President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, Oct. 2016 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 58).

WHAT WOULD I SAY?

I HAVE NEVER really enjoyed talking to others about the gospel very much, mostly because I felt I was incapable of doing so.

Then I had the opportunity to share the gospel with some of my cousin's friends. They asked me questions. They knew that I was a member of the Church, and they had lots of questions. For example, "How are you baptized for the dead? What's that all about?" and "You have a living prophet?"

"We feed [God's] lambs . . . by how we live the gospel: keeping the commandments, praying, studying the scriptures, and emulating His love."

Elder Robert D. Hales (1932–2017) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 2012 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 91).

I didn't know quite what to say. If I'm honest about it, I was a little bit afraid inside. But for the first time, I wanted to talk about it. So I said to myself, "I'm going to have to have the courage to tell them something, so I might as well do my best."

The entire time I was talking to them, I could feel the Spirit telling me how to explain things to them. I explained principles of the gospel, using the right words so that they could understand, and they were delighted because they were able to find answers for the questions they had.

From this experience, I learned that the Spirit can help us to find the right words to explain the gospel to people who have the desire to learn about Jesus Christ. If we have the courage to speak, the Spirit will be there to help us.

Julie J., France

SHE DIDN'T MAKE FUN OF ME

I AM THE ONLY boy in my family, and I have four sisters. I'm really close with them.

I'll never forget one night when one of my older sisters helped me gain a testimony. My dad was giving the home evening lesson about testimonies. The whole time I was frustrated with myself because I didn't feel like I had one.

Later that night, I was reading the scriptures in my room, and my sister came in and asked what was wrong. I was afraid she would make fun of me when I told her, but she didn't.

We decided to read the First Vision story. I had read it many times before, but not like this. As I read, I had a feeling that's not easy to describe. It was peaceful, calm, and quiet.

We stopped and said a prayer, and I continued to feel the Spirit. Now I can say I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet and that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ restored the Church through him.

I love my sisters because they are good examples and they look after me.

Josh J., Alabama, USA



THAT'S MY SISTER!

MY BROTHER, Bruce, was just a year ahead of me in school. He was everything a high school boy might want to be: football star, class president, good looking, popular. I was known as "Bruce's little sister," and I thought he was way too cool to associate with me. Sometimes I even felt sorry for him—that people knew he was related to me. Most of the time I felt sorry for myself. I avoided him in the hallways so I wouldn't feel bad if he didn't say hi.

All that changed one night. After Mutual, while waiting for rides, a boy my age grabbed my sweater from me. As I was trying to get it back, he threw it on the ground and started to run away—right smack into my big brother. Bruce demanded he pick up the sweater, and growled to him, "That's my sister! Don't you *ever* treat her like that again!" In that one moment I realized he was protective and proud of me.

By the next year I had gained enough confidence to run for class president myself! Bruce helped with my campaign and cheered at my speech. Since he was Senior Class President, he helped count ballots. After the count, he pulled me aside to tell me I had lost by a small margin. "I cheered every time a vote came in for you," he said. I realized my brother had always loved me. It was my own insecurities that made me think he didn't. Even though I lost the election, I felt like a winner.

Denalee C., Idaho, USA



The Chief Cornerstone of Our Faith

By President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008)
15th President of the Church

From an October 1984 general conference address.

In each new temple we have a cornerstone ceremony in harmony with a tradition that goes back to ancient times. Before the general use of concrete, the foundation walls of the building were laid with large stones. A trench would be dug, and stones would be placed as footings. Starting at a point of beginning, the foundation wall would be run in one direction to a cornerstone; then the corner would be turned and the wall run to the next corner, where another stone was placed, from which the wall would be run to the next corner, and from there to the point of beginning. . . . The final stone was spoken of as the chief cornerstone, and its placement became the reason for much celebration. With this cornerstone in position, the foundation was ready for the superstructure. Hence the analogy that Paul used in describing the true Church:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

“In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:19–21).

We have basic cornerstones on which this great latter-day Church has been established by the Lord and built, “fitly framed together.” They are absolutely fundamental to this work, the very foundation, anchors on which it stands. . . . [But] I mention the chief cornerstone, whom we recognize and honor as the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

He is the chief cornerstone of the Church which bears His name, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There is no other name given among men whereby we can be saved (see Acts 4:12). He is the author of our salvation, the giver of eternal life (see Hebrews 5:9). There is none to equal Him. There never has been. There never will be. Thanks be to God for the gift of His Beloved Son, who gave His life that we might live, and who is the chief, immovable cornerstone of our faith and His Church. **NE**

Four Cornerstones of the Church

President Gordon B. Hinckley testified that Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone of our faith.

He also taught that there are other basic cornerstones that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is built upon.



The Lord Jesus Christ

Our Lord and Savior. The chief cornerstone on whom our faith and the Church is built.



The First Vision

Opened the marvelous work of restoration.



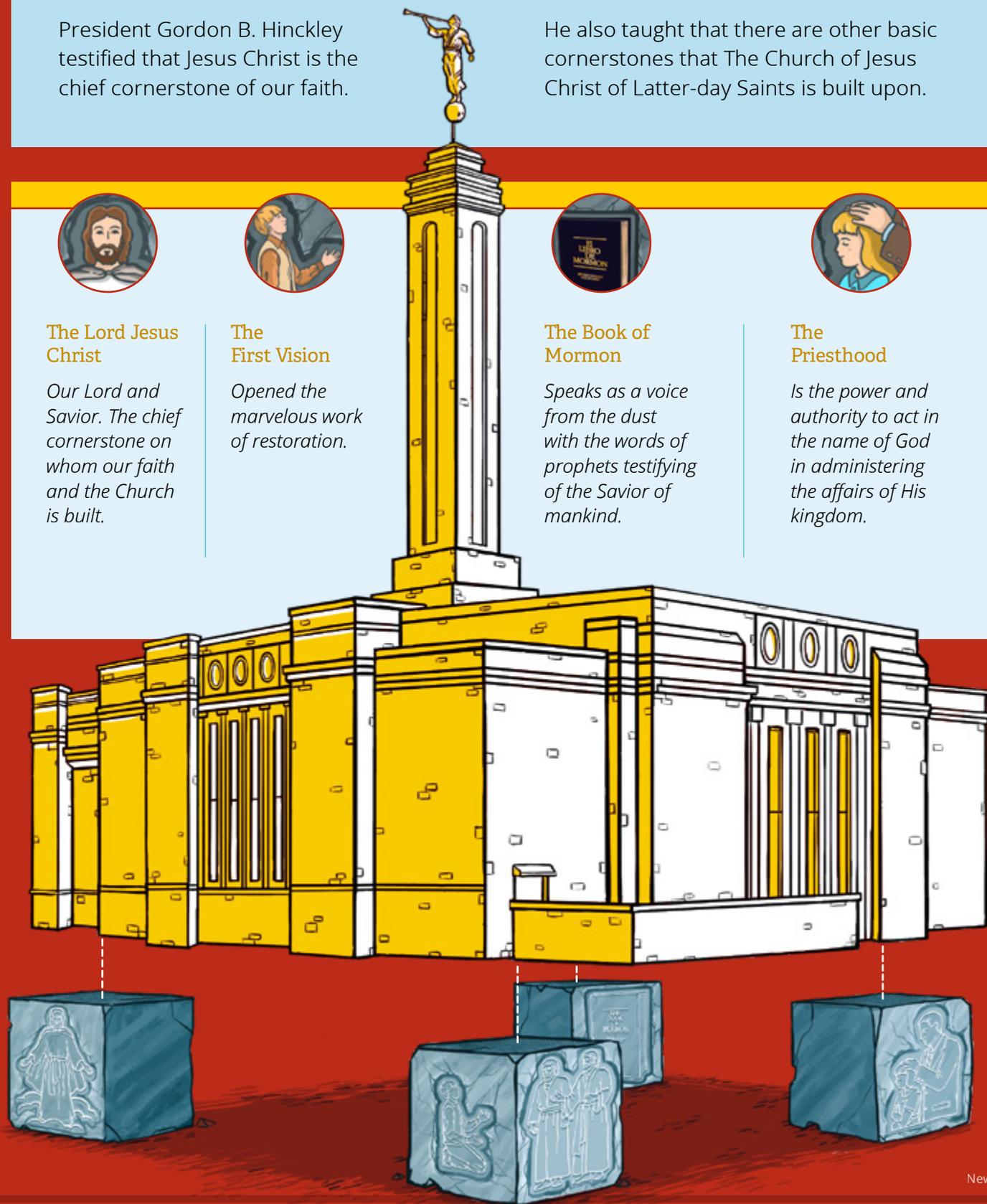
The Book of Mormon

Speaks as a voice from the dust with the words of prophets testifying of the Savior of mankind.



The Priesthood

Is the power and authority to act in the name of God in administering the affairs of His kingdom.





NOW SHOWING! ON A SCREEN NEAR YOU



BOOK OF MORMON VIDEOS

THE BOOK OF MORMON VIDEOS, produced by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, bring the stories from this sacred work to life. Videos covering 1 Nephi–Enos will be released fall 2019, with more coming over time.

Watch them in the Gospel Library app, on ChurchofJesusChrist.org, and on the new YouTube channel at BookofMormonVideos.org.



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