

THE New Era

SEPTEMBER 2013



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Production Manager: Jane Ann Peters

Prepress: Joshua Dennis

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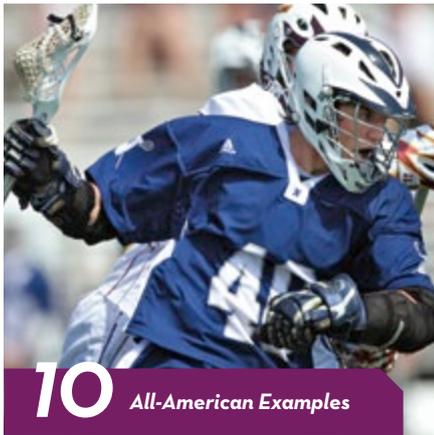
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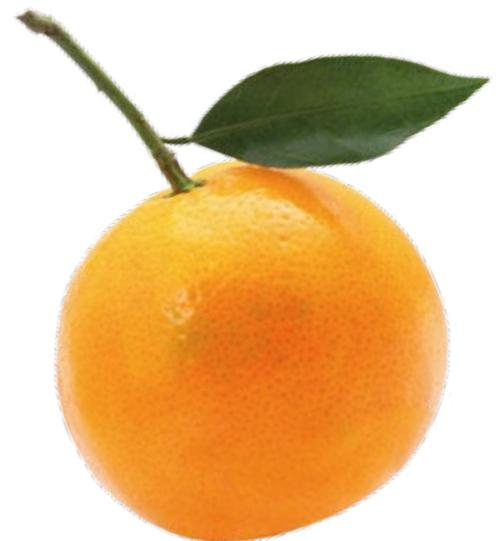
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**By Elder
Neil L. Andersen**
Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

LEARNING FROM LIVING PROPHETS

Could our attention to the counsel and the teaching of the Brethren be more active, searching, and responsive?

Of course we love President Thomas S. Monson, the two counselors in the First Presidency, and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. But in acknowledging our love and our loyalty, I would ask, Could our attention to the counsel and the teaching of these Brethren be more active, searching, and responsive?



The First Presidency—Henry B. Eyring, President Thomas S. Monson, Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Four Questions to Ask

Think how you would respond to the following questions:

1. Could you tell me the names of the three members of the First Presidency and the names of each of those who belong to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles? These are the 15 men you and I sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators.
2. If we were to hold up a picture of these Brethren, would you recognize each of them? We rarely pay close attention to someone we do not recognize or know.
3. Could you share with me the counsel given by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from the last general conference? And could you identify the concerns of President Monson, President Eyring, and President Uchtdorf in the First Presidency Messages of the *Ensign* this year?
4. Perhaps more importantly, could you share with me a recent decision where you changed something in your life because of counsel received from one of these 15 men?

The Lord's Pattern

The reasons our answers to these questions are so important rest in the calling and responsibility of the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles. Whenever the Lord's Church has been established, the Lord has called prophets and apostles. The Savior said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you" (John 15:16). To these men, that ordination brings a spiritual power and a solemn responsibility—a power to know and to testify and a responsibility

to teach and to bless. It also brings a responsibility and a promise to us all. We have the responsibility to listen and to follow, and we have a promise that blessings will come as we believe and act on their words.

When the Lord called twelve disciples in the Americas after His Resurrection, He taught the people: “Blessed are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of these twelve whom I have chosen from among you to minister unto you, and to be your servants” (3 Nephi 12:1). In our day, in a very difficult time, the Lord promised the Saints, “If my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place” (D&C 124:45).

This is the Lord’s pattern. He calls 15 men from “the ordinary pursuits of life”¹

and endows them with the keys and power to guide and direct us. We are not forced to obey; there is no compulsion. But if we will be attentive to their words, if we will be responsive and willing to change our behavior as the Holy Ghost confirms their counsel, we will not be moved out of our place—meaning we will hold fast to the iron rod and will forever remain safely on the path leading to the tree of life. **NE**

From a Church Educational System fireside given on March 4, 2007.

NOTES

1. Boyd K. Packer, “The Twelve Apostles,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 6.
2. Relative to the importance of living prophets, President Wilford Woodruff said: “If we had before us every revelation which God ever gave to man; if we had the Book of Enoch; if we had the untranslated plates before us in the English language; if we had the records of the Revelator St. John which are sealed up, and all other revelations, and they were piled up here a hundred feet high, the church and kingdom of God could not grow, in this or any other age of the world, without the living oracles of God” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* [2004], 198).

A CONSTANT STREAM OF REVELATION

“We have the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants; but all these books, without the living oracles and a constant stream of revelation from the Lord, would not lead any people into the Celestial Kingdom of God. . . .

“Of course, these records are all of infinite value. They cannot be too highly prized, nor can they be too closely studied. But in and of themselves, with all the light that they give, they are insufficient to guide the children of men and to lead them into the presence of God. To be thus led requires a living Priesthood and constant revelation from God to the people according to the circumstances in which they may be placed.”²

President George Q. Cannon (1827–1901), First Counselor in the First Presidency, *Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of George Q. Cannon, comp. Jerreld L. Newquist (1987), 252.*

The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



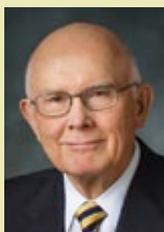
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Quentin L. Cook



D. Todd Christofferson



Neil L. Andersen



What's So **GREAT** about the **GREAT** and **SPACIOUS BUILDING**?

By Dennis C. Gaunt

Abby is excited about going to the prom but wishes her new dress were just a little more like the dresses her friends will be wearing. She thinks her friends will look more glamorous and sophisticated in their sleeveless dresses than she will in her modest dress, and she worries she'll stand out.

Nate is hanging out with his friends one evening when one of his buddies brings out some cans of beer and passes them around. When Nate refuses at first, saying, "I can't," his friends begin to laugh and tease him. Nate doesn't want his friends to think he's not cool, so he considers taking a few sips of beer just to get his friends to stop laughing.

Do these situations feel familiar? Like Abby and Nate, we each come to crossroads in our lives where different choices are laid out before us like pathways. At these difficult and important decision points, sometimes we're afraid to stand up for what we believe because we're afraid we'll stand out.

Abby and Nate are experiencing firsthand some of the difficulties

described in Lehi's vision of the tree of life. In that vision, we learn that two of the main reasons people leave the strait and narrow path are that they are blinded by the allure of temptation (see 1 Nephi 8:23; 12:17) and that they are embarrassed by the mockery from those in the great and spacious building (see 1 Nephi 8:26–28). Let's examine these two parts of Lehi's vision to see if we can not only understand them better but also learn from them to find the strength to stand up and stand out for what is right.

Walk This Way

The problem with the temptations of the world is that they're just so *tempting*, aren't they? As President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said: "Whoever said that sin was not fun? . . . Sin is attractive and desirable. . . . Sin is easy and has a big company of pleasant companions."¹

As much as we hate to admit it, many of those other paths often look appealing. Some paths veer off suddenly in exciting directions, while others curve away so subtly that for

a while they appear to run parallel to the gospel path. Some are glamorously carpeted in red and echo with applause. Others appear to be paved with gold and jewels.

The appeal of the great and spacious building itself is very similar. After all, some of the richest, most popular, most attractive, and most powerful people in the world live there! Who wouldn't want to hang out with, act like, and dress like those people? They often appear to be having a much better time than the rest of us who are trying to stay on the gospel path.

Much like our friend Abby, the more attention we give the residents of the great and spacious building, the more we might feel jealous or frustrated or even angry. We might think it doesn't seem fair that they should have so many nice things while we're trying to stay on the path to the tree of life.

Satan knows that one of the best ways to get people to leave the gospel path is by tricking them into believing that it's too hard, boring, or



When the world tells you that its way is better, have the courage to stand up and live the truths of the gospel.





STANDING FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE

To watch a video about standing up for what we believe and to listen to youth explain why they choose to keep their standards, watch “Dare to Stand Alone” ([lds.org/go/93Alone](https://www.lds.org/go/93Alone)) and “I Choose to Be Pure” ([lds.org/go/93Pure](https://www.lds.org/go/93Pure)).

old-fashioned to stay on the path. He doesn't care which of the other paths we take—any path will do—so long as it's not the gospel path.

“How Does That Fruit Taste?”

Mocking the faithful is a favorite activity at the great and spacious building. President Thomas S. Monson has said: “Increasingly, some celebrities and others . . . in the public eye have a tendency to ridicule religion in general and, at times, the Church in particular. If our testimonies are not firmly enough rooted, such criticisms can cause us to doubt our own beliefs or to waver in our resolves.”²

It seems as though no matter where we go in life, whether in person or online, there will be an open window from the great and spacious building nearby with someone ready to point a finger and laugh at the things we value. We have probably all experienced this mockery at different times, and it can be very painful. We know we should react in a Christlike manner, but it's not always easy. Nobody likes to be laughed at or have deeply held beliefs belittled. Like Nate, we might sometimes respond with a phrase like “I can't—I'm Mormon,” only to hear others laugh even harder.

“I Can't . . .”

Have you ever noticed how mockers always tend to focus on the word *can't*? As in, “Why *can't* you drink that?” “Why *can't* you go shopping with me on Sunday?” or “Why *can't* you have sex before you're married?”

This focus on the word *can't* may cause us to feel powerless. It may feel as though we're weak and spineless. It may feel as though

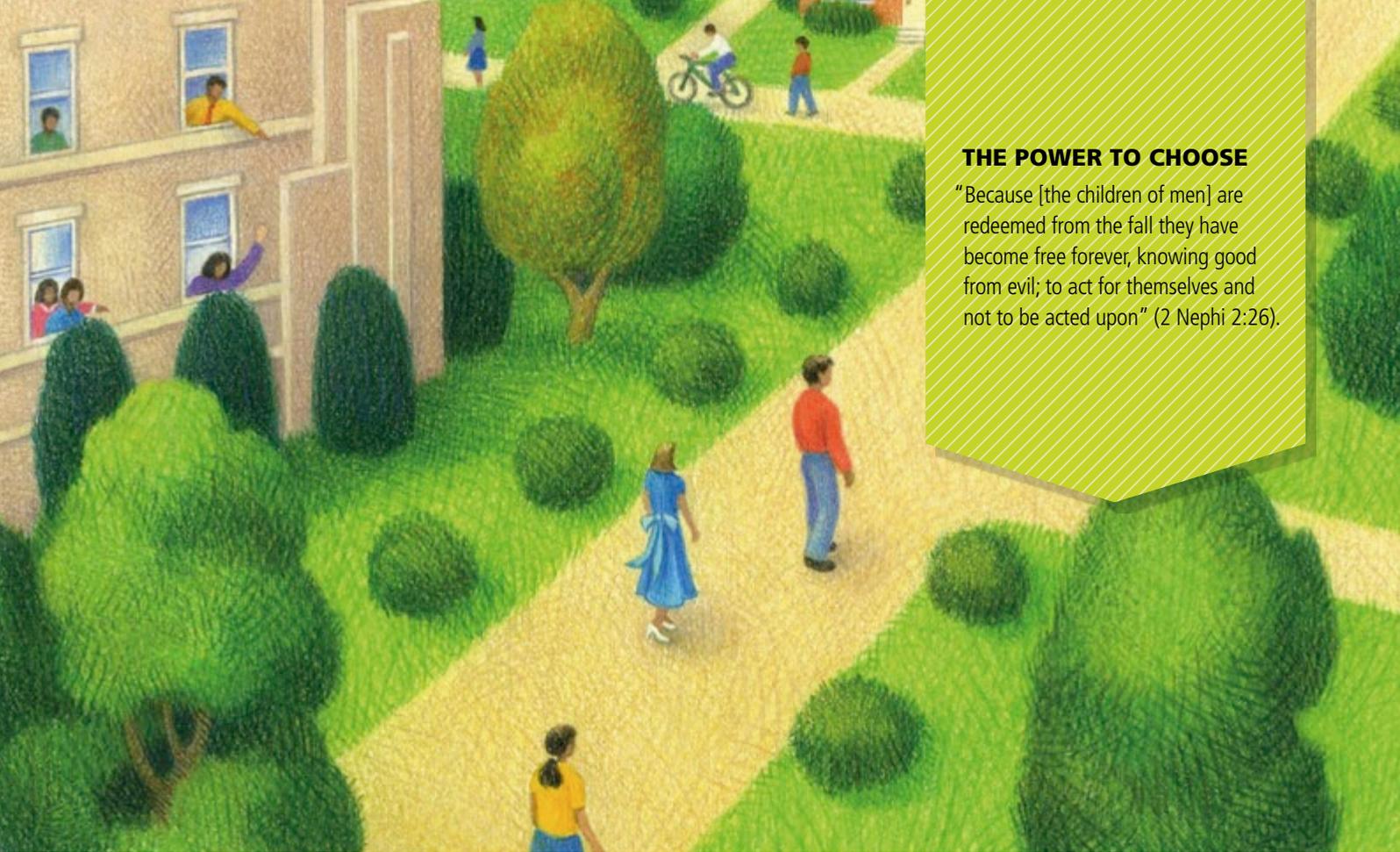
we're helpless victims of an impersonal God who has locked us up so that we don't have any fun.

This tactic is very, very old. In fact, Satan has been using it from the very beginning. When God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, He told them, “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat” (Moses 3:16). Do the words “every tree” sound like a restriction to you? While God told Adam and Eve that there were specific consequences for eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, He never physically restricted them. They had the whole garden to themselves and were told, “Thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee” (Moses 3:17). That sounds like freedom to me!

So it's interesting that when Satan comes along later he says, “Yea, hath God said—Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Moses 4:7). Essentially, Satan was asking, “Why *can't* you eat the fruit of that tree?” in the same mocking tone that comes from the windows of the great and spacious building. Satan focused on the one thing that God had attached consequences to, and he made it sound as though God wanted to deprive Adam and Eve. Satan twisted God's words, adding lies in the effort to convince them to follow him instead of God. In the end, partaking of the fruit had been part of the plan all along. And God provided a Savior to give Adam and Eve and all their children the chance to grow and return home.

“I Won't!”

And what is it we're really saying when we say, “I can't—I'm Mormon”? Are we really saying, “I wish I could, and if I weren't



THE POWER TO CHOOSE

“Because [the children of men] are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon” (2 Nephi 2:26).

Mormon, I totally would”? I once had a friend who used to joke about all the things he’d like to do if he weren’t a member of the Church. The problem was, I couldn’t always tell if he was joking.

Rather than focusing on *can’t* and *don’t*, we would be much better off if we used the word *won’t*. As in, “I won’t—I’m Mormon.” Using *won’t* instead of *can’t* changes the focus of the phrase and shows that we are empowered to choose for ourselves. By saying, “I won’t,” we’re saying, “I’m *choosing* not to do that, not because I’m a blind follower or because I’m restricted but because I believe in agency and accountability and I *want* to do what’s right. I am choosing to act and not be acted upon” (see 2 Nephi 2:14, 26).

Using “I won’t” instead of “I can’t” is also a monumental act of courage. It doesn’t take any courage to follow the crowds down the various paths of the world. Anyone can do that. Standing up for the truth shows real faith. Standing out from the world takes real courage. It shows that we are truly using our agency and really thinking for ourselves. The people in the great and spacious building are always referred to as a nameless crowd, a faceless mob. In the end, their words are hollow and meaningless. By faithfully exercising our agency, we can find the courage to say, as did Lehi and the brave and faithful members of his family, “We heeded them not” (1 Nephi 8:33).

Amid an increasingly wicked world, those who stand up and walk

the gospel path truly do stand out. But they are not alone. As President Thomas S. Monson has invited us, “May we ever be courageous and prepared to stand for what we believe, and if we must stand alone in the process, may we do so courageously, strengthened by the knowledge that in reality we are never alone when we stand with our Father in Heaven.”³ **NE**
Dennis C. Gaunt lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* (1972), 229.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Dare to Stand Alone,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 60.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “Dare to Stand Alone,” 67.

THROUGH THIN WALLS

We didn't realize until later that as we taught one family the gospel, we were also teaching their neighbor next door.

By **Monica Garcia Adams**

As sister missionaries, we were sharing the gospel with a woman who lived in modest circumstances at the bottom of a large hill near a small city dump on the outskirts of Asunción, Paraguay.

Soledad and her husband, Oscar, lived in one room of a long, narrow house that was actually a series of connected rooms, side by side, with very thin walls. Each room was a tiny residence with one window, one door, one table, and one bed. There were several such buildings in this area, constructed of wood, with a thatched roof and dirt floors. Clay that had been pushed into the crevices kept out some of the cold.

Soledad Listened

Soledad was the mother of three young children, and she was young herself—and overwhelmed. It was all she could do to take care of her home and the daily demands of her children. But she seemed to welcome our visits and to recognize a need for God in her life.

Soledad expressed her thoughts

and feelings freely. She had fallen in love and run away from home with Oscar, even though her parents didn't approve. Neither she nor her husband had any education or a job, and their future was bleak. She wondered if God had abandoned her and if He was punishing them for the poor choices they had made.

Oscar peddled trinkets door to door in an effort to help his family survive.

When he had a successful day, he would buy food and, sometimes, small gifts for the children. But when sales were poor, he would often return home depressed, angry, and drunk.

We felt challenged to help them deal with so many temporal concerns. But we also felt urged by the Spirit to continue loving and teaching them, even though at times their progress was disappointing. After several more visits and after praying



sincerely, we finally felt we needed to give them some time to consider what we had taught, study the Book of Mormon, and pray by themselves.

We explained our concerns to Soledad, and she was upset. She felt we were abandoning her family. She also told us they were expecting a fourth child and didn't know how they would survive. In anger she told us to leave and never return.

Juan Listened Too

Unknown to us, however, the neighbor next door, Juan, had been listening through the wall to what we had been teaching. He was young, curious, and painfully shy. As he had listened, he'd had many questions about the plan of salvation, the Book of Mormon, and repentance. He had even been borrowing Soledad's copy of the Book of Mormon, reading it, and praying regarding all that he had been quietly learning.

Days passed. Juan began to worry when we did not return to teach Soledad and Oscar. Then one night, as a heavy winter storm was brewing, he asked Soledad where we lived and how he could contact us. She said she didn't know, and he began to cry. He bore his testimony to her of the truthfulness of our message and ran out into the stormy night to look for us as rain poured down, turning the streets into muddy rivers.

Hours later, tired and cold, he continued to search. He began to pray as he made his way through the darkness, promising his Father in Heaven that if He would help him find us, he would be baptized and serve Him all the days of his life. In the meantime, Soledad, impressed by Juan's testimony, started praying that we would return. Juan came home but continued to pray and read the

Book of Mormon for the next two days. Soledad also prayed earnestly and talked with Oscar. Together they began reading the Book of Mormon.

And Heavenly Father Listened

Two days after the storm, as my companion and I knelt in prayer, we felt compelled to return to the tiny little homes at the bottom of the hill. We went immediately, and when we arrived, we were greeted with happy tears and excitement by Soledad, Oscar, their children, and Juan. They told us all that had happened, and from that time on, all of them were eager to learn about the gospel. It wasn't long before Juan was baptized, and Soledad and Oscar soon followed.

I remember wondering why we were so strongly impressed to keep teaching even when Soledad and Oscar weren't responding well. I remember wondering why we felt such an urgency to return when we had been chased away in anger. But as I saw the joy that came into Juan's life and then into Soledad and Oscar's family, I knew that not only was Juan listening through thin walls but that Heavenly Father was listening to prayers from each of us in turn, prayers that came from the heart. **NE**

Monica Garcia Adams lives in Utah, USA.





All-American EXAMPLES

TWO BROTHERS RISE TO THE TOP OF THEIR GAME

WHILE PUTTING THE LORD FIRST.

With a playing position named “attack,” lacrosse is anything but a slow-paced sport. Watch a few minutes of a lacrosse match and you’ll soon realize there really isn’t any downtime.

“I enjoy the speed of the game,” says Kevin C., a senior from Georgia, USA, who plays the position of attack for his high school’s varsity lacrosse team. “Lacrosse is a blend of so many sports, like football, soccer, and hockey.”

Kevin was recently awarded the status of All-American in lacrosse, a national honor given to only a handful of high school athletes from each state. Even more remarkable, perhaps, is that his older brother Brandon—now serving a full-time mission in Salt Lake City, Utah—was also given the same award for lacrosse one year earlier.

The two brothers are widely recognized for their athletic accomplishments. Yet Brandon and Kevin are each quick to attribute their success not just to practice but also to keeping the commandments.

Run and Not Be Weary

If you were listing sports where you needed to “run and not be weary” (D&C 89:20), lacrosse would fit the description. This sport requires stamina, strength, solid hand-eye coordination, and in some cases, more moves than a ballroom dance competition. You have to be able to bob and weave, catch and throw, and run and turn on a dime—all while dodging a flurry of lacrosse sticks coming at you from every direction. Getting into shape for lacrosse requires intense training and conditioning.

Kevin and Brandon were fortunate enough to play on the same varsity team for two years before Brandon graduated. They decided in younger years that they’d always keep the Word of Wisdom as outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 89. As two of only a few members of the Church in their school, they were in the minority of young men who lived such high health standards.

“One of the biggest downsides of the sport is the atmosphere,” says Kevin. A lot of the players would party hard outside of practice, including some smoking and drinking. When it came time to pull off a six-mile run for practice, those same players often had a harder time keeping up. The brothers’ commitment to the Word of Wisdom and good health “really showed during our play on the field



Brandon C.



Kevin C.

and during practice,” says Kevin.

Brandon, in an email from his mission, says, “I have no doubt that a huge part of [our success in lacrosse] was because God blessed us with health because we lived the Word of Wisdom.”

Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy

Kevin and Brandon had also made a firm commitment to keep the Sabbath day holy. For them, that meant no practices or games on Sunday. “No exceptions,” Kevin says. This particular decision was tested

Setting an Example

Both Brandon and Kevin have proven their skills and talents on the field time and again. In addition to being named All-American, they have each served as captain on the varsity lacrosse team. Captains are chosen by votes from the players on the team. And yet their contributions on the field are only part of the overall picture.

The other students in their school look up to these brothers not only because of what they have accomplished (including earning Eagle Scout awards) but also because of who they are and how they treat others. “These young men are so kind,” says Meagan M., an older ward member who has watched Brandon and Kevin over the years. “They are very well respected.”

When Brandon was leaving for his mission, he invited all the players on his lacrosse team to attend sacrament meeting to hear him speak. Many teammates attended, most of whom had never been to an LDS Church meeting before. Brandon spoke about the importance of obeying the Word of Wisdom and keeping the Sabbath day holy.

Lacrosse is a demanding sport, for certain. However, Kevin and Brandon met those demands well while continually choosing to center their lives in the gospel. “Our faith is much stronger than our love of the game,” says Kevin. **NE**

“OUR FAITH IS MUCH STRONGER THAN OUR

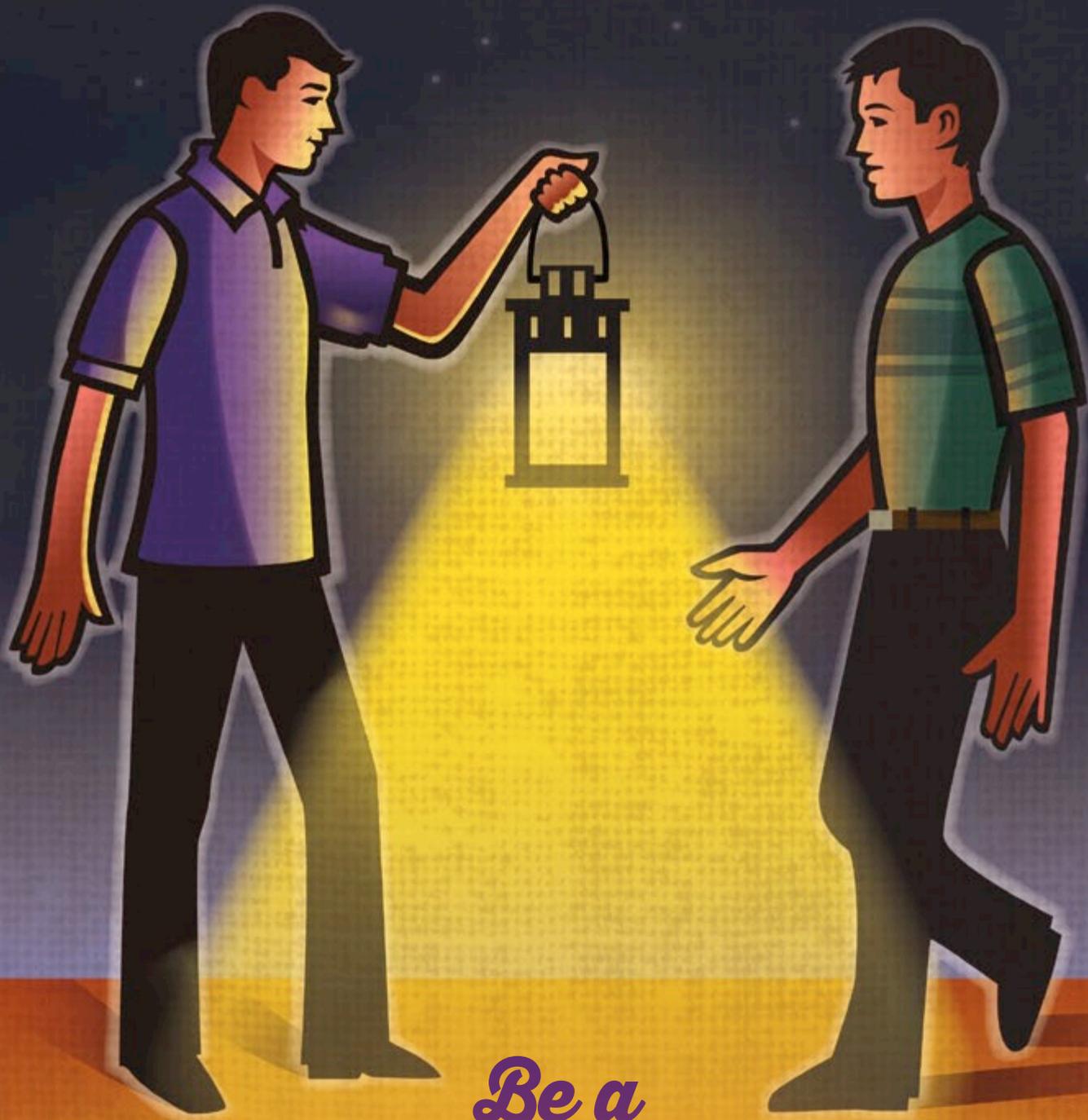
LOVE OF THE GAME,” SAYS KEVIN.



regularly. But they never faltered.

“Like most sports, lacrosse has a lot of tournaments on Sunday,” Kevin explains. “I’ve missed countless tournaments.”

Brandon and Kevin helped each other keep that resolve. “Once we made the decision, it was simple,” Kevin explains. Over the years, coaches and teammates have grown to respect the brothers’ commitment. Sometimes their team had to play without one or two of its star players, but Brandon and Kevin know where their priorities lie. “We really do believe in the commandments,” says Kevin.



Be a
LIGHT
to Your Friends



By Elder Benjamín
De Hoyos
Of the Seventy

When my friends and I became teenagers, things began to change between us.

I grew up with the same friends for the first 12 years of my life. We were neighbors. We went to the same schools and attended each other's birthday parties. I sometimes ate at their homes, they came to mine, and we had fun together. But when we became teenagers, things began to change. They were not members of the Church, and they swore, they smoked, and they drank alcohol. They had a completely different view of the law of chastity than I did.

I thought about the problem carefully, and then I talked to my father about what to do. He said, "You have to decide. These good friends are different from you. Before you couldn't tell, but now there's a very big difference."

I trusted my father's counsel. My friends knew I was a member of the Church, so when I decided not to always go everywhere they went, they understood. Eventually, we spent less and less time together even though we were still friendly.

It was a trial for me to leave my friends, but I knew that it was important to maintain the principles of the gospel in my life. I thought about Alma's counsel to his sons when he taught them to have faith in God. He said, "Whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials" (Alma 36:3).

One of the things that helped me get through this hard time was going every week to Church activities, including Mutual. I also kept myself busy with dancing, sports, and youth conferences.

I made a new friend who was not a member of the Church, and he sometimes invited me to go to parties. These parties were the same day as Mutual, so I told him, "I'm sorry. I would like to go, but I have other plans."

He asked what I was doing. I told him, "I'm going to Mutual."

"What's Mutual?" he asked.

I explained that we had a lot of fun activities at Mutual and that I was serving as a counselor in the presidency. After I turned down three invitations to his parties, he said, "Invite me to Mutual."

So he came with me, the missionaries taught him, and he was eventually baptized.

I invite you to make decisions now so that you can be a light to your friends. One thing you can do is attend seminary. Your seminary teachers do *their* part; they put forth a lot of effort in preparing lessons for you. Seminary will be even more of a blessing to you when you do *your* part: read the assignments, pray and fast, receive and accept the teachings. Learning takes place when both parties do what they need to do.

When I was in high school, one of my friends invited me to a party and said, "Let's go ask my father if we can borrow his car." His father did not want to let him borrow the car. Then, when his father saw me, he said, "OK, I'll let you borrow the car, but only if Benjamín will drive."

This man knew that my family and I were members of the Church, that we didn't drink alcohol, and that I would be a safe driver.

The reaction of my friend's father helped me appreciate my parents' teachings and the example they set. At home we had family home evening and family prayer. Sunday was a day of rest for us. These types of things were the gospel in action for us, and we enjoyed it a lot. My father often invited other members of the Church to come to our house to talk about the gospel on Sunday afternoons. We ate together, we talked about the gospel, and we shared a close friendship.

Prepare now to build your own strong future families. You do that when you are active in learning about the gospel. Remember that if you will put your trust in God; have daily, fervent prayer; read the scriptures; keep yourselves clean; and work on your Duty to God or Personal Progress, you will be protected from harm, will be a light to your friends, and will find joy in your life. **NE**

“Some of my friends
 have questions about
 the Church,
 but it seems they
 just want to argue.
 How can I avoid an
 argument
 and turn this
 into an
 opportunity
 to share?”

The Savior taught, “Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another” (3 Nephi 11:30). Christ does not want us to argue, and He certainly does not want us to argue about His gospel.

So when you’re speaking with friends who want only to argue about the Church, it might be wisest to exit the conversation as soon as possible. You can tell them you would love to answer their sincere questions, but because the gospel is important to you *and* your friends are important to you, you don’t want to fight with them about it. Bear a sincere testimony and invite them to learn more.

You could also try to focus on what you have in common. Ask them about what they believe and then explain how your beliefs are similar or dissimilar. Explain that regardless of what either of you believes, you are friends first. **NE**

Invite the Spirit



This can be a very hard situation, especially when you want to share the gospel. The most important thing to

remember is that the Spirit cannot reside where there is contention. The best way to share the gospel is to bear testimony, and when you bear testimony, the Spirit can and will be there. When I am confronted with a situation like this, I remain calm and simply bear testimony that I know the gospel is true or that the answer I give to a particular question is what I believe. As I approach situations in this manner, people are more open and respectful because they feel the Spirit.

Allison A., 18, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany

Don’t Give Up



If they are asking questions about the Church and they just want to argue, then they probably don’t really want

to know more about the Church. However, don’t give up. Pray and ask for inspiration from God. He will tell you what to do and give the Spirit to help reach their hearts if they open them. If you do it His way, good will come of it.

James D., 15, Utah, USA

Don’t Demand the Last Word

It’s easy to let others’ argumentative approach trigger a defensive attitude

in you. Calmly state the facts and use friendly, cheerful language. Patiently explain that you can see where they are coming from, but explain the truths and why you believe them. Being defensive or arguing back will only invite more anger and fighting. If you've tried to be patient and calm and they're still not listening, then it may be best to just let them have the last word. Remember it's not going to be your last word that touches them most—it's going to be the Holy Ghost.

Mary Ann C., 18, Missouri, USA

Stand Up for What You Believe

Probably the best way to respond is by listening to the Spirit for guidance. You can pray to know what to say either before people ask or quickly in your heart after they ask. Be honest and remember Paul's conviction: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16). Stand up for what you believe in; the gospel is valuable to you and everyone you meet.

Nicholas J., 20, Utah, USA

Be a Peacemaker



If they start to argue, then try saying something like, "This is what my religion believes, and it's OK if you don't agree. I respect your beliefs, so please respect mine." It's our job as Church members to share the gospel truth, not to prove anyone wrong or convert

anyone on the spot. Remain a peacemaker and stay respectful.

Katrina H., 16, California, USA

Stay Positive



This situation can be awkward, but what I've discovered is pretty simple: stay positive! Even if your friends are trying to argue, then they are still asking questions! Answer their questions with a smile on your face. More often than not, this attitude will rub off, and you will be able to finish your discussion in a calm environment where you can both feel the Spirit. It can be nerve-racking, but just remember to "be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (Joshua 1:9).

Amberly L., 18, Arizona, USA



SHOW CHRISTLIKE LOVE

"We should appreciate and approach [faith-centered]

conversations with Christlike love. Our tone, whether speaking or writing, should be respectful and civil, regardless of the response of others. We should be honest and open and try to be clear in what we say. We want to avoid arguing or becoming defensive in any way."

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear," *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 43.

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



Read More

Find additional ideas in "Answering Difficult Questions about the Church" by Young Men general president David L. Beck in the September 2012 *New Era* or online at lds.org/go/93Answer.

UPCOMING QUESTION

"How can I learn to show respect and love for my younger siblings when they sometimes seem to be so difficult?"

Send your answer and photo by October 15, 2013.

Go to newera.lds.org and click "Submit Your Work."

You can also write to us at newera@ldschurch.org or

New Era, Q&A, siblings
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

Citrus WARRIORS

WHAT CAN YOU TEACH YOUR FAMILY ABOUT ANCIENT BATTLE ARMOR? PLENTY.

By David Dickson
Church Magazines

Your parents have asked you to give the family home evening lesson. But you're not quite sure what might keep everyone in your family engaged. Have no fear. An amazing lesson is a mere suit of armor away!

First, get your hands on a complete set of medieval armor. Make sure you find a full assortment. We're talking helmet, breastplate, shield, sword, the works.

Next, you . . . what's that? Your local thrift store is clean out of medieval battle armor? Hmm. Well, in that case, there's another suit of "armor" you can use for an object lesson instead.

A Different Kind of Warrior

For this particular object lesson, all you need is a set of scriptures, a large clear vase or pitcher, and two oranges (keep one hidden at first). The orange will represent your medieval warrior. Fill the pitcher or vase three-quarters full with water before the lesson begins.

When it's time for the lesson, carefully place one orange in the water. What happens? (Hint: It floats!) The peel is like armor that protects the orange, just as the armor of



FHE

Object Lesson

God protects us. That same armor of God also holds us up and keeps us from sinking in the waters of life.

Next, pull the orange out of the water and remove the peel. Place it back in the water and watch with a sigh of sadness as your not-so-protected warrior now sinks like a rock. (Singing ballads of your citrus warrior's brave deeds would be entirely appropriate at this point.)

What connections do you see between this activity and the gospel? That's where your object lesson can turn into a great discussion. Here are a couple of teaching ideas you might use to help you and your family learn together.

Staying Afloat in a Troubled World

As you start your lesson, consider discussing the armor of God mentioned in Ephesians 6:10–18. While chatting with your family, you could talk about different ways armor provides protection—including the armor of God. You could ask questions such as “How can faith be a shield?” or “Why do you think righteousness is the breastplate?”

Don't forget that you can refer back to your citrus warrior. Think about what we learn from the orange that sank when the “armor” was removed. What can happen in our own lives if we decide not to follow the commandments? It's like choosing not to put on the armor of God.

Suiting Up Again

Remember, we never have to stay like that orange without a peel. Repentance lets us put back on the armor of God at any time. You may want to find a quote or scripture about repentance to share. This would also be an appropriate time to bring out your second orange and place it in the water to represent what repentance can do for us. Yes, your citrus warrior is ready to fight again.

Finish your lesson by bearing testimony about the principles you've discussed.

And that's it! Remember, this is only one object lesson you could share. Family home evening lessons don't need to be long or complex to be awesome, memorable, and effective.

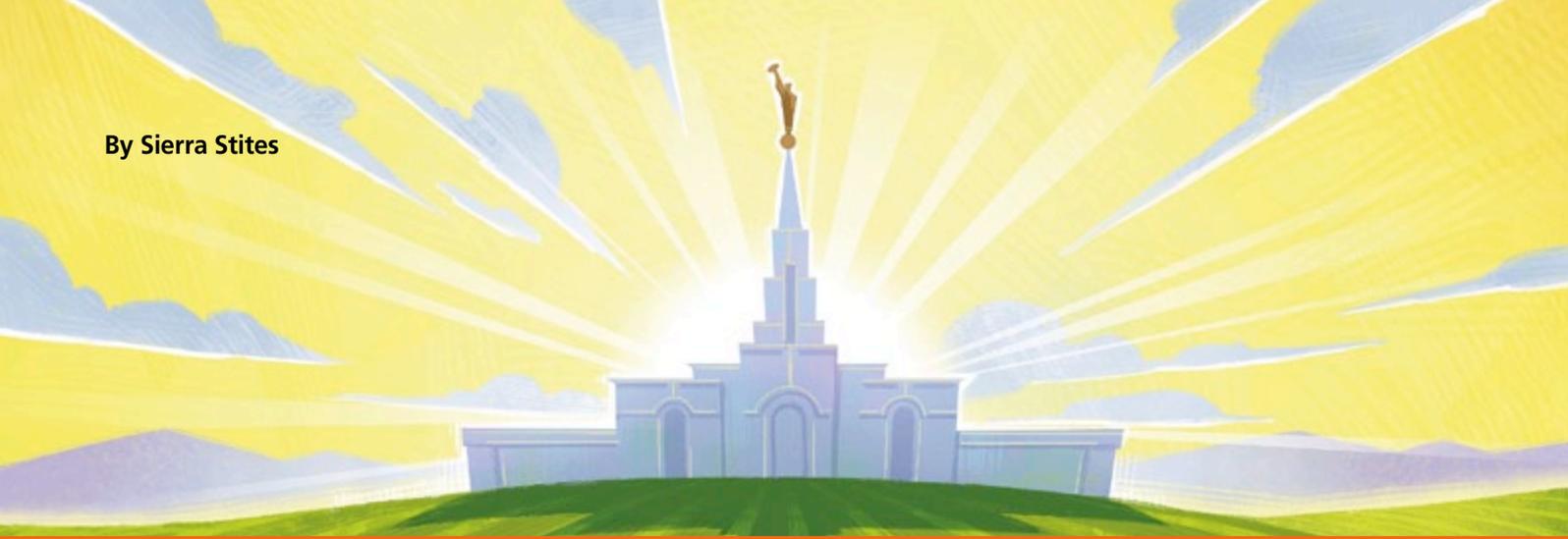
So, should you have a treat? Fresh oranges, anyone? **NE**



LESSON RESOURCES

- Share teachings from living prophets, such as this one from President Thomas S. Monson: “What will protect you from the sin and evil around you? I maintain that a strong testimony of our Savior and of His gospel will help see you through to safety” (“Priesthood Power,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 66).
- Review what Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught about the armor of God in his April 2013 general conference talk “Stand Strong in Holy Places” at [lds.org/go/93Strong](https://www.lds.org/go/93Strong). To download a poster of the illustration from his talk, see the June 2013 *New Era* (page 49) or [lds.org/go/93Armor](https://www.lds.org/go/93Armor).
- Listen to the seminary song “The Whole Armor of God.” Go to [lds.org/youth/music](https://www.lds.org/youth/music) and search for the song by title.

By Sierra Stites



NO MATTER HOW EARLY

My mom's example made me want to visit the temple regularly.

I go to the temple every Tuesday morning. I have to get up at 4:00 a.m. to go to the temple and make it to school on time. Even if I go to bed late Monday night, I still get up the next morning and attend the temple. No one forces me to go—it's my choice.

People have asked me, “Why do you do this every week?” My answer is that my family started this habit a long time ago. I'm the youngest of 12 kids, and for as long as I can remember I've seen my mom coming home from the early Saturday morning temple session. She promised Heavenly Father that if she ever lived near a temple she would go often (for her, once a week), and she has kept her promise ever since my family moved close to a temple many years ago.

Seeing her example made me want to go inside the temple so much. I started a countdown to my 12th birthday when I was only 4! My mom would take my siblings and me to the temple grounds, and this only made my desire to go inside the temple grow even more.

For my 12th birthday, my mom took me to the temple! The temple workers were so nice and treated me like a princess.

I'd never experienced anything

like the temple in my life, and the Spirit was so strong. I will never forget the peace my mom and I felt. Afterward I wiped tears from my eyes as I hugged my mom and thanked her for her example.

That year I continued to go on youth temple trips but felt like something was missing in my life. I told my mom I wanted to go to the temple every week before school and asked if she would take me. She thought it was a great idea, and we have been going together ever since.

I've received many blessings from going to the temple. It's not always easy to wake up that early, but it's worth it. I've done better in school, and I see my temptations in a different light. My faith and testimony have increased, and I feel more love for others and an increased desire to be a good example. I testify that blessings come when we go to the temple, no matter how early we have to get up. **NE**

Sierra Stites lives in Utah, USA.



THE SPIRIT OF THE TEMPLE

“My beloved brothers and sisters, may we make whatever sacrifices are necessary to attend the temple and to have the spirit of the temple in our hearts and in our homes.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 94.



LAUNCH YOUR FUTURE

Fuel up with knowledge and see how far
your learning will take you.



KEEP YOUR COOL

at a

NEW SCHOOL

Remembering these 5 principles can help you face an unfamiliar place.



Your alarm goes off, and as you reach to turn it off you suddenly remember, “Oh no, it’s my first day at a new school!” As tempted as you are to pull the covers over your head and go back to sleep, you know you’ve got to face the day. But what if nobody likes you? What if you can’t make friends or if people make fun of you when they find out you’re a member of the Church? Relax! You’ve got this covered.

Remember these five gospel principles and let your worries fade away.

REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE

You are a child of God and He loves you. You can rely on Heavenly Father when you need comfort. Even if you don’t make friends at school right away, He will not leave you alone. Sister Elaine S. Dalton, former Young Women general president, taught: “When you make a transition, you are never alone. Our Heavenly Father knows exactly where you are, and He will be with you” (“How to Dare Great Things,” *New Era*, Mar. 2012, 48). For more information on God’s love and comfort, read John 3:16, John 14:18, 2 Nephi 1:15, and Alma 26:37.

LET THE GOSPEL LIFT YOU

The gospel provides answers and guidance for the situations you face every day. For example, a young man from Nigeria found comfort when he needed to take an exam for school but didn’t have the required money (read “A Test to Take Tests” on page 47). In every situation, think about how the gospel can help you. For example, if you’re struggling to keep up in your new classes, read Doctrine and Covenants 88:118 and you’ll find that you can get help from the Lord as you learn. If you’re surrounded by bad things at school, study the life and teachings of Moroni—he had great insight on living in a world full of wickedness (see Mormon 8 and Ether 12, along with his father’s counsel in Moroni 9).

SEEK OUT GOOD FRIENDS

Be friendly to everyone at your new school, but make sure that the people you spend your time with are the kinds of friends who support you and help you live the gospel—they'll make a huge difference in your life. For more on this topic, watch the video "A True Friend" at lds.org/go/93True and read the "Friends" section in *For the Strength of Youth*. You can also read "My Friend Stood Up with Me" and "An Unexpected Friend" on pages 46–47 of this issue.

BE AN EXAMPLE AND BE YOURSELF

You may be worried that you'll already stick out by being the new kid in school and that announcing you're a Latter-day Saint will make you stick out even more. But being an example is not about calling attention to yourself—it's about doing what's right. Just be who you are and act in a way that's consistent with your gospel knowledge. Your friends and peers will appreciate being around someone who is genuine and not always pretending to be someone else. To learn more about being an example, read 1 Timothy 4:12, Matthew 5:16, and Doctrine and Covenants 115:5. You can also read "What's So Great about the Great and Spacious Building?" on page 4 of this issue.

FOCUS ON YOUR BLESSINGS

Rather than worry if people will judge you for keeping your standards, remember that you'll have greater peace of mind when you stand up for what you believe, because great blessings come when we keep the commandments (see D&C 130:20–21), although you may not always recognize those blessings immediately. Not everyone at your school will have the same standards you have, but you will find some people who admire you when you have the courage to live your beliefs. (To learn more about having courage to keep your standards, read Joshua 1:9 and 2 Timothy 4:7, and then watch President Thomas S. Monson's video "Dare to Stand Alone" at lds.org/go/93Dare). When times get tough, try counting your blessings, perhaps even keeping a daily record of them, to help you focus on all the things God is blessing you with each day. **NE**



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

STEPS

to Happiness

Commandments are not given to restrict but rather to make possible what we truly desire and what our Heavenly Father, who loves us, wants for us.





SUNDAY LESSONS

 This Month's Topic:
The Commandments

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



At times, some people get confused, thinking that the commandments are restrictions or limitations that complicate life, that take away opportunities or happiness or the pleasures of life. In reality, the commandments protect us and guide us to happiness. They are not to restrict but rather to make possible—to allow us to achieve in this life and in the next—what we truly desire and what our Heavenly Father, who loves us, wants for us.

They are like a flight of stairs. Each step may represent one commandment, and with each commandment that we obey, we can move upward. Then, if we understand the essence of the commandments, we want more. We don't feel resentment regarding the commandments; we want more in order to be able to progress more. And a Heavenly

Father who loves us gives unto us according to our desires. If we desire it, He is going to give us more commandments in order to facilitate our progress.

So, young people, please don't complain about the commandments. Don't say, "I don't want any more," but rather say, "Yes, more, more. I want to progress. I want to be happy. I want to be like my Heavenly Father. And the commandments show me how to do so. They open up the pathway before me and also protect me from evil and the things that destroy happiness—and sometimes they even protect life itself."

I hope that you're convinced. We have to do all things necessary to keep the commandments, even if it seems we are all alone as we do so. **NE**

From an address given to youth in Salta, Argentina, in November 2011.

Throughout September you'll be studying about the commandments in your priesthood quorums and Young Women and Sunday School classes. You may want to think about some commandments that your peers often struggle with. What blessings have you or others received by following those commandments? Think about ways you could testify of those blessings to people around you, and follow the Spirit to know what to say and when to say it. You could role-play some examples during a family home evening or share your testimony during a Sunday School lesson.

Consider sharing your experiences at [lds.org/go/93Steps](https://www.lds.org/go/93Steps). You can even send your story to the *New Era* at [newera](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org). [lds.org](https://www.lds.org) (click "Submit Your Work") or by emailing newera@ldschurch.org.

For more information on this topic, see President Thomas S. Monson, "Obedience Brings Blessings," *Ensign*, May 2013, 89; and Elder L. Tom Perry, "Obedience to Law Is Liberty," *Ensign*, May 2013, 86. You can also read or watch these addresses at [conference.lds.org](https://www.conference.lds.org).

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID HABBEH; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT CASEY © IRI

NEPHI'S BOWS

NEPHI'S STEEL BOW

Type of bow: We can't be sure, but Nephi tells us that it was "made of fine steel" (1 Nephi 16:18). This mention of metal as part of the bow's construction implies that it was strong and probably had a good draw weight (the energy built up when the arrow is drawn back) and thus a good range and force for each shot.

Why it broke: Again, we can't be sure, but increased heat and changed humidity (going from Jerusalem to the southwestern Arabian Peninsula) may have weakened the bow. This may also explain why Laman and Lemuel's bows "lost their springs" (1 Nephi 16:21).



WHAT THEY WERE HUNTING

Some larger animals found in the southwestern Arabian Peninsula that Nephi and his brothers could have hunted include the nubian ibex (a kind of goat), oryx (a kind of antelope), and mountain gazelle. Several smaller animals also inhabit the area.

WHAT ABOUT THE ARROW?

Nephi's new bow was probably a different size (most likely longer) and had a different draw weight (probably weaker) than his first one. This may have required making a new, customized arrow so that it would fly straight and far. And, by the way, it says he made "an arrow" (1 Nephi 16:23). Just one? Now *that's* faith.

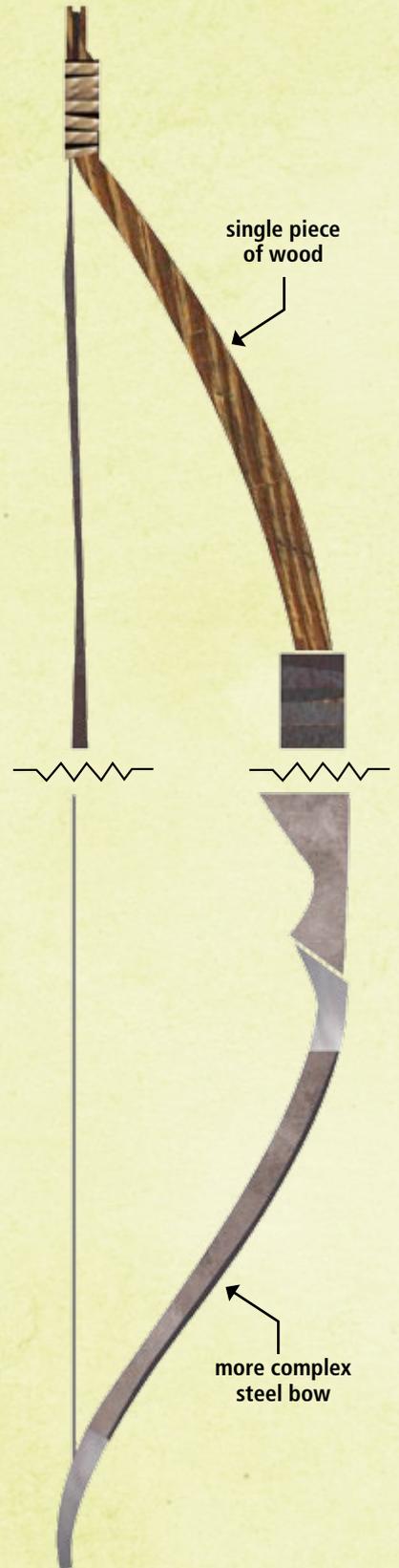
nubian ibex



oryx



mountain gazelle



NEPHI'S BOW OF WOOD

Type of bow: Nephi says he “did make out of wood a bow” (1 Nephi 16:23). A bow made of a single piece of wood is called a self bow.

How it was made: Nephi would have had to carve a piece of wood long enough, thick enough, straight enough, and flexible yet strong enough to draw back with great force without breaking it. Suitable wood in the area may have included olive, pomegranate, acacia, or juniper.

How it compared to the first bow: Bows made only of wood are generally weaker than those that combine various materials, having less range and force. So Nephi may have had to work harder to hunt the animals.

“AND IT CAME TO PASS THAT I, NEPHI, DID MAKE OUT OF WOOD A BOW, AND OUT OF A STRAIGHT STICK, AN ARROW. . . . AND I SAID UNTO MY FATHER: WHITHER SHALL I GO TO OBTAIN FOOD?” 1 NEPHI 16:23

WHERE THIS HAPPENED



From Jerusalem, Lehi’s family traveled to “the borders near the shore of the Red Sea” (1 Nephi 2:5) and then went in “nearly a south-southeast direction, . . . keeping in the most fertile parts of the wilderness, which were in the borders near the Red Sea” (1 Nephi 16:13–14). This would place them somewhere in the rugged mountainous areas of the southwestern Arabian Peninsula.

The story of the weapon Nephi built in order to solve a problem may hold lessons for you.

What

WE CAN LEARN

It had to be made. Unlike the Liahona (see 1 Nephi 16:10), the new bow did not miraculously appear one morning. It took someone with learning, skill, ingenuity, and determination to make it. We should prepare ourselves to be the ones who can do what needs to be done.

It wouldn’t have been easy to make or use. The problems we face aren’t always easily solved. Doing hard things is part of life.

Nephi built it on his own initiative. Nephi chose to act. He did what he could to fix a bad situation. He didn’t wait to be “compelled in all things” but decided to be “anxiously engaged” and do something “of [his] own free will” (D&C 58:26–27). The Lord then blessed his efforts by helping him have a successful hunt (see 1 Nephi 16:30–31).

Nephi built the bow while others complained (see 1 Nephi 16:18, 20, 22). Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “Speak encouragingly, including about yourself. Try not to complain and moan incessantly. . . . No misfortune is so bad that whining about it won’t make it worse” (“The Tongue of Angels,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 18).



MAKE THE EFFORT

“Have the determination to make the effort, the single-mindedness to work toward a worthy goal, and the courage not only to face the challenges that inevitably come but also to make a second effort, should such be required.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Living the Abundant Life,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2012, 5.

FINDING PEACE

in a Troubled World

.....

During the April 2013 general conference, prophets reminded us that through the Savior we can—and should—be of good cheer.

PEACE *to Overcome Fear and Sorrow*

Sometimes when we listen to the news or deal with the day-to-day challenges of life, we may wonder where to turn for comfort and hope. Fortunately, we are blessed with prophets and apostles who give wise counsel on how we can find hope through the Savior. And as the following experiences show, we can, indeed, find peace in our lives as promised in conference and in the scriptures.



“We live at a time in the world’s history when there are many difficult challenges but also great opportunities and reasons for rejoicing. There are, of course, those times when we experience disappointments, heartaches, and even tragedies in our lives. However, if we will put our trust in the Lord, He will help us through our difficulties, whatever they may be. The Psalmist provided this assurance: ‘Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning (Psalm 30:5).’”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Until We Meet Again,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 114.

Watch or read the full talk at lds.org/go/93Trust.

.....

When the phone call came, I could hear my mother in another room, talking quietly with her doctor—the tone of her voice steady but concerned. I instantly felt worried. I needed to find out what was happening, and something inside me told me the news wouldn’t be good.

“The cancer is back, and this time it’s in my liver,” my mom told me when she got off the phone. “The doctor wants me to come in for more tests to see how far it’s spread.”

Although I was just a sophomore in high school, this wasn’t the first time our family had received news that our mom’s health was in jeopardy. When I was just four years old, my dad sat me down during our evening storytelling time to explain that my mother had breast cancer.

Since then, she’d undergone rounds of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. The treatments had always seemed to work, but with each new discovery of cancer in her

body, her chances of survival grew dimmer.

Over the next few weeks after this most recent phone call, I started to feel hopeless as I watched my mother struggling to cope with her illness. Despite doing all the things I knew I should be doing, like going to seminary, reading my scriptures, praying, and fasting, I still felt a looming cloud of despair hang over me.

Peace seemed to elude me, until one morning when I was getting ready for school. I was eating cereal at our kitchen table in my usual hurried fashion and was running late to try to catch the school bus. Suddenly I looked up and saw a painting of the Savior's face with the words "You Are Never Alone" printed in bold letters above it. It was a Mormonad poster that my mom and I had taped to the side of the fridge a few months earlier. I took a closer look and read the scripture at the bottom of the poster: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18).

I instantly felt a comforting feeling wash over me. The scripture on the Mormonad was a simple statement, but it seemed to pierce my heart. The Savior's promise that He would always be by my side lifted my spirits and increased my faith. From then on, I knew that no matter what happened, I would be watched over through my trials. My prayers to find comfort during a troubling time had been answered. My testimony that I am a daughter of God and that He knows me personally was strengthened that day. Since that morning I have known that I will truly never be alone because the Savior is always with me.

Jonelle M., Utah, USA



PEACE THROUGH THE SAVIOR

"Peace comes from knowing that the Savior knows who we are and knows that we have faith in Him, love Him, and keep His commandments, even and especially amid life's devastating trials and tragedies."

Elder Quentin L. Cook
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Personal Peace: The Reward of Righteousness," *Ensign*, May 2013, 33.

.....
 Watch or read the full talk, where Elder Cook provides additional counsel for finding peace, at lds.org/go/93Reward.

See the Mormonad at lds.org/go/93Peace.





PEACE TO BRING CHEER

"I invite you to walk confidently and joyfully. Yes, the road has bumps and detours and even some hazards. But don't focus on them. Look for the happiness your Father in Heaven has prepared for you in every step of your journey. Happiness is the destination, but it's also the path. 'Peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come' is what He promises (D&C 59:23). That is why He commands us to 'be of good cheer' (D&C 78:18; see also John 16:33; 3 Nephi 1:13)."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Your Wonderful Journey Home," *Ensign*, May 2013, 129.

Watch or read the full talk, where President Uchtdorf provides a "map" for navigating through life, at lds.org/go/933Cheer.



PEACE to Overcome Temptation



"By anchoring our lives to Jesus Christ and to His Atonement and by carefully following His plans for our happiness, including daily prayer, daily scripture study, and weekly partaking of the sacrament, we will be strengthened, we will experience real personal growth and a lasting conversion, we will be better prepared to successfully withstand the storms and calamities of life, we will experience the joy and happiness promised, and we will have the confidence that our lives have been built upon a sure foundation—a foundation that will never fall."

Bishop Dean M. Davies, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, "A Sure Foundation," *Ensign*, May 2013, 11.

Watch or read the full talk at lds.org/go/933Sure.

I am in seventh grade. Where I live, there aren't a lot of members of the Church, and some of the people cuss and wear immodest clothing. As the environment around me started to become worse, I realized that if I didn't strengthen my testimony and my relationship with God, then the worldly things would swallow me up. I noticed that I needed to become closer to God and that I needed to do it now.

I decided that I would choose to be around people who would respect my standards and that I would work harder in school and on my talents. On top of that, I helped prepare family home evening lessons so our family could be closer, and we started reading the scriptures together every night. I also decided

to read my scriptures every day and keep a journal about what I'm reading. I pray every morning and night and when I need help. Every Sunday I listen in church so that I can learn as much as possible and do my best to absorb the teachings of prophets and apostles that are shared there.

My life is much happier now, and I can feel the Spirit every day. I don't know why I was so driven to become closer to Heavenly Father, but it may be because of the feeling I got from doing good things or the blessings that were promised. I'm so glad I took the extra leap to become closer to my Heavenly Father. I know He loves me so much and blesses me so greatly.

Daniel N., Virginia, USA

PEACE *to Remove Bitterness*



“President Heber J. Grant described the Savior’s peace this way: ‘His peace will ease our suffering, bind up our broken hearts, blot out our hates, engender in our breasts a love of fellow men that will suffuse our souls with calm and happiness’ (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* [2002], 226). . . .

“... We all participated in the councils of heaven that provided for moral agency, knowing that there would be mortal pain. . . . We understood that this could leave us angry, bewildered, defenseless, and vulnerable. But we also knew that the Savior’s Atonement would overcome and compensate for all of the unfairness of mortal life and bring us peace.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Personal Peace: The Reward of Righteousness,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 33–34.

Watch or read
the full talk at
[lds.org/go/
93Reward](http://lds.org/go/93Reward).

One year at youth conference, my ward spent a day doing service. I volunteered to help at the town’s high school (even though I didn’t have the best memories there), because a janitor needed help moving lockers. As my friend and I helped move the lockers, I thought about the school where we were serving. I remembered a sporting event there where I felt the referees had not called a fair game. For my team, that game was still a sore spot, and I realized that I had let anger and bitterness stay in my heart.

I began to feel sorrow as I thought about the grudge I held, and I prayed for forgiveness. As I prayed and kept serving, I felt the anger and bitterness melting away and began to see the high school as it was: a great school facing some tough times. I began to feel gratitude for God guiding me to where I needed to serve and work through my problems. Through my service, the Lord was able to open my eyes to the grudge I’d harbored

and help me let it go. I learned that service will scrape away the blackness of anger and bitterness, help us gain a love for those we once disliked, and help us draw closer to our Heavenly Father.

Robert S., Idaho, USA

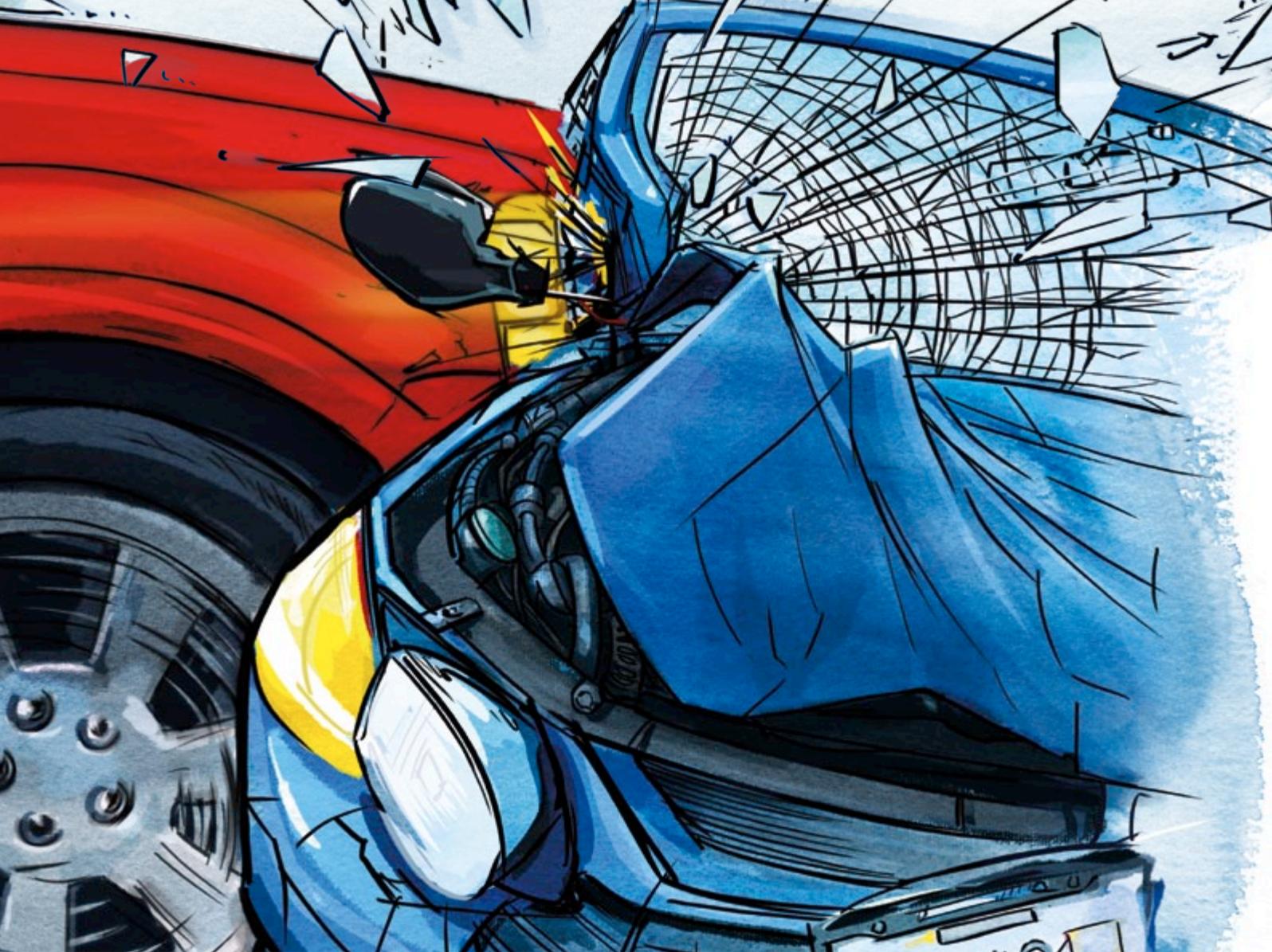


Peace Comes from the Lord

As we have trust in the Lord, turn to prayer for comfort and guidance, keep the commandments, and serve others, we will know for ourselves what the Savior meant when He said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). *NE*

MOMENTS

SAFETY





AFTER THE CRASH

A SEVERE CAR CRASH TAUGHT ME ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING READY TO SERVE.

By Blake Mullinex

I had just turned 18 when a member of my bishopric, Mark, hired me to help him transport some business supplies.

It required a lot of driving, so I was often left alone with my thoughts. During that time I wrestled with a couple of big questions, especially “Should I serve a mission?” and “What should I be when I get older?” These questions became a burden because I was unsure and needed to decide soon.

One day as Mark and I drove around a corner, we came upon an accident. A truck had just smashed into the side of a small car, and both vehicles were still sliding to a halt. The accident looked severe. When the vehicles stopped sliding, Mark pulled to the

side of the road, and we both rushed to the scene. Inside the crumpled car, we found a young boy and girl in the backseat, with their babysitter behind the wheel. All of them were unconscious.

Mark had been a volunteer firefighter for years, and I was a lifeguard trained in emergency rescue. As we assessed the wreck, we noticed that others were stopping to help the couple in the truck, so we focused on the three people in the car.

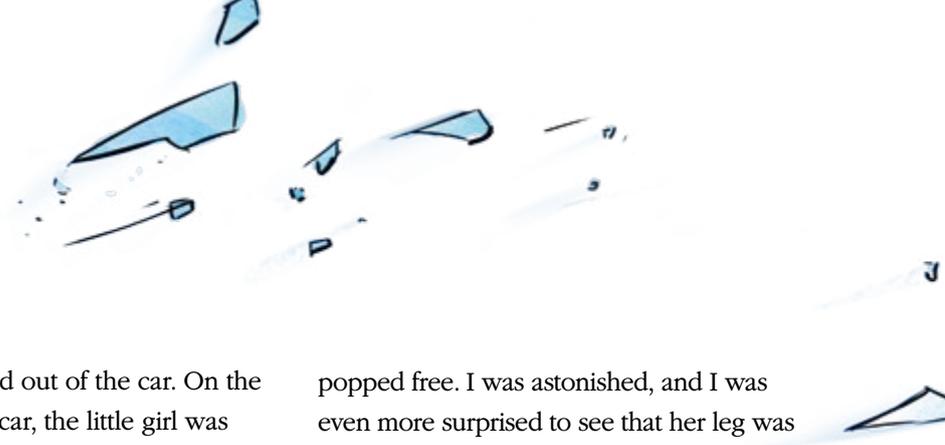
Mark went to the driver, and I opened the back door to check on the children. The boy, who was in a car seat, began to move. I unbuckled his seat belt and quickly checked for injuries. Miraculously, he was unharmed. I set him down next to the driver, whom



BE READY AND WORTHY

“Not every prayer is answered so immediately, and not every priesthood declaration can command the renewal or the sustaining of life. Sometimes the will of God is otherwise. But, young men, you will learn if you have not already, that in frightening, even perilous moments, your faith and your priesthood will demand the very best of you and the best you can call down from heaven. You Aaronic Priesthood boys will not use your priesthood in exactly the same way an ordained elder uses the Melchizedek, but all priesthood bearers must be instruments in the hand of God, and to be so, you must be ready and clean, worthy to act.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Be Ready and Worthy,” *New Era*, May 2006, 4.



Mark had just helped out of the car. On the crushed side of the car, the little girl was still unconscious. She eventually started to wake up, and relief swept through me. That relief was short-lived, however. I looked down and saw that her legs were caught in the twisted wreckage of the car. I stifled my tears and the lump in my throat as I thought, “Even if this girl survives, she will never be able to walk again.”

As the girl regained consciousness, she started to realize what was happening and began to go into shock. She screamed in fear and then struggled to free her legs. I knew that because her legs were probably severely injured, moving them was one of the worst things she could do. I had to calm her down, but I didn’t know how.

Suddenly the thought entered my mind, “Did you think to pray?” (see *Hymns*, no. 140). I took a deep breath and held the girl’s head close to mine. As I closed my eyes, I quietly prayed, “Father in Heaven, please help. Please, let Thy daughter live. And if it be Thy will, let her legs be freed.” As soon as the words left my lips, the girl stopped screaming. I could see calmness in her eyes.

The paramedics arrived and started preparing to cut the girl free. But instead of leaving, I felt that I should try to free her by positioning my hands in a certain way between the girl’s legs and the passenger seat, which was trapping them. I didn’t know how it would work, but I followed the prompting, and, under the supervision of the paramedics, I pushed and pulled as hard as I could. Nothing happened. I pushed and pulled again. I was about to give up when her right leg suddenly

popped free. I was astonished, and I was even more surprised to see that her leg was unharmed. I pushed and pulled again and her second leg came free, also in seemingly good shape. The paramedics and I fitted her onto a backboard and loaded her into an ambulance, which rushed her to the hospital.

Afterward I sat on the curb and reflected on what had happened. A paramedic patted me on the back and said, “That was quite the miracle.” As his words sank in, I thought of what Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once said: “Young men, you will learn if you have not already, that in frightening, even perilous moments, your faith and your priesthood will demand the very best of you and the best you can call down from heaven. . . . You must be ready and clean, worthy to act.”¹

I now have a burning testimony of the principle he taught. The Lord hears and answers our prayers. The accident that day reminded me that Heavenly Father loves every one of His children. He needs our help, especially in “perilous moments.” This experience strengthened my desire to be a missionary and faithful priesthood holder so that I will always be ready to help others get through the “perilous moments” of life. **NE**

Blake Mullinex lives in Oregon, USA.

Struck by Lightning; Renewed by the Priesthood

Watch a short video about another young man, one who had just turned 18 and received the Melchizedek Priesthood and was ready and prepared to serve, in “Sanctify Yourselves” at lds.org/go/93Sanctify.

NOTE

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Be Ready and Worthy,” *New Era*, May 2006, 4.



A PRAYER OF *My Heart*

Raising my standards for the music I listen to helped me love it even more.

By Ma. Consuelo Nuevo

I love music, and my day doesn't seem complete unless I'm listening to it or singing. Lately, my love for music has grown in a different way, and I've learned some things that have changed how I think about and use music.

It started when I read the scripture where the Lord says, "For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads" (D&C 25:12). When I read that verse, I remembered something my mom had taught me. Once, when I was singing the hymns in an inappropriate manner, she reminded me that hymns can be prayers and that I need to sing them properly. I think this verse refers not only to hymns alone but also to any songs we sing with a righteous desire. Imagine what blessings will come upon us, as the scripture says, when we sing songs unto the Lord.

I also learned the importance of listening to good music. After reading this scripture, I started scanning my list of songs and deleting those that were not in harmony with the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*.

I also had to make decisions about music beyond what I had in my own collection. One day when I was in school, a classmate started playing a bad song. I didn't feel good about the song, so I asked him to change it, which he did.

I know that each of us can have the same courage in those situations. And at times when people may not change the music for us, we still have another option: we can go somewhere else.

I know that through good music we can draw closer to our Heavenly Father. Music can edify us, inspire us, invite the Holy Ghost to be with us, move us to righteous actions, and help us withstand the temptations of the adversary (see *For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 22–23).

Remember that when we are singing the song of the righteous, we are actually praying to our Father in Heaven. **NE**

Ma. Consuelo Nuevo lives in Metro Manila, Philippines.

CHOOSE GOOD MUSIC

"Music has a profound effect on your mind, spirit, and behavior.

"Choose carefully the music you listen to. Pay attention to how you feel when you are listening. Some music can carry evil and destructive messages. Do not listen to music that encourages immorality or glorifies violence through its lyrics, beat, or intensity. Do not listen to music that uses vulgar or offensive language or promotes evil practices. Such music can dull your spiritual sensitivity."

For the Strength of Youth (2011), 22.



By Rosemary M. Wixom
Primary General President

The **INFLUENCE** of **MUSIC**

An experiment with mice shows us how much the music we listen to can affect us.

When I ask someone, “What do you remember most about Primary?” the answer is often, “The music.” The words to Primary songs never leave us—they are embedded in our hearts. Take, for example, the following Primary songs. Can you complete each phrase?

“I’m trying to be . . .”

“Heavenly Father, are . . . ?”

“Book of Mormon . . .”

As you completed each sentence, did you find yourself singing the melody?

If so, it’s probably because music enhances our senses, touches our emotions, and creates memories. So it’s no wonder that we celebrate temple dedications with a cultural event where youth participate in uplifting music and dancing. These events let us “make a joyful noise unto God” and “sing forth the honour of his name” (Psalm 66:1–2).

Music Always Affects Us

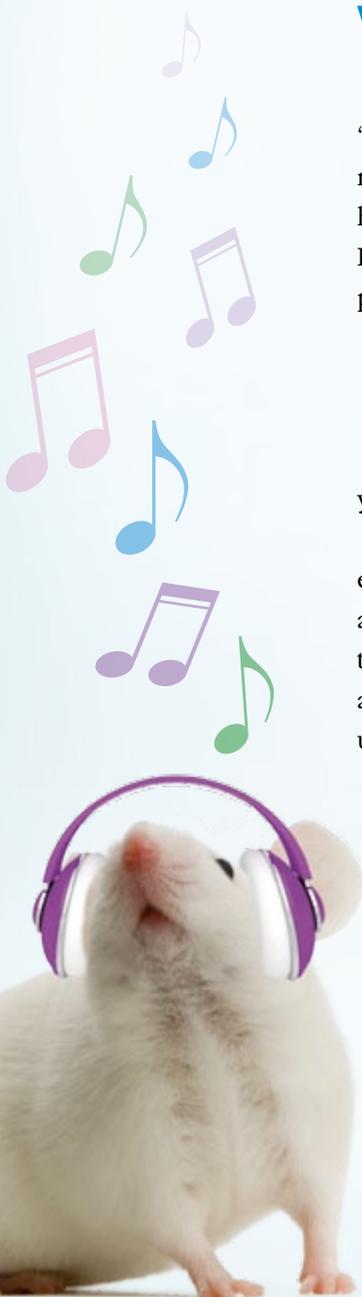
For the Strength of Youth teaches that “music has a profound effect on your mind, spirit, and behavior.”¹ Music can enrich your life in so many ways, but it can also be dangerous. President Thomas S. Monson said: “Music can help you draw closer to your Heavenly Father. It can be used to educate, edify,

inspire, and unite. However, music can, by its tempo, beat, intensity, and lyrics, dull your spiritual sensitivity. You cannot afford to fill your minds with unworthy music.”² And it may not matter if you listen carefully to the words or not; words that are put to music are often easily learned and easily remembered.³ No wonder we are cautioned to “choose carefully the music [we] listen to.”⁴

Mice, Music, and Learning

Your choice of music can also affect your ability to accomplish tasks or to learn. Two researchers explored this relationship by studying the effects of music and rhythm on the nervous system of mice. For eight weeks, one group of mice constantly listened to Strauss waltzes (highly organized and orderly music), while a second heard disharmonious sounds in the form of continuous drumbeats. A third group was raised in silence.

After eight weeks, the mice were placed in a maze to find food. The mice in the second group wandered off with no sense of direction—“a clear indication they were having trouble learning”—and took much longer to find the food than they had at the beginning of the study. The mice exposed “to discordant sounds not only developed difficulties in learning and memory, . . . but they also incurred structural changes in their brain cells.” The researchers’ diagnosis is



very interesting: “We believe that the mice were trying to compensate for this constant bombardment of disharmonic noise. . . . They were struggling against the chaos.”⁵

What could be the “chaos” in some of today’s music—things that might keep you from learning effectively? It may relate to the rhythm and beat of the music (as with the mice) or with the words used or messages presented. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said: “Society is undergoing a subtle, but powerful, change. It is becoming more and more permissive in what it will accept in its entertainment. As a result, much of the music being performed by popular entertainers today seems to



be more intended to agitate than to pacify, more to excite than to calm.”⁶

Matters of Time and the Spirit

It is not only the rhythm and the lyrics of jarring music that are detrimental. By listening to such music, we also prevent quiet moments that allow us to think clearly and listen to the Spirit. In *The Screwtape Letters*, a popular Christian novel, a character named Screwtape represents Satan and tries to lead good souls to his cause. Screwtape says, “It is funny how mortals always picture us as putting things into their minds: in reality our best work is done by keeping things out.”⁷ In essence, Satan knows that he does not always have to fill our minds with bad thoughts if he can just keep us from focusing on things of the Spirit. “If you listen to music constantly, you may not have the quiet time you need for thinking, feeling, and receiving spiritual guidance.”⁸

We need the Holy Ghost with us at all times. For that reason, we should choose carefully the music we listen to and the dances we attend. Let the Spirit be your guide, and when you have doubts about the music you are listening to or the circumstances you are in, have the courage to act so the Spirit can remain with you. **NE**

NOTES

1. *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 22.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Preparation Brings Blessings,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 66.
3. See Jack R. Christianson, quoted in “Author’s criterion for picking music: does it encourage a proper life style?” *Church News*, May 6, 1989, 5.
4. *For the Strength of Youth*, 22.
5. Richard Lipkin, “Jarring Music Takes Toll on Mice,” *Insight*, vol. 4, no. 14, April 4, 1988, 58.
6. Boyd K. Packer, “Worthy Music, Worthy Thoughts,” *New Era*, Apr. 2008, 9.
7. C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (1982), 20.
8. *For the Strength of Youth*, 23.



Fulfilling Your

DUTY TO GOD

through

SCOUTING

By Mark R. Francis

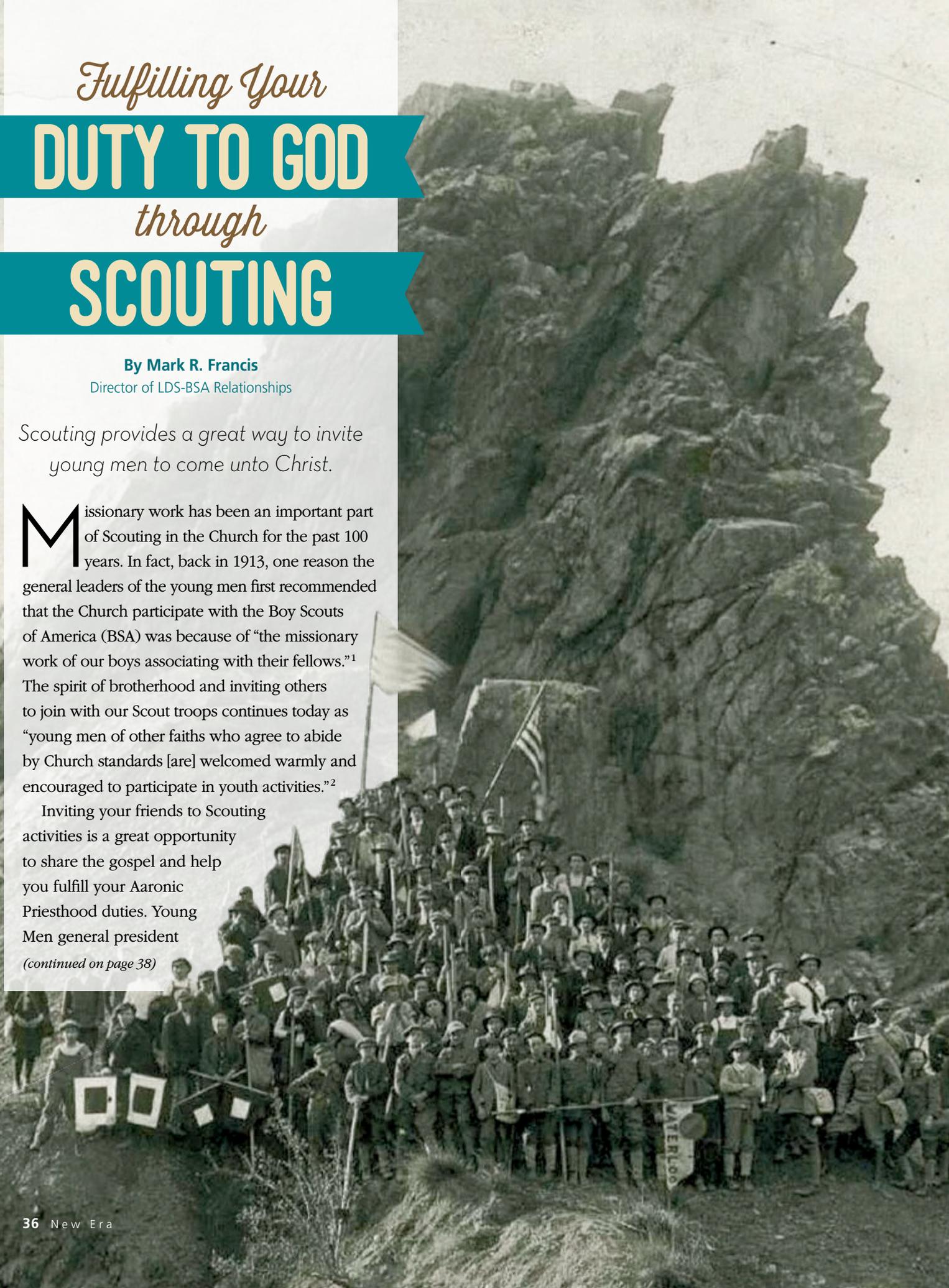
Director of LDS-BSA Relationships

Scouting provides a great way to invite young men to come unto Christ.

Missionary work has been an important part of Scouting in the Church for the past 100 years. In fact, back in 1913, one reason the general leaders of the young men first recommended that the Church participate with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) was because of “the missionary work of our boys associating with their fellows.”¹ The spirit of brotherhood and inviting others to join with our Scout troops continues today as “young men of other faiths who agree to abide by Church standards [are] welcomed warmly and encouraged to participate in youth activities.”²

Inviting your friends to Scouting activities is a great opportunity to share the gospel and help you fulfill your Aaronic Priesthood duties. Young Men general president

(continued on page 38)





100 YEARS OF SCOUTING IN THE CHURCH

Scouting activities were first established as part of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association in 1911 with the formation of the MIA Scouts (see an early troop at lower left). Two years later, in 1913, the Church officially joined the MIA Scouts with the Boy Scouts of America. May 21, 2013, marked the 100-year anniversary of the Church's affiliation with the BSA. On October 29, 2013, a special broadcast will commemorate 100 years of Scouting in the Church; for details, visit lds.org/go/93100.

SNOWSHOES AND SCOUTING

Wyoming can be a cold and snowy place in the wintertime. That's why one troop decided to make snowshoes. During the fall they were looking ahead to the Klondike derby coming up in January. They wanted an activity that could prepare them for winter camping.

Under the direction of their Scoutmaster and deacons quorum adviser, the young men went online to find a pattern and instructions for making snowshoes out of rawhide and wood. "We realized this project was going to take a long time," says Sam F., deacons quorum president, "but we were all excited, and we had a plan."

As the young men worked on their snowshoe frames, they discussed how they could help others in the quorum who were less active, and they made a plan to visit them. "We visited every boy on our list and invited them to come to Scouts," Sam says. "We told them we were making snowshoes for the winter campout coming up." Having a clear goal was helpful in drawing other boys to the troop.

As the snowshoes progressed, so did the quorum. Six young men started the snowshoe project, but soon others joined in, including one of another faith.

John B.'s friend, Timothy N., was active in his church, but it didn't have a Scout troop, so he started coming with his friend. His brother, Thomas, even joined



the ward's 11-year-old Scout patrol and earned his religious award. He was then presented with the award at his own church service.

While the young men and leaders worked, they made religious connections between wrapping the rawhide tightly and bringing their quorum together.

Jacob D. started coming regularly to the Scout meetings. His mother, Heather P., later thanked the troop for welcoming her son and their family. Other young men who had never attended church came to the Scout meetings to make snowshoes.

By January, the snowshoes were finished and each young man had a pair to use during the Klondike derby. Aiden H. said what they all felt about making snowshoes: "It was fun because we got to use them!"

"We learned a lot about enduring to the end on a project and about strengthening our quorum through Scouting," Sam says. "My snowshoes will last a long time, and whenever I see them I'll remember this experience, as well as the great friends we made in our troop and quorum."



David L. Beck calls this work “real growth through Scouting.” When young men of other faiths join Church-sponsored Scout troops, two things happen: (1) Latter-day Saint Scouts have an opportunity to share the gospel through their testimonies and actions and prepare for their full-time missions by inviting others “to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59), which is one of your Aaronic Priesthood duties; and (2) Scouts of other faiths then have an opportunity to participate in Scouting activities under the direction of priesthood leadership.

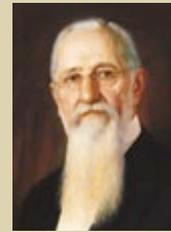
Here are some of the ways you can encourage others to join with you in Scouting:

- Talk about your Scouting activities with friends, classmates, and neighbors.
- When you’re studying a particular merit badge, share your excitement with your friends and ask if they’re interested in learning about that topic with you.
- Help plan quality troop and patrol activities so that other youth will want to attend. Have a calendar of upcoming activities to share.
- Invite other young men to attend unit meetings, activities, and courts of honor with you.
- Look for ways to expand your Scouting activities to include others.
- Use Scouting as a tool to involve less-active young men who may not be interested in attending Sunday meetings.

As you invite your friends to participate with you in Scouting, they can begin to understand what it means to do their duty to God (see the Scout Oath), and all of you will be blessed in the effort. **NE**



Many prophets participated in Scouting.



Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) was the prophet when Scouting was organized as a part of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association.



Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) attended the 1937 World Scout Jamboree in Holland.

George Albert Smith (1870–1951) was the first Church member to serve on the BSA National Executive Board.



David O. McKay (1873–1970) was the prophet when Cub Scouting and 11-year-old Scouts were made part of the Primary association.



Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) was commissioned as an assistant Scoutmaster of his Whitney, Idaho, ward Scout troop at age 18.



Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) was the second boy in Idaho to receive his Eagle Scout award.

Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) was a Boy Scout in his youth.



Thomas S. Monson has served on the BSA National Executive Board longer than any other member.

NOTES

1. Adapted from a letter to the General Superintendent and General Board of YMMIA, Feb. 19, 1913; see also *Century of Honor: 100 Years of Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [2013], 30.
2. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 8.17.3.

I [EXPERIENCE]
THE JOY
OF COMING CLOSER TO

THE SAVIOR

AND OF HIS COMING
CLOSER TO ME
MOST OFTEN THROUGH

*simple acts of
obedience to the
commandments.*

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in
the First Presidency, "Come unto Me,"
April 2013 general conference

COME, FOLLOW ME



Focus on the Blessings

When you think about the word "commandments" for your Sunday learning this month (see lds.org/youth/learn), your first thought may be something like, "Commandments give me lists of things I shouldn't do," because that's how a lot of the world thinks.

But that thinking overlooks the fact that commandments also provide a lot of things we *should* do, such as "be of good cheer" (D&C 68:6), "seek learning" (D&C 109:7), and "seek . . . the best gifts" (D&C 46:8), and that *commandments are designed to help us*. By keeping the commandments, we become better people and find peace and happiness beyond anything the world offers.

That's why it's important to remember that Heavenly Father gives us commandments so He can bless us in incredible ways through our obedience (see page 22). For example, here are some promised blessings of obedience talked about in the April 2013 general conference:

- An unfailing guide, a knowledge of truth, and the answers to our greatest questions (see President Thomas S. Monson, "Obedience Brings Blessings")
- Joy of you coming closer to the Savior—and Him to you (see President Henry B. Eyring, "Come unto Me")
- Happiness and well-being (see Elder L. Tom Perry, "Obedience to Law Is Liberty")
- Power from God to do more than we can do by ourselves; expanded insights, talents, and abilities (see Elder Richard G. Scott, "For Peace at Home")
- Protection and preparation to do God's work (see Elder Robert D. Hales, "Stand Strong in Holy Places")
- Increased happiness and progression in eternity (see Elder David A. Bednar, "We Believe in Being Chaste")

Find many more promised blessings in these and other talks at conference.lds.org.



Share These Cards Online

As you talk about the commandments this month, consider using these cards in Church lessons, with family, or on social media. Or hang them in your bedroom or locker to remind you about your study of the commandments. Download or share them at lds.org/go/930bey.

Why is the

LAW OF CHASTITY

so important?

I PROMISE THAT OBEDIENCE
TO THE LAW OF CHASTITY WILL

INCREASE OUR
HAPPINESS IN
MORTALITY



MAKE POSSIBLE
OUR PROGRESS
IN ETERNITY.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,
"We Believe in Being Chaste," April 2013 general conference

Where I live, you're considered boyfriend/girlfriend after one date.

How can a person casually date different people without getting a reputation as a promiscuous or dishonest person?

This is a significant challenge for many Latter-day Saint youth all around the world. They are counseled to “avoid going on frequent dates with the same person” so that they do not develop serious relationships at a young age (*For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 4). But in the culture of much of the world, the invitation for a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship often comes even before a first date; and likewise, just one date can imply an exclusive relationship with an expectation of commitment. In such a culture, going on dates with different people appears to violate the “relationship” and can give you a reputation as a promiscuous or dishonest person. So what should you do?

First of all, make sure everyone knows your belief in and commitment to the Lord's standard of chastity and sexual purity so that there is never any doubt about your character and behavior. Next, you can actively work to change the dating culture around you for the better by speaking up for the Church's guidelines. If people question you about your dating standards, ask them why, if they aren't looking to get married anytime soon, they feel the need to have such emotionally and physically intimate and exclusive relationships at such a young age.

Invite them to join you on a group date so that they can see the fun they can have while avoiding the needless moral dangers and emotional drama of teen romance. And let them know about the guidance and counsel we have been given by living prophets and apostles. **NE**





Why do young men start **home teaching** when they're **14** but young women start **visiting teaching** when they're **18**?

When should I start paying **fast offerings** and making other **donations**?

In a revelation given at the time the Church was organized in 1830, the Lord declared, “The teacher’s duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them” (D&C 20:53). Besides teachers in the Aaronic Priesthood, this duty is shared by priests and by those who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood (see D&C 20:45–52). Home teaching is one way they fulfill this duty by accepting specific assignments from priesthood leaders. Visiting teaching, although similar, has a slightly different purpose, providing an opportunity for Relief Society sisters to strengthen and teach one another through assignments from the Relief Society presidency (as approved by the bishop or branch president). Young women (especially class presidencies) should, of course, seek to strengthen and support one another in a variety of ways, but they are not assigned to make monthly visits to specific people. **NE**

If you have a source of income and a willing heart, you can start giving fast offerings at any age. Of course, when you earn money, the Lord has commanded that you pay tithing on your earnings. In addition, “a proper fast day observance includes . . . giving a generous fast offering to help care for those in need” (*For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 39). Just because your parents pay for your family’s food doesn’t mean you can’t make a contribution of your own if you feel prompted when your family fasts each month. Remember, although you are young, regardless of the amount of the contribution, what matters most is the fact that you are obeying the Lord’s commandments and selflessly helping to bless others. You as well as others will be blessed through your sacrifice. And if you feel inspired and are able to do so, you may also consider consulting with your parents and making donations to other Church funds listed on the Tithing and Other Offerings slip. **NE**

What are the **physical fitness requirements** to serve a **full-time mission**?

Serious physical challenges or medical limitations can prevent some people from performing missionary duties effectively and can negatively affect their companions’ service as well. Such people do not normally serve full-time missions. For example, those who need a wheelchair or crutches or cannot perform daily tasks without the aid of others are not recommended for full-time missionary service (though they may be able to serve a Church-service mission; see lds.org/csm). And being significantly overweight can cause a person to have serious difficulty with the daily rigors of a mission, so priesthood leaders may ask some people to lose weight before they recommend them for service. Regarding general fitness, one guideline might be that you should be able to walk about six miles (9 km) a day without difficulty.

If you have any questions about any of these matters, your bishop or branch president can give you answers and guidance. **NE**

THE CHALLENGE

By Rachael Lauritzen

My heart ached because I wasn't getting an answer, but I kept trying.

“Will you accept this challenge?” the missionaries asked.

The missionaries were focusing on me. After dinner with our family, they left us with a spiritual message and the challenge to read the Book of Mormon and pray to know if it was true. I accepted the challenge without thinking much of it.

I'm an ordinary girl, with an ordinary life, and I pray every night. But I had never actually prayed to find out for myself if the Church is true. I believed it with all my heart, but I had never known that what I believed was true. I thought about this for a while and then committed myself to take the missionaries' challenge seriously.

On Monday night I read and I prayed, and I didn't get any kind of confirmation. I began to think, “Be patient, Rachael, the Lord will reveal His answers when it is pleasing to Him.”

This went on for a week. Every night I would end my day by my bedside, where I read and prayed for an answer. By Saturday, I was worn out and could hardly keep my eyes open to read. I was trying so hard to live the gospel and to be an example, yet I was getting no answer.

These feelings began to weigh me down, so I did what I had always been taught. I knelt down and prayed. Nothing happened. So I continued praying, and I poured out my soul to my Heavenly Father. My heart began to ache because I wanted to know if all my efforts were worth it.

With tears streaming down my worried face, I opened up my Book of Mormon to the third chapter of Mosiah and began to read. As I read, the verses quickly caught my weary eyes. I put my name into the scriptures and read aloud, “My [Rachael], I would call your attention, for I have somewhat more to speak unto you. . . . And he said unto me: Awake, and hear the words which I shall tell thee.” By now my eyes were as big as apples. I was being told to awake and listen to the scriptures. I kept reading as my heart was filled with the Spirit. “For behold, I am come to declare unto you the glad tidings of great joy.

“For the Lord hath heard thy prayers, and hath judged of thy righteousness, and hath sent me to declare unto thee that thou mayest rejoice” (see Mosiah 3:1–4). The Spirit filled my entire room. *I knew*. I knew without a doubt that this Church was true, for the Lord had heard my prayers.

Some may call it coincidence, and others may call it luck, but I know my Heavenly Father was listening to His daughter here on earth. I know He knows my heart and what I feel. He wants all of us to return to Him. I know this Church is true. The missionaries' challenge blessed my life. **NE**

Rachael Lauritzen lives in Utah, USA.



"No, Brother Jacobsen, lowering the missionary age does not mean they are going to lower the dating age."



JON CLARK

"Yeah . . . this is gonna take some getting used to."



RICK + RYAN GOLDSBERRY

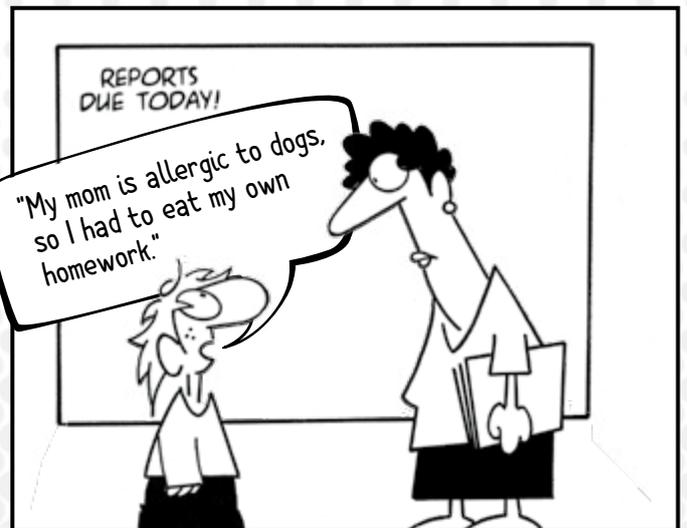
"On the bright side, Elder, you're halfway to a broken heart and a contrite spirit."



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

REPORTS DUE TODAY!

"My mom is allergic to dogs, so I had to eat my own homework."



RANDY GLASBERGEN

Conference Connection

As we draw closer to and follow Christ, we can find peace and hope despite the challenges in this world. Here's what several Church leaders had to say about this during the April 2013 general conference.



"In moments of fear or doubt or troubling times, hold the ground you have already won, even if that ground is limited" (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Lord, I Believe," *Ensign*, May 2013, 93–94).



"We earnestly hope and pray for universal peace, but it is as individuals and families that we achieve the kind of peace that is the promised reward of righteousness. This peace is a promised gift of the Savior's mission and atoning sacrifice" (Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Personal Peace: The Reward of Righteousness," *Ensign*, May 2013, 33).



"If we exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the enabling power of His Atonement *strengthens* us in our moment of need" (Elder Craig A. Cardon of the Seventy, "The Savior Wants to Forgive," *Ensign*, May 2013, 15).

During those times when challenges seem to be all around us, we can still find "hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection" (Moroni 7:41). Read more at conference.lds.org.

Wrapped in the Warmth of Testimony

Kayleena N., 17, of Washington, USA, loves testimonies. She loves bearing her testimony, she loves listening as others share them, and now the testimonies from nearly 200 of her friends and relatives help keep her warm at night. "I feel really blessed that I know so many people who know the gospel is true," Kayleena says.

For years, Kayleena has wanted to create a large patchwork quilt. However, she didn't want merely a colorful blanket. She wanted an heirloom she could show to her children and grandchildren. And she wanted the whole thing tied together with testimonies.

After planning her design, Kayleena contacted friends and family to ask if they'd be willing to write their personal testimony on one of the 192 pastel squares of fabric she planned to use in the quilt. Her own testimony is on a square as well.

The final quilt required the help of many friends and over 200 hours of work. Yet she doesn't regret a single minute. "It's my favorite thing ever," Kayleena says. "Anytime I'm not feeling happy, I can read the testimonies and it lifts me up. It's more than a warm blanket. It's a comfort to my soul."



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF KAYLEENA N.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BRIGHAM S. AND ANNA T.

After the Flood

Sometimes a tasty sandwich can make even the darkest day brighter.

When floodwaters slammed into Calgary, Alberta, Canada, in June, spring rains and mountain runoff forced over 100,000 people out of their homes.

The flood left behind a massive mess—along with a massive need for volunteers. Church members of all ages from wards and stakes in the Calgary area responded immediately. “There was rubble everywhere,” says Brigham S., a deacon who volunteered.

Some youth knocked down drywall, carried away ruined furniture, or raked up mud and debris. Other youth, such as Brigham’s group, made and delivered sack lunches to workers, volunteers, and families returning to their homes.

Brigham remembers one particular family pumping muddy water out of their house. He and



the youth volunteering with him asked this family if they wanted some lunches. “They were so happy!” Brigham says. “They gave us hugs.”

Volunteer efforts went on for many weeks. “Faith and prayers can’t do everything,” Brigham explains. “Sometimes you need to get up and go help somebody.”

My Favorite Scripture

John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

This is my favorite scripture because when I first read it, I wasn’t trying to find an answer of some sort. I just found it, and it gave me a quiet revelation that I belong to the true Church.

Anna T., 15, Arizona, USA



Hymn Vocabulary

Do you know the meaning of all the words in the last hymn you sang? Choose the correct definition for each of the following words that can be found in one or more of our hymns.

- Clad (*Hymns*, no. 4)
 - Barring entry
 - Clothed or adorned
 - A carpentry tool
 - Showing remorse or sadness
- Fain (*Hymns*, no. 233)
 - Unyielding
 - To pretend
 - A sudden thunderstorm
 - Gladly
- Rapture (*Hymns*, no. 26, 286, 289, 337, 339)
 - A state of overwhelming emotion
 - To puncture or tear
 - Speaking with rhythm
 - The stern of a seafaring vessel
- Gallantly (*Hymns*, no. 340)
 - Sharply
 - Acting in haste
 - Bravely
 - Demonstrating great optimism
- Azure (*Hymns*, no. 294)
 - A rare stone, turquoise in color
 - Praiseworthy
 - Folded or pleaded
 - The blue color of the unclouded sky

Answers: 1:B; 2:D; 3:A; 4:C; 5:D



MY FRIEND STOOD UP WITH ME

I have a lot of good friends. Some go to church, and some don't. One day a group of us, including one other LDS young woman, was eating lunch when a few of my friends began to use the Lord's name in vain. No one else seemed bothered by it, and soon other students at the table started saying the Lord's name in vain too. At first I thought, "Just let it slide; they don't know any better." But then it started to really bother me. They kept saying it, and I felt a pit in my stomach. So I stood up. I said firmly, "It really bothers me when you talk like that. Please stop."

They laughed and kept going.

I stood up again, but this time my LDS friend stood up with me. We grabbed our lunches and moved somewhere else. It felt good to leave the table when they were doing that. As I walked away, I felt the Spirit.

I'm glad my friend left with me. It reminded me of the song "We'll Bring the World His Truth" (*Children's Songbook*, 172–73) and how "we must do as the Lord commands." While I may not have had an "army of Helaman," my friend showed me that I am not the only person trying "to bring the world [H]is truth."

Brooke P., Oregon, USA

AN UNEXPECTED FRIEND

During my sophomore year of high school, I became friends with Courtney. Initially I'd known her only by her reputation as "the cool party girl," but then she was in my math class and we had many mutual friends. I was surprised when she took an instant liking to me and was so willing to become my friend. Because of my standards, I didn't attend the high school parties she did,

A TEST TO TAKE TESTS

and I didn't fit in with her lifestyle at the time.

But things changed after a few simple conversations. Before I knew it, we were quickly becoming best friends. Courtney began going to parties less and instead began coming over to my house. She would occasionally attend church with my family and me. I was thrilled! I could see that Courtney was thirsty for knowledge about the Church.

I wondered what had prompted her to make these changes in her lifestyle, so I asked her. I will never forget when she told me that she was impressed by my lifestyle and how happy I was all the time. She wanted to be my friend, but she didn't think I would want to be hers. I found this funny because I used to feel the same way about her.

I believe that as youth in the Church, we should all "stand as witnesses of God at all times" (Mosiah 18:9), because people are watching us. I'm grateful for my opportunity to be an example to Courtney, who was eventually baptized five years after our math class together. I've never felt any feeling like I did when I watched Courtney be baptized, and I will never forget the smile on her face as she came out of the waters of baptism.

Brooke W., Idaho, USA

When a new school administrator announced that students would have to pay a fee to take any exam, I felt dismayed. With little money, rising costs of living, and a failing economy, I knew I would have a hard time finding the money necessary to take my upcoming tests.

Our Church leaders emphasize the importance of education, and I wanted to continue studying despite the new hardship facing me. I decided to ask some relatives who lived nearby if they could help me pay my exam fees. Sadly, they told me they would help me only if I denounced my faith. As the only Church member in my family, I was crushed to hear their response.

I then called my mom and told her about the new fees. I explained that despite my efforts, I did not have the money I needed. My heart nearly broke when my mom told me that her employer had not paid her salary in six months and that she was struggling to provide for our family. Because of this, she did not have any money left over.

I did my best to continue to have faith. I found comfort in the hymns, especially "Come, Come, Ye Saints" (*Hymns*, no. 30) and "Let Us

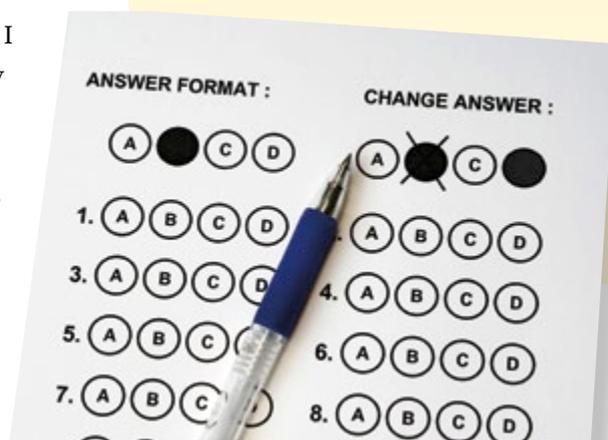
All Press On" (*Hymns*, no. 243). My future, however, did not seem promising. Without the necessary money, I missed my first two exams. The night before my third examination, I poured out my soul to Heavenly Father. I expressed to Him my desire to get an education and my determination to eventually graduate, no matter how many tests I missed. I let Him know that I believed He could prepare a way and that because I did not know what more I could do, I was leaving my trial in His hands. I instantly felt like a huge burden was lifted off of my shoulders, and a spirit of peace and happiness fell over me.

The next day I awoke and continued my habit of preparing for the examination. I'd decided to never stop studying so that if something happened and I was able to take an exam, I would be ready. After some time, a knock on the door interrupted my studying. I was surprised to see my mother. She told me that she'd just received a paycheck for the six months of wages she had not yet been paid for! After shouting for joy, we rushed to pay the fee.

I was able to take all of my remaining exams. I know that Heavenly Father provided a miracle that day. He wants us all to succeed.

Sometimes this requires us to face adversity so that we become humble. I know that our trials can strengthen our testimonies and that Heavenly Father really does watch over us.

Michael U., Nigeria





By Elder
Richard G. Scott

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

HOW TO BUILD FAITH AND FIND JOY

When faith is properly understood and used, it has dramatically far-reaching effects. Such faith can **transform an individual's life** from common everyday activities to a symphony of joy and happiness.

The exercise of faith is vital to Father in Heaven's plan of happiness. But true faith, faith unto salvation, is **centered on the Lord Jesus Christ**, faith in His doctrines and teachings, faith in the prophetic guidance of the Lord's anointed, faith in the capacity to discover hidden characteristics and traits that can transform life. Truly, faith in the Savior is a principle of action and power.

Faith and character are intimately related. Faith in the power of **obedience to the commandments of God** will forge strength of character available to you in times of urgent need. Such character is not developed

in moments of great challenge or temptation. That is when it is intended to be used.

Your exercise of faith in true principles **builds character**; fortified character expands your capacity to exercise more faith. As a result, your **capacity and confidence** to conquer the trials of life is enhanced. The more your character is fortified, the more enabled you are to benefit from exercising the power of faith. You will discover how faith and character interact to strengthen one another. Character is woven patiently from threads of applied principles, doctrine, and obedience.

We exercise faith by doing. We *become* what we want to *be* by consistently *being* what we want to *become* each day.

Neither Satan nor any other power can destroy or undermine your growing character. Only you could do that through disobedience. Strong moral character results from **consistent correct choices** in the trials and testing of life. Such choices are made with trust in things that are believed and when acted upon are confirmed.

What are some of the **empowering principles** upon which faith is based?

- Trust in God and in His willingness to provide help when needed, no matter how challenging the circumstance.
- Obedience to His commandments and a life that demonstrates that

He can trust you.

- Sensitivity to the quiet promptings of the Holy Spirit.
- Courageous implementation of that prompting.
- Patience and understanding when God lets you struggle to grow and when answers come a piece at a time over an extended period.

Your consistent exercise of faith builds strong character. A secure foundation for your growing character is laid by making Jesus Christ and His teachings the center of your life. A consistent, righteous life produces an inner power and strength that can be permanently resistant to the eroding influence of sin and transgression.

If you have determined to live righteously, **don't become discouraged**. Life may seem difficult now, but **hold on tightly to that iron rod of truth**. You are making better progress than you realize. Your struggles are defining character, discipline, and confidence in the promises of your Father in Heaven and the Savior as you consistently obey Their commandments. May the Holy Ghost prompt you to always make decisions that fortify your character and yield much joy and happiness. **NE**

Adapted from an October 2010 general conference address.



Share Your Experiences

Share your experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other youth by going to lds.org/go/93Faith.

— WE NEED —

NOT FEAR THE FUTURE,

NOR FALTER IN HOPE
AND GOOD CHEER, BECAUSE

GOD IS WITH US. . . .

WHEN OUR ONLY DESIRE

∞ IS TO PLEASE HIM, ∞

WE WILL BE BLESSED WITH A

— DEEP —

INNER PEACE.

Elder Bruce D. Porter of the Seventy,
"Beautiful Mornings," April 2013 general conference

WHAT'S ONLINE



Peace through the Savior

One young woman felt completely alone. And after many prayers, she finally received an answer, finding strength in the Lord. See what helped her receive her answer and how it has changed her at lds.org/go/93Prayer.

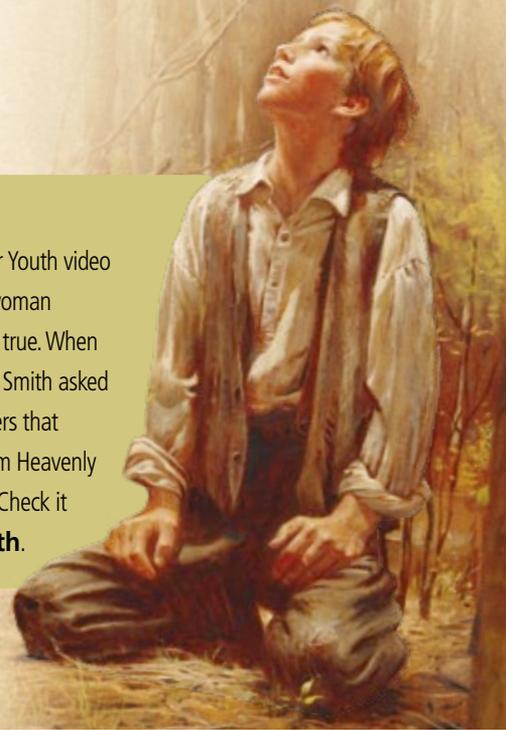


Tips for a New School Year

Heading back to school? Make the most of the year and consider setting some goals for improving your studies. Read "How to Make School a Conscious Effort" at lds.org/go/93School for some ideas on how to stay focused in class.

A Search for Truth

A new Mormon Messages for Youth video shares the story of a young woman struggling to find out what is true. When she learns about how Joseph Smith asked to learn the truth, she discovers that peace and answers come from Heavenly Father, the origin of all truth. Check it out at lds.org/go/93Truth.



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS