

SEPTEMBER 2017

THE

New Era

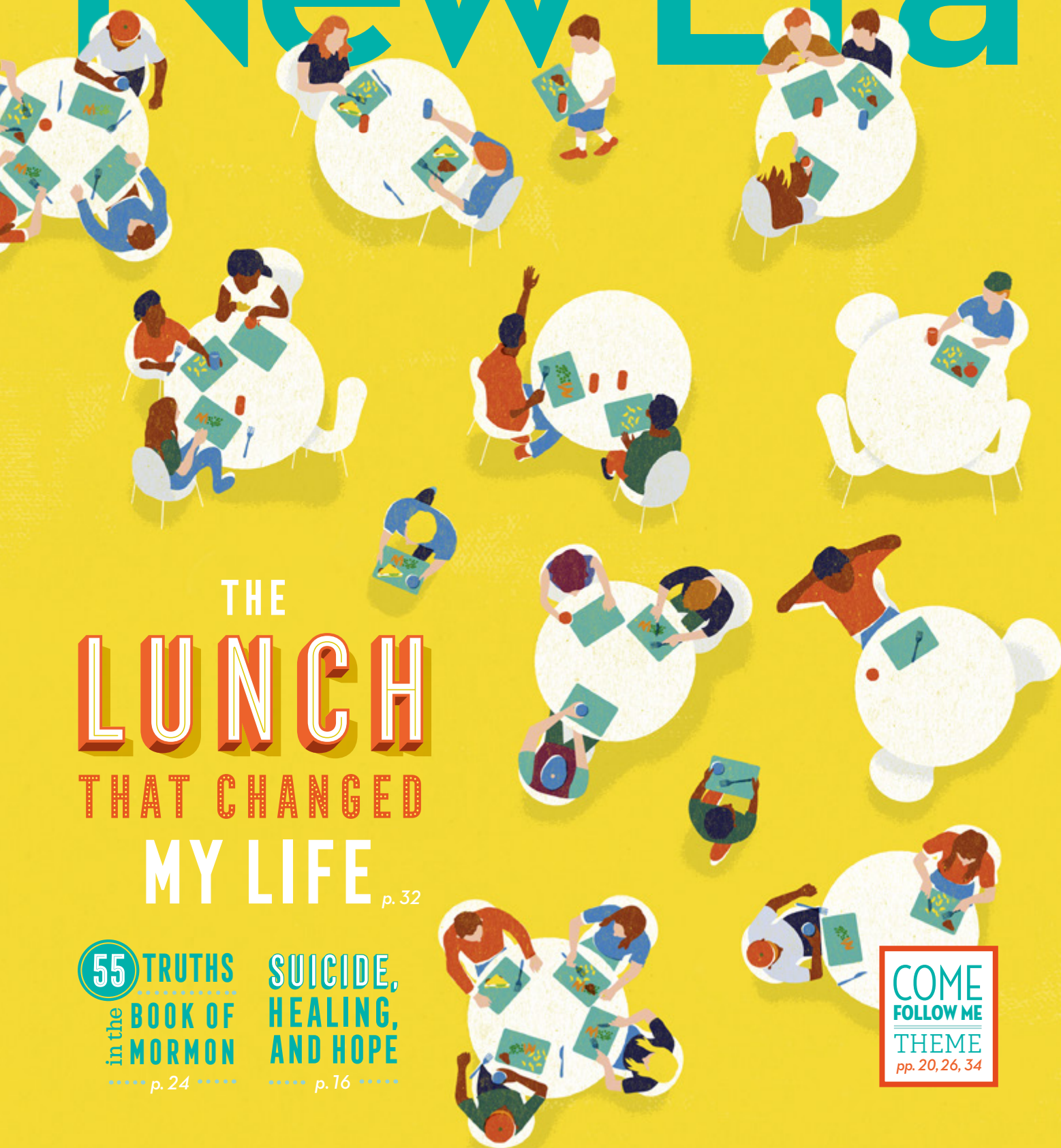
THE LUNCH THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

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SUICIDE,
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COME
FOLLOW ME
THEME
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FAMILY HISTORY *and* TEMPLE WORK *and* YOU!



In last April's general conference, President Henry B. Eyring said that youth are catching the vision of family history and temple work.
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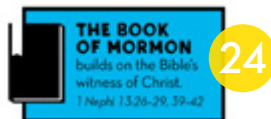
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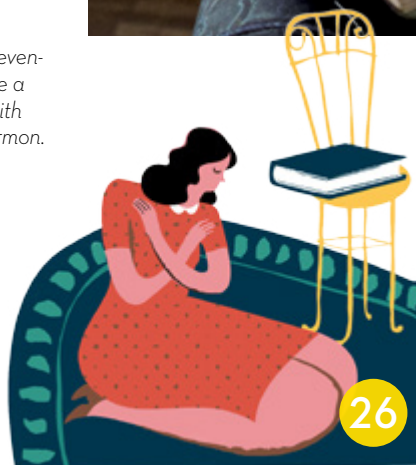
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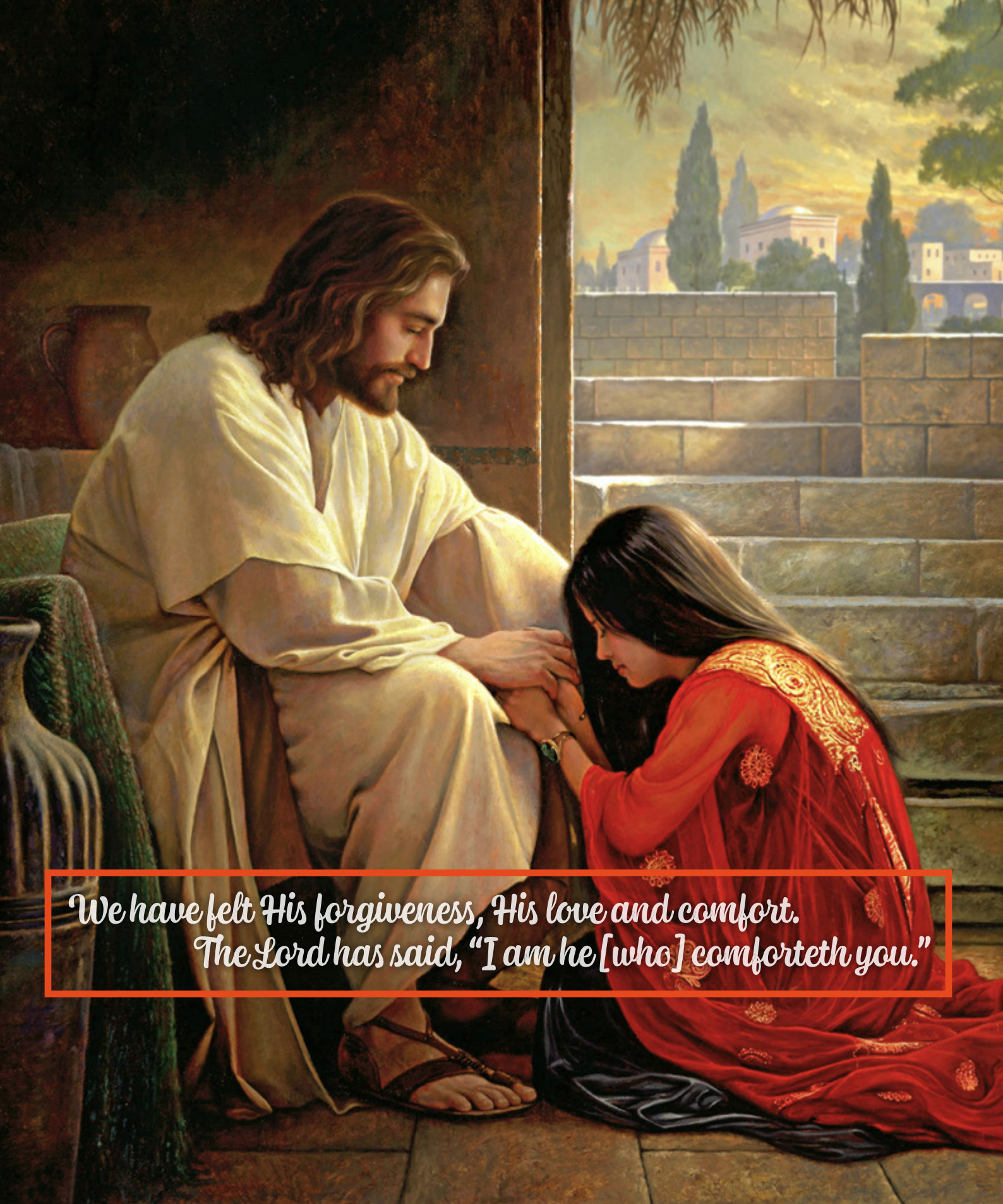
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*We have felt His forgiveness, His love and comfort.
The Lord has said, "I am he [who] comforteth you."*



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

REPENTANCE: *A Loving Invitation*

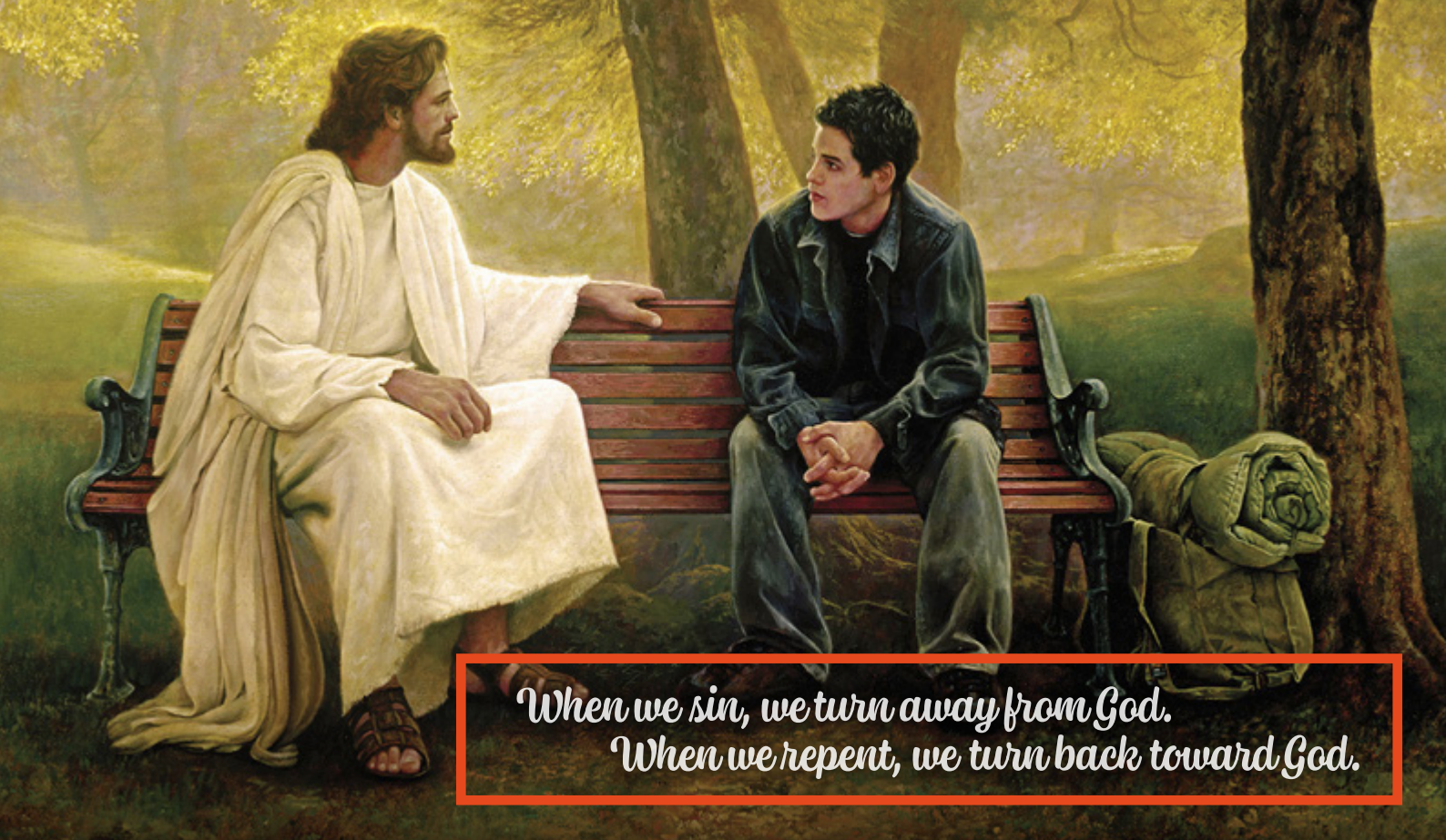
Our Savior can deliver us from our sins. His divine gift removes guilt from our heart and brings peace to our conscience.

I will forever remember President Thomas S. Monson's kindness as he extended my call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. At the conclusion of our interview, he opened his arms to embrace me. President Monson is a tall man. As he wrapped his long arms around me and pulled me close, I felt like a little boy being held in the protective arms of a loving father.

Since that experience, I have thought of the Lord's invitation to come unto Him and to spiritually be wrapped in His arms. He said, "Behold, [my arms] of mercy [are] extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me" (3 Nephi 9:14).

The scriptures speak of His arms being open (see Mormon 6:17), extended (see Alma 19:36), stretched out (see 2 Kings 17:36; Psalm 136:12), and encircling (see 2 Nephi 1:15). They are described as mighty (see D&C 123:6) and holy (see 3 Nephi 20:35), arms of mercy (see Alma 5:33), arms of safety (see Alma 34:16), arms of love (see D&C 6:20), "lengthened out all the day long" (2 Nephi 28:32).

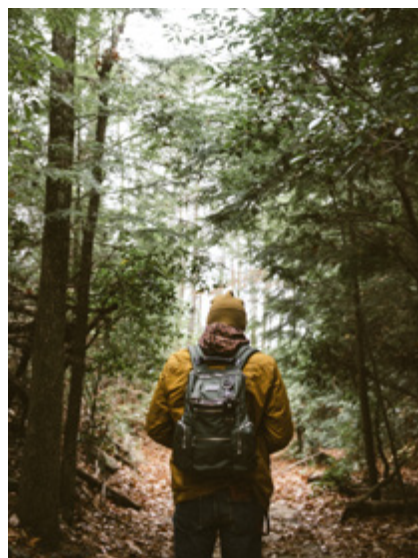
We have each felt to some extent these spiritual arms around us. We have felt His forgiveness, His love and comfort. The Lord has said, "I am he [who] comforteth you" (2 Nephi 8:12).



*When we sin, we turn away from God.
When we repent, we turn back toward God.*

THE INVITATION

The Lord's desire that we come unto Him and be wrapped in His arms is often an invitation to repent. "Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you" (Alma 5:33).



When we sin, we turn away from God. When we repent, we turn back toward God.

The invitation to repent is rarely a voice of chastisement but rather a loving appeal to turn around and to "re-turn" toward God. It is the beckoning of a loving Father and His Only Begotten Son to be more than we are, to reach up to a higher way of life, to change, and to feel the happiness of keeping the commandments. Being disciples of Christ, we rejoice in the blessing of repenting and the joy of being forgiven. They become part of us, shaping the way we think and feel.

I am amazed at the Savior's encircling arms of mercy and love for the repentant, no matter how selfish the forsaken sin. I testify that the Savior is able and eager to forgive our sins. Except for the sins of those few who choose perdition after having

known a fulness, there is no sin that cannot be forgiven. What a marvelous privilege for each of us to turn away from our sins and to come unto Christ. Divine forgiveness is one of the sweetest fruits of the gospel, removing guilt and pain from our hearts and replacing them with joy and peace of conscience. Jesus declares, "Will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?" (3 Nephi 9:13).

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Some may need "a mighty change [of] heart" (Alma 5:12) to confront serious sins. The help of a priesthood leader might be necessary. For most, repenting is quiet and quite private, daily seeking the Lord's help to make needed changes.

For most, repentance is more a journey than a one-time event. It is

not easy. To change is difficult. It requires running into the wind, swimming upstream. Jesus said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). Repentance is turning away from some things, such as dishonesty, pride, anger, and impure thoughts, and turning toward other things, such as kindness, unselfishness, patience, and spirituality. It is “re-turning” toward God.

DAILY STRIVING

Realizing where we need to change, we sorrow for the sadness we have caused. This leads to sincere and heartfelt confession to the Lord and, when needed, to others. When possible, we restore what we have wrongly harmed or taken.

Repentance becomes part of our daily lives. Our weekly taking of the sacrament is so important—to come meekly, humbly before the Lord, acknowledging our dependence upon Him, asking Him to forgive and to renew us, and promising to always remember Him.

Sometimes in our repentance, in our daily efforts to become more Christlike, we find ourselves repeatedly struggling with the same difficulties. As if we were climbing a tree-covered mountain, at times we don’t see our progress until we get closer to the top and look back from the high ridges. Don’t be discouraged. If you are striving and working to repent, you are in the process of repenting.

As we honestly confess our sins, restore what we can to the offended, and forsake our sins by keeping the



commandments, we are in the process of receiving forgiveness. With time, we will feel the anguish of our sorrow subside, taking “away the guilt from our hearts” (Alma 24:10) and bringing “peace of conscience” (Mosiah 4:3).

For those who are truly repentant but seem unable to feel relief:

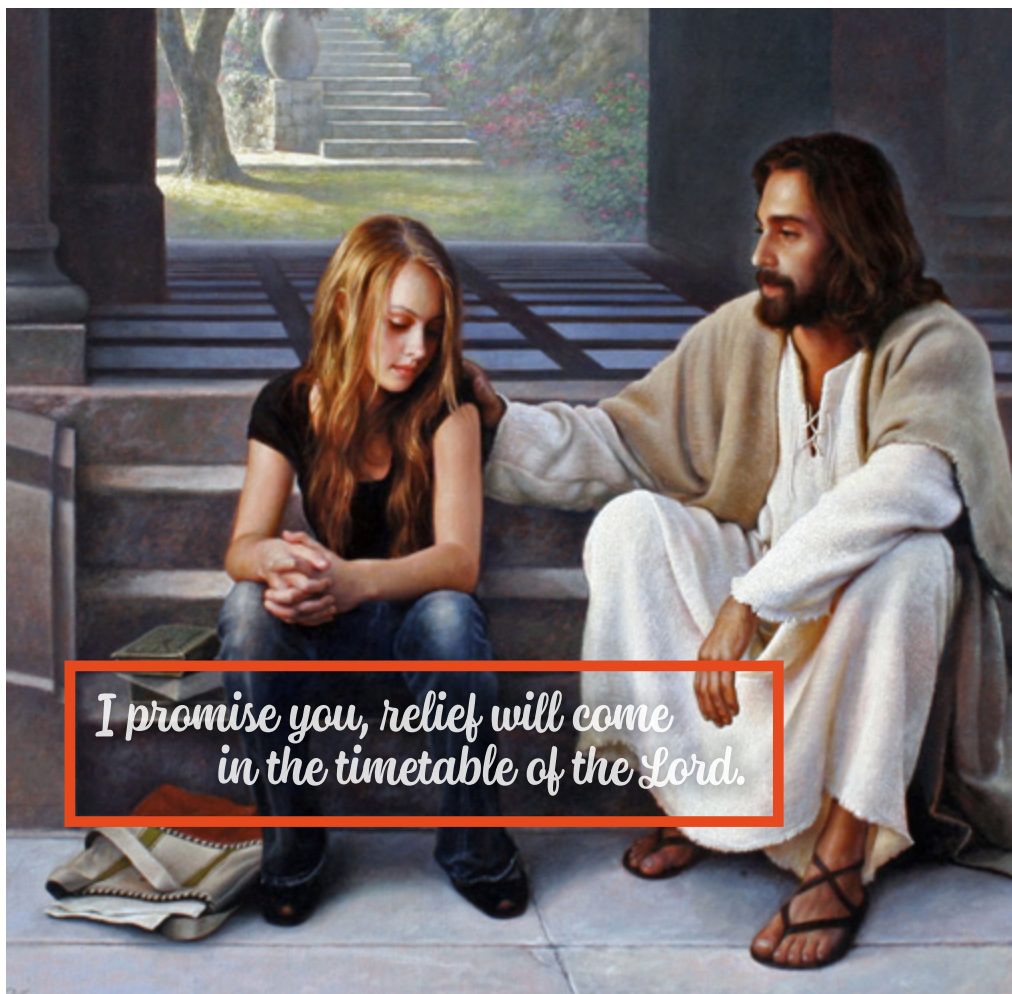
continue keeping the commandments. I promise you, relief will come in the timetable of the Lord. Healing also requires time.

THE BLESSINGS

I bear witness that our Savior can deliver us from our sins. I have personally felt His redeeming power. I have unmistakably seen His healing hand upon thousands in nations throughout the world. I testify that His divine gift removes guilt from our heart and brings peace to our conscience.

He loves us. We are members of His Church. He invites each of us to repent, turn away from our sins, and come unto Him. I witness that He is there. **NE**

From an October 2009 general conference address.



Your Daily Get-Up-and-Go

Teach your family about spiritual power-ups.

By David Dickson

Church Magazines

SUPPLIES

- Small piece of foam (like from an egg carton top or a styrofoam plate)
- Toothpick or craft stick
- Liquid dish soap
- Cookie sheet, or other tray to hold water



Our bodies are incredibly efficient machines. How awesome is it that you can hike for hours powered on a single granola bar? On the other hand, skip enough meals in a row and you'll soon end up with as much energy as a lethargic snail in deep hibernation. Your body needs regular fuel to keep on keepin' on.

Our spirits also require daily nourishment to stay strong. In fact, President Thomas S. Monson recently challenged each of us to read the Book of Mormon every day.¹

Here's a fun way to teach your family the value of keeping our spiritual engines revved up and ready to rumble, or in this case, ready to boat across open water.

Object lesson time!

1. PREPARATION

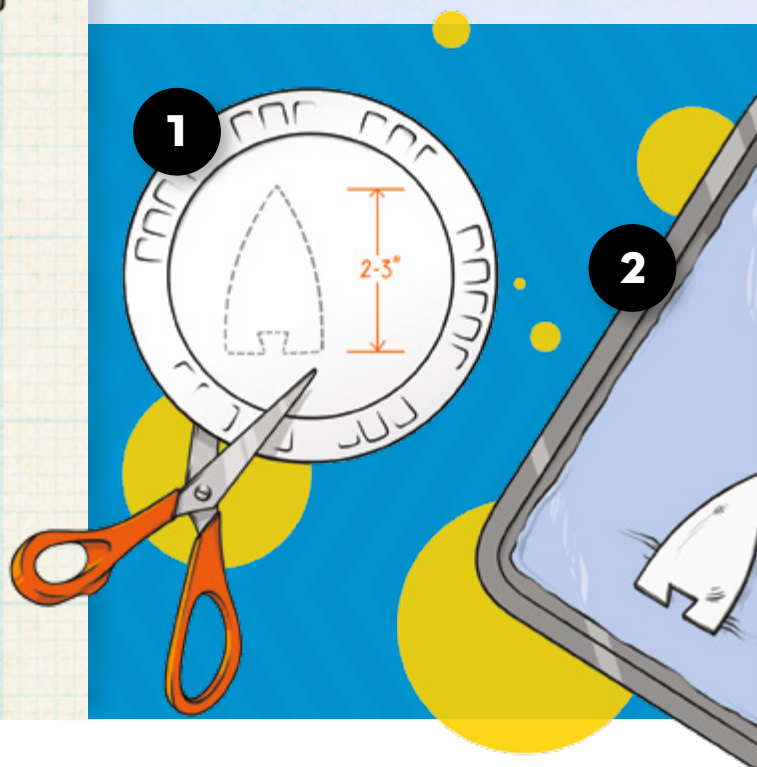
First cut out a boat that looks more or less like this (see image 1 below). Be sure to cut out the notch in the bottom. That's what will allow your boat to zip through water later. A good size for the boat is around 2–3 inches (5–8 cm) in total length.

Next, squeeze a small amount of liquid soap into a small container. Finally, pour enough water into the cookie sheet to float your boat and get ready to serve up a little awesome with a side of wowzers!

2. STUCK IN THE WATER

Hold up the boat and explain to your family that it represents your spiritual self. You could even provide the craft with a noble name, such as the *S.S. Spirit Express*.

Next, tell your family that the tray of water represents a typical day you need to get



through. This includes all the many little decisions you face on a regular basis: thoughts to think, deeds to do, bad stuff to avoid, etc.

So what happens when your spirit doesn't get its fuel for the day? Place the boat in the water and find out.

You guessed it. It just sits in the water. It's not going anywhere.

3. FUELING UP

All righty, let's put some gas in the tank. Tell your family that giving your spirit its daily fuel—such as saying prayers and reading the scriptures—makes all the difference in getting from point A to point B.

Take the boat out of the water, dip the toothpick or craft stick into the soap, and coat the inside of the notch at the back of the boat with soap. As you do, explain that this represents taking the time to do all of those small, simple things that feed our spirits.

4. VROOM VROOM!

So *now* what happens when we tackle the day? Place the boat in one end of the water tray and get ready for some ooohs and ahhhhs. The boat should zip across the water! Your spiritual self is firing on all cylinders, ready to navigate what lies ahead.

You might point out how little time it took to apply the soap even though it made such a huge difference. Similarly, it doesn't take a massive portion of our day to nourish ourselves spiritually. But what a difference it makes in the end! **NE**

TIP: This super cool science trick makes use of the way that soap breaks down surface tension in water. The process gives the boat enough power to move—pretty fast—through the water. But if you want to repeat the demonstration you'll need to change out the now-soapy water for fresh water.

Be sure to try this on your own beforehand to work out any kinks.

NOTE

1. See Thomas S. Monson, "The Power of the Book of Mormon," Apr. 2017 general conference.



STAY TRUE THROUGH TOUGH TIMES



HAVE YOU EVER TRIED TO DO
SOMETHING THAT WAS REALLY
HARD? SO HARD THAT YOU
THOUGHT ABOUT GIVING UP?

By **Megan Armknecht**

Church Magazines

and **John Heath**

Church History
Department

It happens to all of us, sometimes even with spiritual things.

When Joseph Smith faced tough times, he stuck with it. And a lot of those times came during his teen years: He had visions, learned about the Book of Mormon, prepared to translate it—all while people mocked and persecuted him.

It wasn't easy. His family was poor, and he lived in uncertain times in a frontier town that was sometimes rough and unkind. It would have been easy to just give up.

So how did he do it, especially when he felt discouraged? Here are four things he did that could be huge for you, too.



When Joseph sought answers, he studied the scriptures

Did you know that when Joseph went to pray in the Sacred Grove, he'd already been studying the scriptures and seeking answers for *two years*?

He later wrote, "At about the age of 12 years my mind became seriously impressed with regard to the all-important concerns for the welfare of my immortal soul, which led me to searching the scriptures."¹

And Joseph didn't just *read* the scriptures—he *searched* them. It took effort, pondering, and persistence. That opened his heart and prepared him for the inspiration that came when he read James 1:5–6:

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering."

Only then, after his patient effort, was Joseph ready to pray about which church to join (see Joseph Smith—History 1:12–18).

When Joseph struggled, he kept praying

After the First Vision, Joseph still didn't have everything figured out. In fact, in many ways, things got harder.

Some people he respected criticized him. But rather than deny what he had seen, he *continued* to believe and stay close to God (see Joseph Smith—History 1:25, 28).

Sometimes Joseph felt alone. Some family members had joined a church, but since Joseph was told not to join other churches, he waited for more direction from heaven.

On the night of September 21, 1823—over three years after the First Vision—Joseph decided to ask God for "forgiveness of all my sins and follies, and also for a manifestation to me, that I might know of my state and standing before him" (Joseph Smith—History 1:29).

Moroni appeared and taught Joseph many things about the work God had for him to do, including translating the Book of Mormon (see Joseph Smith—History 1:30–35).

Though he battled "weakness and imperfections" (Joseph Smith—History 1:29), Joseph continued to study and pray. He kept his faith and trust in God.

Joseph was humble, accepted correction, and kept repenting

Joseph's first visit with Moroni was in 1823, but he wasn't allowed to obtain the plates and translate the Book of Mormon until 1827. Part of the reason he had to wait four years was because he had to repent.

But Joseph was teachable. Each time Moroni visited, he tutored Joseph. This process helped Joseph become the leader God needed him to be.

Joseph was also humble. Moroni chastened Joseph several times. For example, Joseph said that when he first found the plates, he was, "tempted of the advisory and sought the Plates to obtain riches and kept not the commandment that I should have an eye single to the Glory of God."² Instead of being upset, Joseph took correction humbly, repented, and resolved to be better.³ He came to value the plates as sacred records meant to build up the kingdom of God.

Joseph turned to his parents

During his first visit, one of the things Moroni told Joseph to do was to tell his father. At first, Joseph didn't do it. He was afraid his father wouldn't believe him, wouldn't understand, or both. The next day, Moroni visited Joseph again and told him to tell his father, saying, "he will believe every word you say."⁴ With that counsel, this time Joseph obeyed. Not surprisingly, his family was a great support and, to the end of their days, helped him do the truly important things.

Joseph kept trying, and you can too

Like Joseph, when we aren't sure of what to do, we can study the scriptures and open our hearts to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. God will teach you the things you need to know for *your* life's plan.

Even though he had faith, he didn't know the details of how it would all work out. Just like us, he lived his life one day at a time and he persevered and trusted in God. He found strength to keep trying by keeping close to God and following promptings. And in time, he was able to do the work that God called him to do.

Though many revelations came in remarkable ways, Joseph learned that revelation is usually a process that takes time. When we are persistent, obedient, and faithful, answers come in the way and time that we need them.

Like Joseph, each of us can do the work God calls us to do when we are persistent in reaching out to Him through daily personal scripture study and prayer, if we are humble and teachable, and most importantly, if we just *keep trying*. NE



NOTES

1. "History, circa Summer 1832," pages 1–2, josephsmithpapers.org; spelling and punctuation standardized.
2. "History, circa Summer 1832," pages 4–5, josephsmithpapers.org.
3. See Oliver Cowdery, "Letter VIII," *Messenger and Advocate*, Oct. 1835, 197–200.
4. Lucy Mack Smith, "Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844–1845," book 3, page 11, josephsmithpapers.org; Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (1853), 82.

Elder Neil L. Andersen
of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles,
Apr. 2007
general conference.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID STOKER



*Some temptations are obvious,
but some slip under the radar.
Here are 13 UFOs we
might not think of as
temptations.*



By David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

LOOK OUT FOR

UNRECOGNIZED FIENDISH



When we think of temptation, we sometimes imagine an unseen, demonic voice whispering in our ears, “Do it. You know you want to.” Often we associate it with enticements to sexual transgression or stealing. But just as “there are divers ways and means” to commit sin (Mosiah 4:29), there are just as many ways to be tempted.

In fact, many of the most common temptations go undetected. But they can really damage our spirits. And giving in to them can lead to more serious sins.

Because they’re small or stealthy, these unnoticed temptations can slip in under our radar. They’re like UFOs—*unrecognized fiendish onslaughts*—that fly at us from the enemy of our souls.

Here are just a few examples of these UFOs.

1 UNBELIEF The first thing Satan tempted Adam and Eve’s children with wasn’t sexual sin, murder, or stealing. After Adam and Eve were taught about the plan of salvation and Jesus Christ’s role in that plan, they taught it to their children (see Moses 5:5–12). But then “Satan came among them, . . . and he commanded them, saying: *Believe it not*; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish” (Moses 5:13; emphasis added). Their first temptation was unbelief; then came the other sins. Satan doesn’t want you to believe in the prophets’ teachings about Heavenly Father’s plan or Jesus Christ’s Atonement.

2 A BAD ATTITUDE Sometimes we just can’t imagine anything positive happening around us. Maybe we didn’t get our way when our family or friends were choosing an activity, or maybe we just don’t feel like going to school, church, seminary, or Mutual today for whatever reason.

Whatever causes it, when we have a bad attitude, we’re halfway to having a bad experience and ruining the experience for others. Satan would very much like you to go down this path. Instead, have patience and “be of good cheer” (D&C 78:18).

3 LIGHT-MINDEDNESS The Lord has told us not to take sacred things lightly (see D&C 6:12) and to get rid of our “light-mindedness” (D&C 88:121). Does this mean we can’t ever laugh and have fun? Of course not. But it does mean that certain things are off-limits when it comes to what we talk and joke about. Laughing with friends is fine. Telling or laughing at jokes about sex or jokes that belittle the Savior, His servants, the temple, or any other sacred things—that’s definitely not OK.

4 VALUING OUTWARD SUCCESS OR GLAMOR MORE THAN GOODNESS Some people have accomplishments, wealth, fame, beauty, or intelligence. These aren’t inherently bad things, but

UFOs

UNRECOGNIZED FIENDISH ONSLAUGHTS

we shouldn't forget the best qualities to look up to and aim for. As President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has said: "When I was younger, I was impressed by those who were educated, accomplished, successful, and applauded by the world. But over the years, I have come to the realization that I am far more impressed by those wonderful and blessed souls who are truly good and without guile" ("Lord, Is It I?" Oct. 2014 general conference).

ALWAYS BLAMING OTHERS AND NEVER TAKING RESPONSIBILITY This is a surefire way to make certain we never learn, never grow, never progress. And guess who would love to see that happen? (Hint: It's not your Heavenly Father.) So, regardless of your circumstances, take responsibility for your successes and failures, and learn from every experience.

PLACING YOURSELF ABOVE OTHERS It's not just what we do but also how we think and feel

about others that matters. The beginning of loving our neighbors is to view them as our equals. As the Lord has commanded us, "Let every man esteem his brother as himself" (D&C 38:24). So, the level of your self-esteem should be the same as the level of your "other-esteem." If Satan can get you to think of other people (and not just their actions) as beneath you, then he's gotten you to reject the basis for much of Jesus Christ's teaching.

PUTTING YOURSELF DOWN Tearing yourself down can be just as detrimental to your spiritual growth as tearing others down. The temptation to do so comes from the source of all other temptations. "He who was thrust down in the first estate delights to have us put ourselves down. Self-contempt is of Satan; there is none of it in heaven" (Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 1976 general conference).

BEING "CLEVER" (A.K.A. INSULTING PEOPLE, WITH FLOURISH)

This is a temptation that seems to be strongest in the digital realm. For some reason, snark has more value than civility or graciousness for some people there. Do you want people to see your sharp, caustic wit—or your kind and tender heart? Are you interested in "destroying" someone, leaving their charred remains on the scorched terrain of an online flame war—or are you interested in being a disciple of Jesus Christ? Being a citizen of "Clever-Clever Land" may make us feel good for a moment, but lasting joy comes from being a citizen of Zion.

BEING LAZY Taking a needed break is one thing. Being lazy is another. If we always choose ease and comfort over effort and hard work, we're accepting a mediocre version of ourselves. If Satan can't get us to be bad right away, he'll





settle for mediocre for a start. As President Thomas S. Monson has taught, “Men cannot . . . rest content with mediocrity once they see excellence is within their reach” (“To the Rescue,” Apr. 2001 general conference). Catch the vision of the potential your Heavenly Father and the Savior see. Rest when you need to, but then be excellent.

PLACING GREAT VALUE ON BEING BUSY

Life can get busy. But we’re often tempted to place greater meaning and value on being busy than it really deserves. As President Uchtdorf has taught: “Sad to say, we [sometimes] wear our busyness as a badge of honor, as though being busy, by itself, was an accomplishment or sign of a superior life” (“Of Regrets and Resolutions,” Oct. 2012 general conference). This temptation can distract us from what really matters most.

MAKING YOURSELF LOOK BETTER THAN YOU REALLY ARE (A.K.A. LYING)

Sometimes we’re tempted to “lie a little” (2 Nephi 28:8)—you know, not big stuff, just a little. We generally do this to gain or maintain some sort of advantage for ourselves, like keeping up an image or standing among our peers or in our own minds. Though it seems harmless, it isn’t—at least not to our souls.



QUARRELING WITH SIBLINGS

We know this is wrong, but for some it’s such a normal part of life that they don’t think about it. According to the scriptures, if we quarrel with our siblings, we’re serving the devil (see Mosiah 4:14). That may sound a bit strong, but think about it. Whom else could it possibly serve? Just don’t do it, no matter how hard it may be to resist.

SKIPPING PRAYER

Too busy? Running late? Don’t have anything to say? Whatever is going through your head when you skip your morning and evening prayers, it’s not coming from a good place. “The evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray” (2 Nephi 32:8). Heavenly Father wants to hear from you, no matter what, guaranteed.



GET MORE UFO SIGHTINGS

There are many more UFOs, of course. They’re hard to spot, but we have the best tools to help us: sincere prayer and the gift of the Holy Ghost. And once we’ve been made aware of these temptations, it’s amazing how many of them seem specifically targeted at us. If we’re mindful of them and seek the Spirit’s help in seeing them for what they are, we can recalibrate our spiritual radar and defend ourselves against them. This will lead to greater repentance, change, and spiritual growth. We will be closer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. And we (as well as those around us) will be happier. **NE**

SUICIDE, HEALING AND HOPE

How to be a friend to someone who has lost a loved one to suicide.

By Marissa Widdison

Church Magazines

Jess remembers her younger brother as a super smart guy with a kind heart. She remembers the last funny sitcom they watched together and how he was laughing and seemed to be having a good time. And she remembers standing in front of their home just a few days later, watching the paramedics, realizing that her brother had just died from suicide.

"I felt everything from complete shock to devastation beyond anything I can explain to pure disbelief that this was even really happening," she says. Their family, now grief-stricken, hadn't realized he was in such pain.

It's been years since that happened, and Jess now has a husband and children of her own. She still has unanswered questions and struggles every day with the consequences of her brother's death.

But over the years, she has found some peace. And she's seen firsthand how the teachings of the gospel and love from other people help in healing.

If you know someone like Jess who has lost someone to suicide, it's important to understand: everyone grieves differently. What will help one person may not be as helpful for another person, and that's OK. Here are some ideas that can help you as you prayerfully ask Heavenly Father how to support those you care about.

SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINES

Nearest Location

Worldwide

USA

Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Crisis Textline
Native Youth Crisis Hotline

Canada

Distress Center
Kids Help Phone

UK and Ireland

Australia

Beyond Blue
Kids Helpline



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GETTY IMAGES

TALK TO THEM AND LISTEN

Sometimes after hearing about a suicide, people don't know what to say or worry they'll say the wrong thing. But avoiding the grieving person can be worse.

"It feels very lonely when that happens," Jess says. So instead, just say something—even if it's just something little like, "I'm thinking about you and your family."

Mental health experts recommend talking about the person who died from suicide like you would talk about a person who died from any other cause. Remember the good times together, remember how much you loved the person, and express how much they will be missed.

"I loved hearing good memories about my brother," Jess says. Some people even wrote down those memories and gave them to her family. "Anytime someone brought him up, I felt relief."

Even so, it has been a long process trying to mentally and emotionally sort out what happened. Because of that, Jess has been grateful for people who would listen to her, even if she was rehashing something that had already been said.

"It helped and still does help me get through harder moments."

BE COMPASSIONATE

Jess says it was difficult when people made opinionated comments about her brother's death or said he "wasn't going to be in a good place" because of what he did. Mental illness, she points out, is as real and vicious as any other disease. It was also hard when people said they knew exactly what she was going through.

"No one knows what it was like to lose my specific brother with the specific relationship I had with him—except the Savior," she says. "But even though we may not know exactly what a person is feeling, there are many ways we can support one another."

HELP WHERE YOU CAN

If you are helping someone who is recovering from a suicide loss, ask yourself if there are any small daily things you can help with. Can you help make meals, do chores, or study schoolwork together? Inviting someone to an activity, even if they repeatedly turn down the offer, lets them know you care.

THINGS WILL GET BETTER

Over time, peace can come. "I would love to say that the ache in your heart goes away, but it doesn't," Jess says. "But Jesus Christ's Atonement has healed me in ways I never thought possible." Reading scriptures, praying, and attending church help her see the light at the end of the tunnel. Through those small things, she's received revelation for other ways that she can find help, such as meeting with a professional counselor. Now she takes things "a minute at a time" and tries to fill her day with gratitude and service.

"I have a strong testimony that our Heavenly Father loves every single one of His children." **NE**

Phone Number	Web Address
	preventingsuicide.lds.org befrienders.org / iasp.info/resources/Crisis_Centres
1-800-273-8255 Text START to 741-741 1-877-209-1266	suicidepreventionlifeline.org crisistextline.org save.org/airesources
403-266-HELP (4357) 1-800-668-6868	distresscentre.com kidshelpphone.ca/Teens
116 123	samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/contact-us
1300 22 4636 1800 55 1800	youthbeyondblue.com kidshelpline.com.au

SOMETHING THAT MAKES ME SMILE

PART 2

WOW! When we asked you to send us examples of things that make you smile, you really responded! You sent so many great things, we just had to share some more. So, here's round two of wall-to-wall, gleaming, ear-to-ear beaming.

I love **PHOTOGRAPHY!**

We have such a beautiful world all around us and I find joy in capturing pictures of it. Flowers are just a part of what makes me smile in life!

Sarah P., 15,
California, USA



I am part of a **BALLROOM DANCE** company. It makes me smile because all the people there have some of the same beliefs as me and are super nice people. Also, I get to do what I like best, to dance!

Emma M., 13, Washington, USA



I love **CATS**. I always have, and I probably always will. They make me smile. This is a charcoal drawing I made for Studio Art class at school.

Caleb D., 14, Utah, USA

MAKING FAIRY HOUSES AND LANDSCAPES makes me smile because I get to create my own little world where everything sits still and perfect. It helps me appreciate the details and the small things in life, and it's even more fun to do with my little sister!

Alida C., 17, Utah, USA



I took this picture of the **FLOWER BUSH** in my yard. These make me smile because they are so pretty. It makes me think of Jesus Christ and how He created everything for our happiness and how much He loves us.

Amy P., 14,
South Carolina, USA



SHARING THE GOSPEL makes us smile! We are so happy to be serving a mission and letting people know how much God loves them! He gave us such a wonderful plan and a beautiful chance to learn and grow!

Sister McGuire and Sister Perry, California Ventura Mission

My **DOG**, Daisy, makes me smile because she is so lovable, quirky, and fun!

Cooper V.,
12, Nevada, USA




THEATRE is an art form I'm very passionate about. Participating in theatre productions at my high school has given me a wonderful group of friends and a great way to spend my time, and it has created a perfect environment for me to share the gospel and spread the love of Jesus Christ.

Madeline C., 17, Indiana, USA

PLAYING AND LISTENING TO MUSIC make me happy and can make others smile too. Even when you are in a bad mood, you can listen to music to be in a happier mood when you are listening to uplifting music.

Kate C., 11, Utah, USA



IF  you are not reading the Book of Mormon please do so

—PRESIDENT
THOMAS S. MONSON

DRAWING QUOTES makes me smile because I can share a message from the leaders of our Church with the people I love!

Jayde M., 16, Utah, USA

CREATING ART relieves the stresses of my day, and makes me smile. I especially enjoy sculpting with clay, painting with watercolors, and drawing anime and manga cartoons.

Mia P., 12, Colorado, USA



I love **BALLET**. Being able to express myself through dance makes me smile every day!

Juliette B., 16, Oregon, USA



I'm on a **BALLROOM DANCE** team. It's good to have a safe place to come and be who I am without worrying about being made fun of. Performing is such a blessing because people will come up to me afterwards and tell me that it was just what they needed that day and it makes all the hard hours of practice worth it.

Hanna M., 15, Washington, USA

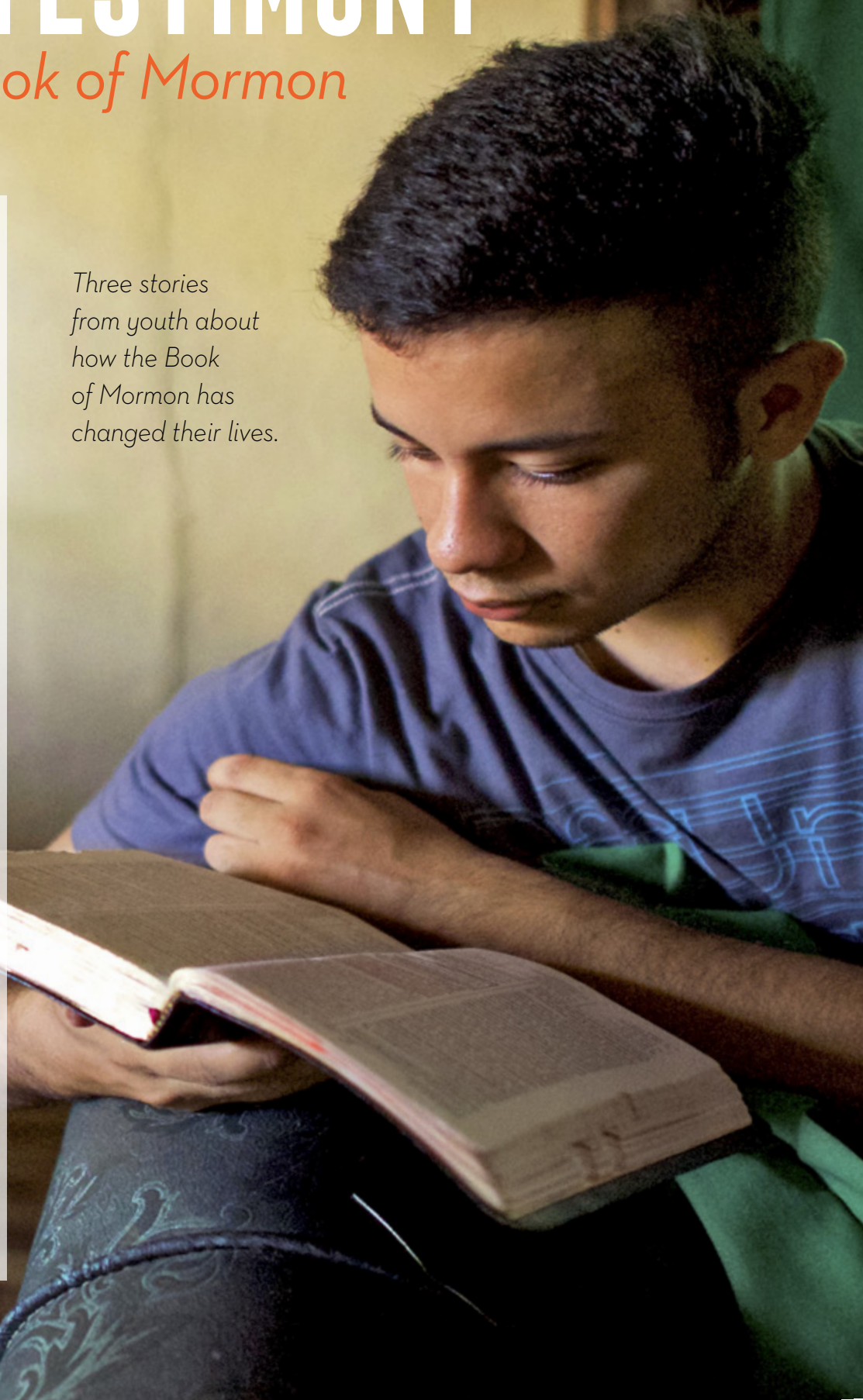
YOUR TESTIMONY

and the Book of Mormon

Joseph Smith said that the Book of Mormon is “the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book” (introduction to the Book of Mormon). The Book of Mormon is a powerful witness of Jesus Christ and His restored gospel. Knowing that it is true changes everything.

The people who wrote the following testimonies became converted to Jesus Christ and His gospel because of their experiences reading and praying about the Book of Mormon. Sincerely reading and praying about the Book of Mormon can change your life too.

Three stories from youth about how the Book of Mormon has changed their lives.



THE BLESSING OF A PERSISTENT CHALLENGE

By Allen Davis,
Utah, USA



One Sunday morning during our priests quorum meeting, my teacher, Brother Allen, asked me, “Brother Davis, do you have a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ?” I told him I did. He asked me how I knew it was true. I told him my parents had taught me it was true, and I believed them.

He explained that I could not rely on my parents’ testimony forever—I needed to obtain my own. He told me that if I read from the Book of Mormon and prayed to Heavenly Father, He would answer my prayer, and I would know for myself that the gospel of Jesus Christ was true. He asked me to do that during the week and return next Sunday to report.

The next Sunday, Brother Allen asked for my report when class started. At first, I didn’t even remember the previous week’s lesson. I told him I had no report for him. He smiled at me and explained that sometimes it takes some work. After renewing his challenge, he told me he would ask about it next week.

During the following week, I read from the Book of Mormon for several days, and I said some heartfelt prayers.

Soon it was Sunday again. I went to my quorum meeting with some trepidation. I hoped that Brother Allen would simply forget about his challenge.

When Brother Allen asked me about it again, I told him that I had read and prayed but had nothing more to report. He renewed his challenge and encouraged me to ask in faith. He then promised me that Heavenly Father would answer my prayers.

During the next week, I read several chapters of the Book of Mormon every night. I prayed earnestly for a testimony of its truthfulness. But by Saturday night, I was unsettled because I still had no answer.

That night, I read a chapter in the Book of Mormon, knelt by my bedside, and prayed like I had never prayed before. I begged my Heavenly Father for a knowledge of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and that the Church was true. After my prayer, I lay in bed. My mind and my heart were filled with a message from the Holy Ghost. It was not a voice but a feeling; yet specific words were given to me. These are the words that filled my soul: “My son, you know the Book of

Mormon is true. You know the Church is true. You have felt it in your heart since you were young. The Holy Ghost has testified to you that it is true. Of course it is true.” I was reminded of several specific spiritual experiences in my life when I had felt the undeniable influence of the Holy Ghost.

The next morning, I was up early and ready for church, excited for Brother Allen to ask for my report. As we assembled in our classroom, Brother Allen began teaching the lesson. He didn’t ask for the report as he had done the last two weeks. I raised my hand. He was startled, but he realized immediately that I was now ready to share my experience. I then told Brother Allen and my priests quorum that I had a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that I knew the Book of Mormon is true, and that Heavenly Father had answered my prayer. In my 16-year-old language, I tried to share the magnitude of my discovery, though my words were insufficient.

I will always be grateful to Brother Allen for his persistence and his love as I gained my own testimony. I know that God lives and answers my prayers. ■

ACCEPTING A PROPHET'S CHALLENGE

By Portia Marjorie J. Alvaro,
Texas, USA



My family moved to America from the Philippines when I was 11 years old. At first, I had a hard time fitting in. But once I learned how to speak English, I quickly adopted the popular culture. I loved listening to pop music, trying different hairstyles, and wearing faddish clothing. I did not have a testimony. Instead, I had a rebellious attitude.

My life turned around when I decided to accept the prophet's challenge to seriously read and study the Book of Mormon. I read the book from cover to cover. It felt good and wonderful, but I still wasn't sure whether it was true.

Nervously, I tried Moroni's promise in Moroni 10:4-5. I expected angels to appear, but nothing happened. I thought, "That was it?"

In spite of my disappointment, I continued studying the book. One night I had a dream about the Book of Mormon. When I woke up, I felt a burning in my heart, peace of mind, and assurance. I thought, "This is it. This is my answer."

After that experience, my confidence soared. I did better in my studies, attended more school activities, and, most importantly, became very active in the Church. I continue to study the Book of Mormon and apply its teachings to my life. The experiences I had while reading the Book of Mormon became anchors to me in my life. ■

THE BOOK THAT SAVED MY LIFE

Name withheld



My family and I joined the Church when I was 12. At the time, I had no idea of the magnitude of that gift. I didn't even know if the Church was true, but my father and mother were impressed with the message the missionaries carried. I liked the missionaries too but didn't fully understand what they were saying. Eventually they invited us to be baptized, and my family decided we would join as a family or not at all. I agreed and was baptized without ever being converted.

I attended church and seminary, but my family later fell away. I had friends at church and went to seminary and Mutual to be with them. I didn't care about the gospel or the teachings and thought church was generally boring. My life grew troubled as I began to engage in activities such as shoplifting and vandalism. My father became abusive, and I thought about suicide.

However, suicide was never an option. I couldn't do that to my mother, whom I loved deeply. So I was left to find an answer. I looked around and saw my friends from church. The one thing they had that I didn't was a testimony. So at the age of 16, four years after my baptism, I sat down to read the Book of Mormon for the first time.

It was difficult, and it took me nearly two years. As I read in 3 Nephi about the Savior's visit to the Nephites after His Resurrection, where He blesses their children and angels descend from heaven and encircle them, it was as though I stood among the Nephites and saw with my own eyes that miraculous

event. The Holy Ghost bore witness of that great moment.

I could not read any more, as my eyes blurred with tears. When I regained my composure, I continued reading. A few more weeks passed, and I finished the book, knelt, and prayed to know if it was true. But I got no answer.

Days passed with me kneeling regularly and pleading to know if the book was true, if the Church was true, but still I got no answer. Despairing, weeks after I'd finished reading, I knelt one more time and asked, "Heavenly Father, is the Book of Mormon true?" The answer that came was not what I expected: "I have already told you. You know it is."

I had gained my testimony weeks before, when I read about Christ blessing the children. I knew that this Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is the kingdom of God on earth, restored by a prophet and led by a prophet, as in days of old.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Book of Mormon saved my life, but it would be more accurate to say the restored gospel saved me and continues to renew me and nourish me each day. It is my most precious possession. ■ NE

YOU CAN KNOW FOR YOURSELF

Whether you already have a testimony of the Book of Mormon or you want to gain that witness for yourself, reading and praying about the Book of Mormon will deepen your conversion.

The Book of Mormon helps all of us draw closer to Jesus Christ. The Book of Mormon will help you know that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is God's true Church on the earth. Open your heart as you open its pages, and you will see how your life can change for the better.

55

TRUTHS

IN THE

BOOK OF MORMON

Prayerfully studying the truths in the Book of Mormon can help you acquire the spiritual knowledge you need to guide your life and to answer questions that you or others may have. Here is a sample of the truths you can learn during your study of the Book of Mormon at seminary, at home, and at church. As you study, ponder, and pray over them, consider ways to share and act upon what you have learned to deepen your understanding, testimony, and conversion to these important truths.

JESUS CHRIST is the Savior, and **JOSEPH SMITH** is His chosen prophet.

Introduction to the Book of Mormon



Joseph Smith was a prophet in **THE LAST DAYS.**

Introduction to the Book of Mormon

GOD ALWAYS PREPARES A WAY FOR YOU TO OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS.

1 Nephi 3:7

THE SPIRIT TEACHES US TO PRAY.

2 Nephi 32:3, 8-9

TRUST GOD and you will be blessed.

1 Nephi 9:3, 5-6

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON IS TO PERSUADE ALL TO BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST.

1 Nephi 6:4-6; 2 Nephi 25:23

The Lord commands us to **MARRY AND HAVE CHILDREN UNTO HIM.**

1 Nephi 7:1-5



We are **ALL ALIKE** unto God.

2 Nephi 26:33

THE BOOK OF MORMON

builds on the Bible's witness of Christ.

1 Nephi 13:26-29, 39-42

JESUS CHRIST

suffered for our sins, pains, and sicknesses.

Alma 7:11-13

To **FIND TRUTH,** pray and study **THE WORD OF GOD.**

2 Nephi 32:3, 8-9

Prayers are often answered over a **period of time.**

2 Nephi 28:30



We can be saved only through **JESUS CHRIST.**

2 Nephi 25:19-20

In the last days people will

REJECT

prophets.

2 Nephi 27:1-5

A seer knows the **PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.**

Mosiah 8:13-17

We receive **direction** from God through **faith, diligence, and obedience.**

1 Nephi 16:27-29



THE **WORDS OF CHRIST**

WILL TELL YOU WHAT TO DO.

2 Nephi 32:3

LEARNING

is good if we follow God's counsel.

2 Nephi 9:28-29

JESUS WAS BAPTIZED TO FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

2 Nephi 31:5-7

Christ invites us to
repent and come unto Him.
3 Nephi 27:20

You receive blessings by
**KEEPING THE
COMMANDMENTS.**
Mosiah 2:41


The Lord **WANTS US
TO BE CHASTE.**
Jacob 2:22-35

THE SPIRIT
speaks the truth.
Jacob 4:13

We **SERVE** God
by **SERVING** others.
Mosiah 2:17

THE NATURAL MAN
is an enemy to God.
..... *Mosiah 3:19*

— **GOD** —
knows all
things and is
**THE SOURCE
OF ALL TRUTH.**
Mosiah 4:9


**Refusing
to forgive**
affects
generations.
Mosiah 19:12-18

Our **ETERNAL
PROGRESSION**
depends upon our
**ABILITY TO CHOOSE
AND ACT**
for ourselves.
2 Nephi 2:5, 14-16, 27-29

We covenant
with the Lord
through
BAPTISM.
Mosiah 18:8-10




**OBEY COMMANDMENTS WITH
EXACTNESS TO PREVAIL.**
Alma 57:21

Resurrection is
the **UNITING OF
SPIRIT AND BODY.**
Alma 11:42-43


.....
AS COVENANT PEOPLE,
OUR RESPONSIBILITY
IS TO BLESS ALL NATIONS.
3 Nephi 29
.....

 The Lord gives us
STRENGTH
to endure trials.
Mosiah 23:20-24; 24:13-15

**THE
BOOK OF
MORMON**
was translated by
the gift and power
of God.
2 Nephi 27:6-23


When you
**ACT IN FAITH, you
GAIN SPIRITUAL
KNOWLEDGE.**
Ether 12:6

**PERFECTION IS
NOT REQUIRED**
to obtain mercy.
Alma 42:15-31

 **FAITH IS NOT**
a perfect knowledge.
Alma 32:21



Learn to keep the
COMMANDMENTS
in your youth.
Alma 37:35

Christ is a **SURE
FOUNDATION.**
Helaman 5:12



To nourish faith, have a
DESIRE TO BELIEVE.
Alma 32:27



.....
The **Lord will fulfill** all the words spo-
ken through **His prophets.**
3 Nephi 1:1-26
.....

**PROCREATION'S
SACRED POWER**
is for marriage.
Alma 39:9



The Savior always does the
WILL OF HIS FATHER.
3 Nephi 11:10-11

GOD WORKS MIRACLES
according to our faith and His will.
Mormon 9:20-21

FORGIVENESS FROM GOD is given
when we **SEEK WITH REAL INTENT.**
Moroni 6:5-9

Humility helps **AVOID PRIDE
AND DESTRUCTION.**
Helaman 11



We pray in
the name of
**JESUS
CHRIST.**
*3 Nephi 18:15,
20-21*

We are **COMMANDED
TO FOLLOW** the perfect
example of Jesus Christ.
3 Nephi 12:48

If you are
TRULY CONVERTED
you will not fall away.
Alma 23:5-13

The Savior
**ATONED
FOR
THE SINS**
of all mankind.
3 Nephi 11:10-11

— **FAITH** —
IS HOPE
for things that
are true but
not seen.
Ether 12:6



**WATCH AND
PRAY** always
to avoid
temptation.
*3 Nephi 18:15,
20-21*

**GOD
LOVES**
all His children
PERFECTLY.
2 Nephi 26:33



CHARITY is the
pure love of Christ.
Moroni 7:45, 47-48

We can **GAIN A TESTIMONY** of the **BOOK
OF MORMON** as we **READ, PONDER, and PRAY.**
Moroni 10:3-5

TEN

By Hadley Griggs
Church Magazines

Have you ever set a scripture-study goal that sounded something like this? “From this day forward, I *will* study my scriptures for an hour every single day—and I will do it *perfectly*.”

If you have set that kind of goal, how did it go? Chances are, not very well. Trying to develop a new habit can be really challenging, especially because we often come up with unrealistic goals (like the one above) that we quickly get tired of or overwhelmed by.

To really make scripture study a habit, it's best to start small. Elder Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave a great suggestion: “Many young people spend an average of seven hours a day looking at TV, computer, and smartphone screens. . . . Will you replace some of that daily screen time—particularly that devoted to social media, the internet, gaming, or television—with reading the Book of Mormon? . . . Even if for only 10 minutes a day.”¹

We asked five youth to accept Elder Stevenson's invitation. They tracked their daily screen time, and then they replaced 10 minutes of it with Book of Mormon study. Check out how it went—maybe they'll inspire you to try it yourself!

MINUTES A DAY

We asked five youth to try Elder Stevenson's invitation to replace 10 minutes of daily screen time with reading the Book of Mormon.



“After keeping record of my time spent on social media

for the first week, I was a little shocked at the amount of time I spent on my phone. It was definitely a good idea for me to use some of that time for the Book of Mormon, especially because diligently reading scriptures is not one of my strengths.

“Ironically, one of the first days I read my scriptures in the morning was a terrible day. However, I knew that reading scriptures would only improve my life, so I kept reading.

“I think the greatest impact from reading every day was that I felt much more in tune with the Spirit. I was able to make decisions much easier. I felt more love for the people around me and an increased desire to serve. When I read my scriptures in the morning, the day went so much better. When I read at night, I slept well. I would strongly recommend that everyone try this. What a difference it makes!”

Bryn C., 18, Utah, USA



“When I tracked my phone usage, I realized that I was on my phone the most on Sunday. I thought that was sad because that’s when I should be trying to get closer to my Savior—but instead, I had been staring at my screen.

“As I started reading my scriptures, I would read the 10 minutes every night before I went to bed, which for me was just about a chapter a night. As I did this, I noticed that I was able to fall asleep much easier. I also found myself making better decisions throughout the week, and I overall just felt better about myself.

“I am grateful that I was able to receive this invitation, and I plan to continue to read for 10 minutes a day and say my nightly prayers.”

Ryan E., 16, Alabama, USA



“Before I tracked the time I spent,

I thought it was going to be really hard to take time out and read the scriptures—but after realizing how much time I spent on social media, taking 10 minutes out of that felt super easy! I could read at lunch or right before seminary started.

“After I had read the scriptures, I was a lot more aware of what I looked at on social media. If I stumbled across something bad, with bad language or a negative message, I noticed it and tried to avoid it way more than before. I also noticed that my prayers were a lot more sincere and that I was receiving more answers to them. This is definitely something that I hope to continue for a lot longer!”

Izzie J., 16, California, USA

“I didn’t really think I was on social media *that much*

until I was asked to track my usage, and that’s when I realized how much of my life social media was consuming.

“As soon as I started really focusing on reading the scriptures every day, I felt such an eagerness to read the Book of Mormon, and I wanted to learn from it. As I read for 10 minutes each day, I became more and more invested in the stories. About halfway through I decided that, before I read, I would pray that I would find answers to my questions, and without fail I received those answers through the Holy Ghost.

“I know that God speaks to us through the scriptures and that the Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ. It can truly bless our lives through fervent and prayerful study. I am so grateful for the opportunity I had to participate in this, and I invite everyone to do the same. It was a life-changing experience.”

Sydney B., 16, Arizona, USA



“Even though I forgot to read a few times,

overall it was a success. I realized that before I started Elder Stevenson’s invitation, I was really only reading about 3 minutes each night, and by increasing my reading to 10 minutes each night, I saw a difference in my life. When I read, I feel more in tune with the Spirit and I can feel the blessings of spiritual protection every day. The same way that it can be hard to start reading after not reading the scriptures for a while, once I started the habit of reading, I couldn’t stop.

“I noticed that for me, when I read the scriptures right before bed, I normally fell asleep or didn’t get as much out of my reading. It worked best to read either in the morning or after school.

“I had a blast doing this and would challenge everyone to try it.”

Rachel A., 15, Colorado, USA **NE**



Want to try it for yourself? Check out “8 Tips for the New-Year Scripture-Study Challenge” at youth.lds.org for tips on how to make this goal a success.

NOTE

1. Gary E. Stevenson, Oct. 2016 general conference.



By Elder Massimo De Feo
Of the Seventy

HOW I DEEPEN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

When I turned 12, I started to really think about how I could be involved in the gospel.

I was living in my hometown of Taranto, Italy. It had been only a few years since my brother and I had met the missionaries and become members of the Church, but I started feeling eager to participate more. I began to feel a desire to pass the sacrament. I remember walking to church each Sunday with a prayer in my heart that I would be called to pass the sacrament.

One Sunday morning, my branch president called me into his office. He said, “Massimo, the Lord wants you to receive the priesthood and be ordained a deacon.”

When I heard those words—“the Lord wants you”—something struck me. I felt that it wasn’t a human asking me to do something, but that it really was the Lord *personally* extending a responsibility. When my branch president looked at me, I felt that the Lord was reaching out to me.

As I began to pass the sacrament every Sunday, I could feel the power of godliness in my life. I felt responsible, I felt involved, and I knew that I was doing the Lord’s work. I felt closer to Him by serving Him.

This experience of feeling the Lord’s hand both through my leaders and in my responsibilities helped me develop a deeper personal relationship with Him. I wanted to be more involved in the gospel; as I lived that way, I felt the presence of God in my life. Developing this kind of relationship with Him is one of the most important things you can do in your youth.



SEEING THE LORD IN YOUR LEADERS

As I met with my branch president, it made a deep spiritual impression on me when I felt that it was the Lord, not just my branch president, giving me a responsibility. By recognizing the Lord in my leader, I felt closer to Him, and my relationship with Him deepened.

If you understand as a youth that when you have callings extended to you or when you sit in your classes at church, you are hearing the words of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, then you will be able to see church in a different way—a spiritual way. You will *want* to participate in the Lord’s work. You will be able to have deep spiritual experiences and will feel closer to Him each Sunday.



SEEING THE LORD IN THE ORDINANCES

We can also develop a personal relationship with the Lord by recognizing His presence as we participate in the ordinances of the gospel. When we are involved in the ordinances—like the sacrament—we know that “the power of godliness is manifest” (D&C 84:20). When I passed the sacrament, even at the age of 12 or 13, I really felt that I was an instrument in His hands. I felt the presence and power of God in those ordinances and the power of godliness in my life. Having that sacred experience each week by recognizing the Lord in this ordinance helped me deepen my personal relationship with the Lord.

This is not limited to just *passing* the sacrament. We can also feel the power of godliness by *taking* the sacrament every Sunday. When we take the sacrament, we shouldn’t take it lightly or occasionally or casually. We should want, decide, and prepare to partake of the sacrament, all of which will allow us to feel the power of godliness in our lives. We should use the sacrament as a powerful spiritual tool to deepen our relationship with God and to prepare ourselves for the everyday challenges of life.



A DEEP PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

Decide now to develop a deep personal relationship with the Lord. The closer you feel to Him, the easier it will be to serve Him.

The Lord reaches out to each of us personally. When we attend church, we are hearing His words. When we take the sacrament, we are fulfilling His sacred ordinances. We need to recognize the presence and power of God in our leaders and in the ordinances so that we can deepen our personal relationship with Him. **NE**






THE LUNCH

THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Holding my sandwich and peas, I made a fateful decision.

By Adam C. Olson

Church Magazines



I didn't know many people at my new middle school. Most of the kids I knew went to a different school, and the few friends I did have were making some bad choices.

I was in a tough spot. I didn't want to be a loner, but I knew I needed to leave the friends I had in order to do what was right.

I was going to have to make new friends.

That has always been a challenge for me. My self-confidence was awful. I was super self-conscious. Small talk was ridiculously hard. And I'm not comfortable opening up to people. The few times I tried, things just didn't work out. You know things aren't going your way trying to find good friends when your most promising prospect ends up asking if he can copy off your test. I was beginning to lose hope.

Yet, the prophet had just promised that God could "raise up friends" for those who turn their lives over to Him.¹ That's what I desperately wanted, but I had no idea what it meant to turn my life over to God—until one day, of all places, in the lunchroom.

My daily lunch routine was a series of painful decisions. Sandwich or mystery meat. Peas or carrots. Sit with friends who were headed the wrong direction or sit alone, making it clear to everyone in the room that I was

friendless. Mostly it was sandwich. Sometimes it was peas. Sometimes it was carrots. But I could never bear the shame of sitting alone.

Until one day, as I stood holding my sandwich and peas, I finally decided I would rather sit alone than continue down the path my friends and I were headed. Without realizing it, I had just turned my life over to God. I had chosen what was right over what was easy.

Making the right decision was all He needed me to do. I didn't even have time to take a step toward an empty table before I heard a voice call, "Hey, Adam! Come sit with us."

It was Curtis. I was shocked. Not only was he one of the most popular kids in the school, but I also knew he had a strong testimony and high standards. His group of friends made a space for me at their table. They remained my friends through our school years, missions, and temple marriages.

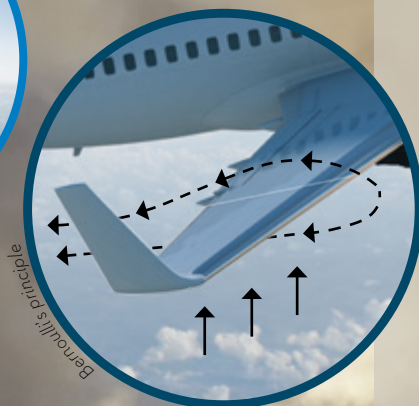
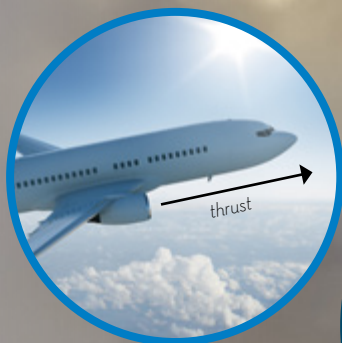
I learned a couple of really important lessons that day. I learned God loved me. I learned He wanted to bless me but couldn't until I had made my decision to follow Him. And I learned that turning my life over to Him wasn't easy, but it was simple. I just need to choose Him over me. **NE**

NOTE

1. Ezra Taft Benson, "Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations," *Ensign*, Dec. 1988, 4.

MECHANICS OF FLIGHT

AN AIRPLANE CAN TEACH YOU A LOT ABOUT OBEDIENCE,
REVELATION, AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION.



TWO FORCES

When I worked as an airplane mechanic, I learned that, to fly, an airplane requires two forces:

1. **Thrust**, or forward momentum, at a speed sufficient to create lift. Thrust overcomes drag, the resistance to movement.
2. **Lift**, which is created by the difference in pressure of the air going over the wing and the air going under the wing (referred to as Bernoulli's principle). Lift overcomes gravity, which would otherwise pull the plane back to earth.

By Richard M. Romney
Church Magazines

WHAT THIS HAS TO DO WITH YOU

Make a few simple comparisons, and you'll find some inspiring similarities between the principles of flight and the principles of the gospel.



SPIRITUAL LIFT

Obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel builds momentum. It provides spiritual thrust that creates spiritual lift. It keeps us moving forward. It enables us to rise above the world, where we can see clearly how to return to our Heavenly Father.



COURSE CORRECTION

After you were baptized, you received the Holy Ghost, the best of all spiritual navigation devices. As you continue in obedience, the still small voice will provide constant promptings about what to do, where to go, and how to act. If you listen carefully, it will guide you.

But it is up to you to use the means the Lord has provided to correct your course. These include checkpoints—are you praying regularly, searching scriptures, attending meetings, preparing for and going to the temple? And they include repentance, which enables you to make both major and minor adjustments to spiritual attitude, altitude, and direction.



COURSE CORRECTION

Of course, there's a lot of other stuff going on when an airplane flies. But much of it involves two additional systems.

1. **Navigational aids** help the pilot keep the plane on course. These include gauges and dials in the cockpit, but also include radar beacons and voice contact with flight towers.
2. **Flight controls** facilitate change of direction. They include rudders (flaps on the tail of the plane), ailerons and trim tabs (small flaps on wings), large flaps and spoilers, slats, and stabilizers. These enable the plane to roll, climb, dive, turn, and come gently back to earth when it's time to land.



WELL-GROUNDED

Pilots depend on the ground crew. The crew prepares the plane to fly, guides the aircraft to and from the runway, conducts pre-flight and post-flight inspections, and performs or recommends maintenance. The crew is responsible for the upkeep and safety of the aircraft.



SPIRITUAL CERTIFICATION

Like a pilot, you must rely on your spiritual ground crew. Your crew includes your parents, Young Men or Young Women leaders, your bishop and his counselors, home teachers, seminary teachers, and righteous friends. Think of interviews with them as pre-flight and post-flight inspections. Just as an airplane is checked at regular intervals, you will have opportunities to verify your readiness to fly during regularly scheduled interviews. Your spiritual ground crew will help you assess your abilities, prepare your flight plan, and counsel you about spiritual wind speed and potential turbulence. Certain activities, such as going to the temple, will require verification that you're cleared for takeoff. General conference talks are like hearing from a flight controller who can see all the planes at once and provide far-reaching navigational instructions. Obedience to the counsel provided will help you steer clear of potential danger.



READY TO FLY

In a spiritual sense, we are meant to fly. We are children of our Heavenly Father, and He wants us to reach spiritual heights. As His children, we should reach for the sky because with His help, we can always soar to new heights. **NE**

For more on this topic, visit youth.lds.org.



GENTLEMAN

I watched as a group of guys gathered around Chris and started to mock him.



ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREW ROBERTS

By Meagan Taylor

I was just starting my junior year of high school. The homecoming dance was approaching and I was so excited to get asked. There were several people I wanted to go with, and I couldn't wait to be asked by a cute, fun guy.

One day, I was about to walk into my English class when a senior boy, Chris, stopped me. "Meagan, will you go to homecoming with me?"

Chris has Asperger's syndrome, a form of autism that makes social interaction difficult, and he was constantly bullied and teased. I was about to turn him down, but then something stopped me—a sentence I remembered from my patriarchal blessing.

As I looked into Chris's hopeful eyes, I said, "I'll let you know, Chris."

I soon realized how selfish I sounded. God had not given me a trial. He had given me an opportunity to serve Chris. When I told Chris yes, I watched joy come over his face.

As the dance neared, I began to worry because I thought our date might be awkward. The day of the dance came, and as I picked up Chris to meet our group, he met me at his door with flowers. These were the first flowers anyone had ever given me. He ran to open my car door, and he was a true gentleman.

As we arrived at the restaurant, we were a little early, and I had the opportunity to talk with Chris. I learned that Chris had been

through a lot of hard trials. I felt guilty for all the times I'd laughed when others teased him. The group arrived, we ate, and then we went ice blocking. Every time I went down the hill, Chris ran down, carried the ice block up the hill for me, fixed the towel, and set it up for me to go down again. I'd never been treated like such a princess!

Later, as we entered the dance, I watched as a group of guys gathered around Chris and began to shove him, mock him, and dance around him. "Stop!" I yelled as I began to cry. I thought this was going to end in disaster. Then several guys from our group stepped in and moved the crowd away from Chris.

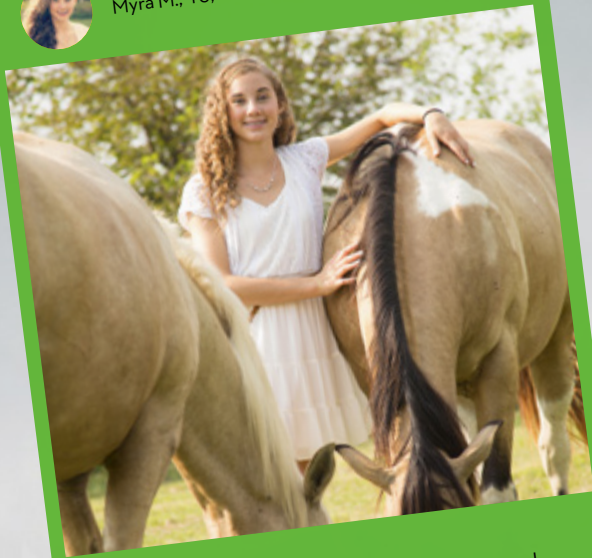
As the guys left, Chris came over to me and asked if I was OK. I'd stood here watching him get teased and mocked, and he wanted to know if I was OK! Who was this guy?

After the dance, I took Chris home. While we were driving, I felt truly humbled. I'd gone on this date thinking I would be helping Chris, when he'd really been helping me. Going to the dance with Chris taught me how wrong we are when we judge others unrighteously. God loves Chris just as much as He loves everyone else. I'd been so busy looking at the outside that I'd looked past the wonderful inside attributes Chris possessed. I believe all of God's children have attributes like that. No matter how different people may appear to be, they still have feelings and God loves them just the same. I thank Heavenly Father for the opportunity I had to go to the dance with Chris. It has forever changed my outlook on life. **NE**

The author lives in Utah, USA.



Myra M., 16, Missouri, USA



I'm Myra, and I love seeing all the animals on my family's farm. It's amazing to see how perfectly the animals were created to do their part.

I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ created me to have a purpose and the ability to fulfill it too! This makes me spring into action to do my best to live a meaningful life, as I was created to do.



Rheanna B., 17, Utah, USA



My name is Rheanna, and I like playing the violin, skiing, fishing, and camping. I also love painting—I've been doing it for forever! I painted the Salt Lake Temple for a Personal Progress project, and it took me a whole year to finish! I grew closer to the temple during that time, and when I was done, I also realized I could bear my testimony through art and music.





To see more stories like this from the Philippines check out [@LDSYouth](#) on Instagram.

My name is Gerrime M., I'm 18, and I live in the Philippines.

Hi, I am Gerrime, and I'm a dancer. In May 2017 I led the Zumba dances at our FSJ conference.

One time, my classmates asked me why Mormons don't use tobacco or drink wine and tea. I simply answered that I want to take care of my body—the Lord loves us, so He gave us bodies that He wants us to keep clean, healthy, and worthy so we can have the Holy Ghost.

The gospel has made my life different because I notice Heavenly Father helps me in many ways. The Spirit helps lead me away from temptations I encounter. I know the gospel of Jesus Christ can help us to make good choices day by day, draw nearer to Him, and become more like Him.

FUN STOP

Double Take

These two pictures of LDS youth in Peru are almost identical. Can you spot the 10 differences?



Lights, Camera, Hink Pink!

Do you remember hink pinks (see Mar. 2017 *New Era*)? **A hink pink is a rhyming pair of words with the same numbers of syllables that answers a riddle.** This time, the hink pinks are fake movie titles! Woot!

Example: In this sci-fi thriller, a 12-year-old Aaronic Priesthood holder transforms into a metallic robot. After a night in the rain, his joints don't move as stealthily as they should. The Squeakin' Deacon!

1. Sir Galahad is on a quest to bathe in the Crystal Pools of Enlightenment, which will allow him forever after to emit a soft glow in the dark.

2. Tired of his older brother stealing his orange on Christmas morning, a budding young electrician wires raw current to his candy-holding vessel on Christmas Eve. Will his plan save what is rightfully his?!
The _____
3. Dr. Frankenstein decides to combine a five-foot lizard with a flesh-eating fish to create a truly heinous creature.
The _____
4. What begins as a minor spat between two friends soon becomes a sweeping argument among all 16-17-year-old young women in the stake!

5. Recently escaped from the black lagoon, this diabolical villain is masquerading as your new math instructor at school.
The _____
6. Their tents were pitched, their marshmallows were roasting. It was almost time for Dracula's grandson to make his move on the unsuspecting humans.

A Riddle Tricky

The following riddle has two answers. (Hint: One is a name; the other is much simpler.)

I am one amidst six brothers. Without me there would be no golden plates, no sword of Laban, no Book of Mormon. I'm repeated four times in the book's table of contents. You remember me every time you say, "I will go and do." I worked in ore and made tools. I built a boat. So you won't find me in Jerusalem—I live in a land of promise.

Fun Stop answers on page 45.

With help, I've **repented** of repeated sins. But I'm **afraid** I'll fall back. How can I **resist temptation** and stay happy?

Replace your fear with faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, in His power to lift and transform you, and in His love and mercy. Remember Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and Their goodness to you. Be humble, pray, study the scriptures, and be faithful. (See Mosiah 4:11–12.) Then you can have joy, which is “the gift that comes from intentionally trying to live a righteous life, as taught by Jesus Christ.”¹

Complete repentance can be challenging. It often takes time, especially if you've sinned repeatedly. Avoid situations that bring temptation. You may need to change your daily routine, your surroundings, and your friends. If you slip, remember that you can still repent and change. Keep trying. Your Heavenly Father and your Savior won't give up on you. “The Atonement . . . can wash clean every stain no matter how difficult or how long or how many times repeated.”² **NE**

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, Oct. 2016 general conference.
2. Boyd K. Packer, Apr. 2015 general conference.



What should I do if **close family and friends** question the Church and **fall away**?

If people close to you begin to question whether the Church is true, love them and stay strong. When they talk with you about the Church, focus on what they're feeling rather than proving you're right. Don't make them feel ashamed for having questions or doubts. Don't act shocked or hurt, even if that's how you feel. If possible, talk to them about their questions calmly and try to help them find answers and to hold onto the faith, belief, and testimony they *do* have (for help, see “Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge” at doctrinalmastery.lds.org).

If someone wants nothing more to do with the Church, your relationship doesn't need to end. Love them, be kind to them, and pray for them. If the Church and the gospel aren't things you share with them anymore, hold onto things you *do* share. Let them know you care about *them*, not just their association with the Church. But don't give up on your own spiritual goals, either. Try to lift them up, but don't let them bring you down. **NE**

At school, people say rude things about me. How can I react without getting upset or letting it affect my confidence?

No doubt about it: unkind words can hurt. But knowing the truth that you are indeed a beloved child of God can help when others turn against you.

The Savior taught us what we need to do when He said: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:44–45).

He also set the example on how to treat others as He loved and served those around Him and forgave His enemies.

Remember the example of Joseph Smith, who was 14 years old when he experienced severe persecution after his experience in the Sacred Grove (see Joseph Smith—History 1:21–25). Persecution followed him the rest of his life, but he stayed true to what he knew was right and put his trust in God to see him through his trials.

So what can you do when some people say rude things to you? Choose to not give in to anger, even when you need to walk away. Turn to your Father in Heaven for comfort and guidance, talk to your parents and priesthood leaders, treat others kindly, and move forward with your life, doing what you know is right. As you do this, you will feel the Savior’s love—and no one can take that away from you. **NE**

Remember You Are a Child of God

I have been bullied, gossiped about, and spoken rudely to, so I know what it feels like when people are rude or mean. I have found that often it is best to walk away. It is hard not to let rude comments affect your confidence, but remember that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know and love you. They know your feelings and who you are when it feels like no one else does. It doesn’t matter what anyone else says; you are a cherished child of God.

Name Withheld



Respect Them

Turn to Heavenly Father in prayer for comfort. Satan wants you to believe the

hurtful comments others throw at you because he is jealous of all that you have and are. Don’t give in to that, and stand for who you truly are. But remember the person who said something rude to you is also a child of God, so don’t be rude back to them. Treat them with respect. And if the comments go on, tell a trusted adult, have faith, and just keep pushing forward. It will all be OK in the end.

Abby A., 16, Washington, USA



Turn to Prayer

I have gone through this situation and learned that the best thing to do is pray.

God will always be there and help us when we need it. People will never fully agree with what we do or say, and we do not have to please them. If we know who we are, what other people say about us does not matter.

Let us forgive others, and try to love them even when they hurt our feelings.

Areli B., 19, Mexico



Think of Others

I have had others say bad things about me. I know that it hurts a lot, makes us sad and

angry, and lowers our self-confidence. Does it matter what others say and think about you? No. I overcame this by thinking of others and how I can be more kind when others aren't. I prayed for help and to know if Heavenly Father knew me and loved me. I know that no matter what people say to you, He loves you more than you can ever know.

Eden W., 16, Utah, USA

Have Self-Control

Ignoring the people who are speaking badly about you must sound like a difficult thing to do, but it is the best option. Self-control prevents you from doing something unwise about the situation and making the problem worse. These people are only looking for someone to make fun of. The only power that gossip and talk have is your attention, so don't fuel them.

Richelle F., 17, Mexico

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



TURN TOWARD FORGIVENESS, KINDNESS, AND LOVE

"Brothers and sisters, if we have not

fully done so yet, let us turn more toward forgiveness, kindness, and love. Let us renounce the war that so often rages in the heart of the natural man and proclaim Christ's caring, love, and peace [see D&C 98:16]."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 2016 general conference.

UPCOMING QUESTION

How can I resist using bad language if I hear it almost all day every day?

Send your answer and photo by October 15, 2017.

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

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



Commandments

As a loving parent, our Heavenly Father gives us gentle guidance to safety and happiness. He does this through His commandments. In the April 2017 general conference, Church leaders taught us about God's commandments. For instance:

- "Becoming a Disciple of Our Lord Jesus Christ," by Elder Robert D. Hales
- "Overcoming the World," by Elder Neil L. Andersen
- "Whatsoever He Saith unto You, Do It," by Elder L. Whitney Clayton
- "And This Is Life Eternal," by Elder C. Scott Grow

Find these and more at conference.lds.org.

Share These Cards

Give yourself an easy reminder to think about this month's theme. Just place these cards in your scriptures, locker, or bedroom. You can also download or share them online at youth.lds.org.

Virtue is
more than sexual purity.
It is cleanliness and
holiness in mind
and body.
**VIRTUE IS ...
POWER.**

Elder Robert D. Hales
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
April 2017 general conference

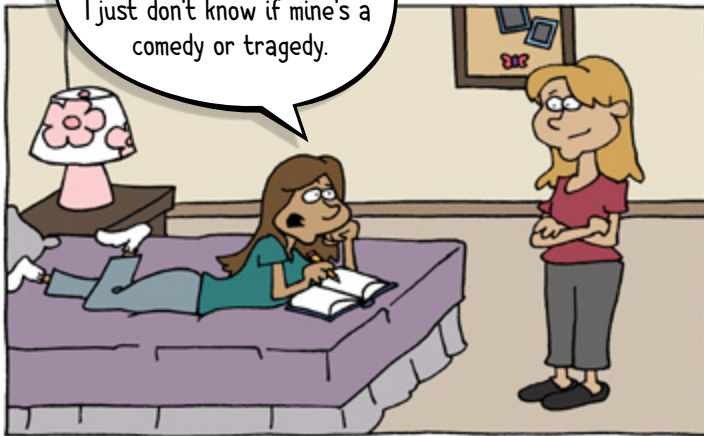
YOU AND I
do the will of the Father
by honoring our
covenants, keeping the
commandments, and
SERVING GOD
and our
FELLOWMEN.

Elder C. Scott Grow
Of the Seventy
April 2017 general conference



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

In Young Women we were encouraged to work on our personal histories. I just don't know if mine's a comedy or tragedy.



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

Well, sure. Twigs, dirt, pebbles-what did you expect trail mix to contain?



JOHNNY HAWKINS

What's your brother making?

Cement, apparently!



RYAN STOKER



THE BLESSINGS OF SEMINARY

During my second year in seminary, we had only three students in our class, but we had an incredible teacher who enjoyed sharing the gospel with us. In one class, we learned about how many people thought that the Church would come apart following the deaths of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. But other early members of the Church remembered that this is God's Church, not man's Church. Our teacher taught us that the Church would not fail, because it is the Church of Jesus Christ.

There is no doubt that our lives were changed by that lesson. That

afternoon, we decided that we would serve the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We would prepare to serve full-time missions. I continued attending seminary.

Over the following two years, I could tell how my life was being blessed from attending seminary, as well as how preparing to serve the Lord nourished my testimony and my desire to serve.

Attending seminary confirmed to me how special I am to Heavenly Father. It has helped me apply the gospel in my life, and above all it has helped me understand that the gospel is not something we live only

on Sundays. Seminary confirmed my desire to serve a mission. There is no doubt in my mind that the blessings of seminary remain present in my life. No one said it would be easy, but if we do decide to attend seminary, the Lord will bless us and will give us the strength necessary to fulfill the desires of our heart.

Begoña C., Guayaquil, Ecuador

WHEN PEOPLE OPEN THE BOOK

On my mission I've seen people who drink, smoke, and use drugs open the Book of Mormon, turn from their ways, and come back to their families and the Church. I've seen prodigal sons return home and serve missions after they opened this book. I've seen broken families read the Book of Mormon together and be sealed in the temple afterward. I've seen people who are totally desperate and don't know what to do open this book, and everything begins to fall into place.

The moment I open the Book of Mormon and use a verse to help someone, miracles happen. The power of God lies beneath those pages, waiting for a life to change, waiting for a miracle to unfold. I can promise you that miracles happen every time you open the Book of Mormon. They may not always be what we want them to be or happen when we want them to happen, but they will happen.

Elder Benjamin Baradi, Philippines Bacolod Mission

STRENGTHENED BY ROCKS

A few years ago I went on a week-long trip to Guatemala to work at a hospital. Shortly after our arrival, we went on a tour of the hospital. We passed by a courtyard, where I saw a little citrus tree. I noticed that someone had attached several large rocks to the limbs of the tree with wires.

"What a strange way to decorate a tree!" I thought.

I was about to walk away when one of our team leaders came up to me. She explained that the rocks had been placed on the limbs of the tree to strengthen it. Each rock had been selected to place just enough weight on the limb to bend it but not break it. By growing stronger under the weight of their rocks, the limbs were preparing to support the weight of the fruit that the little citrus tree would bear throughout its life.

In a way, we are all like the little citrus tree. Our Heavenly Father is the Master Gardener. Each of us has a set of rocks that come in the form of trials and challenges. Although these rocks can be heavy, we can trust that we will never have a trial or a challenge that we are unable to bear with His help. The weight will bend us but never break us—if we stay faithful. And the added strength we gain through our trials and challenges prepares us to support the weight of the fruit we will bear throughout our lives as chosen sons and daughters of God.

Tori Anne S., Texas, USA





By President
Henry B. Eyring

First Counselor in the
First Presidency

HOW TO INVITE THE HOLY GHOST

One of the ways I know that I'm feeling the influence of the Holy Ghost is that I feel a light and I am happy. When the Holy Ghost seems far from me, I feel a darkness and I am not happy. I have felt that ebb and flow of light and happiness in my life and so have you.

I like to feel of that light and I like to be happy. I don't have to wait for troubles and tests to make me want the help of the Holy Ghost. I can **choose to remember** what that companionship has been like, and whenever I do, I want that blessing again with my whole heart.

When we want the Holy Ghost and the peace of mind and enjoyment that comes with it, we know what to do. We **plead with God** for it in faith. It takes the **prayer of faith** to bring the companionship of the Holy Ghost. That faith has to be that God the Father, the Creator of all things, lives and wants us to have the Holy Ghost and wants to send us the Comforter. It takes faith that Jesus is the Christ and that He atoned for our sins and broke the bands of death. With that faith we **approach our Father** in reverence and with confidence that He will answer. With that faith we **close our prayer** in the name of Jesus Christ as His true disciples, confident that our deep repentance, our baptism by His servants, and our faithful service in His cause have purified us and made us clean and worthy of the blessing we seek, the companionship of the Holy Ghost. **NE**

From a Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional given on January 25, 2005.



HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?

I receive the Holy Spirit through the power of prayer, keeping my mind pure, and striving to keep gospel standards. Learning and understanding the role of the Spirit is a continuous process. And then following what my Savior asks gives me a greater desire to act upon it and be more Christlike.
Katie S., 17, Auckland Region, New Zealand

Share Your Experiences

Share how you invite the Holy Ghost into your life and read the experiences of other youth at youth.lds.org.



IT IS FAR BETTER TO
FOLLOW
the Creator
THAN THE CROWD.

Elder Gary B. Sabin
Of the Seventy
April 2017 general conference



HOW DO *you* PREPARE FOR

— GENERAL — CONFERENCE?

Send in your thoughts with your name, phone number, and where you're from to newera@ldschurch.org.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS