

February 2021

For the Strength of Youth

You Are the
Hero of Your
Own Story
p. 8

Don't Stay
Stuck in
the **Mud**
p. 14

How to
Recognize
the **Holy**
Ghost p. 6

Finding Joy in Christ

Maximiliano B.

I'VE REALLY ENJOYED setting goals for the new Children and Youth program. I've tried to set goals that will help me in my day-to-day life, but I've mostly been focusing on goals that will help me prepare for a mission. I've set goals to invite a friend to a Church activity, pass my classes in school, exercise two days a week, and improve my seminary attendance. I've already accomplished some of these goals and I'm really excited about it. It's cool to see that I've already changed a ton.

This has all influenced my life a ton because now, you don't just do an activity, write it down, and that's it. It's helping me to improve and change in all the different areas of my life. The goals, especially the spiritual ones, have helped me stay strong during these difficult times, which I know will also help me while I'm on my mission. And in some ways, a mission isn't meant to last for just two years but for the rest of your life, so I know if I keep working hard and stay obedient, all of this really will impact me forever.



@StrivetoBe

Photograph by German Sittner



Contents

2 KAYLI'S NEW LIFE

After she moved from Alaska to Texas, USA, this young woman saw many changes in the landscape—and, eventually, in herself.

6 LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE THE HOLY GHOST

By Brother Mark L. Pace

The Holy Ghost will guide and direct our lives as we learn to recognize and follow His promptings.

8 YOU ARE THE HERO OF YOUR OWN STORY

By Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Whether you feel like a hero or not, you are one!

14 STUCK IN THE MUD: A LESSON ON REPENTANCE

If we choose to repent, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ can help us get out of any sticky situation.

16 THE DEVIL'S CUNNING VS. GOD'S WISDOM: NO CONTEST

As Joseph Smith learned, we can trust in God's wisdom—no matter what.

20 PARK BENCH PROMPTINGS

She said she didn't want to talk. So why did the Spirit keep prompting the sister missionaries to talk to her?

24 THE STORY OF THE WITNESSES

See how the Three Witnesses came to behold the gold plates.

Also Inside . . .

12 Home Evening Object Lesson

19 Poster

22 How We Worship

26 Fun Stop

28 Questions and Answers

30 Firm Foundations



20



22



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ON THE COVER: *How to recognize the Holy Ghost*, p. 6.

Photograph from Getty Images



Kayli's New Life

This young woman traveled a lot more than miles to get where she is today.

By David Dickson
Church Magazines

THE LANDSCAPE was *nothing* like she was used to. Hot, dry, and not a snowflake in sight, Texas seemed almost like another planet to Kayli C. For a girl who grew up in Alaska, that's an understandable reaction.

"In Alaska, during the summer we called our hot weather anything above 50 degrees," Kayli said. "In Texas it was hard to breathe because it was so humid and hot outside."

For Kayli, the weather shift from Alaska to Texas was only one change among many. Her dad had just died in an unexpected tragedy, and their mother was unable to care for Kayli and her two younger sisters. At the time, Kayli, now a junior in high school, was 13, and her younger sisters, Jada and Rhianna, were only 10 and 8.

Extended family decided that the best solution would be for the three siblings to move in with their older sister and her husband in Texas.

Even though Jenny, Kayli's older sister, and Jenny's husband, Matt, welcomed the three siblings with open arms, this was anything but an easy transition.

First there was the weather. There was also the fact that, to the small-town sisters, the *huge* schools of Texas were overwhelming.

And then there was this whole practice of attending church . . .

The Way Things Were

"I loved growing up in Alaska," Kayli says. "I loved the snow and cold. I loved going outside. Everything was so pretty. And I loved ice skating, sledding, and all the winter stuff."



She's also quick to point out a few other things about life back in Alaska. "My friends and I saw that doing bad things was how you got popular. And to me, being popular was how you became happy. So I wasn't headed in a good direction."

One of Kayli's friends became pregnant. Another got involved with drugs. Some of her other friends started becoming extremely negative all the time.

"I liked living in Alaska," Kayli says again. "But I really have to wonder where my life would be if I'd stayed there. A lot of my friends in Alaska are not in a good place now."

The Way Things Change

One important event in Kayli's life happened before she was even walking and talking. While Kayli was still very young, her older

sister Jenny met the missionaries in college and joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After attending one year of college in Alaska, Jenny transferred to BYU-Idaho, where she met her husband, Matt. After graduation, Matt and Jenny moved to Texas.

When they took in the younger siblings, Matt and Jenny had two rules about religion: "The first was that they would attend church with us, as part of the family," says Jenny. "The second rule was that Matt and I would never require them to be baptized or even to take the missionary lessons. That had to be their own choice."

So, Kayli started attending church as well as midweek activities. At first, it didn't really do much for her. "I attended, but I didn't believe



anything,” Kayli says. “I wasn’t really paying attention.”

However, she began to notice something unusual. “Every time I went to church or youth activities, I’d be happy.”

After a couple years of noticing this, Kayli was ready to meet a very special friend.

Small Steps, Big Rewards

“I met my friend Maddie when we moved to another part of Texas the summer before 10th grade,” Kayli says. “She introduced herself and became such a great example to me.”

Kayli says that Maddie always seems upbeat and joyful, even when times get tough. As their friendship grew, Kayli looked forward to attending Church meetings and activities more.

Another big influence in Kayli’s life was seminary. Unlike when she first attended church, this time Kayli truly



“Maddie is such a good friend,” Kayli says.

started paying close attention to what was being taught. “The reason why I started paying attention in seminary is that the people around me were really good at answering questions and participating. I wanted to be a part of that.”

The stars were aligning, as they say. Between studying the Book of Mormon in seminary, seeing the gospel bring happiness to her older sister, brother-in-law, and others in the ward, and making some key friendships, Kayli was ready to say yes when Maddie asked if she’d like to take the missionary lessons at her house.

From there, things moved quickly. Kayli and her younger sister—who was asked independently and by a different

friend to take the lessons at *that* friend’s house—decided to be baptized on the same day.

“In Alaska, my happiness came from hanging out with my friends and trying to be popular,” Kayli says. “Now my happiness comes from the gospel. I’ve learned so much from the members here. I’ve learned that

happiness and light come through Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father.”

A Gospel-Centered Life

Kayli’s testimony of the gospel grew, in large part, with a close study of the Book of Mormon in seminary. These days, the Book of Mormon is still just



PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUBREY STOCK

as important to her as ever. "The Book of Mormon is one of the main things that has been bringing me happiness," she explains. "It's

changed me so much. I want others to feel that too and have been trying to share it."

She carries the Book of Mormon with her everywhere she goes, including school. "There are so many things that kids at school do that drive the Spirit away, like using bad language or trying too hard to be popular," Kayli says. "Keeping a Book of Mormon in my backpack helps me remember my goal: to keep the Spirit and share the positivity that the gospel brings us."

She doesn't know if her testimony would have had that chance to grow, though, if it hadn't been for the faithful examples of Church members around her. "Members of the Church were a part of me being baptized," she says. "Without their examples and spiritual light, I probably wouldn't have noticed anything different in them and would have continued not paying attention to anything Church-related."



Hope Always

Kayli and her siblings have definitely been through some hard times in the past. Yet Kayli has found hope for her future, and it's a hope she wants to pass on to anybody else struggling through a hard time right now.

"Remember to press forward and keep focusing on the positive side of things," Kayli says. "And if you've lost a loved one, remember that Heavenly Father has a plan for you and for others. We'll be able to live with our families forever if we do what's right."



Learning to Recognize the

By Mark L. Pace

Sunday School General President

WHEN I WAS A YOUTH, I didn't know what the Holy Ghost felt like. I was around 12 years old when my mother sat me down and asked me this important question: "Mark," she said, "has the Lord ever told you through the Holy Ghost that the Church is true?"

I wasn't in the business of lying to my mom, so I honestly and sheepishly responded "No?"

She then said, "Heavenly Father wants you to know for yourself, but you need to put in the effort. If you will read the Book of Mormon and pray, He will let you know of its truthfulness by the Holy Ghost."

I had my own copy of the Book of Mormon, but I had never read it on my own. With the determination to take this invitation seriously, I started my own spiritual journey. Each night before I went to bed, I read a chapter or so in the Book of Mormon. As I knelt down to pray, I asked Heavenly Father to let me know that it was true. As I prayed, a peaceful feeling rested upon me. I felt good inside.



HOLY GHOST



The Holy Ghost will guide and direct our lives as we learn to recognize and follow His promptings.

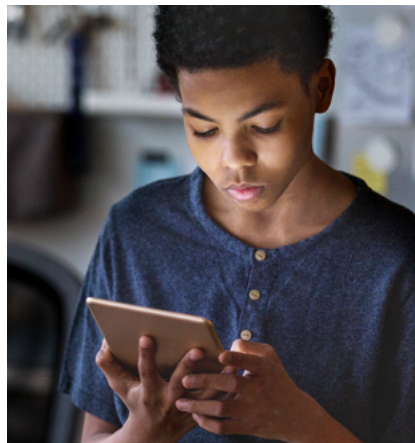
Were these feelings from the Holy Ghost? I wasn't really sure. This was all new to me, and I didn't know what the promptings of the Holy Ghost felt like. I wondered if an angel was going to come visit me or if perhaps a great divine light would appear in my room. Nevertheless, with sincere desire to receive the promised knowledge from the Holy Ghost, I continued to read and pray night after night. Every time I prayed, I felt feelings of peace, and I felt good inside.

It wasn't until later that I realized the Lord had been answering my prayers all along, but I had been looking for a different kind of answer. I just didn't realize that we can "feel" the promptings of the Holy Ghost.

Learn to Recognize Promptings

Oliver Cowdery once struggled to recognize promptings from the Spirit. When he asked the Prophet Joseph Smith about it,

he received this response from the Lord: "Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God?" (Doctrine and Covenants 6:23). He had already received an answer, but he didn't recognize it. The answer was peace to his mind—much like I had felt as a youth.



A little later, the Lord provided additional counsel for Oliver and the rest of us: "I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart. . . . This is the spirit of revelation" (Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3).

The Apostle Paul teaches us to recognize these feelings of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [and] meekness" (Galatians 5:22–23).

Promptings from the Holy Ghost are often quiet and subtle. God will rarely shout to try and get our attention. Instead, as we take time to pause, feel, and ponder, we show Him that we are listening and desire answers through the Holy Ghost. The next time you kneel in prayer, instead of jumping up after saying "amen," wait for a few moments. Stay on your knees and just listen. The Lord might be trying to "speak peace to your mind" just as He did with Oliver Cowdery and with me.

The Great Gift of the Holy Ghost

After baptism we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This divine gift provides help from a member of the Godhead throughout our lives. We are promised that as we strive to live worthy of this gift, the Holy Ghost "will show unto you all things what ye should do" (2 Nephi 32:5). The Holy Ghost confirms truth to our hearts, protects us from evil, and guides us throughout our lives. What a wonderful blessing!

I am grateful for the incredible gift of the Holy Ghost and His direction in my life. 🙏

How Has the Holy Ghost Blessed You?

This month in *Come, Follow Me* you will read how John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Not long afterward, Peter, James, and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood. This means that we can be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. How have you been blessed by the gift of the Holy Ghost?



PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES





**By Elder Dieter F.
Uchtdorf**

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

You Are the Hero of Your Own Story

WHEN I THINK of the youth and young adults of the Church of Jesus Christ, I feel a deep tenderness toward you. When I think of you, I see me!

As a young man, I stood at the fence of an international airport and watched those magnificent flying machines.¹ The take-offs and landings were a miraculous sight. One that stirred my soul! How I wanted to be in the cockpit of one of those impressive airplanes and feel the thrill of rising up from the ground, climbing above the clouds, and traveling unto new horizons.

But was that dream possible? I was not born into wealth. My family had twice been refugees, taking only what we could carry. I was considered by some to be an outsider. While other children played with their friends, I had to spend my afternoons and weekends working in our family laundry business, often as a delivery boy.

I say this because some of you might also be wondering if your dreams will ever become reality. I understand what you are feeling. If I could go back in time and talk to that young boy who stood on the other side of the fence yearning for a better future, I would say:

“It’s not going to be easy, but you can do it. You will be all right. The journey will be filled with challenges, Dieter. But the struggle itself will transform you into the person you want to be. Work hard. Be consistent. Focus on the things you can change, not so much on the things you cannot change. Have faith. Have hope. Trust in God. Know that if you do your part, things will work out.”

This is also my advice to you today.

You Are the Hero of Your Own Story

My dear friends, from my earliest childhood I loved adventure stories. Many of those stories start with a character who has a problem. The bigger the problem, the more compelling the story. And what the character doesn’t know is that things



are going to get a lot worse! They get so bad, in fact, that the hero may start to feel that he or she will never overcome the challenges before him or her.

This is, until something special happens in their lives, like a trusted person or a source of wisdom appears to help them gain enough knowledge and insight to formulate a new plan. The rest of the story is about how the hero follows the plan and overcomes the difficulties that confront him or her.

In a past general conference, I spoke about Bilbo Baggins—a very ordinary

hobbit who sets out on an adventure to slay a dragon. Gandalf was his source of wisdom and help. Or think of Obi-Wan Kenobi, who helps Luke Skywalker learn how to master the Force and defeat the Death Star. Anne of Green Gables has Marilla and Matthew, who love her and guide her as she goes from being an unwanted orphan to an accomplished student and beloved friend. Hermione Granger and Harry Potter have caring teachers at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry to help them learn what they need to do to overcome “He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.”



**Whether
you feel
like a hero
or not, you
are one!**

And now, I come to you. Whether you feel like a hero or not, you are one! You are the hero of your own life's story! Perhaps you are standing before a fence of your own, yearning for something you want to become. At times, you may feel alone—but you are not.

You are a child of God. He is your Heavenly Father. He loves you and is only a prayer away. You have Jesus Christ. The effects of His Atonement are always available to take away the pain and loneliness of mistakes. You have caring bishops and other Church leaders and your ward family who can guide and help you.

Trust That God Will Guide Your Steps

No matter how far away your destination feels, know this: you may not get to where you want to go in a day or a week or even a year. But if you continue to place one foot in front of the other and strive each day to follow your plan, things will work out and you will reach your goals. You will certainly find surprises and unexpected challenges during your adventure, but those are the things that make a successful story—your life story! And, especially, remember that if you trust in the Lord, learn of Him, have faith in Him, He will direct your path.²

My beloved friends, fellow travelers on the road of this great adventure of mortality, do not be discouraged. Do not give up. The future is bright! Someday you will look back on the person you are now with kindness and compassion, and you will know then that the steps you took today molded you into the wonderful person you have yet to become. 🙏

NOTES

1. See *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines* (1965), a British period comedy film.
2. See Proverbs 3:5–6



A Mighty Change of Heart

How does an egg teach us about the importance of a mighty change of heart?

By Emily Joy Powell
Church Magazines

MATERIALS:

- A jar with a lid
- One raw egg
- Vinegar
- Paper and pencils



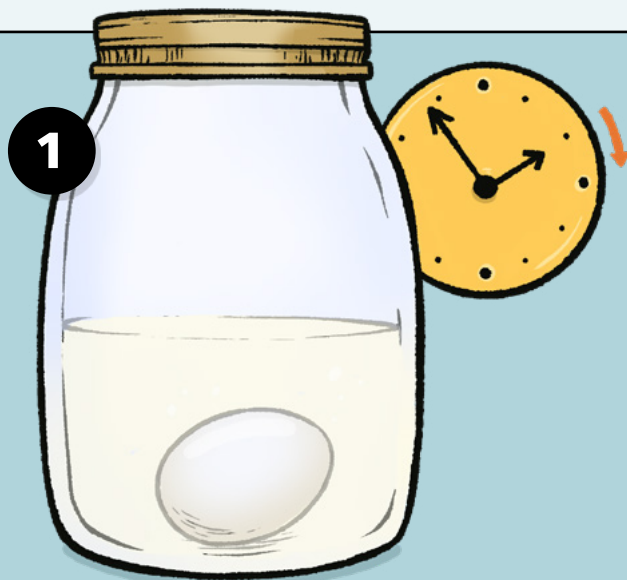
LOTS OF THINGS around us change. Winter changes to spring. Sunny mornings change to rainy afternoons. Flour, yeast, and water can even change into homemade bread! The scriptures talk about the need to have “a mighty change in us, or in our hearts” (Mosiah 5:2), but what does that really mean?

With this home evening object lesson, you can teach your family why Heavenly Father wants our hearts to change, and you’ll teach the principle by dissolving an eggshell in vinegar.

What to Do

1. Change can happen pretty quickly, such as a sudden shift in the weather or the transformation of ingredients into food. It is good to remember our hearts can take a bit longer to change, maybe even a lifetime. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught that this change comes “gradually and almost imperceptibly. . . . This phase of the transformation process requires time, persistence, and patience.”¹

The egg, just like our hearts, will need time to change. You might ask your family what changes they think will occur when the egg is left in the vinegar. Place the egg in the jar. Pour in enough vinegar to cover the egg, loosely place the lid on the jar, and let it sit for at least 24 hours. Even though the egg needs to soak for a while, you can check on it and watch the shell disappear.



2. After waiting 24 hours, gather your family back together to check out the changes with the egg. Remove the lid and slowly pour out the vinegar making sure to not drop the egg. Set the jar aside and read Mosiah 5:1-2 together.

Like king Benjamin's people, we can also experience a change of heart by learning to listen to Heavenly Father and keep his commandments. Has there been a time in your life where you have felt "no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2)?

3. Now rinse the egg under water and remove any of the left-over shell. Notice how smooth and soft the egg has become! Pass it around and let each family member feel the change. Just as the vinegar changes the egg, the Lord can change our hearts. As we listen to him and follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost, our hearts

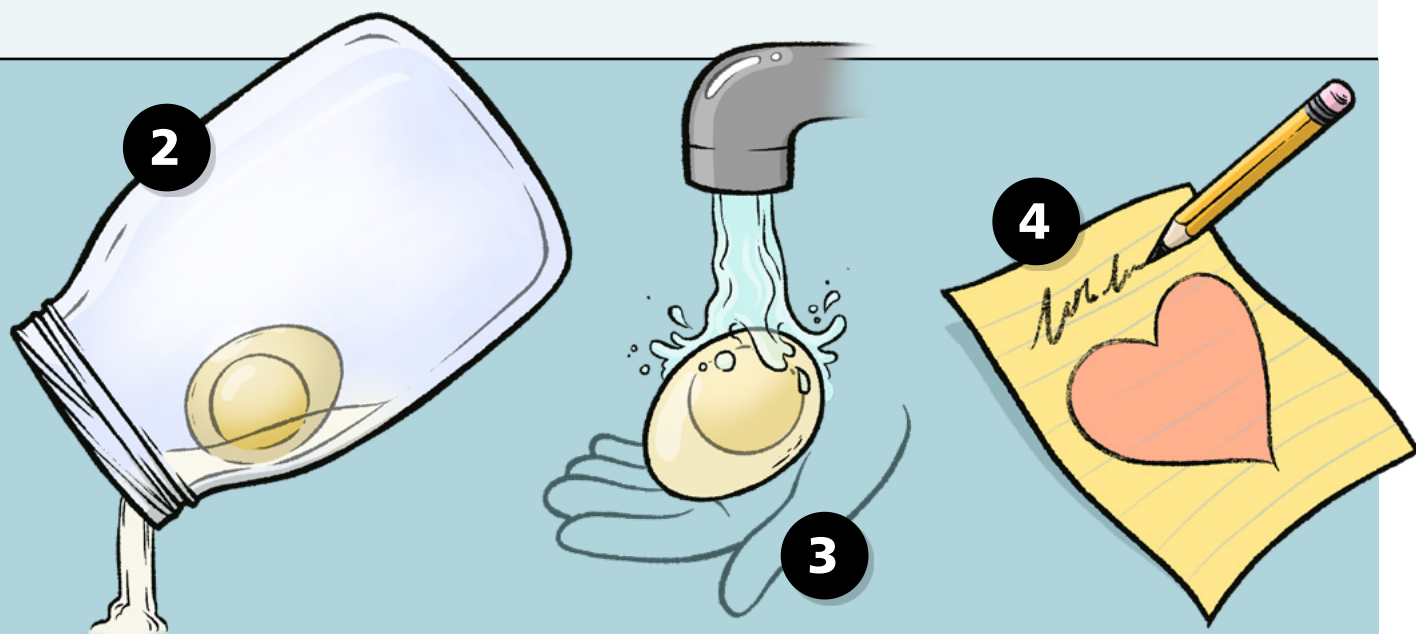
will soften. If we choose not to listen to Heavenly Father and turn away from Him our hearts can become hard, like a shell, and prevent us from feeling the Holy Ghost.

4. Have your family write down on a piece of paper one thing they can do to better have a soft heart. Could you spend more time in the scriptures or reviewing general conference? Maybe you feel prompted to listen better during your prayers? Take time to really think how you can work to soften your heart.

Want to try another experiment? Place a new egg in different liquids to see if you can get the same results. What happens if you leave it in lemon juice, soda, water, milk, or apple juice? 🙏

NOTE

1. David A. Bednar, Apr. 2007 general conference (Ensign or Liahona, May 2007, 21).





STUCK IN THE MUD

A Lesson on Repentance

By Emily Joy Powell
Church Magazines

SOMETIMES REPENTANCE can feel difficult to talk about. We may not even know what it means to repent. We might think only others can be forgiven or that we just need to repent of large sins. Don't listen to those thoughts.

Heavenly Father wants you to know what repentance really means. He wants you to know it is not a punishment but a blessing. Repentance is a change in us—our thoughts, our desires, our actions, our very nature. It is part of becoming more Christlike. Repenting helps you to feel more joy now.

Joyful Repentance

How can repentance bring joy?

Jesus Christ said, "Return unto me, and repent of your sins . . . that I may heal you" (3 Nephi 9:13). Repentance allows us to "feel the joy of having the Savior's help."^{*}

As we choose to turn to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, we find that They are there and ready to help us get out of any sticky situation.

Satan wants us to think we are alone when we make mistakes. That is simply not true! Repentance helps us see that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are always there. However, it is up to us to turn to Them. When we do, we find love, comfort, and joy knowing that we can be forgiven and try again.

A Muddy Afternoon

I thought of this lesson about repentance after watching my sister one afternoon. Our family's backyard opened onto a field that had been cleared for construction. During heavy rainstorms, the field would turn to mud. This was no average mud. No, this mud was gross, gooey, and deep. If you got stuck, getting out was like trying to run through peanut butter.



One day my little sister decided she wanted to go outside and play. My mom reminded her to stay on the cement patio close to the house. Instead, my sister wandered off into the field.

After a while, I heard somebody crying and looked outside. I couldn't believe it! My sister was sitting in the middle of the mud, completely covered, with tears rolling down her face. She kept trying to get out, but it was impossible. Every time she tried to move, she sunk deeper and deeper into the gross mud. Of course, we quickly ran out to rescue her.

I helped my mom lay down boards to so we could walk out to my sister without getting stuck ourselves. The mud was so thick that when my sister was pulled out, her shoes and socks were sucked right off!

Cleansed through Christ

Life can be a lot like that muddy field. If we're not careful, we can become bogged down by sin, worldly influ-

ences, or poor decisions. These things are like spiritual mud sticking to our spirit and make us feel awful inside.

As we choose to turn to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, we find that They are there and ready to help us get out of any sticky situation. It is because of the Savior Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice that we can be forgiven and become clean again. You will always find "joy in choosing to repent."^{*}

NOTE

* Dale G. Renlund, Oct. 2016 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 124).

Indescribable Joy

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared how he felt after repenting one time: "My feelings of guilt vanished, my gloomy mood lifted, and my heart felt light." Have you ever felt that way before? Write in your journal about a time you felt the joy of repentance.







THE DEVIL'S CUNNING VS. GOD'S WISDOM: NO CONTEST

You can learn what Joseph Smith learned: God's wisdom will always win in the end.

By David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

AN OFT-REPEATED EVENT from early Church history deals with the loss of the 116 manuscript pages of the Book of Mormon. Two reasons we tell the story of this event so frequently are: (1) it's directly related to two revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants (sections 3 and 10), so it comes up regularly in our scripture study; and (2) the lasting lessons Joseph Smith learned from these experiences can help us in many ways today.

One of those lessons was taught by the Lord in these words: "My wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil" (Doctrine and Covenants 10:43). The Lord wants us to trust in Him. If we do, we will gain greater understanding, strength, and peace.

Joseph Smith's Experience

After the 116 pages were lost, the Lord told Joseph Smith not to translate that portion of the gold plates again, because evil men were plotting to deceive people by showing differences between the two translations. But centuries before, the Lord had told Nephi to make the small plates and had told Mormon to include them in his record. So Joseph was able to restart the translation from there, and we have the Book of Mormon today. (See Doctrine and Covenants 10; 1 Nephi 9; Words of Mormon.)

The devil and those who served his purposes had laid a cunning plan, but the Lord's wisdom thwarted it.

The Devil's Cunning

The cunning of the devil can take many forms, but one basic message behind it seems to be "Don't believe." This was the main thrust of the adversary's very first message to Adam and Eve's children after their parents taught them the plan of salvation (see Moses 5:13). And it's the same message at the heart of his cunning plans today.

What is it that the devil doesn't want you to believe? Well, basically, anything true or good. If he can get you to not believe in the reality of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, the plan of salvation, the scriptures, the commandments, the Restoration, the prophets, then he has succeeded. Then it's easier to get you to give in to various temptations and keep you away from truth, repentance, and exaltation.

And how is it that he gets you not to believe? By planting fear, uncertainty, and doubt in your mind.

An Example for Today

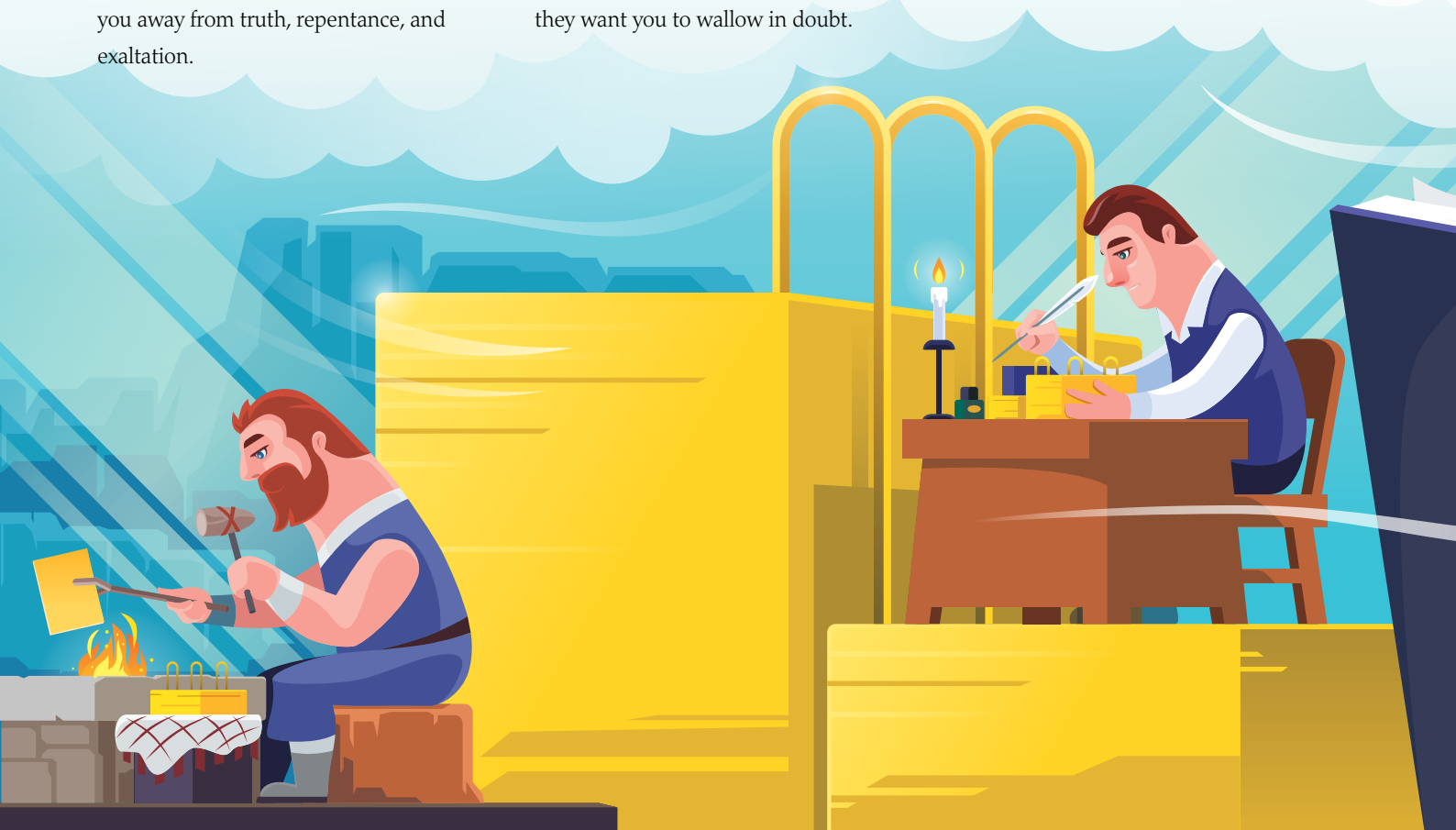
For instance, today (just as in Joseph Smith's day) the devil's message of unbelief focuses a lot on Joseph Smith and his work as the prophet of the Restoration. People will try to convince you that Joseph Smith wasn't a prophet and the Book of Mormon isn't true. If you do an online search, you could get the impression that the evidence is stacked against the Prophet and his work. But this is a cunning deception.

Just as people wanted to discredit Joseph Smith in his day and were willing to lie and deceive to do it, there are those today who would have you focus only on a set of partial or distorted facts about the Prophet or the Book of Mormon. They don't want you to see the whole picture; they want you to wallow in doubt.

Three Pieces of Counsel

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave these three pieces of counsel on studying about the Prophet Joseph Smith: "Be patient, don't be superficial, and don't ignore the Spirit" ("The Prophet Joseph Smith" [devotional address at BYU-Idaho, Sept. 24, 2013], byui.edu/devotionals).

- 1. BE PATIENT.** The Lord will always bless us for our patience and faith. If we're patient and keep believing, what's unclear often becomes clearer over time. And some "evidence" people bring against the Prophet today may be thrown out tomorrow because of new evidence that refutes it.



2. DON'T BE SUPERFICIAL. If we're thorough in our studies, we'll avoid getting stuck with someone else's intentionally limited, negative view and see the bigger picture about the Prophet—the facts and their context. We'll see that the fruits of his work are overwhelmingly good.

3. DON'T IGNORE THE SPIRIT. If we pay attention to the thoughts, promptings, and feelings that come from the Spirit, we'll have a more complete set of tools for obtaining and understanding truth. And we'll be able to move forward and grow spiritually even if we don't have all of the answers to our questions.

The Wisdom of God

The wisdom of God is indeed greater than the devil's cunning. Even if we don't know all the reasons behind the Lord's commands, we can still trust in Him and His prophets.

Nephi didn't know why the Lord asked him to make the small plates. He didn't know about the 116 pages and the plans to discredit Joseph Smith 2,400 years in the future. But Nephi knew it was "for a wise purpose in [the Lord]," and he knew that he could trust in Him (see 1 Nephi 9:5–6).

Today, we can trust in the Lord too, even if we don't know all the reasons behind the counsel He gives us through His prophets. We can keep on believing and having faith in Jesus Christ and His chosen prophet of the Restoration, Joseph Smith, even if we don't have all of our

questions answered. We can trust the Lord's timing. We can continue to have hope, even if our challenges seem scary and overwhelming.

We can do all of this because, no matter what, when the devil's cunning plans are pitted against God's wisdom, there's no contest. God's wisdom will always prevail. 🏰

He Knows the Future Perfectly

"The Lord is leading the Restoration of His gospel and His Church. He goes before us. He knows the future perfectly. He invites you to the work. He joins you in it. He has in place a plan for your service. And even as you sacrifice, you will feel joy as you help others rise to be ready for His coming."

President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency, "He Goes before Us," Apr. 2020 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 69).



PARK BENCH PROMPTINGS

The woman sitting on the bench didn't know it yet, but she needed to talk to us.

By Sam Lofgran
Church Magazines

IT WAS ANOTHER COLD and rainy day for my companion and me as we walked the streets of the small seaside town of Los Vilos, Chile. It had been a difficult few weeks for us—we didn't have anyone to teach and were struggling to find anyone who wanted to listen to our message. I was pretty discouraged, and I felt like we weren't having much success because we weren't teaching many lessons.

My companion and I were walking along that night, and I looked over and saw a woman on a park bench crying. I just knew we needed to speak to her. I looked at my companion and motioned toward the woman. As we walked up to her, I kept feeling like she really needed to hear something from us, but I couldn't think of what. I just knew it was important that we speak with her.

The instant she saw us, she said, "Go away. I don't want to talk to anyone."

I tried telling her who we were and that we just wanted to help, but she wouldn't listen. She asked us again to leave. I tried to think of what we could say but came up blank. We walked away.

We were only about four steps away when I got another feeling that we needed to talk to her. I turned to my companion and said, "We have to go back."



We went back, and the exact same thing happened, but this time she was more upset. "I need to be alone. Go away."

Again, I couldn't think of anything important to say to her. I could tell she was having a really hard day, but I didn't know what she needed to hear. So I sighed, and once more, we walked away.

We were a bit farther away when I got the feeling again: *Go talk to her.*



"I hate to say this, Hermana," I said, "but we *really* have to go back and talk to that lady."

My companion suggested that we not do it, since the woman was clearly not very happy with us.

Honestly, I agreed with her and felt a bit worried about going back again and annoying the woman, who was clearly in distress. But instead I said, "Nope, I really feel like we need to. She doesn't know it yet, but she needs to talk to us."

We cautiously made our way back to the woman on the bench, who was still crying. Before we got to her, I said a small prayer. "Heavenly Father," I thought, "please just help me know what this woman needs to hear."

As soon as we got to her, I said, "I'm sorry to bother you again, but I just want to tell you that you are a child of God. He really needs you to know that He loves you. Because He does. And we're happy to talk to you more, but if you really don't want us to, it's OK. I just needed you to know that."

She looked up at us with a much calmer expression. She said, "I guess you can come sit down."

Her name was Veronica. She opened up and told us about what was going on in her life. She was having a lot of family trouble and had gotten some bad news about her job. She had been feeling very lost and alone.

We shared a scripture from the Book of Mormon with her and asked if she wanted to hear more about the gospel. She politely declined but thanked us for our message and for being so insistent about talking to her. Before leaving, we prayed with her on that small park bench, and we asked that she and her family would be blessed and guided.

We never saw Veronica again, but that experience taught me that even though we might not see someone get baptized, just expressing love to someone is an important act of missionary work. Even the smallest actions can have a great impact, so when we receive a prompting—even if it seems a bit scary or we don't know why—it's important that we follow it. Because Heavenly Father knows what His children need. Even if the best we can do is to simply share the love of God with someone, that is still a success. 🙏

**EVEN IF
THE BEST WE
CAN DO IS TO SIMPLY
SHARE THE LOVE OF
GOD WITH SOMEONE,
THAT IS STILL A
SUCCESS.**



IN PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL



OLÁ! My name is Helaman B. And I am Julia Felix O. We are from Porto Alegre. Porto Alegre is the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, a southern state in the country of Brazil.

Helaman B.

I live with my parents, my great-grandma, and my older brother. I have another brother currently serving a mission in Hungary. Porto Alegre is a very big city and I've gotten lost more than a few times.



Our winter season is usually from May to August and our summer season is from November to March. It rains about 1,397 mm (55 inches) every year!

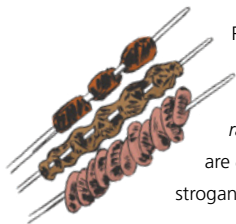
There are two other Church members in my school, but I don't have contact with them on a normal school day. I have other friends at school, though, who are not members. They are good people.

I love to play hymns on the Sabbath day. Playing them on the piano always bring the Spirit to me, no matter what.



Julia Felix O.

I was born in São Paulo and moved to Porto Alegre when I was three years old. My father served in Porto Alegre as a full-time missionary. I currently live with my mother, father, and one-year old brother.



People in Porto Alegre are very fond of eating barbecued meat, also called *churrasco*. But my favorite foods are *estrogonofe* (a Brazilian beef stroganoff) and pizza.

At my school, I have two friends from the Church who study in other classes. We try to be good examples of Jesus Christ to everyone around us.

The temple in Porto Alegre is 30 minutes from my house. I always love going to the temple and helping with baptisms. I am happy to be able to help people who are on the other side of the veil.

Porto Alegre means
"Happy Port"
(*porto* = port;
alegre = joyful).



It is built at the junction
of 5 rivers.

They are famous for their
***churrasco*, or barbecue.**

Home to two interna-
tional football clubs.
Football is the national
sport of Brazil.



The temple in Porto Alegre
was the 102nd to
be dedicated.

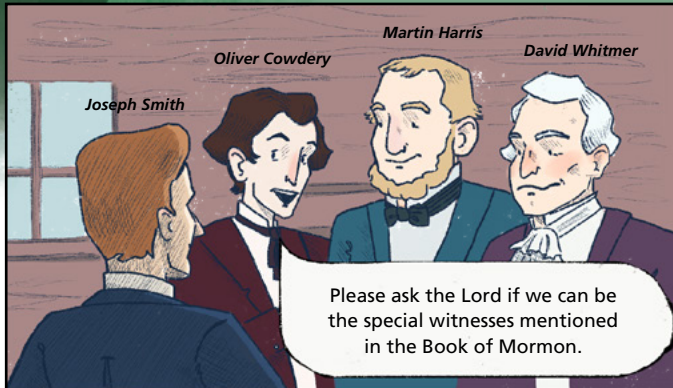
There are 2 missions in
Porto Alegre
(South & North).

Tell Us How You Worship

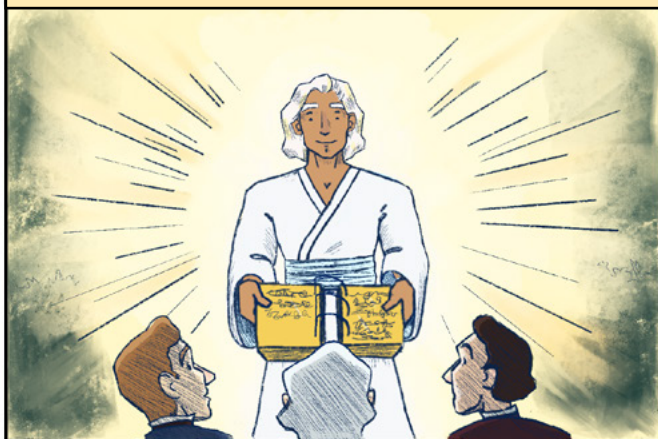
We would love to hear how you worship where you live. Send us a brief description of your location, what you do on the Sabbath, your favorite activities, or anything else you can think of. Send it to ftsoy@ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

The Story of the Witnesses

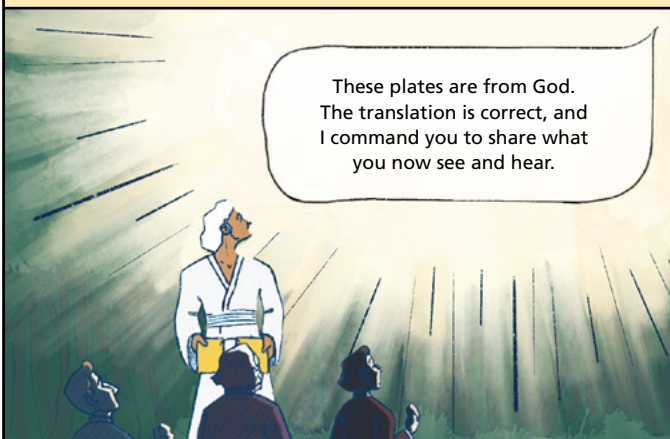
WRITTEN BY ERIC B. MURDOCK, ILLUSTRATED BY ELLIE OSBORNE



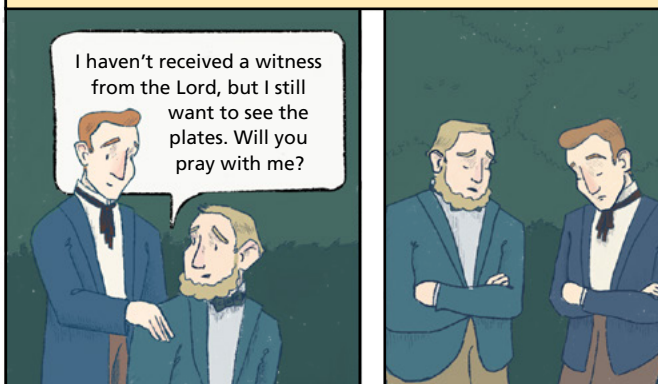
SOON THE ANGEL MORONI APPEARED.



THEN THEY HEARD THE VOICE OF GOD.



LATER, JOSEPH FINDS MARTIN PRAYING.



A FEW DAYS LATER AND WITH DIRECTION FROM GOD, JOSEPH INVITED EIGHT OTHERS, INCLUDING HIS FATHER AND TWO OF HIS BROTHERS, TO SEE THE PLATES. THEY DID NOT SEE AN ANGEL, BUT THEY GOT TO HOLD THE PLATES IN THEIR HANDS.

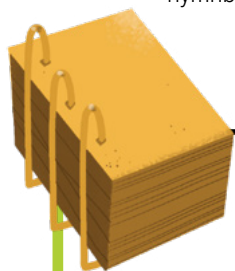


All eleven witnesses attached their names to statements in the Book of Mormon, known as Testimony of Three Witnesses and Testimony of Eight Witnesses. Though some left the Church for a time, they all bore testimony throughout their lives that they had seen the gold plates. None of the witnesses ever denied what they saw.

FUN STOP

MUSICAL NUMBERS

In the early days of the Church, Emma Smith was asked to put together a collection of hymns (see Doctrine and Covenants 25). How many hymns were included in that first hymnbook? To find out, do the math below.

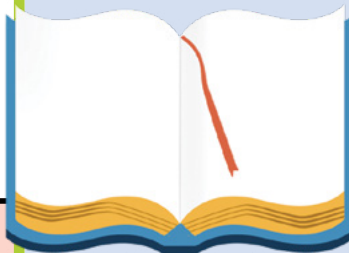


A. Take the year the Church was organized and divide it by the number of witnesses of the Book of Mormon who were shown the gold plates by an angel (see Ether 5:4).

B. Divide the result of A by the number of books in the Old Testament called Samuel.



C. Take the result of B and subtract the number of sections in the Doctrine and Covenants.



D. Take the result of C and add the youngest age at which a person can be baptized (see Doctrine and Covenants 68:25).



E. Divide the result of D by the number of books of Moses in the Old Testament (see 1 Nephi 5:11).

F. Take the result of E and add the number of days in a week.



G. Divide the result of F by the number of "days" it took God to create the earth (see Doctrine and Covenants 77:12).

H. Multiply the result of G by the number of virgins in the Savior's parable (see Matthew 25:1).



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOSH TALBOT



I. Take the result of H and add the number of loaves the Savior used to feed the four thousand (see Matthew 15:34–38).

J. Take the result of I and add the number of articles of faith we have.



ANSWER: _____

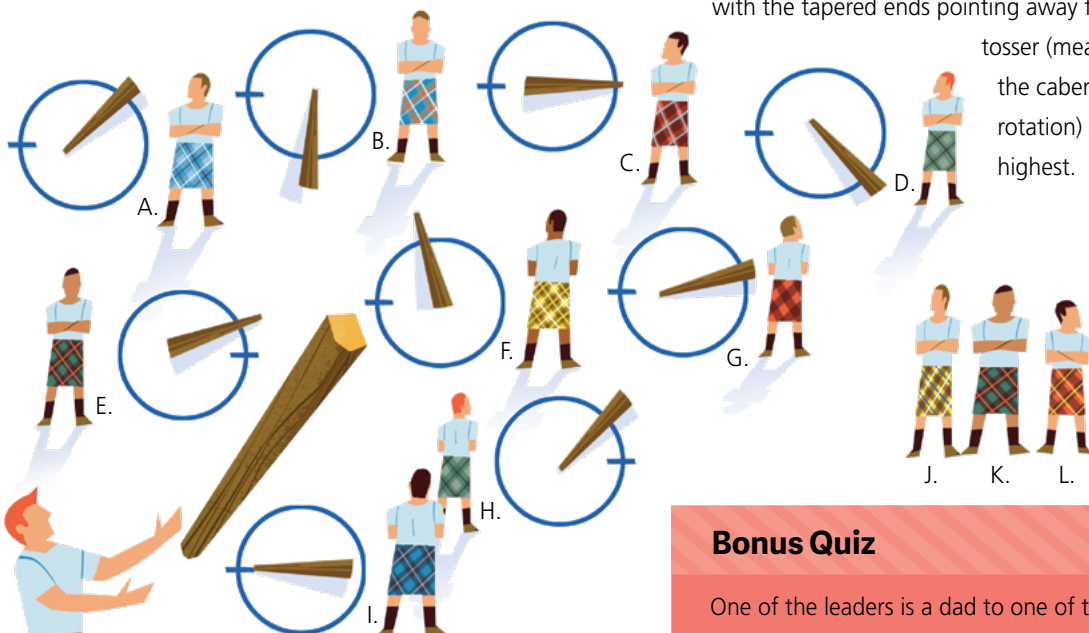


CABER TOSS QUIZ

In Scotland, a favorite sport is the caber toss. A caber is a long, tapered (smaller at one end) log that an athlete throws in the air. The way to win is to pick up the caber at the tapered end, toss it end-over-end, and have the

tapered end pointing away from the tosser in the 12:00 position on a clock.

Can you figure out which of these Scottish youth did the best toss in their activity today? Hint: the cabers with the tapered ends pointing away from the tosser (meaning that the caber did a full rotation) score the highest.



Bonus Quiz

One of the leaders is a dad to one of the young men. Can you spot them by their matching family kilts?



Come, Follow Me Resources

*“Use the *Come, Follow Me* manual! I often*

*struggle making my scripture study meaningful, but by using resources in the manual, I am able to understand what I’m reading. Ever since I started using *Come, Follow Me* with my scripture study, I have been able to better understand the scriptures and my Heavenly Father.”*

Monique B., 18, Utah, USA



Write Down Promptings

“For me, praying before studying and

writing down ideas that come to my mind really help me personalize and understand the scriptures. I have a little journal where I write my thoughts as I read. It helps me to understand and love the scriptures.”

Lindsay C., 16, Oregon, USA



Ask and Search

“Ask your parents, leaders, and family.

They can help you understand. But especially, pray to Heavenly Father and ask Him to help you. Then as you read, search for the little gems that make you feel warm inside.”

Lolade O., 15, Québec, Canada

“I don’t understand a lot of the scriptures. How can I get more out of scripture reading?”

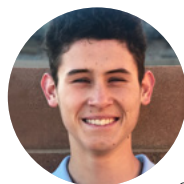


Book of Mormon Videos

“I started watching the Book of Mormon

videos, and I really felt the Spirit. I use the scriptures to follow along with the video. If you have trouble learning or believing the scriptures, the Lord will help you, even if you don’t know it.”

Aidan D., 11, Nebraska, USA



Take It Slow

“A good way to get a lot out of your scripture study is read-

ing a passage line by line. You could also look for a footnote or think of how that scripture relates to your life.”

Shane S., 13, New Mexico, USA

“My testimony of the Book of Mormon . . . continues to grow as I continuously search, with a sincere heart, to more fully understand the word of God as contained in this extraordinary book of scripture.”

Elder Ulisses Soares of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2020 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 34–35).

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

How can I know that I hear the Lord's voice in my life?

PRESIDENT RUSSELL M. NELSON has invited us to “think deeply and often” about how we hear Jesus Christ and to “take steps to hear Him better and more often” (“‘How Do You #HearHim?’ A Special Invitation,” Feb. 26, 2020, [blog.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org)).

We can hear Him through the scriptures and the words of prophets. But it's not just hearing or reading those words that is the key. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord explained:

“It is my voice which speaketh [these words] unto you; for they are given by my Spirit unto you . . . ;

“Wherefore, you can testify that you have heard my voice” (Doctrine and Covenants 18:35–36).

In addition, seeking to hear Him is not something we do in spurts. President Nelson has said, “It takes conscious and consistent effort” (“Hear Him,” Apr. 2020 general conference [*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 89]).

As you study, pray, worship, serve, and obey the Lord's commandments, He will bless you with His Spirit and, through Jesus Christ's Atonement, will change you. Then you can know you have heard His voice.



What Do You Think?

Sometimes I feel like nothing I do matters. How can I make a difference?

Send your answer and photo by March 15, 2021.

Go to ftsoy.ChurchofJesusChrist.org, click “Submit Your Work.” Sign in with your Church Account and then select “For the Strength of Youth” under “Choose Magazine.” Click “Add File” to select your file and photos, and then click “Submit” to upload and send us your file. Or email us at ftsoy@ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

FUN STOP ANSWERS (PAGES 26–27): Musical Numbers: A. 1830÷3=610 B. 610÷2=305 C. 305-138=167 D. 167+8=175 E. 175÷5=35 F. 35+7=42 G. 42÷6=7 H. 7×10=70 I. 70+7=77 J. 77+13=90 Answer: 90 **Caber Toss Quiz:** The winner is I. Bonus Quiz: K. I. S. E. S. dad.

IT'S WORTH IT

I HAVE SEMINARY at 6 a.m., before school. I wake up really early to have time to eat breakfast, have family prayer, and walk to the church. But the more I go to seminary, the more I see that waking up early is worth it!

The teachers are really great and always teach with the Spirit. They are wise and know so much about the gospel, which made me excited to go and learn more.

Going to seminary each morning helped me be brave enough to share the gospel with two classmates and helped me explain the scriptures. Seminary also helped me be brave enough to stand up for my beliefs. I was listening to the radio one morning, and a man was saying Joseph Smith was a liar. I was really frustrated by this because I had gained a strong testimony of Joseph Smith in seminary and knew that what the man was saying wasn't true.

I told my seminary teacher about it, and he suggested I write a letter to the man and share my testimony of Joseph Smith. I wrote the letter and bore my testimony about Joseph Smith and the Church. It helped me calm down and not be so frustrated. He never responded, but I felt a confirmation of my testimony while I was writing. It made me really grateful that I had gained such a strong testimony of the Prophet and the gospel in seminary.

Raquel B., Argentina





SUNDAY SCHOOL SERVICE

I'M A DEACON. My parents have taught me that I should be an example for my friends because I hold the priesthood and because I represent Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. It really helps me to choose the right and look for chances to serve others. I know that if I do good things, my friends will see what I do and maybe want to do good things too.

After Sunday School a while ago, I was in the hall when I saw a teacher who needed help with some chairs. She was going to set them up outside the building for an activity. She didn't ask me to help her, but I saw that she needed help. There were a lot of chairs, and she was all alone. So I took most of the chairs outside and set them up for her.

Afterward, the teacher said, "Thank you for helping." It wasn't a big deal for me since it didn't take very long, but she was really grateful, which made me feel good. Later, the teacher told my mom about what I had done. My mom said I did a good thing and that I should keep looking for opportunities to serve others, because it's something that Christ would do.

I was happy and grateful that I had served. It made me feel good, and it made me want to serve more often.

Emiliano H., Texas, USA

THE GRATITUDE FLASHLIGHT

WHEN I ENTERED high school, it seemed like everything became a lot harder for me. I was jealous of other people's talents, of people who seemed more cool than I was, of opportunities that came to others but not to me. I was always wishing for or wanting something I didn't have.

I talked to my parents about it. They reminded me that Heavenly Father has already given me everything I need but that He may not give me every single thing I want. My parents helped me realize that when you understand that nothing you truly need is lacking, you can find peace.

I recently read a book that compares gratitude to a flashlight. If you go outside at night where there aren't any lights, all you will see is darkness. But if you go outside with a flashlight and shine it on what's around you, you can see everything that is there.

Gratitude is like that light. When it shines, it lights up what is already there. But because you can now see it, you appreciate it more.

The great thing about the gratitude flashlight is that you can use it day or night, no matter where you are or what circumstances you're in. All you need to do is turn it on.

Ethan B., Utah, USA

Fear Not

The Lord has told us how to live without fear.

Doctrine and Covenants 6:33–37

33 Fear not to do good, my sons, for whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap; therefore, if ye **sow** good ye shall also **reap** good for your reward.

34 Therefore, fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail.

35 Behold, I do not condemn you; go your ways and sin no more; perform **with soberness** the work which I have commanded you.

36 Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.

37 Behold the wounds which pierced my side, and also the prints of the nails in my hands and feet; be faithful, keep my commandments, and ye shall **inherit** the kingdom of heaven. Amen.

NOTES

1. See D. Todd Christofferson, "To Always Remember Him," *Ensign*, Apr. 2011, 54.
2. See Luke 24:38–39; 3 Nephi 11:14–15.



Fear not to do good

The Lord wants us to do good, so we shouldn't be afraid to do it.



Sow . . . reap

To *sow* means to plant seeds. To *reap* means to harvest what you planted. This is sometimes called "the law of the harvest." If you plant good seeds, you'll harvest good food. If you plant bad seeds, you'll harvest bad food. Doing good is like planting good seeds. You'll receive good rewards.



I do not condemn you; go your ways and sin no more

The Lord can forgive us if we repent. We shouldn't let our past sins keep us from repenting, moving forward, and doing good.



With soberness

In a serious, calm, thoughtful manner.



Look unto me in every thought

This is another way of saying "always remember him," as we promise to do in the sacrament.¹



Behold the wounds

The wounds in the hands, feet, and side of the Jesus Christ are signs that He was crucified and resurrected.² They show us that He has overcome all things. This gives us strength and courage so that we do not need to doubt or fear.



Inherit

Heavenly Father will give us everything He has if we obey Him.



Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith

Had 11 children; 3 girls and 8 boys.

Moved 8 times within 10 years.

Married in Vermont, January 1796.

Worked in storekeeping, trade, and farming.

The Smiths worked hard to provide for their family and rely on God. They encouraged each of their children to have faith, pray, and study the Bible.

WE WANT YOU

THIS IS YOUR MAGAZINE.
BE A PART OF IT!

SEND US:

- Personal stories (see pages 30–31).
- Photos and descriptions of how you live the gospel (see inside front cover, page 22).
- Answers to questions other youth have (see page 28).
- Activities or comics (see pages 26–27).

Email them to us at ftsoy@ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

