

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • AUGUST 2017

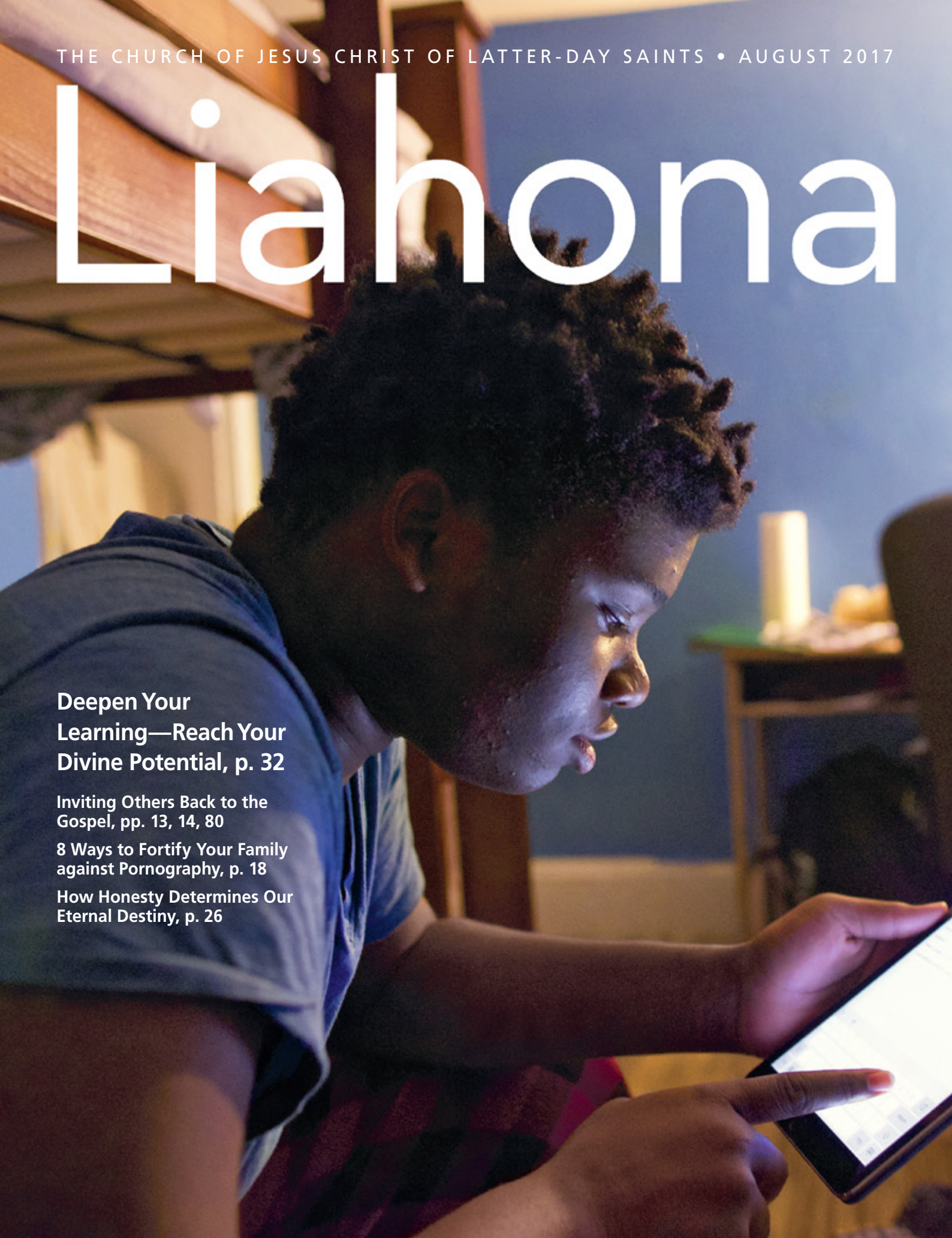
Liahona

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The Kirtland Temple, pictured in the background in 1907, was the first temple built in this dispensation. The Prophet Joseph Smith saw the temple in a vision, which provided its design (see D&C 95). The temple was dedicated on March 27, 1836 (see D&C 109). Of that great spiritual experience, Eliza R. Snow wrote, "Angels appeared to some, while a sense of divine presence was realized by all present" (in Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 307).

Photograph by George Edward Anderson,
courtesy of Church History Library



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Photograph by Cody Bell.

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**By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf**
Second Counselor in
the First Presidency

A DISCIPLE'S LIFE

Thirty years ago in Ghana, a young college student named Doe stepped inside an LDS meetinghouse for the first time. A friend had invited Doe to come with her, and Doe was curious to know what the Church was like.

The people there were so nice and warm that she couldn't help but wonder, "What kind of church is this?"

Doe felt so impressed that she decided to learn more about the Church and its people, who were filled with so much joy. But as soon as she began doing so, well-meaning family and friends began to oppose her at every turn. They said terrible things about the Church and did all they could to dissuade her.

But Doe had received a testimony.

She had faith, and she loved the gospel, which was filling her life with joy. And so, she entered the waters of baptism.

Afterward, she immersed herself in study and prayer. She fasted and sought the influence of the Holy Ghost

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

President Uchtdorf teaches us that the path of discipleship is difficult but that those who live the "peaceable life of a disciple of Jesus Christ are those who will eventually find joy." Just as President Uchtdorf tells the story of Doe to show how a true disciple of Christ can find peace and joy despite life's trials, you may consider sharing a story from your own life about why you choose to follow Christ and how He has strengthened you. When you are led by the Spirit, sharing personal stories can strengthen those you teach.

in her life. As a result, Doe's testimony and faith grew stronger and deeper. Eventually she decided to serve a full-time mission for the Lord.

After returning from her mission, she dated and married a returned missionary—the very one who had baptized her years earlier—and they were later sealed in the Johannesburg South Africa Temple.

Many years have passed since Doe Kaku first experienced the joy of the gospel of Jesus Christ. During that time, life has not always been sweet for her. She has endured her share of heartbreak and despair, including the loss of two children—the deep grief of those experiences still weighs heavily upon her heart.

But she and her husband, Anthony, have striven to draw close to each other and to their beloved Heavenly Father, whom they love with all their heart.

Today, 30 years after she entered the waters of baptism, Sister Kaku recently completed another full-time



Doe Kaku at the time of her conversion to the Church.



Sister Kaku today with her husband, Anthony.

mission—this time together with her husband, who served as a mission president in Nigeria.

Those who know Sister Kaku say there is something special about her. She glows. It's hard to spend time with her without feeling happier yourself.

Her testimony is certain: "I know that the Savior sees me as His daughter and friend (see Mosiah 5:7; Ether 3:14)," she says. "And I am learning and trying so hard to be His friend too—not only by what I say but also by what I do."

We Are Disciples

Sister Kaku's story is similar to that of many others. She had a desire to know the truth, she paid the price to gain spiritual light, she demonstrated her love for God and her fellowman, and along the way she experienced hardships and sorrow.

But no matter the opposition, no matter the sorrow, she kept moving forward in faith. And just as important, she kept her joy. She found a way not only to endure the hardships of life but also to thrive despite them!

Her story is similar to yours and mine.

Rarely is our journey smooth or without trial.

We each have our heartaches, our disappointments, our sorrows.

We may even feel discouraged and at times overwhelmed.

But those who live a disciple's life—who remain faithful and keep moving forward in faith; who trust God and keep His commandments;¹ who live the gospel day by day and hour by hour; who give Christlike service to those around them, one good deed at a time—are those whose small acts often make a big difference.

Those who are a little kinder, a bit more forgiving, and a touch more merciful are the merciful who will receive mercy.² Those who make this world a better place, one caring and loving act at a time, and who strive to live the blessed, satisfying, and peaceable life of a disciple of Jesus Christ are those who will eventually find joy.

They will know that "the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men . . . is the most desirable above all things . . . and the most joyous to the soul."³ ■

NOTES

1. See Mosiah 4:6.
2. See Matthew 5:7.
3. 1 Nephi 11:22–23.



YOUTH

Joy as a Disciple of Jesus Christ

Have you ever had a bad day? What did you do to cheer up? President Uchtdorf knows that “we each have our heartaches, our disappointments, our sorrows. We may even feel discouraged and at times overwhelmed.”

His solution is to live what he calls “a disciple’s life”: “remain faithful and

keep moving forward in faith.” When we move forward in faith, we are able to trust God, keep His commandments, and serve others—and feel joy during all of it! As President Uchtdorf said, “Those who live a disciple’s life . . . are those whose small acts often make a big difference.”

Consider making a list of ways that you can live a disciple’s life. For instance, you could write down a service idea like “Help a parent prepare dinner” or an idea for keeping the commandments like “Praying for more patience with my siblings.” The next time you feel frustrated or overwhelmed, pull out your list, pick an idea, and try it!

CHILDREN

Happy Helping

When we follow Jesus and try to be kind, we help make others happy. And being kind makes us happy too! Circle two or three things you could do this week to be kind to others.



Living a Consecrated Life

Prayerfully study this material and seek for inspiration to know what to share. How will understanding the purpose of Relief Society prepare daughters of God for the blessings of eternal life?

“To consecrate is to set apart or dedicate something as sacred, devoted to holy purposes,” said Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “True success in this life comes in consecrating our lives—that is, our time and choices—to God’s purposes.”¹

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “We tend to think of consecration only as yielding up, when divinely directed, our material possessions. But ultimate consecration is the yielding up of oneself to God.”²

As we consecrate ourselves to the purposes of God, our faith in Jesus Christ and in His Atonement will increase. As we live a consecrated life, we can be made holy through those actions.



Faith
Family
Relief

Carole M. Stephens, former First Counselor in the Relief Society Presidency, said: “Elder Robert D. Hales taught, ‘When we make and keep covenants, we are coming out of the world and into the kingdom of God.’

“We are changed. We look different, and we act different. The things we listen to and read and say are different, and what we wear is different because we become daughters of God bound to Him by covenant.”³

Consecration is the covenant God makes “with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their

inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33). Living a consecrated life is in harmony with God’s plan for us.

Additional Scriptures

1 Thessalonians 1:3; Doctrine and Covenants 105:5
reliefsociety.lds.org

NOTES

1. D. Todd Christofferson, “Reflections on a Consecrated Life,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 16.
2. Neal A. Maxwell, “Consecrate Thy Performance,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 36; *Liahona*, July 2002, 39.
3. Carole M. Stephens, “Wide Awake to Our Duties,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 115–16.



Consider This

How does consecrating our lives to the Lord help us become more like Him?

APRIL 2017 CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

As you review the April 2017 general conference, you can use these pages (and Conference Notebooks in future issues) to help you study and apply the recent teachings of the living prophets and apostles and other Church leaders.



DOCTRINAL HIGHLIGHT

Be Not Guilty of Persecution

In various countries across the world, I have had small glimpses into the ugliness of prejudice and discrimination suffered by those who are targeted because of their race or ethnicity.

“Persecution comes in many forms: ridicule, harassment, bullying, exclusion and isolation, or hatred toward another. We must guard against bigotry that raises its ugly voice toward those who hold different opinions. Bigotry manifests itself, in part, in unwillingness to grant equal freedom of expression. Everyone, including people of religion, has the right to express his or her opinions in the

public square. But no one has a license to be hateful toward others as those opinions are expressed.

“. . . The Savior taught, ‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them’ [Matthew 7:12]. For us to ask for respect, we must be respectful. Furthermore, our genuine conversion brings ‘meekness, and lowliness of heart,’ which invites ‘the Holy Ghost [and fills us with] perfect love’ [Moroni 8:26], an ‘unfeigned love’ [1 Peter 1:22] for others.”

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Our Good Shepherd,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 31–32.

PROPHETIC PROMISE



GOD TRUSTS US TO SERVE OUR ANCESTORS

“God knew that you would feel drawn to your ancestors in love and that you would have the technology necessary to identify them. . . . And He knew that He could trust you to accomplish this work in behalf of your ancestors. . . .

“This is the work of our generation. . . . You have felt this, as I have, when you have experienced an increase of love as you looked at the picture of an ancestor. You have felt it in the temple when the name on a card seemed like more than a name, and you couldn’t help but sense that this person was aware of you and felt your love.

“I testify that God the Father wants His children home again, in families and in glory. . . . I promise you the inspired help that you seek and need.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Gathering the Family of God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 21, 22.



Sin-Resistant Means Being Repentant

Being sin-resistant doesn't mean being sinless, but it does imply being continually repentant, vigilant, and valiant.

Perhaps being sin-resistant comes as a blessing from repeatedly resisting sin. . . .

"The stripling warriors 'were exceedingly valiant for courage. . . . They had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him' [Alma 53:20–21]. These young men went to war carrying Christlike virtues as weapons against their adversaries. . . .

"Our children don spiritual armor as they establish patterns of personal daily discipleship."

Joy D. Jones, Primary General President, "A Sin-Resistant Generation," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2017, 88.

ANSWERS FOR YOU



How Can I Know If My Answer Is from the Spirit or Just Me?

"Remember the words of Nephi. 'I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the thing which I should do. Nevertheless,'

he said, 'I went forth' [1 Nephi 4:6–7].

"And so must we. We must be confident in our first promptings. Sometimes we rationalize; we wonder if we are feeling a spiritual impression or if it is just our own thoughts. When we begin to second-guess, even third-guess, our feelings—and we all have—we are dismissing the Spirit; we are questioning divine counsel. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that if you will listen to the first promptings, you will get it right nine times out of ten."

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Let the Holy Spirit Guide," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2017, 95–96.

To read, watch, or listen to general conference addresses, visit conference.lds.org.

FILL IN THE BLANK

Use the May 2017 issue or visit conference.lds.org to read more of what these speakers said.

1. "Overcoming the world is not one defining moment in a lifetime, but a lifetime of moments that define an _____." —Neil L. Andersen, "Overcoming the World."
2. "An assignment to labor in a specific _____ is essential and important but secondary to a call to the work." —David A. Bednar, "Called to the Work."
3. "In the eyes of God, there is no _____ in the kingdom that is more important than another." —Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Greatest among You."
4. "Seeking the _____ is in our spiritual DNA." —Mark A. Bragg, "Brighter and Brighter until the Perfect Day."

Answers: (1) eternity, (2) place, (3) calling, (4) light

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

Visit news.lds.org for more Church news and events.

New Area Leaders Assigned

The First Presidency has announced changes in area leadership assignments, effective on August 1, 2017.

The Seventy are called by revelation, under the direction of the First Presidency, to assist the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in their ministry

throughout the world. The Presidency of the Seventy and Area Presidencies preside over geographic areas, and area leaders travel within their assigned area to teach and encourage local leaders and members of the Church.

During Christ’s mortal ministry, He called the Seventy, instructed them in a manner similar to the Twelve Apostles, and sent them out “before his face,” explaining that those who heard their voices would hear His voice (see Matthew 10:1, 16–17; Luke 10). ■

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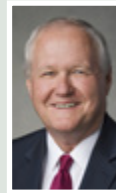


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CLOCKS

By Christy Rusch Banz

The Holy Ghost is much like the clocks my son was so fascinated with.

When my son, Joshua, was about two years old, he developed a keen interest in clocks. If we passed a clock in the house, he wanted to stop and look at it. He especially liked to put his ear up close to the clock and listen to the ticking sound it made. He went through a phase where we couldn't pass by a clock without stopping to listen to it tick.

I realized some interesting things from that simple activity. First, the clock ticked all the time, not just when we paid attention to it. Second, even though we knew the clock made a sound, we had to get close to it and be very quiet and still in order to hear the soft ticking.

The Holy Ghost is much like the clocks my son was so fascinated with. Those of us who have been baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost can have His constant companionship if we live worthy of it. The Holy

Ghost is always with us, but sometimes we let the noises of the world drown out the quiet promptings He gives us. Just as my son and I had to be quiet and still to hear the soft ticking of the clock, we each need to be still in order to hear, or feel, the quiet promptings the Spirit gives.

President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said: “The voice of the Spirit is described in the scripture as being neither ‘loud’ nor ‘harsh.’ It is ‘not a voice of thunder, neither . . .

[a] voice of a great tumultuous noise.’ But rather, ‘a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper,’ and it can ‘pierce even to the very soul’ and ‘cause [the heart] to burn’ (3 Nephi 11:3; Helaman 5:30; D&C 85:6–7). . . .

“The Spirit,” President Packer taught, “does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all. . . .

“Occasionally it will press just firmly enough for us to pay heed. But most of the time, if we do not heed the gentle feeling, the Spirit will withdraw and wait until we come seeking and listening” (“The Candle of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 53).

Now whenever I hear soft ticking sounds from a clock, I can't help but remember the simple lesson my son taught me about being still to hear the quiet promptings of the Spirit. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



THE LORD'S CONCERN FOR US

By Paige Anderson

Thinking back to when my family was the focus of ward councils, I realized that we were not just the ward's concern—we were the Lord's concern.

When my bishop asked if I would accept a calling as Young Women president, I wanted to say no. I felt inadequate to preside over the young women. But three months after I had accepted, I was heartbroken to learn that our ward boundaries were changing and I would be released.

might feel like ward projects. After I had voiced my concern, however, the Spirit told me that Heavenly Father is concerned about all His children.

Some years ago my husband and I were the focus of a ward council, and we knew it. I returned to activation after our first child was born, but my husband did not. For years, stake



“Loving service and devotion to the needs of others was perhaps the chief characteristic of the Savior’s mortal life. It will always be a

mark of the Master’s disciples.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “What I Wish Every New Member Knew—and Every Longtime Member Remembered,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Oct. 2006, 12.

a testimony. I will never forget the beautiful day our family was sealed in the temple.

It wasn’t until I was called as Young Women president and had the opportunity to serve on a ward council that my eyes were opened to what it means to be the focus of a ward council. I learned that ward councils focus on certain people not because they care about numbers but because they, and the Lord, care about individuals. When we serve in our callings, the Lord fills us with His love for those we serve.

Thinking back to when my family was the focus of ward councils, I realized that we were not just the *ward’s* concern—we were the *Lord’s* concern. They cared about us because He cares about us.

The truth is, we are all the Lord’s concern. Out of love, He has designed a plan to strengthen us and, if necessary, activate us—a plan often carried out by people like the bishop and home teacher who helped my husband. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



I prayed to know why the Lord would allow me to come to love the young women only to say goodbye so soon. My answer came unexpectedly during a ward council meeting.

Council members had been asked to share stories at stake conference about helping members of our ward, but I was concerned that some people

presidencies, bishoprics, and home teachers tried to help us.

Then we moved into a new ward. A patient and loving bishop and a home teacher became my husband’s friends. This time my husband was receptive to the Spirit. He was prompted to read the Book of Mormon, and he started going to church. Slowly he regained



By Elder
Terence M.
Vinson
Of the Seventy

Blessing THOSE WHO ARE Less Active

We discover many of life's beautiful truths through our spiritual senses rather than through our physical senses. In fact, many important things—including eternal things—can be felt but not seen.

The Apostle Paul taught this principle to the Corinthian Saints: “We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18).

Love is learned and felt primarily through the spiritual senses. Likewise, compassion, friendship, longsuffering, and faith are fruits of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22). Heavenly Father uses these feelings of the Spirit to bless His children, including those who have strayed.



*As we live in tune with
the Spirit and seek the
Lord's help, He will bless
our efforts to bring His lost
sheep back to the fold.*

I have lived most of my life in the Pacific Area. Many people of the Pacific have a profound understanding of the importance of the unseen things described by Paul, and many clearly prioritize spiritual things over physical needs.

This area of the Church is diverse, with developed and sophisticated nations, such as Australia and New

Zealand, as well as farming and fishing nations, such as Tonga and Samoa, where Church members represent high proportions of the population. Then there are developing nations, such as Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, where significant challenges confront the people.

This diversity provides opportunities to learn.

Urgency to Visit the Less Active

One such learning experience stands out. As an Area Seventy, I had been assigned to preside at a stake conference in New Zealand. Only a few months before, President Thomas S. Monson had delivered a powerful address to all the Seventies of the world. His address centered on rescuing those who had slipped away from the ordinances of the gospel.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRIAN CALL

As a result of President Monson's address and the consequent challenge he gave us, I felt an urgency to visit and invite those not fully involved in the gospel to return to the covenants and ordinances of salvation. I invited stake presidents to take me with them during stake conference weekends to visit less-active members. Those visits were always wonderful.

One Saturday during a particular stake conference weekend, the stake president and I visited several families. The husband and wife of one of these families had been married for about 10 years and had been sealed in the temple but were now less active. They welcomed us warmly, and we had a spiritual visit. As the visit was ending, I felt prompted to ask the husband if he would like a blessing and then to ask him to give his wife a blessing.

This was an unusual prompting. I had been taught that as a guest in another's home, I should take a subordinate role and that the head of the home should be the one who decides what is done. This brother, however, was grateful for the offer of a blessing, and he was visibly moved after the stake president and I had finished.

As he arose, however, he asked whether one of us would bless his wife. He told us that despite being married 10 years, he had never given her a blessing and was uncomfortable doing so.

"We will help you," I said, encouraging him.

After we had explained how to give a blessing and helped him rehearse what to say at the beginning and at the end, he gave his wife a wonderful blessing. When he finished, we all had moist eyes, and he and his wife accepted our invitation to return to the gospel.

As a result of this tender experience, the stake president felt inspired during his address to stake members the next day to challenge priesthood holders to return home after stake conference and to give blessings to family members.

Prompted to Bless

As that Sunday session of stake conference ended, I felt another prompting—this time to approach a young sister who was sitting about 10 rows from the front of the chapel and ask whether she needed a blessing. I did not know her, but the prompting was compelling.

Taken aback, the sister said hesitantly, "No, thank you."

I was somewhat grateful for her reply, but I felt that I had done as the Spirit had directed. I returned to the front of the chapel to greet members when this same young woman suddenly came forward and asked me whether I was still willing to give her a blessing. I told her "of course" and suggested that she go to the stake president's office, where we would join her shortly.

As the stake president and I made our way to his office, I asked about her. He

explained that she had just returned to Church after about 10 years of not attending. She was living alone, but during those 10 years she had led a life contrary to gospel standards.

Before the blessing, this young sister told us of her feelings of unworthiness. During her time away from the Church, she said, she had simply done what she wanted with no thought of spiritual matters. She had since reawakened to the gospel but felt that she had slipped so far behind in her spiritual development that she had no hope of ever catching up.



The laborers who enter the vineyard late will receive the same reward as those who have long labored there.

We taught her that the laborers who enter the vineyard late—and those who return to the vineyard after leaving for a time—will still receive the same reward as those who have long labored there (see Matthew 20:1–16). Then we gave her a priesthood blessing.

As the voice of that blessing, I was overwhelmed by the outpouring of love I felt that the Lord had for her. It was a more powerful feeling than I had ever felt before—one that made me aware that I was in the presence of a particularly noble spirit. As we finished the blessing, the sister rose from the chair. Two black lines of mascara were running from beneath her eyes. I too was moved to tears.

The Lord had allowed me to see that this exceptional young lady was in the early stages of a process that we all must experience to achieve our full potential here on earth. When we lose our way spiritually and when we commit sin, we all must humble ourselves and repent.

As the Apostle Paul taught the Galatians, this life is the time for the spirit to subdue the flesh. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Galatians 5:17).

Whether we reach our potential depends on whether our spirits govern our bodies, whether we prevail over “the natural man” (Mosiah 3:19). In today’s world, many seem to have no fight for this battle. The appetites of the flesh govern their lives, and the flesh subdues their spirits.

This young woman was on a path that would enable her spirit to subdue the flesh. She had begun a contest she was determined to win.

“Walk in the Spirit”

As I left the stake that day, I asked the stake president to provide me contact information for those I had met that weekend so I could encourage them to continue on the gospel path and to remember the commitments they had made.



The young sister continued to progress and to do so rapidly. By her faith, she began to “walk in the Spirit” and to “live in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, 25). She kept in touch and confided in me about the significant challenges she had overcome and has since faced. She has become a dear friend to our family, and we have seen the strength of her spirit as she has drawn close to the Savior.

She now enjoys the blessings of the temple, has served as an ordinance worker, and radiates the spiritual gifts of charity and goodness. She has since married a worthy young man in the temple.

The spiritual has clearly overcome the temporal in this young lady. We have seen her heart become pure, and she has “no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2).

Perhaps the Lord’s knowledge of the nobility of her soul was the cause of the prompting I received that day. That prompting has blessed me to see Heavenly Father’s power and grace manifest in her life.

We all have a responsibility to help our less-active brothers and sisters, and we can all be prompted in ways to bless them. As we live in tune with the Spirit and seek the Lord’s help, He will bless our efforts in “bringing them back to the fold” (“Dear to the Heart of the Shepherd,” *Hymns*, no. 221; see also Alma 26:4). ■

136 BILLION PORNOGRAPHIC

videos were viewed on smartphones in 2015.



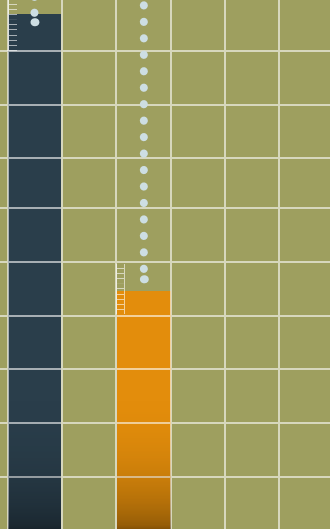
30% of
INTERNET
DATA is
PORNOGRAPHY.

Pornography is a

\$97 BILLION
industry.

*By comparison, the
COMBINED revenue of
the top-10 sports leagues
in North America,
Europe, and Asia is*

\$45.8 BILLION.



EIGHT STRATEGIES TO Help Children Reject Pornography



By Lisa Ann Thomson

The statistics can overwhelm parents. Extremetech.com estimates that about 30 percent of all data transferred over the internet is pornography.¹ It is found on literally hundreds of millions of web pages, including social media giants Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. It is accessible through television, computers, tablets, and smartphones.

“The material a child is coming across just traumatizes a child’s tender and fragile brain,” points out therapist Dr. Jill C. Manning, who is a frequent presenter on the impact of pornography on marriage and family.

But there is hope.

Even with the seeming pervasiveness of pornography, parents have power to protect their children and prepare them to face and reject pornography.

Here are eight strategies from Church leaders and experts to help parents fortify their families.

1. Address Access and Family Rules

Start with the outer defenses. “We safeguard our children until the time they can safeguard themselves,”

says Jason S. Carroll, professor of family life at Brigham Young University. The brain stem, which houses the pleasure centers of the brain, develops first, he explains. Only later do the reasoning and decision-making abilities in the frontal cortex fully develop. “So kids have the gas pedal without the full brake,” he says. Therefore, external filters and monitoring are crucial for young people.

Simple steps and rules can protect children (and adults) from unintentional exposure and help them think twice about the content they choose to view:

- Use filters at the computer, router, and internet-service-provider levels.
- Enable parental and content controls through cable providers and online media services.
- Set up content restriction settings on mobile devices.
- Keep computers and tablets in common areas.
- Ask children and teens to turn in their phones and mobile devices at night.
- Establish an open-book policy; parents can view texts and social media accounts at any time.

TEACH CHILDREN what to do if they encounter **PORNOGRAPHY:**

- Close their eyes.
- Shut down the device.
- Tell an adult.
- Redirect their thoughts.

SOCIAL MEDIA platforms have become highly trafficked pornography exchange sites.

76% of internet users across 40 countries use social media.



Teach children what to do if they encounter pornography: (1) close their eyes and shut down the device, (2) tell an adult, and (3) redirect their thoughts. Assure them that they did nothing wrong and are not in trouble.

2. Preach of Christ

“Filters are useful tools, but the greatest filter in the world, the only one that will ultimately work, is the personal internal filter that comes from a deep and abiding testimony of our Heavenly Father’s love and our Savior’s atoning sacrifice for each one of us,” said Linda S. Reeves, Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency.²

To help children develop that internal filter, Sister Reeves points to the counsel of Nephi: “We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, [and] we prophesy of Christ . . . that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26).

Experts agree. Studies have confirmed that religiosity in the home, coupled with a “warm parenting style,” has a protective effect against pornography.³

“The best preventative measure and the best reparative measure for pornography is the true teaching of the gospel in the home,” says Timothy

Rarick, parenting professor at Brigham Young University–Idaho and member of the United Families International advisory board. “The best thing we can do is help our children establish their own connection to heaven.”

3. Teach Children How to Filter Internally

Parents can teach specific strategies for filtering media through gospel standards. For Dr. Manning, the thirteenth article of faith is the quintessential filter for all media choices.

“We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men [and women]. . . . If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things’ [Articles of Faith 1:13]. There is a lot of material in the latter days that does not line up with that criteria. And if what we find does not line up, we need to keep looking,” says Dr. Manning.

But it is that effort that sets Latter-day Saints apart, pointed out President Thomas S. Monson: “As the world moves further and further away from the principles and guidelines given to us by a loving Heavenly Father, we will stand out from the crowd. . . . We will be different as we decide not to fill our minds with media choices that are base and demeaning and that will remove the Spirit from our homes and our lives.”⁴



4. Teach Children Healthy Sexuality

The principle of “opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11) applies to pornography. It is not enough to label pornography as bad; parents also need to teach their children what is good.

“One of the most powerful buffers and protections for our youth is to teach them sexuality in the home, starting early,” says Dr. Manning. “Our youth are suffering because they are growing up in a vacuum of toxic messages with too few positive messages within the gospel framework.”

Brigham Young University family life professor Mark H. Butler recommends a straightforward explanation: “The sexual-response cycle exists naturally in us as human beings. The desire and drive we have is a God-given endowment which blesses us, drawing us naturally and affectionately toward the opposite sex, toward marriage, and toward family life.”

Age-appropriate discussions about healthy sexuality can begin early. Professor Carroll points out that conversations about

good touch and bad touch and personal privacy, along with correct terminology for body parts, can be taught starting at a young age. By age eight, a child is able to gain a basic understanding of sex in its physical, spiritual, emotional, and relational contexts, he says.

Youth also appreciate correct and direct language. One young man said, “If you beat around the bush, people can really misunderstand. I was taught about the law of chastity a dozen times before I knew they were talking about sex.”

Professor Carroll says parents should also pay attention to the context of these discussions. “Do everything possible not to ritualize these conversations,” he says. “We take our child out to dinner, we put on our church clothes, or we have the conversation in the parking lot of the temple,” he says. But if children get the message that sex can be discussed only under those circumstances, they might not know how to recreate those circumstances when they have questions.

Rather, parents should create an ongoing dialogue and opportunities for children to ask



Watch a video of children explaining how to stay safe from pornography at lds.org/go/81722.



When addressing issues, take a TRIAGE APPROACH:



★—How long has it been going on?

questions whenever they have them. “If the conversation happens sitting on your bedroom floor or in your pickup truck or out picking strawberries, they know how to get back there,” says Carroll.

“My experience has taught me that the teenagers who are the most sexually active are usually the least informed,” points out BYU associate professor Bradley R. Wilcox. “Young people who get answers from parents at early ages are usually the ones who avoid sexual experimentation.”

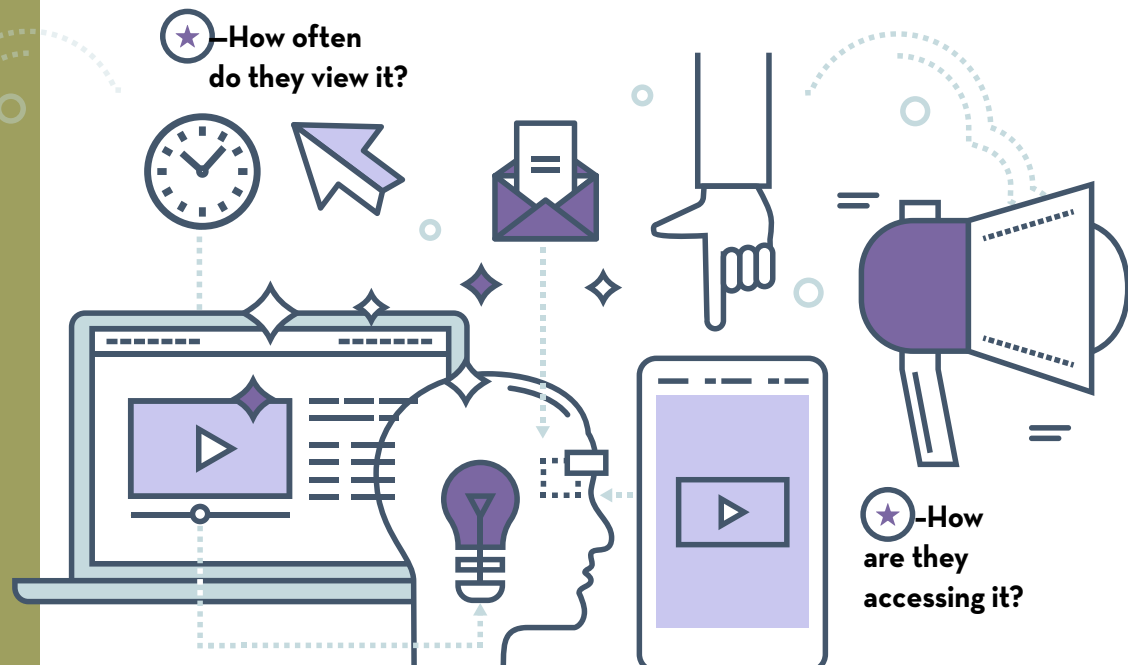
5. Shatter the Myth of Pornography

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) clearly stated the truth about pornography. “It is vicious,” he said. “It is lewd and filthy. It is enticing and habit-forming. It will take

[you] down to destruction as surely as anything in this world. It is foul sleaze that makes its exploiters wealthy, its victims impoverished.”⁵

“Pornography use by adolescents and young adults often leads to a distorted view of sexuality and its role in fostering healthy personal relationships,” points out the American College of Pediatricians. “These distortions include the overestimation of the prevalence of sexual activity in the community, the belief that sexual promiscuity is normal, and the belief that sexual abstinence is unhealthy.”⁶

In discussions about pornography, parents should point out that pornography is mythical on all levels. The behaviors portrayed in pornography are neither normal nor a reflection of what should be anticipated or





expected in a healthy relationship. “Pornography is attractive only as long as the myth of pornography is embraced,” Professor Carroll says.

6. Change the Conversation about the Problem

Experts and Church leaders warn against jumping too quickly to the conclusion that any involvement with pornography necessarily indicates an addiction.

“Not everyone who uses pornography willfully is addicted to it,” points out Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “In fact, most young men and young women who struggle with pornography are not addicted. That is a very important distinction to make—not just for the parents, spouses, and leaders who desire to help but also for those who struggle with this problem.”⁷

“Young men and young women get involved with pornography out of curiosity, out of accessibility, and out of what, at its core, amounts to immaturity,” says Professor Carroll. “Every one of us experiences the power of the sexual-response cycle triggered during

puberty, long before we have the emotional or spiritual maturity to fully make sense of it.”

Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, BYU professor of Church history and faculty adviser to the student club Unraveling Pornography, observes that “the problem is real and has terrible consequences, but making blanket statements about the problem often pushes it deeper into the souls of those struggling.”

Elder Oaks points out that pornography problems can range from “occasional or repeated intentional use, to intensive use, to compulsive (addictive) use. . . . If behavior is incorrectly classified as an addiction, the user may think he or she has lost agency and the capacity to overcome the problem. . . . On the other hand, having a clearer understanding of the depth of the problem—that it may not be as ingrained or extreme as feared—can give hope and an increased capacity to . . . repent.”⁸

When addressing issues, Professor Butler suggests parents take a triage approach: How long has it been going on? How often do they view it? How are they accessing it? Then parents can work with the youth to determine an appropriate level of action.

Create an ONGOING DIALOGUE for children to ask questions.

GUILT

is a natural response to mistakes that can motivate change.



SHAME

is a destructive feeling that can lead to a sense of hopelessness.

“Understand the person and who they are,” says Professor Holzapfel. “How deep is their problem? What is really going on? What is their reason for viewing pornography, and how can we address the deeper problems?”

7. Teach Emotional Management

Addressing deeper problems may be key to preventing pornography problems as well, says Nathan Acree, a Utah-based therapist. Beyond natural curiosity, pornography is often used as a way to cope with emotion, particularly overwhelming emotion.”

Professor Butler adds, “At some point, a young man or woman has a difficult or distressing psychological, relational, or spiritual experience.” He says negative experiences can lead the adolescent brain to revert to “feel-good experiences” such as viewing pornography and engaging in related behaviors such as masturbation. The emotions created in such behaviors then replace or mask distressing emotions. And therein lies the danger: “The person moves away from a feel-good experience into the initiation of a psychological dependency orientation. Now he or she is using the behavior as a way of managing life.”

Brother Acree says parents should teach children that both pleasant and

unpleasant emotions are normal, and it is OK to experience negative feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, or hurt. Parents often feel the need to control their children’s emotions, but allowing them to experience and cope with negative feelings builds a critical skill set.

If a pornography problem exists, parents should take care not to add to the child’s emotional burden through shaming. BYU family life professor James M. Harper noted that while *guilt* is a natural response to mistakes that can motivate change, *shame* is a destructive feeling that can lead to a sense of hopelessness.

In other words, creating or exacerbating a feeling of shame in a child damages the child’s ability both to develop positive emotional responses and to recognize the influence of the Spirit, which is ultimately the most powerful ally in the prevention of and recovery from pornography use.

One young man who struggled with pornography remembers clearly how his parents responded when his challenge came to light: “My mother reacted strongly, yelling and screaming, and it made me feel worse about it rather than hopeful of overcoming it,” he says. “The most helpful was my dad telling me repeatedly how much he loved me.”



“Please do not condemn them,” pleads Elder Oaks. “They are not evil or without hope. They are sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father.”⁹

8. Teach That the Savior’s Atonement Works

In talks, lessons, and reading materials, youth receive the clear message that pornography is a dangerous evil, but we need to give additional emphasis to the doctrine of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

For youth, Professor Butler believes that the adolescent brain may be one of the primary reasons to teach them about the Atonement. “The adolescent brain is not fully formed, and that leads to certain issues like impulse control and lack of forward thinking,” he explains. “A spiritually sincere, striving teen can become crippled by overwhelming guilt when he encounters weaknesses that he is uniquely vulnerable to having with that still-adolescent brain. It is so critical that, alongside teaching the commandments, you teach adolescents the Atonement—that it’s there for the purpose of developmental patience and persistence in life.”

“All of us need the Atonement of Jesus Christ. . . . Through proper and complete repentance, [all] may become clean, pure, and worthy of every covenant and temple blessing promised by God,” says Elder Oaks.¹⁰ This includes those who have used pornography.

And that is a hopeful message: there is much parents can do to prepare their children to reject pornography,

and when they falter, the Savior’s infinite Atonement makes change and repentance possible.

“That means, come what may, Heavenly Father will never stop loving you, and we, your parents, will never stop loving you,” says Professor Rarick. For a child, there can be no more hope than that. ■

Adapted from “Arm Your Kids for the Battle,” BYU Magazine, Spring 2015.

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

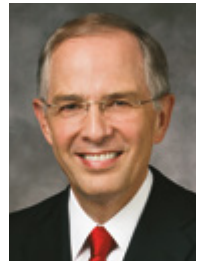
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY SIMONE SHIN

Defining moments will test your integrity. As you choose honesty and truth, you will realize that important crossroads become fundamental pillars of strength in your spiritual growth.



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

THE DIVINE STANDARD OF Honesty

For a disciple of Christ, honesty is at the very heart of spirituality.

God our Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, are beings of absolute, perfect, and complete honesty and truth. We are sons and daughters of God. Our destiny is to become like Him. We seek to be perfectly honest and true like our Father and His Son. Honesty describes the character of God (see Isaiah 65:16), and therefore honesty is at the very heart of our spiritual growth and spiritual gifts.

Jesus declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6; see also John 18:37; D&C 84:45; 93:36).

The Lord asked the brother of Jared, “Believest thou the words which I shall speak?”

The brother of Jared answered, “Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie” (Ether 3:11, 12).

And here are the Savior’s own words: “I am the Spirit of truth” (D&C 93:26; see also verse 24). “I tell you the truth” (John 16:7; see also verse 13).

On the other hand, Satan is described as the father of lies: “And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice” (Moses 4:4).



The world would tell us that truth and honesty are difficult to define. But we can be in the world but not of the world as we reject false concepts and false teachings.

Jesus said, “The devil . . . abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar” (John 8:44; see also D&C 93:39).

The Savior constantly rebuked those who professed one thing publicly but lived differently in their hearts (see Matthew 23:27). He praised those who lived without deception (see D&C 124:15). Can you see the contrasting difference? On one hand there is lying, deceiving, hypocrisy, and darkness. On the other hand there is truth, light, honesty, and integrity. The Lord draws a sharp distinction.

President Thomas S. Monson has said:

“Where once the standards of the Church and the standards of society were mostly compatible, now there is a wide chasm between us, and it’s growing ever wider. . . .

“The Savior of mankind described Himself as being in the world but not of the world [see John 17:14; D&C 49:5]. We also can be in the world but not of the world as we reject false concepts and false teachings and remain true to that which God has commanded.”¹

The world would tell us that truth and honesty are difficult to define. The world finds humor in casual lying and quickly excuses so-called “innocent” deception. The contrast between right and wrong is dulled, and the consequences of dishonesty are minimized.

To constantly receive the Spirit of Truth—the Holy Ghost—we must fill our lives with truth and honesty. As we become completely honest, our spiritual eyes are opened to increased enlightenment.

You can easily understand how this spiritual strength lifts your learning in the classroom. But can you also see how this principle applies to critical decisions of how you spend your time, with whom you spend your time, and how you shape your life?

Commit to Personal Honesty

You cannot separate the spiritual endowment of truth you need and want from your being a person of honesty and truth. The truth you seek is tied to the person you are. Light, spiritual answers, and heavenly direction are unalterably linked to your own honesty and truth. Much of your lasting satisfaction in life will come as you continually elevate your commitment to personal honesty.

Roy D. Atkin shared the following story:

“After a number of students dropped out following [my] freshman year, my dental school classes became even more competitive. Everyone worked hard to be at the top of the class. As the competition increased, some students decided that the way to succeed was by cheating. This troubled me greatly. . . .

“. . . I knew I couldn’t cheat. I wanted to be right with God even more than I wanted to become a dentist.”

[During] my junior year, I was offered a copy of an upcoming test in a crucial class. Obviously that meant some of my classmates would have the test questions ahead of time. I declined the offer. When the corrected test papers were returned, the class average was extremely high, making my score low in comparison. The professor asked to speak to me.

“Roy,” he said, “you usually do well on tests. What happened?”

“Sir,” I told my professor, “on the next exam, if you give a test that you have never given before, I believe you will find that I do very well.” There was no reply.

“We had another test in the same class. As the test was handed out, there were audible groans. It was a test the teacher had never given before. When our graded tests were handed back, I had received one of the highest grades in the class. From then on, all the tests were new.”²

Because we are disciples of Christ, the divine standard of honesty grows within us. In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin’s admonition to “[put] off the natural man” (Mosiah 3:19) is in part a call for a more heightened sense of honesty and truth.

To the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul counseled, “Put off . . . the old man, which is corrupt . . . and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.” Paul then gave specific counsel on becoming a “new man” or a “new woman”: the very first thing he told them to do was “[put] away lying, speak every man truth” (see Ephesians 4:22–25; see also Colossians 3:9; 3 Nephi 30:2).

I like this definition of honesty: “Honesty is to be completely truthful, upright, and just.” Also, integrity is “[having] the moral courage to make [your] actions consistent with [your] knowledge of right and wrong.”³

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, once told of applying for Officer’s Candidate School in the United States Army. He said:

“I was summoned before the board of inquiry. My qualifications were few, but I had had two years of college and had finished a mission for the Church in South America.

“The questions asked of me at the officers’ board of inquiry took a very surprising turn. Nearly all of them centered upon my beliefs. ‘Do you smoke?’ ‘Do you drink?’ ‘What do you think of others who smoke and drink?’ I had no trouble answering these questions.

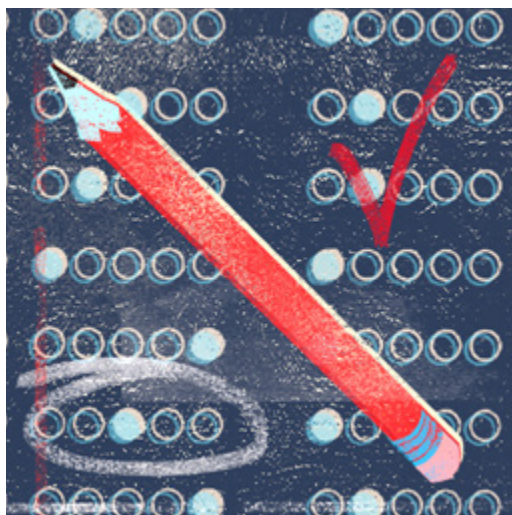
“Do you pray?’ ‘Do you believe that an officer should pray?’ The officer asking these questions was a hard-bitten career soldier. He did not look like he prayed very often. . . . I wanted to be an officer very much. . . .

“I decided not to equivocate. I admitted that I did pray and that I felt that officers might seek divine guidance as some truly great generals had done. . . .

“More interesting questions came. ‘In times of war, should not the moral code be relaxed? Does not the stress of battle justify men in doing things that they would not do when at home under normal situations?’

“. . . I suspected that the men who were asking me this question did not live by the standards that I had been taught. The thought flashed through my mind that perhaps I could say that I had my own beliefs, but I did not wish to impose them on others. But there seemed to flash before my mind the faces of the many people to whom I had taught the law of chastity as a missionary. In the end I simply said, ‘I do not believe there is a double standard of morality.’

“I left the hearing resigned to the fact that these hard-bitten officers would . . . surely score me very low. A few



days later when the scores were posted, to my astonishment I had passed. I was in the first group taken for Officer's Candidate School!"

And then President Faust, realizing how small decisions can have large consequences, said, "This was one of the critical crossroads of my life."⁴

Honesty, integrity, and truth are eternal principles that significantly shape our experience in mortality and help determine our eternal destiny. For a disciple of Christ, honesty is at the very heart of spirituality.

Honor Your Word

Honesty envelops every part of your daily life, but let me refer to a few specific examples. In my student days, I remember then-Brigham Young University president Dallin H. Oaks, now a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, sharing this quotation from Karl G. Maeser: "My young friends, I have been asked what I mean by word of honor. I will tell you. Place me behind prison walls—walls of stone ever so high, ever so thick, reaching ever so far into the ground—there is a possibility that in some way or another I may be able to escape. But stand me on that floor and draw a chalk line around me and have me give my word of honor never to cross it. Can I get out of that circle? No, never! I'd die first!"⁵

There are times we honor commitments simply because we have agreed to honor them. You will have situations in your life when you will be tempted to disregard an agreement you have made. You will initially make the agreement because of something you wish to receive in return. Later, because of a change in circumstances, you will no longer want to honor the terms of the agreement. Learn now that when you give your word, when you make a promise,

when you sign your name, your personal honesty and integrity bind you to your word, your commitment, your agreement.

How grateful we are that you "believe in being honest" (Articles of Faith 1:13), that you tell the truth, that you would not cheat on an exam, plagiarize a paper, or deceive one another. The Lord tells us:

"And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come;

"And whatsoever is more or less than this is the spirit of that wicked one who was a liar from the beginning" (D&C 93:24–25).

Our challenges often come in the "more or less"—the small temptations on the edge of being completely honest. As a college freshman, I kept a statement above my desk often quoted by then-President David O. McKay (1873–1970). It read: "The greatest battle of life is fought out within the silent chambers of the soul."⁶

How do you think the Lord feels when we make difficult decisions

of honesty? There is enormous spiritual power in remaining true and honest when the consequences of your honesty could appear to be a disadvantage. Each of you will face such decisions. These defining moments will test your integrity. As you choose honesty and truth—whether or not the situation works out the way you hope—you will realize that these important crossroads become fundamental pillars of strength in your spiritual growth.

"Be Righteous in the Dark"

President Brigham Young (1801–77) once said, "We must learn to be righteous in the dark."⁷ One definition of this phrase is that we must learn to be honest when no one would know if we were dishonest. I challenge you to be



“righteous in the dark.” Choose the course that the Savior Himself would choose.

The poet Edgar A. Guest wrote:

*I don't want to keep on a closet shelf
A lot of secrets about myself,
And fool myself, as I come and go,
Into thinking that nobody else will know.*⁸

Remember the beautiful words of the Prophet Joseph Smith: “I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it; at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation” (Joseph Smith—History 1:25).

There is pressure to achieve, pressure to keep high grades, pressure to find employment, pressure to find friends, pressure to please those around you, pressure to graduate. Do not allow these pressures to crack your character of honesty. Be honest when the consequences appear to move against you. Pray for greater honesty, think about the areas in which the Lord would want you to be more honest, and have the courage to take the needed steps to lift your spirit to a higher level of resolve in being completely honest.

President Monson has admonished us, “May we be examples of honesty and integrity wherever we go and in whatever we do.”⁹ You might consider putting this counsel by the Lord’s prophet where you can see it often.

Elder Oaks has counseled, “We should not be tolerant with ourselves. We should be ruled by the demands of truth.”¹⁰ Be uncompromising with yourself. The Savior said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24).



I end where I began. Our Heavenly Father and His Son are beings of absolute, perfect, and complete honesty. I testify that our Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son live. They know you personally. They love you. Your destiny as a son or a daughter of God is to become like Them. We are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us have the courage to follow Him. ■

From a devotional address, “Honesty—The Heart of Spirituality,” delivered at Brigham Young University on September 13, 2011. For the full address in English, go to speeches.byu.edu.

NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Priesthood Power,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 66, 67.
2. Roy D. Atkin, “I Wouldn’t Cheat,” *New Era*, Oct. 2006, 22–23.
3. *Young Women Personal Progress* (booklet, 2009), 61.
4. James E. Faust, “Honesty—A Moral Compass,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 42–43.
5. In Alma P. Burton, *Karl G. Maeser: Mormon Educator* (1953), 71; see also Dallin H. Oaks, “Be Honest in All Behavior” (Brigham Young University devotional, Jan. 30, 1973), 4, speeches.byu.edu.
6. See James L. Gordon, *The Young Man and His Problems* (1911), 130.
7. Brigham Young’s Office Journal, Jan. 28, 1857.
8. Edgar A. Guest, “Myself,” in *The Best Loved Poems of the American People* (1936), 91.
9. Thomas S. Monson, “At Parting,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 114.
10. Dallin H. Oaks, “Balancing Truth and Tolerance,” *Ensign*, Feb. 2013, 28; *Liahona*, Feb. 2013, 32.

Do not allow the pressures of life to crack your character of honesty. Be honest even when the consequences appear to move against you.

By Elder Kim B. Clark

Of the Seventy
Commissioner of the Church Educational System



LEARNING FOR THE WHOLE SOUL

This message is for the youth and young adults in the Lord's Church. Many years ago I had a strong impression come to me about you and about this day. It was as if I saw children in Primary all across the earth. I knew they would make and keep covenants with the Lord. And I knew that the Lord would bless them with opportunities for deep learning, spiritually and temporally, and raise them up as a mighty army to build His kingdom and prepare the earth for His return.

You are those children, and this is your day.

It is a great day in the kingdom of God, a day full of opportunities for you to learn and grow and experience joy and happiness. There are important challenges, to be sure. Yet through the redeeming and strengthening powers of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, through His glorious gospel and His true and living Church, the Lord continues to open doors and prepare the way for you to repent, learn deeply, grow spiritually, and become more converted to Him. The Lord is preparing His kingdom and



His people for His return, and you of the rising generation are playing a central role in that great work.

This is a day of miracles. New technologies make it possible for learning and education to flourish. That is true

The Lord is moving with power in His Church for you to obtain the education He wants you to have.



Learning is essential to help us reach our mortal and eternal potential.

instructed more perfectly . . . in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand” (D&C 88:78).

Spiritual Knowledge Has Priority

Deep learning, in any field of study, is inherently a spiritual experience, anchored to a foundation of faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and obedience to His commandments so that the Holy Ghost can teach you. Deep learning is not easy, but it is worth the effort! If you really desire to learn deeply, if your heart and your mind are open to learning, and if you act on that desire, the Lord will bless you. When you do your part—pray in faith, prepare, study, engage actively, and do your very best—the Holy Ghost will teach you, magnify your capacity to act on what you learn, and help you become what the Lord wants you to become. “Salvation itself,” taught President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918), “under the atonement of Christ, is a process of education. . . . Knowledge is a means of eternal progress.”⁵

for both secular as well as spiritual knowledge. The Lord is moving with power in His Church for you to obtain the education He wants you to have.

This is all part of the commandment the Lord gave to the Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–44) in the beginning of the Restoration: “It is my will that you should . . . obtain a knowledge of history, and of countries, and of kingdoms, of laws of God and man, and all this for the salvation of Zion” (D&C 93:53).

This commandment has taken on an urgency in our day as the Lord hastens His work. Now is the time for you to take advantage of the opportunities for education that are before you, and the potential for learning and growth that is in you.

These words of President Thomas S. Monson ought to ring in your ears every day:

“I urge you to pursue your education.”¹

“Your talents will expand as you study and learn.”²

“Each of you . . . has the opportunity to learn and to grow. Expand your knowledge, both intellectual and spiritual, to the full stature of your divine potential.”³

Deep Learning

The learning that allows each of you to rise “to the full stature of your divine potential” is what I will call *deep learning*: learning of the whole soul—the mind, the heart, the body, and the immortal spirit. Deep learning applies to every kind of knowledge, whether spiritual or secular. Learning is deep when it increases your power to do three things: (1) to know and understand; (2) to take effective, righteous action; and (3) to become more like our Heavenly Father.⁴

As the Lord taught the Prophet Joseph, deep learning must be done in the Lord’s way, through revelation and inspiration in the Light of Christ and by the power of the Holy Ghost and through active, diligent study and teaching of one another, attended by the grace of Jesus Christ. That is true for any kind of knowledge. Here are the Lord’s commandments about deep learning:

“Seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118).

“Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be

This process applies to any setting you may be in and to any kind of knowledge. However, the most important knowledge you need to acquire is knowledge of the things of God. Spiritual knowledge, therefore, must have first place in your heart and in your priorities. The Prophet Joseph Smith emphasized the primacy of

spiritual knowledge in these words: “A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world, as evil spirits will have more knowledge, and consequently more power than many men who are on the earth. Hence it needs

revelation to assist us, and give us knowledge of the things of God.”⁶

It is true that the gospel encompasses all truth,⁷ but knowledge and understanding of the plain and simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ must be your foundation for all deep learning. Putting spiritual knowledge first in your mind and in your heart ensures that you will rely on the Lord and the Holy Spirit in your learning, that you will see everything you study in the light of His gospel, and that you will continue to learn deeply all through your lives.

Deep Learning for a Lifetime

Deep learning of both spiritual and secular knowledge is a commandment of the Lord. Imagine what would happen if you were to stop learning. What if I had stopped learning when I graduated from college in the mid-1970s? I would have had no new insights or revelation from the living prophets, the scriptures, or the Holy Ghost; I would know nothing of ongoing developments in technology, health care, world affairs, government regulations, or

Learning must be done in the Lord's way, through revelation and inspiration.



education. There would have been no personal growth or spiritual development through repentance and learning from experience.

When I served as president of Brigham Young University–Idaho, Sister Clark was often asked, “How did you meet President Clark?” Her response often began with, “He wasn’t President Clark when I met him.” If I had not continued learning, I would have gotten older, but I would still be the 25-year-old whom Sister Clark knew when I graduated from college—not a good prospect for Sister Clark or for our family!

If you stop learning, you cannot become more knowledgeable, more effective, more useful, more faithful, or more like your Father in Heaven.

Your experience with learning in your youth and young adult years lays the foundation for a lifetime of learning. If you develop the ability to learn deeply in the Lord’s way—through the Spirit and with diligent, active study—it will be a great blessing to you.

A key to reaping that blessing is to keep your heart and mind open to learning. Here are three things you can do to always be ready to learn:

1. Ask the Lord to bless you with the desire to learn deeply.

If you already have the desire to learn deeply, wonderful. If not, ask the Lord for that gift. The Lord will

educate your desires so that you will want to learn what and how He wants you to learn all through your lives. In the Lord’s plan, how He wants you to learn—by the Spirit, with diligent study—is just as important as what He wants you to learn.

2. Make repentance a central part of your life.

Repentance is a divine process. It is the way we change, grow, and get better through the redeeming and strengthening power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. If repentance is central to your life, you will always be on your knees, humbling yourself before the Lord, seeking His help in how to use your time and how to serve Him.

3. Worship in the temple as often as you can.

The temple is the Lord’s house of revelation and learning. If you go there often, if you take your questions and your desires to learn with you, the Lord Himself will teach you.

Overcoming Opposition to Deep Learning

Deep learning now will prepare you for a lifetime of learning. However, I know you face obstacles and even outright opposition to the learning the Lord wants you to obtain. Fear, discouragement, laziness, difficulty with reading, lack of support or opportunity, cultural or family



Through the Lord’s power, including advances in technology, learning opportunities are more available than ever.

traditions, worries about cost, temptations of the world, false ideas about education, and many other things may stand in your way.⁸

I know that some of you face several of these things, and they feel like insurmountable barriers to learning.

I bear you my witness that no matter where you live, no matter what your circumstances may be, the Lord Jesus Christ stands with you against all this opposition with His redeeming love and His almighty power. Through His atoning sacrifice, He has experienced and overcome everything that could block your progress toward eternal life. In His strength and with His power, you can overcome whatever stands between you and the learning the Lord wants you to obtain.

This is His promise to you, and His promises are true: “Draw near unto

me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (D&C 88:63; see also Matthew 7:7).

Conclusion

This really is a great day in the kingdom of God. The Lord is hastening His work, and we have seen miracle after miracle as the Lord moves in power to open up wonderful opportunities for you to learn deeply.

The Lord is working in your lives to bless and prepare you. I pray that you will act with faith in Jesus Christ to take advantage of every opportunity

to learn deeply, grow in knowledge and understanding, bring about His righteous purposes, and become what you were born to become. ■

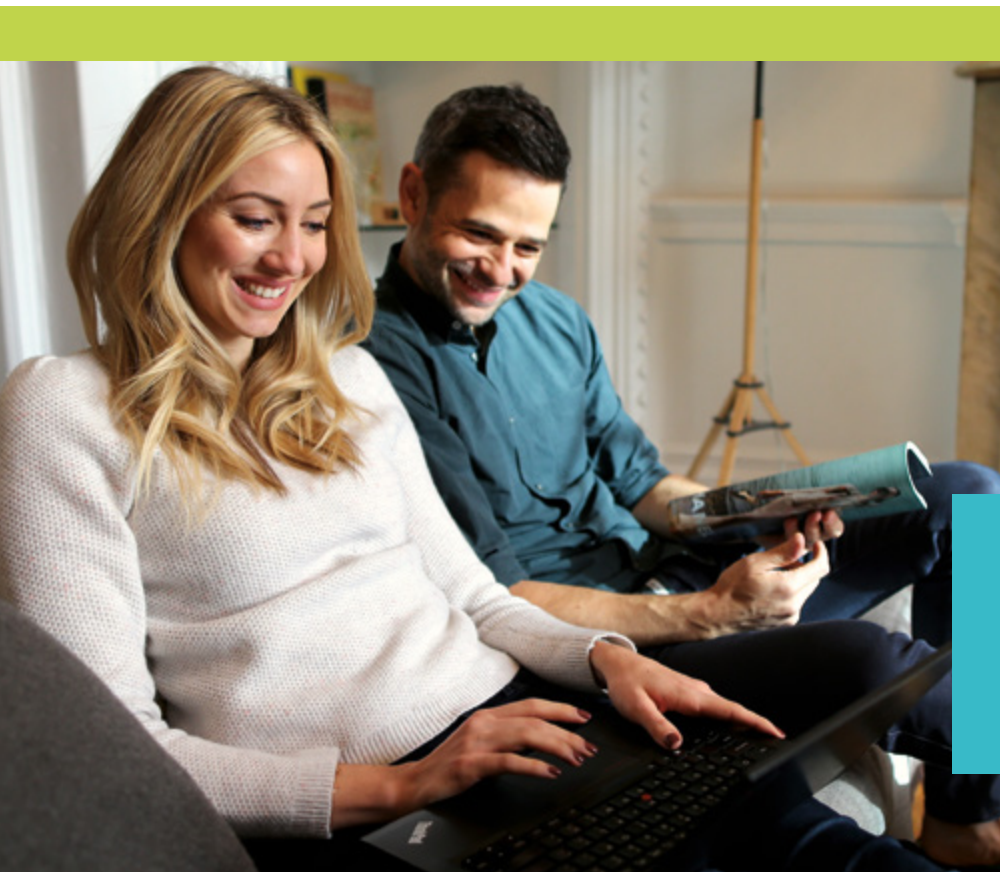
For more information on Church education opportunities, visit education.lds.org. To learn more about seminary for youth, see page 50 in this issue. To learn more about institute for young adults, see pages 44 and 46 in this issue.

NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 116.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Three Goals to Guide You,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 119.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “The Mighty Strength of the Relief Society,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 95.
4. The pattern of “know, do, become” has been used widely as a framework for leadership development and in discussion of the Lord’s

plan for the spiritual development of His children. See Thomas S. Monson, “To Learn, to Do, to Be,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 60–68; and Dallin H. Oaks, “The Challenge to Become,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2000, 32–34. For an in-depth treatment of each of the elements of this pattern, see the three-volume series by David A. Bednar, *Increase in Learning* (2011); *Act in Doctrine* (2012); and *Power to Become* (2014).

5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 314.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 266.
7. This quote from Brigham Young captures the idea well: “Not only does the religion of Jesus Christ make the people acquainted with the things of God, and develop within them moral excellence and purity, but it holds out every encouragement and inducement possible, for them to increase in knowledge and intelligence, in every branch of mechanism, or in the arts and sciences, for all wisdom, and all the arts and sciences in the world are from God, and are designed for the good of his people” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* [1997], 193).
8. Here is an example of a false idea born out of cultural traditions that may affect young adults: A generation ago, a person living in the developed world could find a good, well-paying job with enough income to support a family with some high school education or, even better, with high school graduation. That idea still persists despite the fact that for most people, in most developed countries, and even in the developing world, those days are gone. Education and learning beyond high school in fields that are in high demand, whether by earning certification in technical skills or acquiring a college degree (and in some fields an advanced degree), has become essential for supporting a family, providing for retirement years, and establishing a temporal foundation for service in the Church.



We have seen miracle after miracle as the Lord moves in power to open up wonderful opportunities for you to learn deeply.

BYU-Pathway Worldwide

By Elder Kim B. Clark

In our day the Lord is moving with power in His Church to deepen learning and extend its reach to more and more of you. Perhaps the best example of the Church extending the reach of deep learning is the 2017 announcement of a new organization within the Church Educational System (CES) known as BYU-Pathway Worldwide. This new organization was inspired by the Pathway program.

Pathway

In 2009, the Church Board of Education authorized Brigham Young University-Idaho to create a new academic program called Pathway with the intent of opening opportunities for higher education to many more members of the Church. Pathway is a three-semester program that prepares students for higher education by taking online courses and gathering at an institute or meetinghouse each week to receive religious education and to participate in student-led discussions of the material in the online courses. The Pathway program is guided by local priesthood leaders and supervised by Church-service missionaries who mentor and support the students.

Pathway's threefold purpose is to (1) get the gospel down into students' hearts, (2) help students become capable learners, and (3) prepare students to lead and support families.

Pathway now operates in approximately 500 sites worldwide and has served more than 57,000 students, opening doors of opportunity, increasing hope and faith in the Savior, and deepening learning for thousands of you. Completing the Pathway program has enabled many students to enroll in higher education opportunities, including certificate and degree programs offered online through BYU-Idaho or at local educational institutions.

BYU-Pathway Worldwide

The growth and success of the Pathway program has inspired the creation of a new organization, affiliated with all CES institutions, called BYU-Pathway Worldwide (BYU-PW). BYU-PW oversees Pathway and coordinates all other CES online higher education certificate and degree programs. The organization serves students through online courses and manages gathering activities in Pathway sites worldwide, including student-led academic discussions and workshops and local career services.

BYU-PW is the outgrowth of a policy approved by the Church Board



of Education in November 2015: “The Church Educational System will seek to provide opportunities for education to the members of the Church wherever the Church is organized.”

BYU-PW can help you gain access to its online certificate and degree programs that will open up improved opportunities for employment. Combined with religious education in institute and learning by the Spirit in the Lord's way, you can learn deeply wherever you study. In addition to academic advising, you will have access to advice and support from CES and Self-Reliance Services personnel to help you find internships and jobs or pursue local educational opportunities.

You can access BYU-PW programs, including Pathway, English language instruction, certificates, and degrees, through your local Church units and leaders. These programs are available in many areas now, and BYU-PW will continue to add new Pathway sites and new programs in a measured, steady way as the Church moves forward under the direction of the Lord. ■

Visit pathway.lds.org for more information (in English).





PORTRAITS OF FAITH

Studying classical art has brought Niki and his family to Italy several times. Niki is currently pursuing his studies in Rome, where he is discovering ways to use his talents and the arts to bear testimony of Jesus Christ.

CODY BELL, PHOTOGRAPHER

Niki Covington

Lazio, Italy

How do you use the gifts and talents God has given you to share your testimony and your feelings about the gospel with others? This question has set our family on a quest to learn what our gifts are and how we can use them to bear testimony of the Savior.

As I've studied the roots of the arts, I've come to learn that the arts have a very sacred root in God. He is the author of all beauty, virtue, and truth. All forms of beauty emanate from Him. This has been a great discovery for me as an artist. Hopefully, through the workmanship of my hands, I can leave this as a testimony for my children and others.

Learn more about Niki's journey of faith at lds.org/go/81739.

See uplifting art from members around the world at lds.org/go/817art.

“I KNOW THAT GOD LIVES”

I'm from Nigeria, an English-speaking country, so when I was called to serve in the Benin Cotonou Mission and realized that I would be speaking French, I became nervous. How was I going to teach the gospel? As I expected, I struggled to learn French while in the missionary training center in Ghana. Many times I felt almost hopeless.

Then, in my first area, I was asked to bear my testimony to the branch *in French!* Everyone sat in silence as I slowly walked to the pulpit. I reached into my pocket for the short testimony I had written down. But I could not find it! Fear gripped me instantly!

When I looked out at the beautiful faces before me, my eyes filled

with tears. I had so much I wanted to share, but I didn't know how to say it. I said the only thing I could in French: “I know that God lives.”

I sat back down and during the rest of the meeting, I prayed in my heart. I told Heavenly Father that I really wanted to speak French, and that if He would help me, I would serve Him with all my heart.

Three months later a new missionary couple from the United States visited the branch. They were also asked to bear their testimonies. The sister walked to the pulpit, said a few words in French, and then stopped. Tears fell down her face. The chapel was silent. I walked up to her and asked if I could interpret for her.

“Oh, that would be wonderful, Elder,” she said. I felt the Spirit as she spoke English, and I interpreted her testimony, word for word, in French.

After the meeting the branch president's wife said to me, “I remember how long it took you to say, ‘I know that God lives’ when you first arrived. Yes, God really lives and He has touched your tongue.”

I know that God understands every language and every problem we face. He is there to help us if we put our trust in Him, and He blesses our efforts when we try. Because He answered my prayer, I have been able to teach the gospel in French and my life has been blessed. ■

Donaldson Izekor, Utah, USA

How was I going to teach the gospel in French?

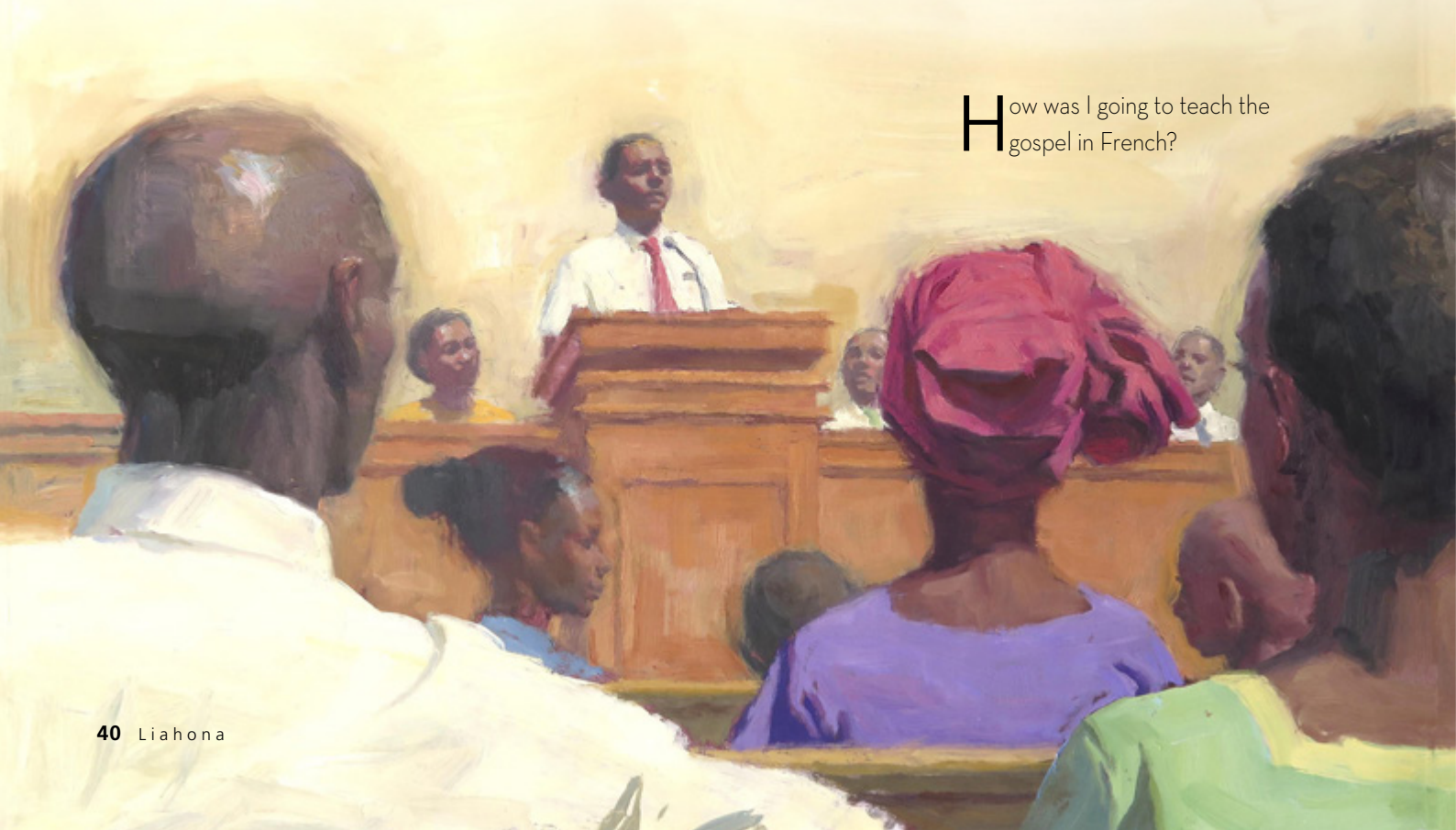


ILLUSTRATION BY ALLEN GARNIS

DID I NEED THE SACRAMENT?

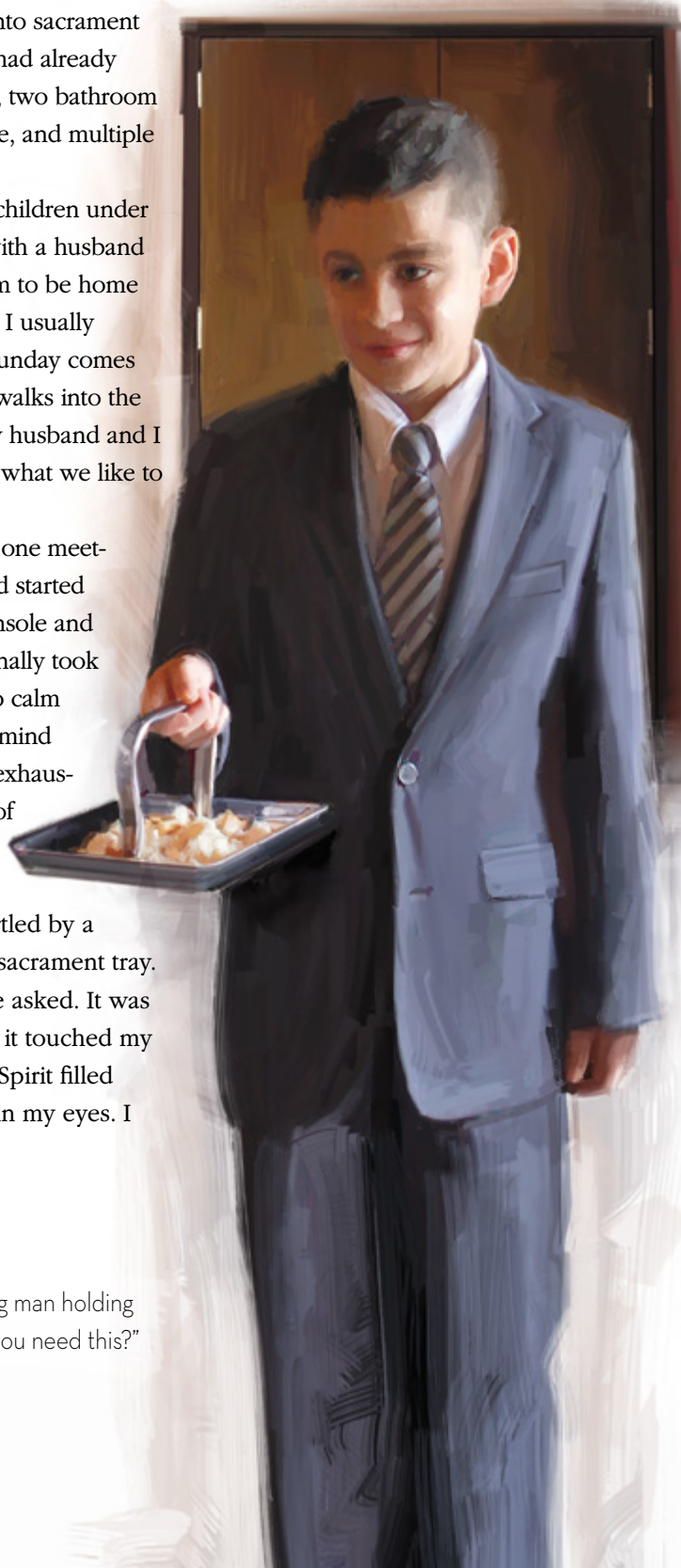
Only five minutes into sacrament meeting, and we had already experienced a tantrum, two bathroom breaks, a diaper change, and multiple cries of “I’m hungry!”

As a mother of five children under the age of eight, and with a husband whose work allows him to be home only on the weekends, I usually feel exhausted when Sunday comes around. As our family walks into the chapel on Sundays, my husband and I prepare for an hour of what we like to call “long-suffering.”

Fifteen minutes into one meeting, our nine-month-old started to scream. I tried to console and quiet her. In defeat, I finally took her out of the chapel to calm her. As I sat down, my mind began to focus on my exhaustion and the demands of the new week. I felt overwhelmed.

Suddenly, I was startled by a young man holding a sacrament tray. “Do you need this?” he asked. It was a simple question, but it touched my soul. Immediately the Spirit filled me, and tears formed in my eyes. I

I was startled by a young man holding a sacrament tray. “Do you need this?” he asked.



thought to myself: “More than you know.”

Daily demands and responsibilities can drain us throughout the week, but the sacrament can fill us up. As I partook of the sacrament, I felt peace and healing flow through me. In that moment I realized that I needed the sacrament more than anything because I needed the Spirit to be with me.

My eyes focused on a painting in the foyer of the Savior holding His hands outstretched. Gratitude swelled in my heart as I pondered how He is always ready to heal and strengthen us. I am reminded of this each Sunday as I partake of the sacrament. I am grateful that the Spirit taught me through a simple question that in the midst of life’s challenges, the Savior is our source of strength and peace. ■

Julie Archer, Utah, USA

GOD WAS CALLING ME AGAIN

After I completed my college education, I became a research scientist. Trained in the scientific method, I accepted only what could be sensed and proven. I lived without God's influence in my life; I was practically an atheist.

Then one morning I received a call that my son had been in a serious automobile accident. On the way to

the hospital, I felt prompted to say the Lord's Prayer, which I had learned in childhood. I could not remember it, but I felt that I needed to pray anyway.

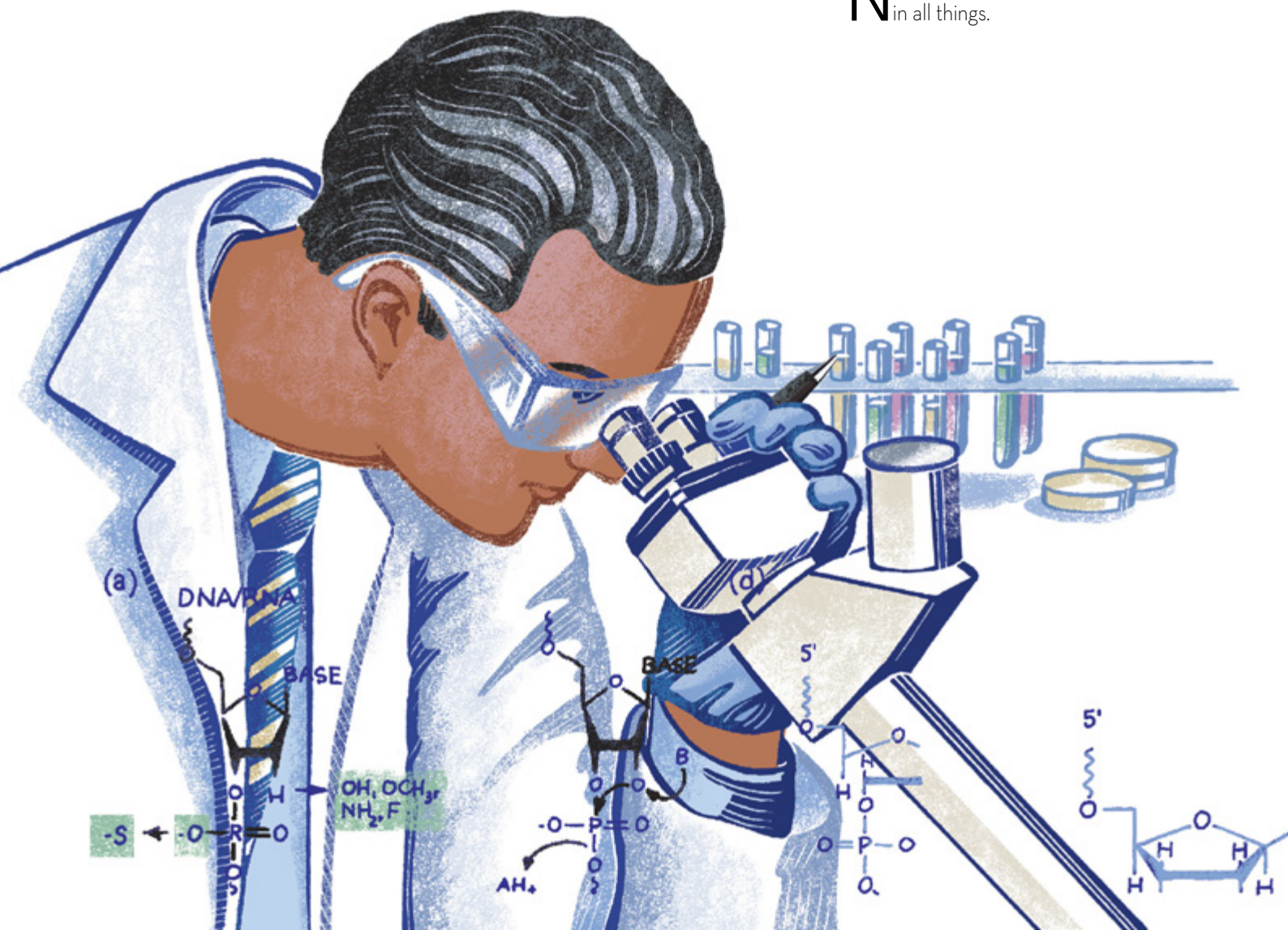
Even though God had called to me, when the crisis subsided and my son recovered, I continued to live without Him in my life.

Years later I began dating a woman named Rubí. She was a member of

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, though she was not active. We were together for three years when she began to feel the desire to go to church. She would ask me to go with her, but I always refused.

One day the missionaries came to our door. They gave me a Book of Mormon and left me with reading assignments. I read what they

Now I see the hand of God in all things.



CRISTINA'S MANY MIRACLES

requested but felt nothing. I also attended church but was always skeptical. Even so, I felt I needed to keep reading the Book of Mormon. God was calling me again.

As I continued reading, I started to feel that the book was true. My faith was growing. When I reached 3 Nephi 13:9–13 and read the Lord's Prayer, the Spirit flooded over me. I broke into sobs. God was calling me a third time. This time I listened.

My faith in God grew. I wanted to know more. In a short time, I read all the standard works. I continued attending church, and after Rubí and I married, I was baptized. I will never forget the joy I felt when I was confirmed a member of the Church.

Today I am still a research scientist. But now I see the hand of God in all things. I agree with Alma, who said, "All things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator" (Alma 30:44). ■

Sergio I. Alva Estrada, Mexico City, Mexico

Our family has witnessed many miracles because of my sister, Cristina. She was born with a serious heart defect. When the doctors examined her, they told my parents she probably wouldn't survive. My parents, however, held their fragile baby in their arms and put their trust in the Lord. Cristina's survival was a miracle.

The years passed, and Cristina became a strong, smart, playful, and beautiful girl. When she was 12, she needed surgery to place an artificial valve in her heart. We worried whether she would survive the surgery, but with great strength and courage, she said goodbye to us and entered the operating room.

Cristina survived the operation and returned home to us. She always appeared happy and was grateful to Heavenly Father to be alive and to have the opportunity to learn and grow. Friends never imagined she had a heart defect, because she was very active.

After recovering from a stroke when she was 16, Cristina was asked to help teach seminary. She encouraged many students as they memorized scriptures and learned from the Book of Mormon. Cristina also played the piano and

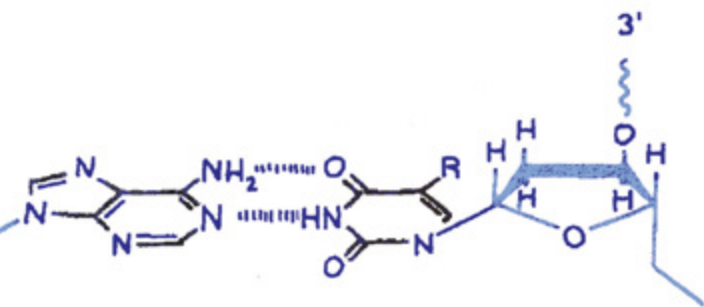
loved to sing. She didn't miss a beat when she was invited to direct a choir of 60 voices for a ward conference.

When she was 22, Cristina married a young man in the temple for eternity. Soon after getting married, she was called to be Young Women president in her ward.

When she was 26, Cristina's health quickly declined. She went to São Paulo for some tests. There she learned she needed another surgery. During the operation, Cristina suffered a heart attack that caused brain damage. Months passed, and she did not improve. As a family we gathered together to fast and pray for her recovery, but she did not improve. We decided to fast again, this time asking for help to accept the will of our Father in Heaven. The following day Cristina passed away.

This was not what we hoped for, but we realized this was a miracle too. Cristina no longer had to suffer. The gospel gave us joy and peace, even in moments of deep sadness. Because we have been sealed, we know we can be with Cristina again. ■

Gislaine Batista Pires Skraba, Paraná, Brazil



What Is Institute?

By **Wayne L. Davis**

Seminaries and Institutes

When Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles encouraged young adults to become “the greatest generation of young adults in the history of the Church,” one thing he recommended they do was enroll in an institute of religion. He promised that by doing so, they would be better prepared for a mission, eternal marriage, and life as an adult, and better able to receive inspiration and guidance from the Spirit.¹

But if you’re not exactly sure what the Church’s institute of religion is or how it can bless your life after high school, I’ll try to answer a few questions you might have.

Who Can Attend?

Most youth choose to participate in seminary, but then what? Some students go on to attend a Church university or college, where religion courses are built into their school

schedule. Why? Because having a spiritual education experience along with an academic experience is crucial.

But what if you don’t attend a Church school? A lot of young adults don’t realize that a combined academic and spiritual education is available almost anywhere they go. As you attend college, an institute of religion program is usually close by, often across the road from the college or in a local Church building. Some colleges even allow institute classes to be taught right on their campuses. Even after college graduation, you are welcome to attend.

You don’t even have to be a college student. All young adults, ages 18–30, married or single, can attend institute.

Visit institute.lds.org to find an institute near you.

Why Attend?

The program started with just 57 students near a college in Moscow, Idaho, USA, and now has over 250,000 students worldwide. They see great

strength and blessings pouring into their lives. In a recent survey, institute students in 10 different countries were asked what institute did for them. Why did they go? How was it helping? Thousands of responses were gathered and revealed three main themes: Institute helps students (1) strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ, (2) progress spiritually, and (3) gain confidence to make important life decisions.

Don’t miss out on the friendships, spiritual protection, and gospel knowledge.

Think of the decisions you face: picking a college; deciding whether or not to go on a mission; and choosing a career, friends, and a spouse. These are huge decisions. And as President Thomas S. Monson said, “Decisions determine destiny.”² Certainly these critical decisions should be made with the help of the Holy Ghost. The needed divine help can be found as you connect with the Spirit, the scriptures, and friends who share your values through a religion class at institute or a Church school.

Laura is one student who benefits from institute. When she began attending a university in Ontario,

Canada, she felt lost and felt that her testimony wasn’t as strong as it once was. She started going to institute and once again “felt like herself” and “knew who she was.” (See her story and the stories of other young adults at InstituteIsForMe.lds.org.)

When you truly know who you are—a son or daughter of a loving Heavenly Father who wants you to become someone incredible—you can make important decisions leading to happiness and success.

As you build upon what you learned in seminary and other Church experiences, attending institute will strengthen your relationship with Jesus Christ at a very crucial period of

life and help you continue your spiritual progression.

Heavenly Father loves you. He will provide ways for you to continue to become like Him. Institute is one of those ways that is making a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives every year. ■

NOTES

1. M. Russell Ballard, “The Greatest Generation of Young Adults,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 68, 69.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Follow the Prophets,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Jan. 2015, 5.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN?

Institute offers a variety of courses. All students are invited to take the four cornerstone courses:

- Jesus Christ and the Everlasting Gospel teaches about Christ’s divine mission and how you can appreciate His role in your life.
- The Eternal Family explores topics such as understanding the relationship between gender and eternal identity, exercising faith in difficult family situations, and improving temple worship.
- Foundations of the Restoration explains the doctrinal foundation and historical context of Church history and how it relates to you today.
- Teachings and Doctrine of the Book of Mormon will help you understand the key doctrinal themes of this book of scripture that was written for our day.



Institute Is for Us

By Leah Welker
Church Magazines

We've got a lot on our plates. Some of us are students. Some are working long hours. Some of us are away from friends and family, or have responsibilities that weigh heavily on us. Some of us are trying to adjust after returning from a mission, or have just graduated from high school and aren't sure what comes next.

It might seem counterintuitive to add institute on top of everything else. Many of us have wondered at one time or another, will institute really help me?

The answer is *yes*.

Thousands of young adults across the world, many of them in situations like yours, find strength, support, friendship, and spiritual enrichment at institute. Here are just two examples of incredible young adults who, despite all their challenges, know that institute is for them.

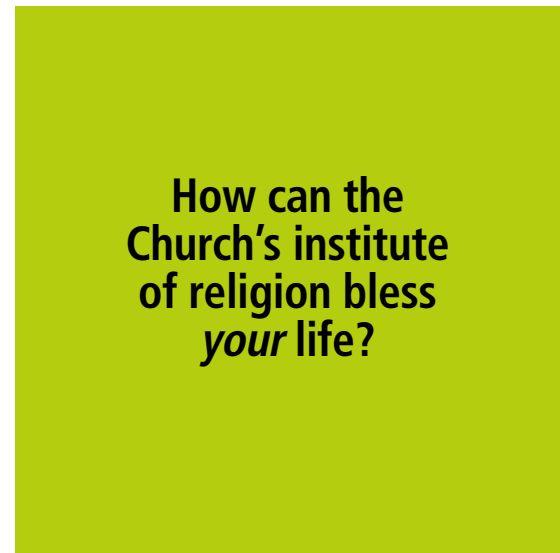
Institute Is Good for the Heart

Aric's story, Toronto, Ontario

Aric (pictured top right) is a PhD student at the University of Toronto, working with heart tissue and regenerative medicine.

In describing his research, he explains, "Certain types of stem cells can turn into anything in your body. We can put stem cells in a petri dish and grow them into a heart cell. After two weeks, they'll start beating themselves. We then use these to model different diseases and to test different drugs. My goal is to one day grow a heart in a laboratory setting like this."

Aric had his own change of heart during his mission to Belo Horizonte, Brazil. "When I served a mission, I learned how to listen to and follow the Spirit. It helped me learn how to study, to learn how to apply



myself." He changed so much that he was concerned about coming home. "I didn't really know how to act or what to do," he admitted. "I had to relearn how to act in certain situations. Going to institute helped me."

The social network at institute is important to Aric. "I've been able to befriend people who needed friends.



I've been able to comfort people when they needed to be comforted. That's important to me, to help other people, but then it's also important for me to feel that from other people as well."

He jokes about how long he has been going to institute, but he keeps going. "Every time that I go, I feel the Spirit that is present there. And it helps me be a better person, stay in good places, and do well in my work."

Aric draws a comparison between his work and institute. "If we put a cell in a good environment, there are internal changes that happen in the cell that make it more receptive to those positive changes or those positive signals that we want to give it. Over time, the cell changes—it morphs into something better, something bigger than itself. For me, that's something very, very special. If I put myself into the right environment, then I'm going to become more receptive to these spiritual aspects of life and less receptive to the negative influences that happen in the world."

He concludes, "God is real. That's something that I feel deep down inside myself. I haven't always felt His love in my life. I'm starting to realize that that's because of decisions that I've made. I realize that He's there to help me, that He really wants me to be my best self."

Institute Helps Me Remember Christ

Veronica's story, Madrid, Spain

When Veronica (pictured below) was 17, her twin sister died in her arms. Three years after her sister's death, on her own and struggling through life, Veronica started going for walks to work out her feelings of sadness. She had always believed in God,

WHAT LEADERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT INSTITUTE

All young single adults who have not graduated from a Church university or institute of religion should be encouraged to enroll in and graduate from institute.

Local leaders counsel together to create an effective plan to identify and invite each young single adult to attend institute. Seminary and institute personnel are prepared to assist priesthood leaders in these efforts.

The most effective efforts involve the following:

- **Priesthood leaders** lead the initiative.
- **Personal invitations** are extended to the young adults.
- Leaders use a **system of accountability** to report back on invitations.

so one day while she was walking, she prayed, "Lord, why are you doing all of this to me?"

At that moment, she looked up at an LDS Church building she had always passed by. Really seeing it for the first time, she became curious; she went inside and introduced herself to two sister missionaries, who taught her later that week.

Veronica says that after the first lesson, "I stood up and told them, 'You're all crazy,' and I left." She didn't want any of it, but eventually she began to reconsider.

"I think it was the first time I prayed so much. I felt like God was telling me, 'I am sending you this opportunity so that you can get to know me better. Don't you want it?'"

She decided she *did* want it. Despite losing her home and her job because of the gospel, she was baptized. Even though her life continued to be difficult sometimes, she trusted in the Lord. "Before I knew about the Church, I would cry or get mad if I didn't know how I was going to pay my rent. But now I know that the Lord will provide."

Veronica's patriarchal blessing told her that she was to serve a mission, but she didn't have any skirts or any way to buy them. A member of the Seventy and his wife were passing through the area and heard about her need; the wife had felt inspired to pack extra skirts for the

trip, and she gave many of them to Veronica. She also encouraged Veronica to attend institute. When Veronica's bishop started an institute program for their area, she began attending regularly.

Institute has given her peace and happiness. "I think what I like the most about institute is that during the week, we have a lot of different tasks to do. We have Sundays to renew our covenants with Heavenly Father. But on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, what do we have? I am grateful that we have institute at least once during the week because it is a way to remember Jesus Christ. Institute is one way He's helping me progress."

And Veronica did serve a mission. In October 2016 she left to serve in the Chile Osorno Mission.

She says, "I know that I'm here today because of Him. I know that He has prepared a plan perfect for each one of us. He will give us opportunities throughout our lives. I can feel His love every day, even though sometimes I say, 'Father, why is this happening to me?' But before



INVITING YOUNG ADULTS TO INSTITUTE: A SUCCESS STORY

Inviting all young adults to attend institute is one of the goals of the Church. Depending on the stake, this effort could involve several leaders:

- Institute coordinators
- Stake presidency members and bishops
- Institute teachers
- Young single adult representatives
- Students



A small town in New Zealand offers an amazing example of how the leaders in one stake came together to create an institute class to better serve the needs of their area.

The bishop of the Ngaruawahia Ward, Sam Higgins, wanted to know how he could help the young adults in his ward. President Bobby Hamon, second counselor in the Hamilton New Zealand Stake presidency, suggested institute, and he got in touch with Jonathan Warwick, the institute coordinator for that area.

Brother Warwick explains, “At first, we proposed increased advertising and personal contact to encourage students to make the 30- to 45-minute journey to Hamilton to attend the institute class there. But everyone felt that having a class in Ngaruawahia would help the students feel at home.”

With the help of a senior missionary couple, they created an institute class in Ngaruawahia. The class has grown from 2 students to over 40.

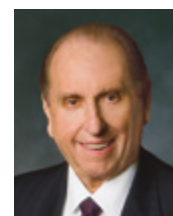
Brother Warwick says, “The Ngaruawahia institute class has become a miraculous answer to prayers. Through this class, individuals are reminded that the Lord truly loves each of His children and is anxious to provide solutions that will strengthen their testimonies of Jesus Christ, help them experience lasting conversion to the gospel, and help them feel the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ in their lives.”

For more thoughts from these leaders about this successful experience or for help on how to collaborate in strengthening the young adults in your stake, visit lds.org/go/81747.

I go to sleep, He responds, “This is happening because of this. Now go to sleep.’ And I love Him, too. Maybe I had to go through everything I went through to come to feel so much love for Him.” ■

INSTITUTE IS FOR ME—VIDEO STORIES

Watch the stories of Aric, Veronica, and other young adults at lds.org/go/81749.



MAKE INSTITUTE A PRIORITY

“Think of it. Friends will be made, the Spirit will be felt, and faith will be strengthened. I promise you

that as you participate in institute and study the scriptures diligently, your power to avoid temptation and to receive direction of the Holy Ghost in all you do will be increased. That is a promise which I leave with you.”

President Thomas S. Monson, Apr. 21, 2009, si.lds.org.

SEMINARY: Where We Make CONNECTIONS

In so many ways, seminary is where things come together.

By David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

Do you sometimes feel isolated as you try to understand your life, your trials, and the scriptures? If so, then one way to escape this feeling is to make connections. One of the best places to do this is in seminary. Here are some of the connections you can make there.

Connect with Other People

Seminary is a great reminder that you're not alone. And it's a great place to connect with others in a safe and supportive environment.

Whether you're meeting every day in a classroom or doing home or online study, seminary connects you with other youth as well as a caring teacher. These are people you can be your best self with. You can explore the scriptures, ask questions, look for answers, share thoughts and feelings and experiences. You can laugh, cry, and sing together—and possibly even eat together (ask your teacher; if the answer's no, never mind).

Connect with the Scriptures

Though the scriptures may have been written long ago and far away, seminary helps you reach through space and time to really connect with them. It helps you understand the similarities and differences between the world of yesterday and the world of today. And it helps you see the consistency of God's message to His people and the world.

In this way, seminary can help you see how God can speak to you through the scriptures and the Spirit to give you customized guidance. It also helps turn the scriptures into a lifelong friend—a constant source of comfort, advice, and help.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS OF TEENS IN CLASSROOM, SCRIPTURE MARKING, AND YOUNG MAN PRAYING BY MASON COBERLY



Connect the Scriptures with Each Other

What does Alma have to do with Matthew? Does Isaiah have anything in common with the Doctrine and Covenants? Seminary helps you see the threads that bind all of the gospel teachings together throughout the scriptures. Once you start making these connections, the scriptures become both useful and exciting, as well as friendly and familiar. This will spark your interest in making more of these connections between scriptures. And seminary is right there to help you do it.



Connect Your Present and Your Future

Present-You may have heard of *Future-You*, but it would be nice if they could get better acquainted. Through seminary you can get a better idea of who this *Future-You* person is. For instance, you may see how *Future-Missionary-You* uses the scriptures to teach people the gospel, resolve their concerns, and help them change their lives. Or you may get a glimpse of how *Future-Parent-You* plants a love of the scriptures in the hearts of children. Or you may begin to understand how focusing on scriptural truths can help *Future-Church-Service-You* to serve, teach, and inspire others. And of course, you'll see how *Future-You* experiences personal joy, peace, and inspiration from a habit of daily scripture study.



Connect with Your True Self

Your true self is the part of you that knows what kind of being you are, where you come from, and who your Heavenly Parents are. Your true self also knows what your true potential is, what kind of power you already possess, and the vast power you can gain access to if you make the right choices.

As you master the doctrines in the scriptures through seminary and feel the Holy Spirit confirm the truth of them to your heart, you deepen this knowledge. You'll also feel the Spirit's promptings to act—to repent, serve, pray, learn, and do everything in your power to connect with the true, best self your Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know you can be.

Connect with Heavenly Father

You strengthen your connection to Heavenly Father as you pray to Him, learn of Him and the Savior, and live as They want you to live. In seminary you learn how Heavenly Father speaks to you through the scriptures and the Holy Ghost, which comes to you when you earnestly study the scriptures. Seminary also gives you frequent opportunities to pray, ponder, bear testimony, and make many other connections to Heavenly Father.

See how these youth made connections.

Every time I am in seminary, I know Heavenly Father loves me and cares for me! Attending seminary has blessed me with a clearer understanding of who I am and why I am here. The principles and doctrines I have learned in seminary have helped me make righteous decisions. I am more resolved now to serve a full-time mission and excited to share the gospel with others.

Marlou T., age 20, Sorsogon, Philippines

Marlou

Growing up, I was never very active in the Church. I didn't have a firm testimony. But as I attended seminary every day, I learned that you can pray and get comfort and answers. I was able to relate to scripture stories. I don't think I had ever even read a chapter on my own before seminary.

I learned the basic principles of the gospel because I enrolled in seminary. I could always find peace in seminary. I cannot express enough that seminary is guided by the Lord.

Brynn W., age 17, Idaho, USA

Brynn

Through my years in seminary, I've learned a lot about where I came from, why I'm here, and what I should do. Seminary taught me how to ask questions and find answers. Before, it was hard for me to apply scriptures to myself. But in every lesson, we made parallels with our lives, so I not only learned scripture stories but also realized that my life is part of that story and that prophets have left directions for me. Because of that, it's easier for me to search for the right way and make right decisions.

Anastasia V., age 18, Moscow, Russia

Anastasia

My love for the standard works increases greatly in every year of seminary. This love helped me feel a greater desire to fulfill what Heavenly Father wants us to do. He helped me to feel a sincere love for my neighbor. I had the opportunity to share the gospel with each person around me. Through seminary, a program inspired by God, I was able to get out of the difficulties presented to me by the world. Heavenly Father helped me know what kind of daughter He wants me to be, what things I should focus on, and how I should act.

Mirian (center)

Mirian C., age 18, Guatemala, Guatemala



The past few years, I have struggled with clinical depression and anxiety. Last year was a record low for me. My testimony was slipping, and seminary was the only thing barely pulling me through. I met a few girls who quickly became my best friends. The scriptures began to resonate with me. And our teacher taught in such a way that the New Testament stories of Jesus Christ from so long ago became relevant to our teenage lives. I grew to know my Savior and my Heavenly Father. Slowly my testimony not only was restored but also became stronger and more immovable. My battle with my mental health has never left me, but because of seminary, the hope that was once lost is now abundant. I have a testimony of Jesus Christ; I know He lives, He loves us, and He can bear our burdens if we come to Him. Without seminary I would not have received that blessing.

Jalee

Jalee D., age 16, Colorado, USA



Before my first year in seminary, I didn't understand why we have to study the scriptures. I thought they had only boring stories. But thanks to seminary, I learned that each story contains a valuable lesson and that I can apply in my life right now. I have the desire to continue learning in the scriptures.

Oscar B., age 15, Limón, Costa Rica




Oscar

I was baptized in May 2016. My first year of seminary started later that year. I was skeptical at first, and I wasn't ready to get up early, but I was prompted to go. I was still a little unsure about recognizing the voice of the Spirit, but being in seminary has helped me recognize that voice. Through the Spirit, I'm able to know the scriptures are true. I know that the Spirit prompts me to highlight scriptures with meaning and that there's always a reason. The scriptures guide me when I'm lost, and they teach me. Whenever I'm having a bad day, I can open them up and make my day better. ■

Shelby L., age 16, Montana, USA



Shelby

A photograph of two women, one in a red shirt and one in a green shirt, looking at a smartphone together. They are standing at a table covered with a green and white striped tablecloth, which has several papers and documents on it. The background is bright and slightly out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting with large windows.

How You Can Help with **TEMPLE WORK**

Temple work brings joy to you and those you love.

By Megan Armknecht

Have you ever been so excited about something that you just couldn't wait to start? Maybe you were excited about going with your brother to see your favorite sports team play, or maybe your best friend invited you to an amazing concert.

In the 1840s, God restored a gospel truth that made Joseph Smith really happy and excited. He learned that

through proper priesthood authority, people could be baptized by proxy for their loved ones who had not been baptized in this life.

The doctrine of baptism for the dead was especially exciting to Joseph because his older brother Alvin had died at the age of 25 without having been baptized. Joseph had been worried that Alvin was condemned to eternal suffering because he had not been baptized in this life.

But through the revelations on salvation for the dead, Joseph learned that Alvin could be baptized by proxy and saved in the celestial kingdom (see D&C 137).

Sharing the Truth of Baptism for the Dead with Others

Not only was this news exciting to the Smith family, but it also was exciting to the other Saints in Nauvoo, Illinois, too. On August 15, 1840, Joseph Smith taught about the ordinance of baptism for their ancestors at a funeral for Seymour Brunson. Joseph said that it was time to fulfill and restore that practice, which had been practiced by Saints in ancient times (see 1 Corinthians 15:29).¹

When the Saints in Nauvoo heard that they could be baptized for their deceased family members, they were thrilled. “The moment I heard of it my soul leaped with joy,” said President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98).²

Once the Saints realized they could perform baptisms for the dead, they

wanted to get their families’ work done as soon as they could. Many wrote to family members so they could gather names of deceased relatives. Because there was no temple at the time, hundreds of people went down to the Mississippi River to perform the ordinances.

Baptism for the Dead and You

The excitement about temple work and baptism for the dead continues today. There are temples around the world, and temple work opens the door for *everyone* to have salvation. It is such a gift!

Just like the Saints in Nauvoo, you can gather with your friends and family and do proxy baptisms for those who have died. You can take your family to the temple. This means taking not only your *living* family to the temple but also your deceased loved ones. If your family can’t go to the temple, you can ask friends, leaders, or quorum and class members to go with you.

Going to the temple with loved ones brings joy. It connects families, brings peace, and reminds us that God loves all of us and that He offers salvation to all of His children.

And that is something we can all be excited about. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. See Matthew McBride, “Letters on Baptism for the Dead,” May 29, 2013, history.lds.org.
2. Wilford Woodruff, in *Deseret News*, May 27, 1857, 91.



UNITING OUR FAMILIES

“If the youth in each ward will not only go to the temple and

do baptisms for their dead but also work with their families and other ward members to provide the family names for the ordinance work they perform, both they and the Church will be greatly blessed. . . . The eternally significant blessing of uniting our own families is almost beyond comprehension.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Roots and Branches,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 46–47.



Ten tips from youth to help your family reach new heights on your knees.

By Charlotte Larcabal
Church Magazines

Did you know family prayer is a commandment?

Jesus Christ *commanded* the Nephites to “pray in your families unto the Father” (3 Nephi 18:21).

Since then, prophets and apostles have echoed this teaching. For example, Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that it should be “a nonnegotiable priority in your daily life.”¹

Family prayer is important! It’s also the key to growing closer to each other and Heavenly Father. And it’s not just up to Mom and Dad. You can have a big influence on your family! You can be a champion for family prayer.

BE A CHAMPION

What is a champion for family prayer? When you think of champions, you might think of people who are the best at something. That’s one kind of champion: a winner of first prize or first place in a competition. Another kind of champion is someone who fights for something, an advocate or defender. So a champion for family prayer would be someone who fights for, stands up for, and defends family prayer. Think you can do that?

CHAMPIONS

for Family Prayer

Here are some tips on how to be a champion for family prayer:

1. Try not to say repetitive prayers when it's your turn to pray. *Jeanel S., age 14, Idaho, USA*

2. Make a list of things you need to pray about as a family. *Samantha B., age 17, Alabama, USA*

3. In my family we always try to express gratitude more than we ask for things. We always try to have a spirit of gratitude toward Heavenly Father, so I try to help my siblings with that. *Karla S., age 17, Tijuana, Mexico*

4. Remind everyone. If your family isn't very good at praying together, a good start would be having personal prayers. *Camille G., age 18, Alabama, USA*

5. Get up a few minutes earlier to make sure family prayer

happens before you leave. You can set an alarm telling you when it's time for family prayer. *Tess Z., age 16, Texas, USA*

6. Listen to the words the person praying is saying, and repeat them in your head. Afterwards, see what you can remember from their prayer. Saying "Amen" means "so be it," or that you agree. I really want to know and understand what I'm agreeing to. *Grace M., age 14, California, USA*

7. Have a good attitude about family prayer. Don't think of it as something to check off before you go to sleep. Remember that family prayer can help bring your family closer together. *Ranoah H., age 17, Alabama, USA*

8. Try to help all your siblings out. Even just having a good attitude and being a good example does a lot. *Will W., age 14, California, USA*

9. Think about what you want to pray about before you pray. *Lyric A., age 13, Arkansas, USA*

10. Remember that nothing can be more important than that. Spending time with your family and making sure you get that quality time to read scriptures and to pray is really important. *Isaac S., age 14, California, USA*

NOTE

1. Richard G. Scott, "Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 93.



"There is no more beautiful sight in all this world than to see a family praying together."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Come unto Him in Prayer and Faith," *Ensign*, Mar. 2009, 5; *Liahona*, Mar. 2009, 3.



Deciding TO BE Faithful

*These four decisions can be very
beneficial to you.*

One of the greatest challenges I faced growing up as a child in Guatemala was poverty—spiritual poverty because we didn't know the gospel and temporal poverty because of the lack of money. My mother died when I was five years old, which left my father to raise four young children by himself. Because my father wanted to keep us all together, he had to delegate some of the household responsibilities to us children.

I was the oldest child and was assigned the task of preparing lunch and dinner for the family every day. It was hard at first, but I learned a few ways to cook. Each day my dad would leave me 25 cents to buy the food. I would buy a pound of beans for 6 cents and a pound of rice for 7 cents. Then I would buy 5 cents of charcoal that I used to cook everything, 2 cents of kindling, and 5 cents of tortillas. I did this every day, and every day we ate rice and beans with tortillas. Even back then 25 cents wasn't much, but this was how we got by.

The challenge was how to leave this cycle of poverty. And it all comes down to decisions—the choice to do something to better my life. We as individuals are always making decisions for ourselves, even when we don't think we are. For example, we *choose* to believe. Sometimes we can feel confused when faced with what the world teaches and what Jesus Christ teaches. But the best source to guide our lives is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. As I made decisions based on this doctrine, I felt the hand of the Lord in my life.



By Elder
Enrique R.
Falabella
Of the Seventy



The challenge was how to leave this cycle
of poverty.

And it all comes down to decisions—the choice to
do something to better my life.



I would like to share with you four decisions that have had a profound impact on my life. If you make these same decisions and hold firm to them, they will be a blessing to you as well: (1) the decision to be baptized, (2) the decision to believe in Jesus Christ and remain active in the Church, (3) the decision to trust in the Lord's promises, and (4) the decision to remain faithful and follow the counsel of the prophets.



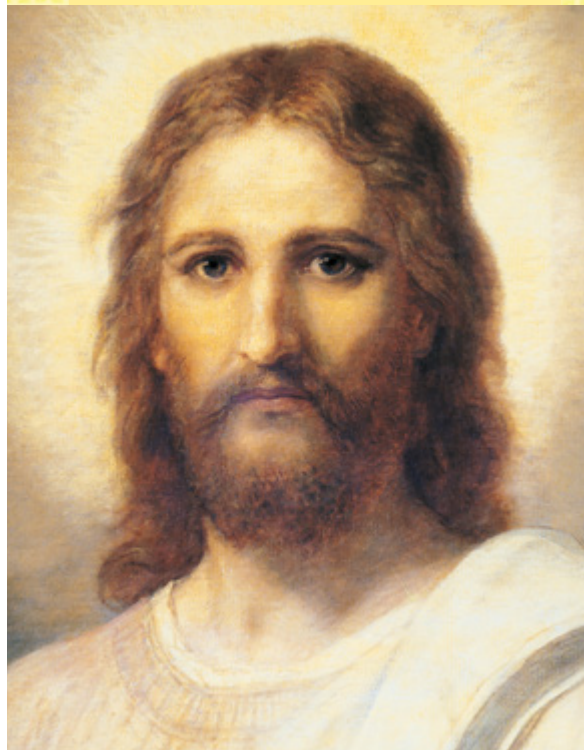
→ The Decision to Be Baptized

When I was 12, the missionaries began to teach my siblings and me. At first my father didn't participate. He would just sit in a back room behind a curtain and listen. But then he read a Church pamphlet that described how a man and a woman married with the right authority could live together forever. This got his attention because even though his wife had passed away, he could be with her again. Once he learned this, he decided to be baptized. And we were all baptized as a family.

The newfound perspective that the gospel provided helped me realize it was possible to achieve better things in life if I applied myself and was obedient. I made the personal decision that I would do whatever it took to remain on the Lord's path.

→ The Decision to Believe in Christ and Remain Active in the Church

I remember specifically making this promise one day as I sat in a chapel waiting for a baptismal service to start. As I sat pondering the doctrine of Christ, I began to have a strong feeling of joy telling me that everything I had learned from the missionaries was true. In that moment I silently committed to God to always trust Him and that I would remain active in His Church throughout my life if it meant I could continue to have the joy that comes from the Holy Ghost. To me this promise included not only attending church every week but also trusting in the Lord's doctrine, the scriptures, the living prophets, and especially my Savior, Jesus Christ.



→ The Decision to Trust the Lord's Promises

It was relatively early in my life that I made this important decision to trust in the Lord's promises. Since then my decision has proved to be very beneficial to me. Whenever a doubt or a question has come up, I have been able to think back to the commitment I made and have based my life decisions on that commitment. Deciding early on the standards you will live by will help you make correct choices when doubts or problems come.

I had a memorable experience with this principle when I was a student. I always worked hard in school to try to learn and prepare for the future. I knew that in order to leave poverty, I would have to find a career that would open doors to new opportunities in life. I also knew that in order to obtain this type of career, I would have to focus on my education.

As important as education was to me, I made the personal decision to forgo studying on Sundays. As a member of the

Church, I knew the Lord had said that the Sabbath is His day, not ours. I tried to make purposeful decisions about what I would do on this special day. However, even after having made this decision, at times I was tempted to bend my own rule, especially when I had a test coming up. I would think, "It's not bad; it's just studying. I can go to church in the morning and study in the afternoon and evening."

But as I remembered the promise I had made that I would remain active and faithful to the counsel of the Lord's prophets, it was much easier to stick to my decision to not study on Sundays and instead use the Lord's day for service and worship. I had already decided to remain faithful, so for me it was just a matter of interpreting what the Lord had said about the Sabbath day and applying His counsel as best as I could in my life.

I ended up excelling in my studies and obtaining a good career that helped me provide for my family. I know that because I kept my promise to the Lord, He blessed me to be able to create a better life.

→ The Decision to Remain Faithful and Follow the Counsel of the Prophets

For each of us, remaining faithful to the Lord is a matter of establishing to what extent we personally believe that Jesus is the Christ, that those who wrote the scriptures were inspired of God, and that the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles truly are servants of God. Knowing that revelation exists in our day and that the prophets were called of God makes it easier to stay true to the gospel when you come across difficult situations.

If you can develop this type of confidence, then you will never be troubled by questions about what behaviors or activities are or are not appropriate. All of these concerns will be answered as you seek answers in faith through the scriptures, the Spirit, and the prophets—the appointed servants of God. ■





INDIVIDUAL WORTH

Like a flower, each person is precious,
no matter how or when they bloom.



**By Elder
Robert D. Hales**
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

HOW TO RESPOND WITH CHRISTIAN COURAGE

One of mortality's great tests comes when our **beliefs are questioned or criticized**. In such moments, we may want to respond aggressively—to “put up our dukes.” But when we respond to our accusers as the Savior did, we not only become more Christlike, we **invite others to feel His love and follow Him** as well.

As true disciples, our primary concern must be others' welfare, not personal vindication. Questions and criticisms give us an opportunity to reach out to others and demonstrate that they matter to our Heavenly Father and to us. Our aim should be to **help them understand the truth**, not defend our egos or score points in a theological debate. Our **heartfelt testimonies** are the most powerful answer we can give our accusers. And such testimonies can only be borne in **love** and **meekness**. We should be like Edward Partridge, of whom the Lord said, “His heart is pure before me, for he is like unto Nathanael of old, in whom there is no guile” (D&C 41:11). To be guileless is to have a childlike innocence, to **be slow to take offense and quick to forgive**.

To all who seek to know how we should respond to our accusers, I reply, we **love them**. Whatever their race, creed, religion, or political persuasion, if we follow Christ and show forth His courage, we must love them. We do not feel we are better than they are. Rather, we desire with our love to **show them a better way—the way of Jesus Christ**. His way leads to the gate of baptism, the strait and narrow path of righteous living, and the temple of God. He is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Only through Him can we and all our brothers and sisters inherit the greatest gift we can receive—eternal life and eternal happiness. To help them, to be an example for them, is not for the weak. It is for the strong. It is for you and me, Latter-day Saints who pay the price of discipleship by answering our accusers with Christian courage. ■

From an October 2008 general conference address.



HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?

Treat them with kindness like the Savior would so that they get to know the real you rather than judging you by the things they've heard. If you feel the love of the Savior, it will be easier to handle the situation.

Samantha L., age 18, Chihuahua, Mexico

The best way is by being an example to others. Most of us have lived moments when we felt alone or scared. When we give our love, a hug, or even a smile, we will help others and even ourselves.

Yandri P., age 17, Chihuahua, Mexico

“How can I help my friends overcome problems like swearing and excessive video gaming?”

Helping your friends overcome problems can be a touchy topic, because you don’t want to come across as being overbearing or judgmental. Even though each situation will be different, an important point to remember is that your example matters. By upholding your standards, others will notice—and you can be a positive influence. For instance, if your friend swears, make sure that you’re always using only clean language—including clean jokes and comments. That way, he or she has a great example of how it’s possible to be funny and cool without swearing.

Your friends will often notice your choices and respect them. Good friends will respect you for your choices, even if they don’t make the same ones.

But what if your friend doesn’t stop doing whatever troubles you, even though you’re being a good example? Well, it’s also important to remember that your friends can’t read your mind. Sometimes, they might not even *realize* that a particular behavior bothers you. If, after a little while, he or she doesn’t stop, it’s perfectly OK to kindly and respectfully ask them to.

Whatever problems your friends face, you can be a positive influence on your friends by choosing the right. You can invite them to do fun, uplifting activities. If you are happy to choose the right, people will notice.



Strengthen Your Friends

I gave a lesson about language in Mutual. I think that it’s working, at least with one of my good friends. We first have to set the example. We can pray for our friends and have the courage to tell them at the right time, “Please do not speak with bad words. I challenge you not to say rude things today.”

Dante C., age 19, Puebla, Mexico

Pray before Talking with Them

First, I would pray before having a conversation with him or her. Second, I would speak to them kindly and positively, giving advice such as refraining from reacting when mad, for example. My example will also help them use better language.

Ndansia B., age 18, Kimbanseke, Democratic Republic of the Congo



Show Them Better Things They Can Do

Instead of chastising them, help them realize there are better things they could be doing.



Invite them to do fun, wholesome activities with you and encourage them to do more

productive hobbies such as learning to play a musical instrument, playing



with siblings, or helping them around the house.

Elder Cobabe, age 19, and Elder Allred, age 19, Hong Kong China Mission

Practice Makes Perfect

I would tell them to pray for strength and practice talking without swearing or using crude words. I'd also tell them that spending excessive time on video games limits their interactions with family and friends and that they can stop it by engaging in wholesome and worthwhile activities. If they find themselves making a mistake, they can pray for strength and continue practicing because practice makes perfect.

Ozioma O., age 17, Abia, Nigeria

Influence Them for Good

We can't control other people's actions, but we can help influence them for good. We can live our lives as positive, Christlike examples and help those who are around us come unto Christ. If our friends are making poor decisions, we can suggest better alternatives and express what we know to be right and true through our words and our actions.

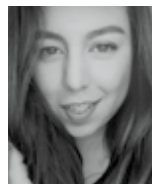
Mosiah M., age 17, Utah, USA

Have a "Swearing Jar"

One specific way I could help my friends stop swearing is by having a "swearing jar," and whenever someone swears, they have to put a quarter

in the jar. I can help encourage stopping excessive video games if I invite my friends to youth camps, Church events, and other fun activities. I can also introduce them to new people who will help them be both social and active.

Owyn P., age 13, Hawaii, USA



Caring for Others

Being a good example is the most important thing I can do because trying to help someone

stop a bad behavior when I am doing the same thing is just not reasonable. They won't take my advice or my point of view seriously. I can also help my friends by explaining to them why I don't feel comfortable with their behavior. If their language is not appropriate, I can help them see the impression they give to people when they use that type of bad language.

Alejandra T., age 17, Chihuahua, Mexico



BE AN EXAMPLE IN SPIRIT

"We are to be an example in spirit. To me that means we strive to have in our lives kindness, gratitude, forgiveness, and goodwill. These qualities will provide for us a spirit which will touch the lives of those around us."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Be an Example and a Light," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 86-87.

Pray

You can pray for them to stop swearing or stop gaming so much. Prayer will never hurt.

Joshua L., age 14, Oregon, USA

UPCOMING QUESTION

"What activities should I do in my free time to make it more valuable?"

Submit your answer and, if desired, a high-resolution photograph by September 15, 2017, at liahona.lds.org (click "Submit an Article") or by email to liahona@ldschurch.org.

Please include the following information: (1) full name, (2) birth date, (3) ward or branch, (4) stake or district, (5) your written permission, and, if you are under age 18, your parent's written permission (email is acceptable) to publish your response and photograph.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.





By Lori Fuller

Church Magazines

Based on a true story

"I'll stand for truth. I'll stand for right. The Lord can depend on me" (Children's Songbook, 162).

"Hey, look at this." Jack pulled a folded piece of paper from his pocket. "I found it in a magazine this morning." He unfolded it and held it out to Taran.

But Taran could see right off it wasn't something he wanted to look at. He turned away and said, "I don't want to look at that."

Jack shrugged and put the paper back in his pocket. "Baby."

Taran didn't really care.

When Taran got home, he helped Mom make flatbread for dinner. He dragged a chair over to the counter, and Mom tied his apron.

"Mom," he said, "when I was at Ian's house, his friend tried to show me a picture of a person without

clothes. I turned away and walked away.”

Mom set down the bowl of dough and gave Taran a hug. “That was a really good choice. Thank you for telling me about it.”

“In family night that’s what you said to do,” Taran said as he patted his hands with flour and lifted the dough onto the counter.

“I’m glad you remembered. Is that the first time someone’s shown you a bad picture?”

Taran nodded.

“Well, I’m really glad you told me. You know you can ask me about anything or tell me anything, right? Even if you made a bad choice, I’d still want to know so I could help. I wouldn’t be mad.” She dabbed a bit of flour onto his nose.

Taran smiled and wrinkled his floury nose. “Yup. I know.”

After dinner that night, Dad said, “Today someone tried to show Taran a bad picture, the kind we’ve talked about in family night.”

Reena’s hand shot up in the air. “I remember talking about that!” Dhara wasn’t old enough to remember much, but she nodded too.

“So what did you do?” Sonia asked Taran.

“I didn’t look at it, and I walked away,” said Taran.

Mom nodded. “We’re really happy Taran made such a good choice. And we’re so proud of him for letting me know what happened.”

Dad reached across the table to give Taran a high five. “Way to go, bud.” Reena and Dhara clapped, and Sonia gave Taran a big smile.

“So to celebrate we have a special treat!” said Dad. That made *everybody* cheer.

Mom got up to pull the ice cream out of the freezer, and Taran and Sonia ran over to grab bowls and spoons.

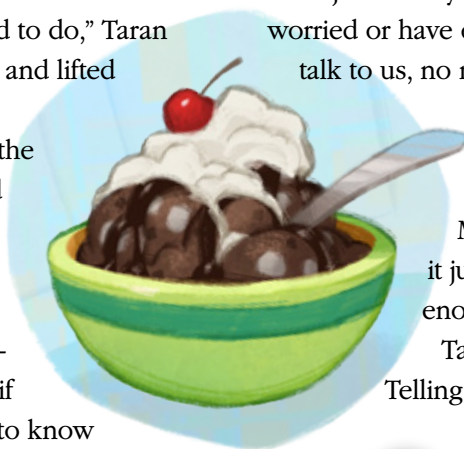
“OK, bud,” said Dad, pointing the ice cream scoop at Taran. “Which flavor do you want?”


As they all dug into their ice cream, Mom said, “Dad and I just want you kids to remember that if you’re worried or have questions, you can always come and talk to us, no matter what. It makes us happy.”

“And gets us ice cream?” Sonia asked as she held up a spoonful of chocolate.

Mom laughed. “Sometimes. But mostly it just makes us happy. And that is enough.”

Taran nodded as he finished his last bite. Telling Mom had made him happy too. ■





CHALLENGE

“I will only read and watch things that are pleasing to Heavenly Father”
(My Gospel Standards).

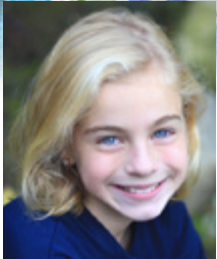
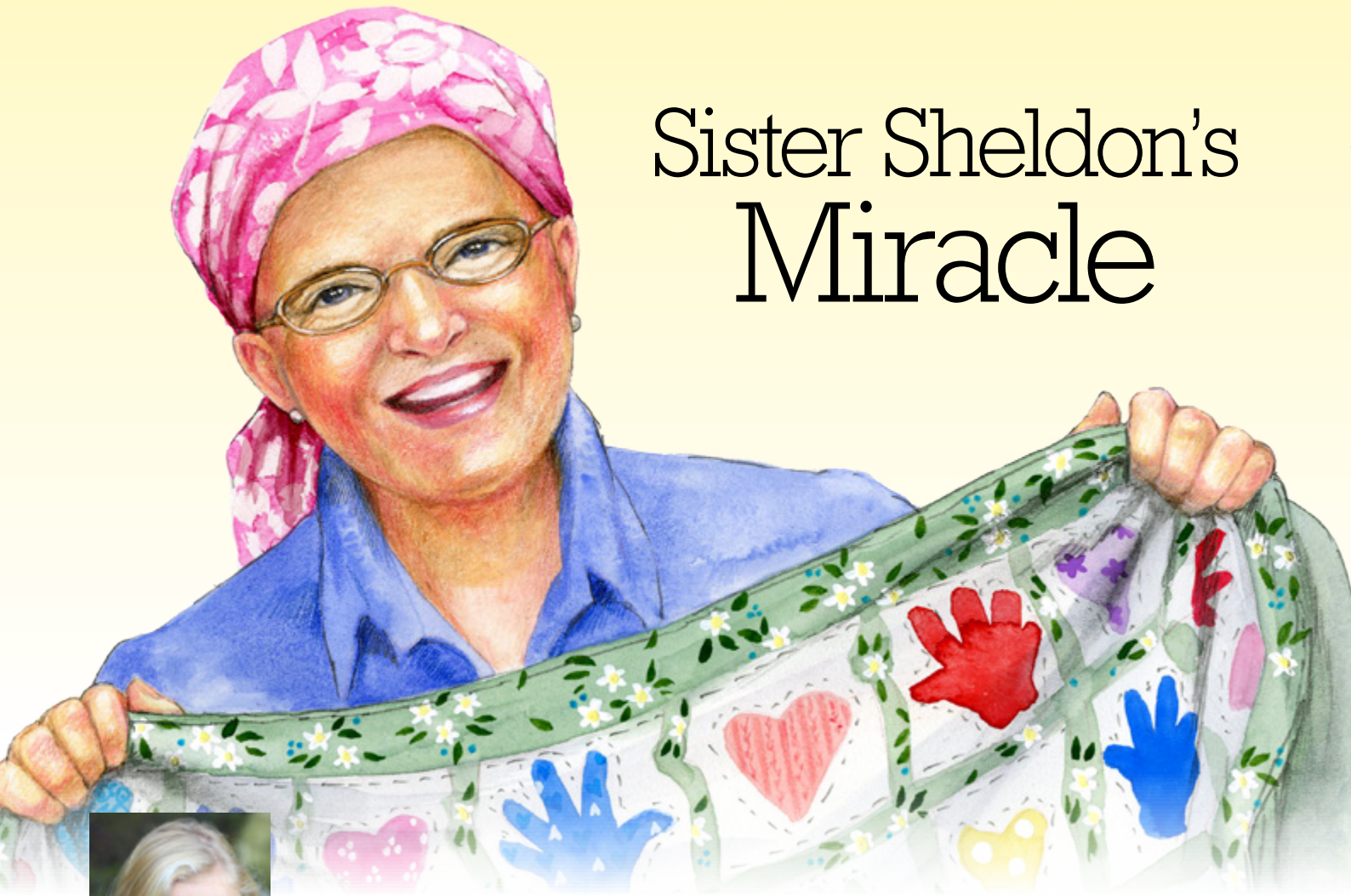
Practice saying no if someone tries to show you something bad. Turn away and walk away.

Talk to a parent or trusted adult about why pornography isn’t good for us.

Make a plan with your family. If you see something bad, tell a parent or trusted adult as soon as possible to quickly let go of bad feelings.

I challenge myself to . . .

Sister Sheldon's Miracle



By Elyse D., age 10, Washington, USA

Sister Sheldon is the greatest Primary president ever! She is energetic and funny. When she stands up to do sharing time, we all chant, “It’s Sheldon sharing time” with jazz hands and smiles. She loves it!

Early in 2015 Sister Sheldon discovered that she had cancer again, for the fifth time! She explained to all of us what cancer is and what it does. She told us that she might miss church sometimes and she would probably lose her hair. She asked us to fast and pray to help make the cancer go away.

During this time, our Primary did the helping hands challenge, where we cut out paper hands and wrote on them an act of service we did. Sister Ashby, in the Primary presidency, had the idea to make a helping

hands quilt for Sister Sheldon. We all wanted her to know that we love her, so the whole Primary traced hands and hearts, and the activity day girls used them to make a quilt. We sewed, ironed, and poured all of our love into it. Some of us even tied strings on our fingers to remember Sister Sheldon.

We gave the quilt to Sister Sheldon. She took it to her chemotherapy sessions and felt our love.

The best part was when Sister Sheldon bore her testimony to the entire Primary. She told us how special we were to her and that she loved us. She knew we were a big part of why she made it through chemo again. Even though I was scared that she might not make it, I just knew she would. Today Sister Sheldon is cancer free! ■

Being Like Nephi



By Mason J., age 8, Utah, USA

One day I learned in Primary about how faithful and righteous Nephi was. So I decided that I wanted to be like Nephi.

The next day I worked on making better choices. My brother hit me. I got mad. I wanted to hit him back, but I decided to be like Nephi. Instead of hitting my brother back, I just walked away. It helped to take my anger away.

Another time, my brother played with my airplane without asking, and I was worried that he was going to break it. So I asked him nicely to give it back, and he did!

It is hard to make the right choice sometimes, but I think of Jesus's and Nephi's examples. I also read my scriptures every night, and it helps me throughout the day to make righteous choices. I know that when we are faithful like Jesus and Nephi, it will make us happy. ■





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

How do I help **EVERYONE** feel welcome in Primary?

God loves all children.
We are all His sons
and daughters. We
need to be thoughtful
and kind. Some of our
friends come to church
by themselves. Some
can't get baptized until
they grow up.

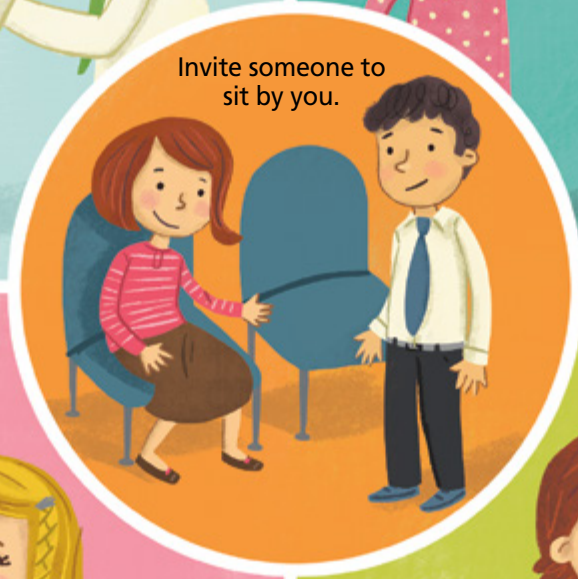
You can reach out to
someone who feels alone
or left behind.



Knowing someone's
name can make a
difference.



Invite someone to
sit by you.



Let's open our arms and our
hearts a little wider.



Help those
who feel
scared or
shy. Think
about them.
Welcome
them.



From "Whoso Receiveth Them, Receiveth Me," Ensign or Liahona, May 2016, 49–52.

REACHING OUT to New Friends



Elder Neil L. Andersen and his wife, Kathy, visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Africa. They had a Church meeting outside under tents. Around the tents was a big fence. Elder Andersen could see children watching them from the other side of the fence. Sister Andersen asked him, “Do you think you might want to invite the children to come in?” Elder Andersen walked up to the man at the microphone. He asked the man to invite the children to come in and join them.

The children came running! They were all smiling and excited to be a part of the meeting.

Elder Andersen also told a story of a boy named Joshua who reached out to another child at church.

When Joseph, a boy from Uganda, went to church for the first time, he didn’t have any family there to help him know where to go. Then the missionaries introduced him to Joshua.

Joshua told Joseph he would be his friend. He gave Joseph a songbook for Primary, and he sat next to him. Then the Primary class sang “I Am a Child of God” to Joseph. Everyone made Joseph feel very special, especially his new friend, Joshua. When they were older, Joshua and Joseph served as missionary companions!

These experiences reminded Elder Andersen that we all need to reach out to people around us who might feel left out or alone. ■

Happy to Help!

I like enchiladas, math, and the color mint green. My parents are from Burundi, a country in East Africa. I was born in a refugee camp in Tanzania. Now I live in Utah, USA.



A SPECIAL NAME

I speak English and a language called Kirundi. My last name means "I will always be grateful for what I have." I'm grateful that many of my relatives live nearby too.





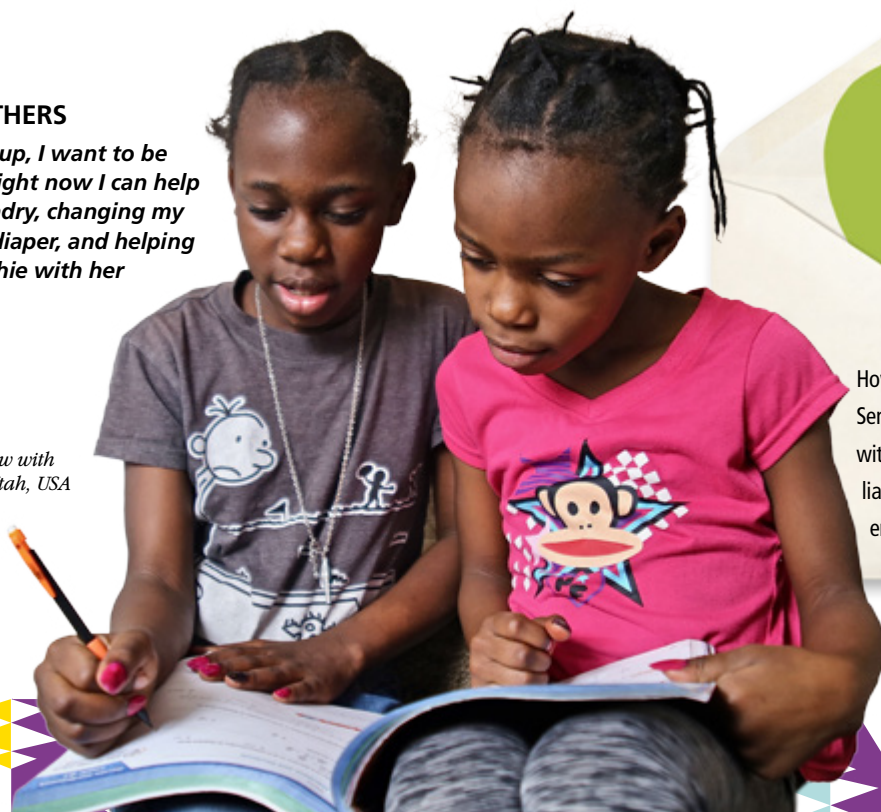
FAMILY FUN

During the holidays my family and I go to Grandma's house for dinner. We eat sambusas (fried dough with rice or meat inside). Then the parents tell stories, my uncle and cousin play drums, and my sister and I dance!

HELPING OTHERS

When I grow up, I want to be a nurse. But right now I can help by doing laundry, changing my baby sister's diaper, and helping my sister Sophie with her homework.

From an interview with Jordan Wright, Utah, USA



SHOWING LOVE TO KIDS WHO ARE NEW

- If you don't speak their language, find someone who can translate.
- Learn how to say hello. In Kirundi, say "Amakuru." In Swahili, say "Jambo!"
- Invite them to come play with you.

HELPING NEWCOMERS

I like helping at Primary too. Some of the kids in my branch speak Kirundi at home, and some speak Swahili. We have Primary in English. When new kids come to Primary who only speak Kirundi, I help by translating for them.

**SEND US
A HEART!**

How do you follow Jesus by showing love? Send us a heart with your story and photo, along with your parent's permission. Submit it through liahona.lds.org (click "Submit an Article") or email liahona@ldschurch.org.

Try this Christ-centered family home evening idea.

Names of Jesus

Here's an activity your family can do. Learn about Jesus Christ by reading these scriptures and filling in the H name used in the verse. Then share one way you know Jesus loves you!

Mosiah 3:20

Jesus is our _____ and Redeemer. He saved, or "redeemed," us from death and sin through the Atonement. Because of this, we have the chance to live with our Heavenly Parents again one day.

1

2 Nephi 2:28

A _____ is a go-between person, or someone who helps solve problems between people. Because we all sin, we all need help to be able to live with God again. Jesus can help us with this problem! He "mediates" for us, giving us chances to change and have eternal life even though we make mistakes.

5

Jarom 1:11

The name _____ means "the anointed." This name for Jesus reminds us that He was the King the prophets and scriptures had taught about.

2

Isaiah 40:28

Jesus is sometimes called the _____ because He helped make this beautiful earth for us, under the direction of Heavenly Father.

6

Abraham 2:8

Before Jesus was born on earth, He was called _____, the God of Israel.
This name was so sacred that Jewish people didn't say it out loud, but instead used other names like Lord when talking about Him.

3

Psalms 23:1-3

Jesus is the Good _____.
He loves us and wants to guide and protect us, just like a shepherd cares for his flocks.

4

John 8:12

Jesus is the _____.
Even when bad things happen, we can feel peace and hope by learning about Jesus and following His teachings. He loves every single person in this world—including you!

7

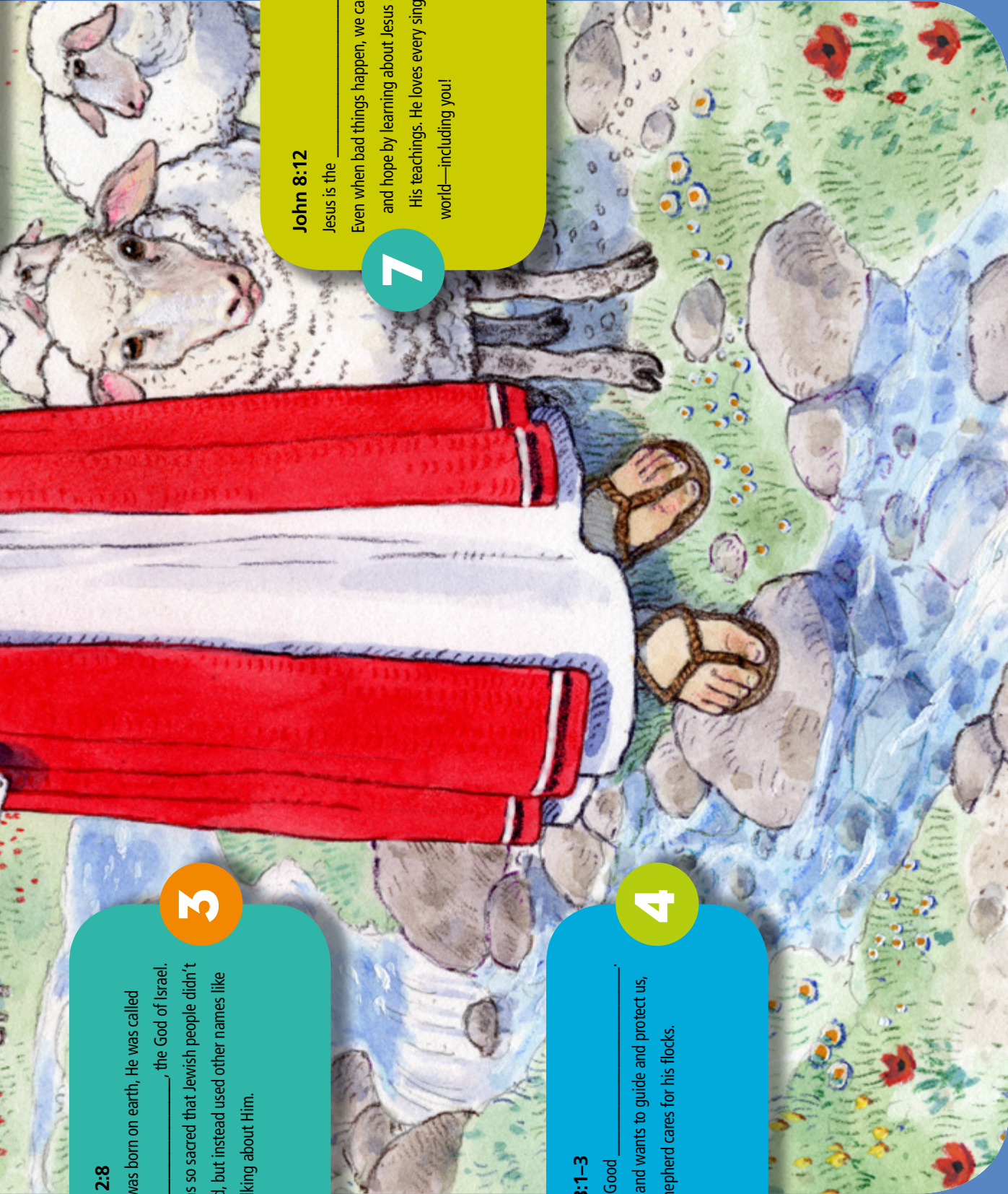


ILLUSTRATION BY KRISTIN KWAN

Answers: Savior, Messiah, Jehovah, Shepherd, Mediator, Creator, Light of the World

You can also watch a video at Mormon.org about the names of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Forgave

By Kim Webb Reid

One day Jesus was praying. One of the disciples asked Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

Jesus told His disciples to pray and ask Heavenly Father to forgive their sins. He said Heavenly Father would forgive them if they forgave others.



Peter once asked Jesus how many times he should forgive someone who did something wrong. “Seven times?” Peter guessed.

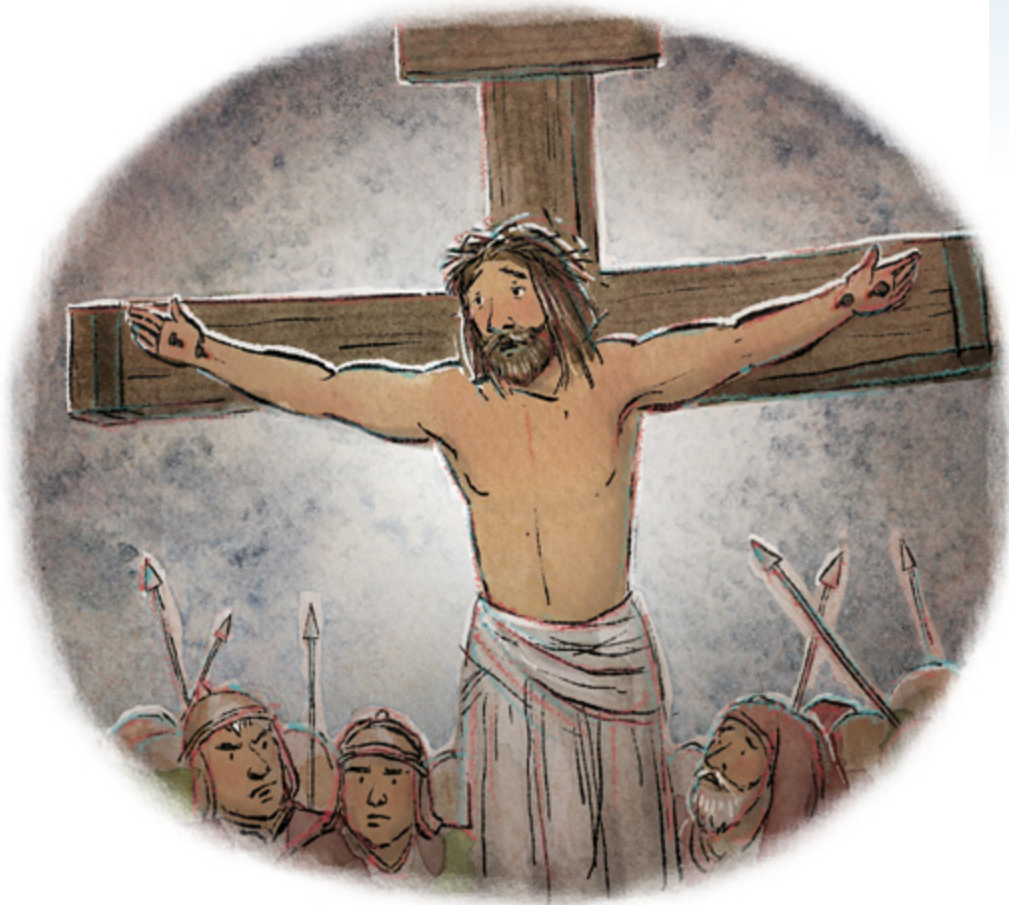
“Seventy times seven,” Jesus said.

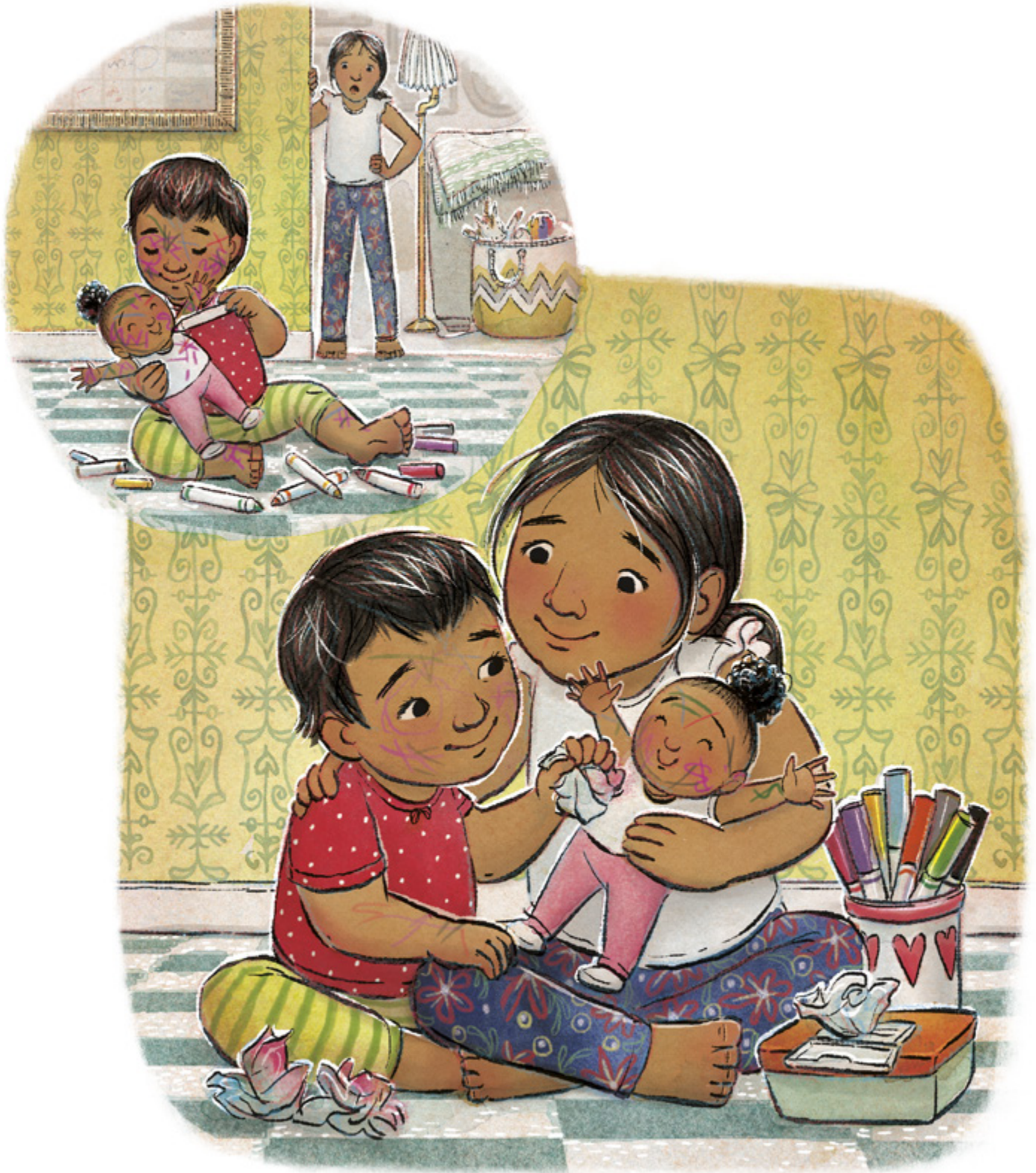
Jesus taught His disciples that we must *always* forgive.



Jesus forgave people who felt sorry about their sins. When He forgave one woman, she felt so grateful that she washed His feet with her tears.

Jesus also forgave people who didn't know they were doing something wrong. He asked Heavenly Father to forgive the men who crucified Him. They didn't know He was the Son of God.





Jesus forgives people because He loves them. I can try to be like Jesus by forgiving others too! ■

*From Matthew 18:21-22; Luke 7:37-48;
Luke 11:1-4; Luke 23:34*

I Can Be Reverent

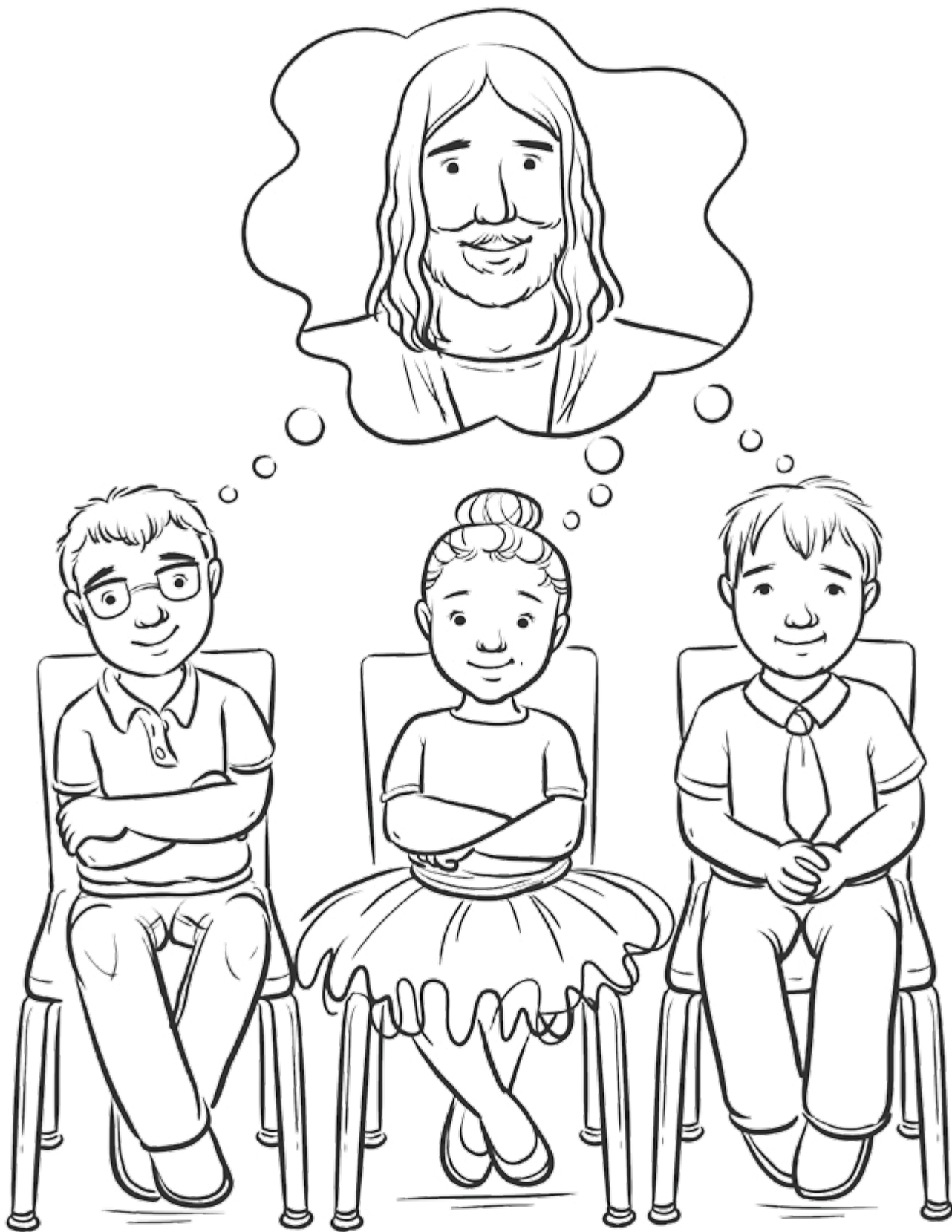


ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT



By President James E. Faust (1920–2007)

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

PLEASE COME BACK!

We open our arms to you.

We need your help.

To those who have been offended or lost interest [in the Church], or who have turned away for any reason, we invite all of you to join in full fellowship again with us. The faithful members, with all their faults and failings, are humbly striving to do God’s holy work across the world. We need your help in the great struggle against the powers of darkness so prevalent in the world today. In becoming a part of this work, you can all satisfy the deepest yearnings of your souls. You can come to know the personal comfort that can be found in seeking the sacred and holy things of God. You can enjoy the blessings and covenants administered in the holy temples. You can have great meaning and purpose in your lives, even in the profane world in which we live. You can have



strength of character so that you can act for yourselves and not be acted upon. (See 2 Nephi 2:26.)

A few years ago, the First Presidency of the Church issued [this] invitation:

“We are aware of some who are inactive, of others who have become critical and are prone to find fault, and of those who have been disfellowshipped or excommunicated because of serious transgressions.

“To all such we reach out in love. We are anxious to forgive in the spirit of Him who said: ‘I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men (D&C 64:10).’

“We encourage Church members to forgive those who may have wronged them. To those who have ceased activity and to those who have become critical, we say, ‘Come back. Come back and feast at the table of the Lord, and taste again the sweet and satisfying fruits of fellowship with the saints.’

“We are confident that many have [wanted] to return, but have felt awkward about doing so. We assure you that you will find open arms to receive you and willing hands to assist you” (*Church News*, Dec. 22 1985, 3).

. . . I sincerely and humbly reiterate that request. And we open our arms to you. ■

From “A Priceless Heritage,” Ensign, Nov. 1992, 85–86.



**CHRIST HEALS
THE SICK,
BY JEFFREY HEIN**

"Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them" (3 Nephi 18:32).

Also in This Issue

FOR YOUNG ADULTS

What Is Institute?

Don't know what the institute of religion is or how it can bless your life? Find out why institute really is for you!



p. 44

FOR YOUTH



p. 56

CHAMPIONS *for Family Prayer*

Do you want to help your family get on track with family prayer? Use these 10 suggestions to become your family's champion for prayer.

FOR CHILDREN

Names of Jesus

Did you know that Jesus is called by many different names? Test how well you know His other titles.



p. 74