Practice Exercise

1. Read aloud the following scenario, and consider if you have ever faced circumstances or questions similar to those the young man experienced:

At lunchtime last Friday, John was eating with a group of friends when one of them asked if he was going to the party that night. John had been hearing about this party the entire week and had heard enough to know that it was not the kind of party he should go to. John replied, “No, I don’t think this one’s for me. Plus, I have some other things I want to get done.”

One of the girls at the table said, “John, does this have to do with your religion? I’ve heard that Mormons can’t have any fun. Why does your church have so many rules?” Another boy at the table chimed in, “Yeah, why don’t they let you make your own choices?”

As John struggled to find a way to answer his friends, the bell for class rang and everyone got up to leave. While John walked to class, he replayed the conversation in his mind. He knew that this party was not one that he should go to, but he was surprised that he struggled to explain why and that he wasn’t sure how to answer his friends’ questions.

2. Discuss the following questions as a group:
   - How has John acted in faith so far in this scenario?
   - Even when people know the right thing to do, sometimes fear prevents them from acting in faith. What fears or concerns might begin to influence John as a result of his experience at lunchtime?
   - What could help John confront those fears or concerns and remain faithful in his decision to not attend the party?

3. Continue reading the scenario aloud:

John continued to think about the questions his friends asked him during lunch: “Why does your church have so many rules?” and “Why don’t they let you make your own choices?” As John thought about these questions, it was clear that he viewed the standards and commandments of the Church differently than how his friends at school might see them.

4. Discuss the following questions as a group:
   - Based on the questions John’s friends asked, what beliefs or assumptions might they have about commandments and choices?
   - What do we learn from 2 Nephi 2:27 that can help us view commandments and choices with an eternal perspective?
   - What else do you know about the plan of salvation and the teachings of Jesus Christ and His prophets that helps you view commandments and choices with an eternal perspective?

5. Continue reading the scenario aloud:

As he thought about it more, John understood that if he chose to go to the party he could experience consequences that he did not want to experience—such as losing the companionship of the Holy Ghost. Instead of going to the party, John decided to play basketball with his little brother that evening. Later, as he knelt to pray, John felt the Spirit confirm that he had made the right choice.