

G E T O

The Heart

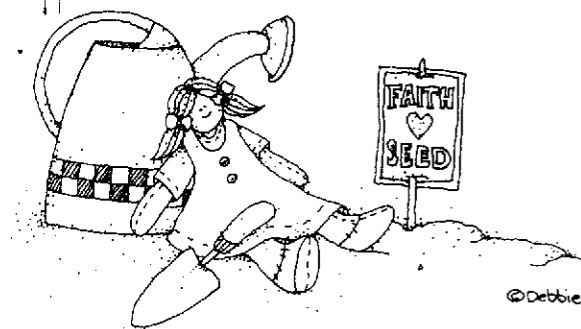
of The

Voices

FAITH

"And if ye keep my
commandments and
endure to the end you
shall have eternal life,
which gift is the
greatest of all the gifts
of God."

D&C 14:7



I am a daughter of a Heavenly Father who loves me, and I will have faith in His eternal plan, which centers in Jesus Christ, my Savior.

And now as I said concerning faith – faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith, ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true. Alma 32:21

Now, finally, and most important, BELIEVE IN GOD and that He is a rewarder of them that serve Him in righteousness. Believe in God as a person, the Father of our spirits to whom we may go in prayer... the vital faith that comes of a knowledge of a personal God to whom we can speak and from whom we can receive strength is the thing that will give us power and capacity and stability to stand up and take our place among the peoples of the earth. This is the faith, and the only faith, which will bring peace to this troubled world. ‘Be not faithless, but believing.’ - - Gordon B. Hinckley

Shortly after I was called as a General Authority, I went to Elder Harold B. Lee for counsel. He listened very carefully to my problem and suggested that I see President David O. McKay. President McKay counseled me as to the direction I should go. I was very willing to be obedient but saw no way possible for me to do as he counseled me to do. “I returned to Elder Lee and told him that I saw no way to move in the direction I was counseled to go. He said, ‘The trouble with you is you want to see the end from the beginning.’ I replied that I would like to see at least a step or two ahead. Then came the lesson of a lifetime: ‘You must learn to walk to the edge of the light, and then a few steps into the darkness; then the light will appear and show you the way before you.’” - - Elder Boyd K. Packer

Faith is not knowing what the future holds, but knowing who holds the future.

Trust Him when dark doubts assail you.
Trust Him when your strength is small.
Trust Him when to simply trust Him,
Seems the hardest thing of all.
Mary E. Rathfon

THERE IS THE LIGHT

Elder John H. Groberg

On one occasion, as a missionary in Tonga, I received word that a missionary was very ill on a somewhat distant island. The weather was threatening, but feeling responsible, and after prayer, we left to investigate the situation. Extra heavy seas slowed our progress, and it was late afternoon before we arrived. The missionary was indeed very ill. Fervent prayer was followed

By administration, during which the impression came very strongly to get him back to hospital on the main island, and to do it now! The weather had deteriorated, but the impression was strong--"Get back now"--and one learns to obey the all-important prompting of the Spirit. There was much concern expressed about the darkness, the storm, and the formidable reef with its extremely narrow opening to the harbor.

Some found reasons to stay behind; but soon eight persons had boarded the boat. No sooner had we made our commitment to the open seas than the intensity of the storm seemed to increase sevenfold. As the sun sank, so did my spirit seem to sink into the darkness of doubt and apprehension. I found my spirit communing with the Spirit of the father of an afflicted child in the

New Testament, as he exclaimed, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24)

As we rolled and tossed closer and closer to the reef, all eyes searched for the light that marked the opening--the only entry to our home. Where was it?

Then I heard the chilling sound of the waves crashing and chewing against the reef! It was close-too close. Where was the light? Unless we hit the opening exactly we would be smashed against the reef. It seemed that all the elements were bent on our total destruction. Our eyes strained against the blackness, but we could not see the light.

At the height of this panic, I looked at the captain--and there I saw the face of calmness--the ageless face of wisdom and experience--as his eyes penetrated the darkness ahead. Quietly his weather-roughened lips parted, and without moving his fixed gaze and just perceptibly shifting the wheel, he breathed those life-giving words, "Ko e maama e" ("There is the light.")

I could not see the light, but the captain could see it. And I knew he could see it. Those eyes, long experienced in ocean travel, were not fooled by the madness of the storm nor were they influenced by the pleadings of those of lesser experience to turn to the left or to the right.

Soon we were in the protected harbor. We were, home. Then and only then did WE see through the darkness that one small light--exactly where the captain had said it was. Had we waited until we ourselves could see the light we would have been smashed to pieces. But trusting in those experienced eyes, we lived.

And so the great lesson: There are those who, through years of experience and training, and by virtue of special divine callings, can see further and better and more clearly--and can and will save us in those situations where serious injury or death--both spiritual and physical--would be upon us before we ourselves could see.

I testify that in our day THERE IS A LIVING PROPHET whose eyes see the light that can and will save us and the world. When all about us are sinking in darkness and fear and despair, when destruction seems close and the raging fury of men and demons ensnares us in seemingly insoluble problems, listen as he calmly says "There is the light. This is the way." I testify that he will guide us safely home IF WE WILL BUT LISTEN AND OBEY. THE STORM IS PERHAPS LIKE THE WORLD, WITH THE MANY FALSE DOCTRINES AND SINKING VALUES. THE BOAT IS OUR TRUTH, AND THE CHURCH. THE LIGHT IS THE GOSPEL TRUTH.

STANDING BY
Author Unknown

At sometime during World War II, a passenger ship set sail from Great Britain headed for port in New York City. The Captain of the ship being afraid of enemy vessels, sought the advice and guidance of the British Admiral. The Admiral calmly assured the Captain that no matter what happens, he should be sure to sail his ship straight ahead. "Do not take any detours – sail the ship straight ahead – continue onward, heading straight towards the intended mark", he said.

After several days of sailing across the Atlantic Ocean, which was undeniably filled with submarines and enemy vessels of all kinds, the Captain spotted an enemy destroyer off his forward bow.

Nervously he grasped the handset and called for assistance. The calm voice replied, "Keep on straight. Do not detour. Just sail the ship straight ahead. Everything will be just fine. Just keep on going straight ahead."

After a couple more days the ship pulled safely into the great harbor of New York City. Shortly after docking the great British battleship "Man of War" pulled into port behind the passenger vessel. The Captain realized that while he did not see the British Battleship, she had been there, standing by. Standing ready to come to his defense should it prove necessary.

So it is in our lives. God is standing by. We may not always see Him there, but He is. Waiting. Bidding us onward toward the mark...Keep your ship on course. Keep on going – straight ahead.

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Faith is not without worry or care, but faith is fear that has said a prayer.

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Faith is trust in what the spirit learned eons ago.

B.H. Roberts

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As our faith increases, so does our ability to obey.

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The key to faith is what we are willing to sacrifice to obtain it.

Elder Cloward

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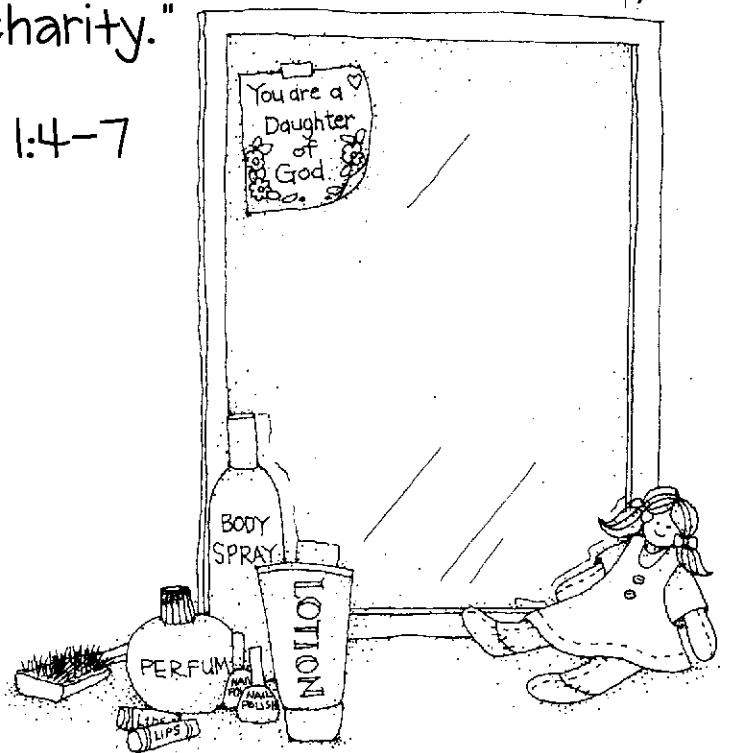
Faith means that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ live, and they are in charge of this world. They know me. They love me. They have a plan for my future. I will obey the commandments, work hard, and trust in their plan. Sooner or later, everything will be okay.

Virginia H. Pearce

# DIVINE NATURE.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperence; and to temperence patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

2 Peter 1:4-7



*I have inherited divine qualities which I will strive to develop.*

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The world would have you believe that you are of worth only if you have money, a certain physical appearance, stylish clothes, or social position. The gospel assures you that your value is not dependent on your looks or material possessions...Part of what it means to be a Latter-day Saint is to know within your soul your eternal worth, who you really are, and why you are here on earth.

Elaine L. Jack

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I am certain our Heavenly Father is displeased when we refer to ourselves as "nobody". We do ourselves a great injustice when we allow ourselves, through tragedy, misfortune, challenge, discouragement, or whatever the earthly situation, to identify ourselves. No matter how or where we find ourselves, we cannot with any justification label ourselves as "nobody." As children of God we are somebody. He will build us, mold us, and magnify us if we will but hold our heads up, our arms out, and walk with Him. What a great blessing to be created in His image and know of our true potential in and through him! What a great blessing to know that in His strength we can do all things!

Marvin J. Ashton

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I would charge you to say again and again to yourselves,..."I am a daughter of God" and by so doing begin today to live closer to those ideals which will make your life happier and more fruitful because of an awakened realization of who you are.

Harold B. Lee

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What you are is God's gift to you.  
What you make of yourself is your gift to God.

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I AM A PRINCESS

Deep inside my young heart lies the one I want to be.
And deep inside my soul I find the seeds of divinity.
Now and then I see glimpses of the woman I can become.
I know someday I'll find her here if I don't give up.

Every day I'm closer to the one I want to be.
And slowly I'm uncovering my heavenly qualities
And I'll continue working toward the woman I can become.
Developing my qualities through service and through love.

I am a Princess
A royal Queen I'll be.
So I must choose to find and use my divine qualities.
Daughter of heaven, a Queen someday I'll be.
An heir of my Mother in heaven
For eternity.

HE THOUGHT OF ME

I am worth the coming down,
The silence
In return for mockery.
I am worth the thorns,
The bleeding back,
The wincing, weakening steps to Calvary.
He suffered these and thought of me.
He could have halted soldiers
With a fiery eye,
And pronounced death
In words that rang
From marble palace walls,
And in the garden dreamed instead of prayed.
But as the glistening crimson beads
Slipped from His face,
He thought that I was worth the price He paid.
I'm blind to what He sees in me,
Yet I know the thorns and what it is
To wince and weaken.
Gethsemane and Calvary - -
He suffered so and thought of me.
Margery Stockseth

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*You must know where you came from to know where you are to go.*  
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You are here on earth for a divine purpose. It is not to be endlessly entertained or to be constantly in full pursuit of pleasure. You are here to be tried, to prove yourself so that you can receive the additional blessings God has for you... The Lord is intent on your personal growth and development."
Richard G. Scott

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If you could catch the vision of the woman God intended you to be, you would rise up and never be the same again.  
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The greatest gift I could give to you
Is for you to see yourself the way that I do.
If you could see who you used to be,
When you walked and talked with Him.
If just for one moment you could open your eyes
And see beyond your mortal disguise.
You'd see what I see and know what I know.
See your full potential and let it grow.
This gift of sight could set all men free
To know who they are, who they're meant to be.
So open your eyes that you might know.
See your full potential and let it grow.

GOOD ENOUGH

By Sandra Stallings

Emotionally and spiritually, I was about ready to hit rock bottom, but I wouldn't admit it to myself. Nor would I face the fact that I was the cause of my own troubles. I kept thinking that I'd be okay. I kept trying to ignore the consequences of my actions. I blamed others for the growing emptiness and discontent I felt.

Activities with one group of friends were pulling me away from the Lord, my family, my testimony, and my prayers. I didn't feel worthy to pray. The prayers I did offer were hollow. I knew they wouldn't make it past the ceiling. I was also pulling away from my best friend, Ann. But she wouldn't let go.

She stopped by to see me one day after school, and we went outside to talk. She pointedly asked, "How are you?"

"Good," I shot back a bit defensively, conscious of my poor choice of grammar, which matched my rebellious mood.

"Just how good are you?" she pushed.

Without thinking I blurted out a phrase I had picked up from my new group of friends. "Good enough for who I'm for!"

Often, instead of doing their best, they did just enough to get by. "It's good enough for who it's for," was their common cliché.

As soon as my words escaped my lips I wanted to recall them. They echoed through the emptiness I felt.

"Are you really?" Ann queried.

The words stung bitterly as questions raced through my mind. "Who was I really for? And what was I good for? Was I still for the Lord?" It didn't even seem like I was for myself anymore. It was time to take a good hard look at myself. Now when I look back on that confrontation, I thank the Lord for a friend who wouldn't allow me to push her away. Our conversation caused me to reflect upon where I was and who I was for. It caused me to begin to make some major changes in my life.

I decided I would be for the Lord. I would work for his cause and to fulfill his purposes. Now I know who I'm for, but I'm still working on being good enough for who I'm for.

THE KING'S SON

By Bishop Vaughn J. Featherstone

Many years ago I heard the story of the son of King Louis XVI of France. King Louis had been taken from his throne and imprisoned. His young son, the prince, was taken by those who dethroned the king. They thought that inasmuch as the king's son was heir to the throne, if they could destroy him morally, he would never realize the great and grand destiny that life had bestowed upon him.

They took him to a community far away, and there they exposed the lad to every filthy and vile thing that life could offer. They exposed him to foods the richness of which would quickly make him a slave to appetite. They used vile language around him constantly. They exposed him to lewd and lusting women. They exposed him to dishonor and distrust. He was surrounded 24 hours a day by everything that could drag the soul of a man as low as one could slip. For over six months he had this treatment—but not once did the young lad buckle under pressure. Finally, after intensive temptation, they questioned him. Why had he not submitted himself to these things—why had he not partaken? These things would provide pleasure, satisfy his lusts, and were desirable; they were all his. The boy said, "I cannot do what you ask for I was born to be a king."

You are a divinely created daughter of your Father in Heaven. Catch the vision of the woman you really are and rise up and become your truly unique self. Make your space better for having been there.

How much do you think that you matter?
Is a rich man worth more than a poor man?
Is a stranger worth more than a friend?
Is a baby worth more than an old man?
Is your beginning worth more than your end?
Is a martyr worth more than his assassin?
Does your value decrease with a crime?
Like when Christ took the place of the murderer,
Would you say that he was wasting his time?

I suppose you think that you matter.
Well, how much do you matter and to whom?
Is it much easier at night,
When with friends and bright lights,
Than much later alone in your room.

Well, how much do you think that you are worth?
Will anyone stand up and say?
I suppose you think you're worth something.
But how many are willing to pay?

Suppose your life had been valued
And a price had been paid for your name.
Would you ask what was traded,
How much and who paid it,
Who he was and from whence he came?

If you heard His name was called Jesus
Would you say that the price was too dear?
Held to the cross not by nails but by love
It was you who broke His heart, not the spear.

If it don't make you cry,
Laugh it off and pass Him by.
But remember this day,
When you throw your life away,
That He paid what He thought you were worth.

Well, how much do you think you are worth?
Can anyone stand up and say?
How much are you willing to give Him
In return for the price that He paid?

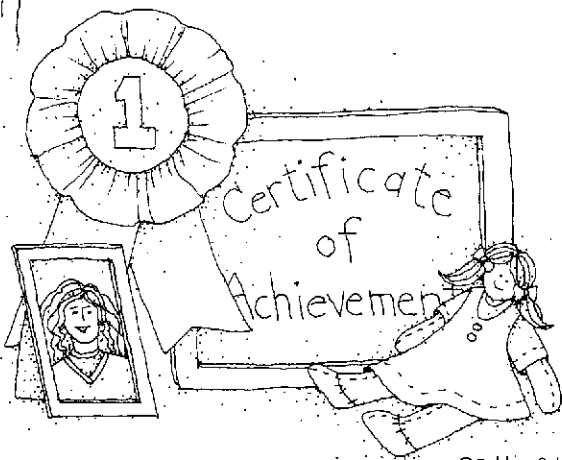


Control your thoughts
because they become
the words you use.
Control your words
because they become
the actions you perform.
Control your actions
because they become
the character you reflect.
Control your character
because your character
becomes your destiny.
Control your destiny by becoming
what your Heavenly Father and
Savior, Jesus Christ want you to be.

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"Remember the worth
of souls is great in the
sight of God."

DEUT 18:10



I am of infinite worth with my own divine mission which I will strive to fulfill.

THE DULCINEA PRINCIPLE

By Nancy Crossen

Dulcinea was the lady of a knight-errant but wasn't sure she could be a lady. She had been the barmaid Aldonza all of her life until she met the knight Don Quixote, who gave her a new name and said she was a lady. "Take the clouds from your eyes and see me as I really am!" she yells at one point in the musical *Man of La Mancha*. "A lady? I'm not any kind of a lady. I am Aldonza!" Finally, at Quixote's deathbed, Aldonza realizes that because of Quixote's devotion, she has become the lady Dulcinea.

This part of the Don Quixote story illustrates a very basic principle that we too often forget. I like to call that idea the "Dulcinea principle." This principle simply states that a person's self-image can be greatly influenced by the way his associates think of him and treat him. It seems that we are often told about how we can improve ourselves by changing our own self-concepts, but we seldom hear about the effect we can have on other people's attitudes about themselves. After all, Don Quixote made a lady out of a barmaid by seeing her potential and treating her accordingly. I suspect that all of us are what we are in part because of the way our friends think of us.

I first encountered this principle in high school. I considered myself to be unattractive, and so it was easier for others to think of me as unattractive—a vicious circle. But I had the fortune to acquire two friends, Janice and Jim. Janice thought that I had a wonderful personality, and it was easy for me to be pleasant around her. Eventually I found it easier to get along with other people because she had instilled confidence in me.

Her faith in my desirability helped me improve my grooming. I confided to her that I had always wanted to perm my hair so that it would be curly all over, but I was afraid that the other kids would make fun of it. She was so enthusiastic about this idea that I permed my hair and loved it. Janice also never saw the 15 pounds that I needed to lose; and because she helped me think of myself as thin, I lost the weight.

Jim was also a good friend. He was not interested in me romantically, but he still thought that I was attractive. When we became friends, I stopped wondering if the dresses I was buying looked similar enough to what everyone else was wearing and began to consider if Jim would like them. Because Jim was a good enough friend to let me know when I looked good, I gained confidence in my taste and I became able to buy and do things because I liked them. Because these two friends had patience, confidence, and the ability to see the Dulcinea in me, I have become happy with myself.

I have also seen this principle work among other friends of mine. One week in Sunday School, the class was laughing about a girl they called "pit face" who had asked one of the boys, Mike, to the girls'-choice dance. I brought in a filmstrip about a girl renowned in her village for her ugliness. The filmstrip taught the class that after a young man was willing to treat her as if she were beautiful, the girl became very attractive. The class was touched, and they learned the Dulcinea principle. Mike went out with the girl and had a

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great time. Within a few weeks, two of the girls were able to report that they were becoming good friends with this girl and that she was really very nice.

The Dulcinea principle should always be at the center of our lives; it is not something we use at school and with our friends and forget at home. It can go a long way toward making our homes, as President David O. McKay admonished us to do, a heaven on earth.

My little brother John was having trouble in school. He refused to listen to his teacher, was forever talking, and would not perform well in his schoolwork. Trying to force my brother to do his homework at home was also useless; he could not seem to remember how to do it. We were becoming exasperated, and John was becoming obnoxious. But then my mother talked to the counselor in the elementary school and learned that John had the potential to be a very quick learner but that he was lazy. In a family council we decided to expect John to be his best—the Dulcinea principle. When I helped John with his homework and he would say, “I can’t remember,” I would respond with, “Yes, I’m sure you can.”

At first, he responded with, “No, I can’t” and “I’m not going to do this anymore.” But eventually John began to remember and caught up with his class. Reminding John that he was too old to throw temper tantrums didn’t stop them, but ignoring them because they were beneath his dignity soon did. Now, two years later, John still isn’t convinced he’s very smart; but his schoolwork compares well with his classmates, and he is much easier to live with. We are still helping him to build a good self-image.

It is not manipulative to help our associates to think highly of themselves. One of our purposes on this earth is to help bring other souls back to our Father in Heaven, and none can go back to his kingdom without a sense of self-worth.

Our responsibility might be made easier if we remember to use the Dulcinea principle. By reacting positively toward others and supporting them, we will bring out the best in our associates, and the Dulcinea principle will become a way of life.

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Believe you are the most valuable possession you have and you’ll protect yourself from intruders. Aren’t you valuable enough to own?

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BE YOURSELF

Ever since I was a little kid, I didn’t want to be me. I wanted to be BILLIE WIDDLEDON and Bill Widdledon didn’t even like me. I walked like he walked; I talked like he talked; and I signed up for the same high school he signed up for.

Which was when Billie changed. He began to hang around HERBIE VANDERMAN. He walked like Herbie Vanderman; and he talked like Herbie Vanderman. He mixed me up! I began to walk like Billie Widdledon, talking like Herbie Vanderman.

And then it dawned on me that Herbie Vandeman walked and talked like JOEY HAVERLIN. And Joey Haverlin walked and talked like CORKY SABINSON.

So here I am walking and talking like Billie Widdledon's imitation of Herbie Vanderman's version of Joey Haverlin, trying to walk and talk like Corky Sabinson. And who do you think Corky Sabinson is always walking and talking like? Of all people, DOPEY WELLINGTON. That little pest who walks and talks like me!

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TO EACH IS GIVEN

By Tawnya Warnick

As I stood watching my cousin do her gymnastics, I was amazed to see all that she could do. Even though I was older, I couldn't even do a cartwheel, no matter how hard I tried. Finally, I got tired of watching and went into the house. "Why can't I do a cartwheel?" I thought. "I really have to work hard, but all she has to do is see something and then she can do it. Why can't I?"

The next day in my physical education class we were required to do a cartwheel for a grade. Again my thoughts turned to my cousin, and I wondered why I couldn't do such a simple little thing.

Sunday came around, and as I was thumbing through my scriptures waiting for church to start, my attention was drawn to two scriptures in the Doctrine and Covenants:

"For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God.

"To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby" (D&C 46:11-12). I realized then that each of us has different talents and capabilities and that we should develop those we have so we can lift and help one another.

After reading those scriptures, I no longer felt bad that I can't do gymnastics. I was happy for my cousin because she can!

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ALICE

By Barbara Elliott Snedecor

Alice held the crumbled paper in her hand. She clenched her fist tightly and tried hard to erase the horrible words that now burned in her mind. *Alice is an idiot*, the paper read. Alice didn't know who had written the words—someone nearby, no doubt—but she had found the mean little message sitting on her desk when she had returned to her seat. Now, defeated and miserable, she wished she had never signed up for this section of Speech 1. She wished even harder that she had never had to stand up to give her presentation. And she wished even harder still that she could believe that the words written on the paper were lies. But she couldn't. She was an idiot, she was sure.

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Minutes before, Alice had walked to the front of the class to deliver her speech. She had prepared for her presentation carefully, had even read the book for her report twice. But something unexplained had snatched her confidence from her the moment she had opened her mouth to speak. Her voice had trembled as she spoke, unrecognizable, wobbling foolishly, and her hands had shaken so badly she was afraid she would knock the podium over. She had barely made it through her speech. By the end of it, she was visibly on the verge of crying. During the long walk back to her desk, she had been afraid to look at the students in the class.

Why? she had thought miserably to herself. Why did I have to go to junior high school? Why did we have to move? Couldn't I have stayed in the sixth grade forever? Everything within her young, thin frame wanted to be back in Mrs. Martin's class, to be back in her old neighborhood, where all was familiar and sweet.

And then she had sat down at her desk, and there she had found the nasty message she was certain was true. I am a jerk, she thought bitterly to herself. I'm stupid and dumb and I have no confidence. I have no friends, either. And I hate this stupid school.

The angry bath of self-hatred washed over her, spilled out of the corners of her eyes, made her feel peculiarly numb in her misery. But the horror was not over yet.

"Alice?" Mr. Goldstein's voice called to her, as the bell sounded to switch classes. "Alice, can I see you up front for a minute?"

Alice heard some snickers from a group of boys as she gathered her books. She swallowed, then walked up the aisle to Mr. Goldstein's desk.

"Alice," he began. "I was so surprised by your performance today. I know you're a bright and talented girl. I think you just need another chance." He paused thoughtfully, then continued, "What if I schedule you to give it another try next time we meet?"

Alice opened her mouth to speak, but no words came out. Panic filled her. Wasn't one humiliation enough? Couldn't he see she was no good at speaking? But Mr. Goldstein's soft voice rumbled on, something about fitting her in easily at the end of the next class, that he was certain her classmates wanted her to get another chance, too.

Alice walked home from school alone that day. Tami and Susan had offered to walk with her, but she had declined. They weren't in her speech class, and she didn't want to have to tell them the sad story of how foolish she had felt. If she didn't walk with them, she wouldn't have to speak to any one until she got home. By then, she hoped she could muster a calm *hello* to her mother, and then take refuge in the room she shared with her older sister until dinner. If she was lucky, Karen would stay late at school, practicing her part for the Autumn Festival play.

Alice walked the blocks home from school, acutely conscious of herself. In every storefront, in the windows of every parked car, she saw her face, her thin and sorrowing face. Why can't I wear eye makeup yet? She wondered angrily to herself. Everyone else does, even most of the girls in the ward.

She held her head down before the gusty wind, couldn't bear to let her bangs blow upward, exposing her large forehead. Oh! it was miserable to be almost 13.

Alice managed to pass by her mother's scrutiny. Something inside her wouldn't let her tell her mother. She wanted to keep her horrible failure inside. She wanted to be by herself. Alice closed the door t

o her room, lay on her bed, face down on the pillow, alone in the safety of her home. Her father had been transferred again. They had

lived in this new neighborhood just three months. Alice remembered her painful good-byes now. She rolled over, looked up to the ceiling, felt a flash of nervousness. She was terrorized at the thought of having t

o present her speech again. How could Mr. Goldstein be so mean?

Dinner passed.

"What's the matter with the kid, here?" her older brother had asked, affectionately winking at Alice. "You're quieter than usual."

Karen gave the family home evening lesson that night on joy, of all things. Alice listened stonily.

Who could feel joy when everyone thought you were an idiot? she thought bitterly. Worse yet, who could feel joy when you had to go through another horrible day at school? Alice hardly heard her older sister's comments about how prayer had sustained her during the first weeks of their move.

Tuesday passed. Alice saw only two of the students that were in her speech class, and both of them were girls. They smiled at her, and Alice felt no menace in them. Inevitably, though, Tuesday evening came, the good-nights, the walk up the stairs to bed, the certainty that tomorrow was coming.

Alice turned restlessly in bed. She was still awake when Karen came in. Alice watched the easy confidence with which Karen removed her makeup, fluffed her hair, then reached for the light. There were a few moments of silence as Karen said her prayers beside her bed, then the comforting sound of the bedsprings, the rustling sheets, of Karen settling into sleep. But Alice was still awake.

Hours passed, it seemed, but always the horror of the morning prevented Alice from surrendering to the black walls of her heavy eyelids. She had said her speech 300 times by now, had practiced taking deep breaths, had even imagined the entire occasion from start to finish, the perfect delivery and confident self-assurance. But reality always filled her. Alice was afraid. This wasn't Primary, this wasn't Young Women, this wasn't even sacrament meeting. It was a class full of strangers, some of them older than she was, and all of them better at speaking than she would ever be.

Alice sat up in bed. She looked over at her sleeping sister, peaceful and at rest. Maybe being 17 did that to a person, Alice thought hopefully. A thin column of white penetrated the dark room, the glow from the streetlight on the corner reaching in from behind the shade. A car passed by, its headlights shadowing wild patterns in the room. The pipes knocked in the basement, followed by the pleasant sound of steam hissing in the radiator.

Prayer is the best way to get through the tough times, Karen had said the other night. Alice had not wanted to think about it then, had thought it sounded corny and dumb. After all, Alice wasn't a Merrie Miss anymore. She no longer had to sit uncomfortably in the back of Primary opening exercises. But prayer?

Alice pushed the covers off. The floor felt cold on her feet. She bent down, then knelt awkwardly. Should she fold her arms, or was it enough just to kneel? It was an awkward prayer, she knew, her first attempt since the faith of her family had begun to seem something weird and distant to her, something not to tell her new friends about, something that had to be done, she guessed, when her parents made her, a burden more than a blessing.

Alice opened her eyes after the *amen*, lingered for a moment on her knees, beside her bed, looking at the shadows in the light. And then a feeling warmed her, something real and sweet, a glow not from the hissing radiator, but a quiet warmth just the same. Quite simple, really. As Alice pulled the covers over herself, though, the moment lost its simplicity and became profound. The Holy Spirit had filled her,

she knew, had warmed her and given her peace.

Alice walked slowly down the hall to her speech class. She avoided the boys who had laughed. She tried hard not to think of her failure or of the horrid little note, or of the minutes until she must surely try again.

"Alice? Are you ready to give it another try now?" It was Mr. Goldstein's voice, of course, calling her to her second death, she was sure.

Alice stood slowly, picked up her paper, told her legs to move to the podium in the front of the classroom. She knew her heart was beating too fast already. She was cold and trembling. She took a deep and trembling breath, smiled weakly to the class, then opened her mouth to speak.

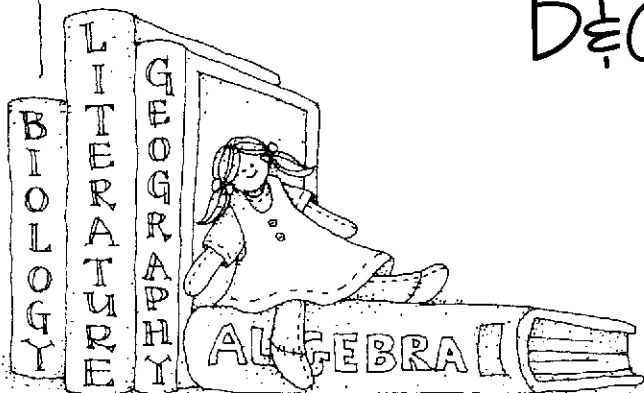
And in a timeless moment, suspended somewhere between her trembling breath and her first uneven words, she remembered the warmth of the night before, the sense that her Father loved her, had heard her.

"Mr. Goldstein. Students. Good morning."

KNOWLEDGE

"And as all have not
faith, 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:



I will continually seek opportunities for learning and growth.

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It seems that none of the crows knew how to fly. One of the crows was asked to give a talk in Sacrament meeting. He thought long and hard about it, but was having trouble coming up with a subject. (It seems the crows already knew just about everything!) One day, as he was crossing the street, he was so engrossed in thought that he did not see a car coming until the car honked. It was almost upon him and he had no time to run out of the way. He panicked so completely that he began to flap his wings furiously in the air. In doing so, he became airborne and lifted himself completely out of danger.

"Aha!" thought the crow. "I will give my talk on flying." So, when Sunday arrived, the crow dressed himself in his best clothes and went to church to teach the other crows to fly.

His talk was wonderful! He talked about the dynamics of flying, the methods of flight, flight patterns and on and on. He next invited the members of the congregation to practice flying. The young ones caught on most quickly, but before long there was not one member of the ward, even the most elderly, that did not know how to fly. They flew around the chapel, down the halls, into the classrooms and back. It seemed that they were born to fly! Every crow nodded their heads and declared the meeting a GREAT SUCCESS! They congratulated each other and slapped each other on the backs. Then, they gathered up their families and belongings...

...And they all walked home.

Knowledge is more than just learning. To become knowledge, it must be internalized.

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...We must learn to make wise use of the tools and technology we have. Wise use of our technology would include care in that which we invite into our homes by the way of television, videos, computers, including the Internet. There is much that is good and edifying in the media, but there is also much that is gross, immoral, and time consuming, enticing us to be 'ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth' (2 Tim. 3:7). During the Second World War when gasoline was in short supply and rationed, I remember signs saying, 'Is this trip necessary?' Today, with ever-increasing demands on everyone and time in short supply, might we ask ourselves, before we turn on the video game, the television, the computer, or access the many programs available, 'Is this trip necessary?'

Perhaps every person who is listening might also ask these questions of himself or herself and expect an honest reply: 'Is the information I am receiving from this tool of learning edifying, and adding truth into my life? Are the hours I am investing an effective use of my valuable time? Does this computer game assist me in fulfilling my responsibilities and goals?' If the answer is not a resounding yes, then we should have the courage and determination to click the off button and direct our lives to more important tasks.

"Search the scriptures - search the revelations ... and ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, to manifest the truth unto you, and if you do it with an eye single to His glory nothing doubting, He will answer you by the power of His Holy Spirit. You will then know for yourselves and not for another. You will not then be dependent on man for the knowledge of God; nor will there be any room for speculation" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938], pp. 11-12).

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Education is the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life.  
Attributed to Brigham Young...

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God does not begin by asking us about our ability, but only about our availability, and if we then prove our dependability, he will increase our capability!
--Elder Neal A. Maxwell

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Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge  
By Richard G. Scott

Gaining spiritual knowledge is not a mechanical process. It is a sacred privilege based upon spiritual law. I testify that you can receive inspired help.

You wonderful, righteous members of this church constantly inspire and motivate me. Thank you for your zest for life, your generous giving of self, your devotion, and your determination to live worthily. I also express gratitude to our many friends who have joined us through these conference sessions. May the messages given bless your lives.

Recently in South America a youth inquired, "Can you give us suggestions that will help us know the Savior better and be able to constantly follow His example?" That meaningful question and others like it have prompted this message on acquiring spiritual knowledge.

President Ezra Taft Benson emphasized the importance of spiritual knowledge, saying:

"We should make daily study of the scriptures a lifetime pursuit. . . .The most important [thing] you can do . . . is to immerse yourselves in the scriptures. Search them diligently, Learn the doctrine, Master the principles.

"You must . . . see that . . . searching the scriptures is not a burden laid upon [us] by the Lord, but a marvelous blessing and opportunity"

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Spiritual learning takes precedence. The secular without the foundation of the spiritual is . . . like the foam upon the milk, the fleeting shadow. . . One need not choose between the two . . . for there is opportunity to get both simultaneously

President Spencer W. Kimball

Never before in the history of the world has there been a time when so many opportunities have been open to women. Now is the season to train your minds and your hands for the work you wish to do. I am not suggesting that all of you should be university students. There is a need for technicians of many varieties, and the work to be done is honorable and contributes immensely to the society of which we are a part.

Some of you may think that marriage will take care of all your future needs. Marriage is important, and I hope that each of you will have the blessing of a happy marriage, but circumstances arise in the lives of many women that make it necessary to work and provide for their needs. Education can prove to be the wisest and most profitable investment you can make. Get all the help and direction you can concerning your aptitudes and ambitions, and then get training to sharpen your skills and improve your opportunities.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

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#### THE MAGIC PEBBLES

“Why do we have to learn all of this dumb stuff?”

Of all the complaints and questions I have heard from my students during my years in the classroom, this was the one most frequently uttered. I would answer it by recounting the following legend.

One night a group of nomads were preparing to retire for the evening when suddenly a great light surrounded them. They knew they were in the presence of a celestial being. With great anticipation, they awaited a heavenly message of great importance that they knew must be especially for them.

Finally, the voice spoke, “Gather as many pebbles as you can. Put them in your saddlebags. Travel a day’s journey and tomorrow night will find you glad and it will find you sad.”

After having departed, the nomads shared their disappointment and anger with each other. They had expected the revelation of a great universal truth that would enable them to create wealth, health and purpose for the world. But instead they were given a menial task that made no sense to them at all. However, the memory of the brilliance of their visitor caused each one to pick up a few pebbles and deposit them in their saddlebags while voicing their displeasure.

They traveled a day’s journey and that night while making camp, they reached into their saddlebags and discovered every pebble they had gathered had become a diamond. They were glad they had diamonds. They were sad they had not gathered more pebbles.

It was an experience I had with a student, I shall call Alan, early in my teaching career that illustrated the truth of that legend to me.

When Alan was in the eighth grade, he majored in “trouble” with a minor in “suspensions.” He had studied how to be a bully and was getting his master’s in “thievery.”

Every day I had my students memorize a quotation from a great thinker. As I called roll, I would begin a quotation. To be counted present, the student would be expected to finish the thought.

“Alice Adams – ‘There is no failure except . . .’”

“‘In no longer trying.’ I’m present, Mr. Schlatter.”

So by the end of the year, my young charges would have memorized 150 great thoughts.

“Think you can, think you can’t – either way you’re right.”

“If you can see the obstacles, you’ve taken your eyes off the goal.”

“A cynic is someone who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.”

And, of course, Napoleon Hill’s, “If you can conceive it, and believe it, you can achieve it.”

No one complained about this daily routine more than Alan – right up to the day he was expelled and I lost touch with him for five years. Then one day, he called. He was in a special program at one of the neighboring colleges and had just finished parole.

He told me that after being sent to juvenile hall and finally being shipped off to the California Youth Authority for his antics, he had become so disgusted with himself that he had taken a razor blade and cut his wrists.

He said, “You know what, Mr. Schlatter? As I lay there with my life running out of my body, I suddenly remembered that dumb quote you made me write 20 times one day. ‘There is no failure except in no longer trying.’ Then it suddenly made sense to me. As long as I was alive, I wasn’t a failure, but if I allowed myself to die, I would most certainly die a failure. So with my remaining strength, I called for help and started a new life.”

At the time he had heard the quotation, it was a pebble. When he needed guidance in a moment of crisis, it had become a diamond. And so it is to you I say, gather all the pebbles you can, and you can count on a future filled with diamonds.

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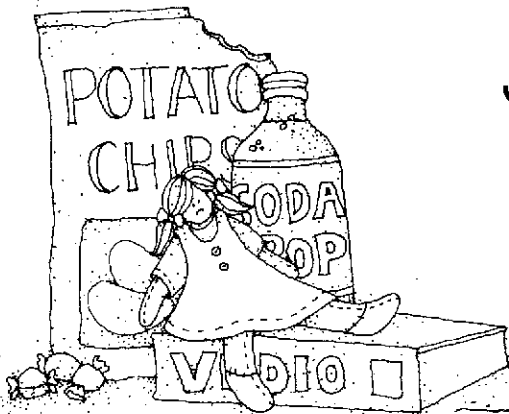
Too great care cannot be taken in educating our young ladies. Great responsibilities will devolve upon them. To their hands will be mainly committed the formation of the moral and intellectual character of the young. Let the women of our country be made intelligent, and their children will certainly be the same. The proper education of a man decides his welfare; but the interests of a whole family are secured by the correct education of a woman.

George Q. Cannon

CHOICE & ACCOUNTABILITY

"And if it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Joshua 24:15



I will remain free to choose good over evil and will accept responsibility for my choices.

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Dear and precious teenage girls  
How does your album go?  
Will pictures there  
Be sweet and rare  
You'll want the world to know?  
Will you be glad  
To show your dad  
A snap of what you've done,  
And share with mom each moment  
Of last night's party fun?  
Life can be your greatest joy  
Or hours full of sorrow.  
It depends on your decisions  
Today...tonight...tomorrow.  
You may shove a smutty picture  
Way back upon your shelf,  
But you can't hide it far enough  
To hide it from yourself.  
Your albums are your memories  
To bring a happy glow  
Be careful what you put in them  
How will your album go?  
Bonnie Jolly

~~~~~  
The decisions we make today affects the generations yet unborn.
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Today comes with built in decisions, great and small. The clothes I put on, the road I travel, the people whose lives I touch. In fact, nearly everything in my day depends on how I choose. Today I can choose to carry the blame myself, or to hold out a helping hand...to shout out loud in anger, or to wait ten seconds...to cloud someone's mind with doubt, or to lift a heart with encouragement.

Today I can choose to count stars or to count mud puddles. When I go to the store, I can choose to see how much there is to buy instead of how much I have to pay. When I get stuck in traffic, I can see, in every other car, a person just as important as me. Today, because I live in a free land, there are a thousand things I can choose.

The neighborhood I live in, the friends I laugh with, the work I do, the thoughts I think, the dreams I dare. And what I will become, in spite of my fears and failures, in spite of the talents I lack, in spite of all the privileges I never had, depends on how I choose to challenge myself today. For I have power, if I choose, to act instead of complaining...to speak out instead of cherishing a hurt...to seek justice instead of getting even...to love the world instead of waiting for the world to embrace me first. What I choose today may well be the cause of my tomorrow. Today...I shall live as I choose. Let me choose wisely and well....

## CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

DECIDE TO DECIDE - - Such a simple directive, but oh so powerful! We can push some things away from us once and have done with them! We can make a single decision about certain things that we will incorporate in our lives and then make them ours - - without having to brood and re-decide a hundred times what it is we will do and what we will not do. - - President Spencer W. Kimball

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There is in our language a dangerously disarming phrase by which people often persuade other people to compromise principles. It is the phrase "Just this once." "Just this once" has a siren-like lure. It is the forerunner of the phrase "Just once more." It is the beckoning voice of a false friend that leads us from safety to a false position, first "Just this once," and then "Just once more." "Just once more won't matter." "Just once more, and then I'll quit." And so we sometimes move from one false step to another, often deluding ourselves into thinking that this is the last time. In some social and personal matters, many of us live somewhat this way. We may know, for example, that we are living our lives at a pace we cannot keep up, but we hate to refuse a friend. Thus we are led from obligation to obligation, and each time we say "yes," we tell ourselves that we are saying it "Just this once" and that tomorrow will be better. But tomorrow is seldom better except as we have the backbone to make it better. In matters of eating and appetite, people often go from one indulgence to another, always saying to themselves, "Just this once. Tomorrow I begin to diet." "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow." "Just this once" becomes especially serious when people persuade other people that a principle is a matter of frequency rather than a clear-cut matter of right or wrong. It is true that a one time offender is looked upon with more leniency than a frequent offender. But stealing "Just this once," lying "Just this once," deceiving "Just this once," or any other act of immorality urged upon anyone "Just this once" is a dangerous doctrine. "Just this once" is a long step, but "Just once more" is an easier step, and so men often forget their own fetters from link to link.

If it isn't right, let it alone. Don't do "Just this once" what shouldn't be done at all.

- Richard L. Evans

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One reason for the decline in moral values is that the world has invented a new, constantly changing and undependable standard of moral conduct referred to as 'situational ethics.' Now, individuals define good and evil as being adjustable according to each situation; this is in direct contrast to the proclaimed God-given absolute standard: 'Thou shalt not!' as in 'Thou shalt not steal' (Ex. 20:15). - - David B. Haight

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I would say to him, do not lie. Just one lie told and you have committed yourself to remember every facet of the situation to protect that lie. Furthermore, once you lie and are discovered, just once, all the rest of your life that person will not trust you. Every time your name comes up, if he is in a position to give you some position or advantage involving trust, that lie will be remembered, and he will not have confidence. You may have repented long since and have been forgiven, even by him, but in spite of himself, he will wonder if you truly have repented. On the other hand, if you tell the truth always, no matter what, it will someday save your reputation and perhaps your honor. - - S. Dilworth Young

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### THEY'RE NOT REALLY HAPPY

Bishop Glenn L. Pace

When our children were younger and we would be on our way to Sunday church meetings, occasionally we would pass a car pulling a boat. My children would become silent and press their noses against the windows and ask, "Dad, why can't we go waterskiing today instead of to church?"

Sometimes I would take the easy but cowardly way out and answer, "It's simple; we don't have a boat." However, on my more conscientious days, I would muster up all the logic and spirituality available to a patriarch of a family and try to explain how much happier our family was because of our Church activity.

I first realized I wasn't getting through when on a subsequent Sunday we saw a family laughing and excited as they loaded their snow skis onto their car. One of my teenage sons said with a sly grin, "They're not really happy, huh, Dad?" That statement has become a family joke whenever we see someone doing something we cannot do. When I see a teenager driving a beautiful, expensive sports car, I say to my sons, "Now there's one miserable guy."

You young people are growing up in a most challenging and confusing world. Activities always forbidden by the Lord and for many years frowned upon by society are now accepted and promoted by that same society. The media serves up these activities in such a fashion as to make them look very desirable. Add to acceptability and desirability the power of peer pressure, and you have an extremely explosive situation.

Lehi's vision of the tree of life is appropriate for our day. In that vision, he saw a great and spacious building, which represents the pride and temptations of the world:

"And I ... beheld ... a great and spacious building; ...

"And it was filled with people, both old and young, ... and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who ... were partaking of the fruit" (**1 Ne. 8:26-27**).

Even though you have a testimony and want to do what is right, it is difficult not to be drawn to the great and spacious building. From all appearances, the people in the building seem to be having a great time. The music and laughter are deafening. You would say to me what my children have said, "They're not really happy, huh, Dad?" as you watch them party.

They look happy and free, but don't mistake telestial pleasure for celestial happiness and joy. Don't mistake lack of self-control for freedom. Complete freedom without appropriate restraint makes us slaves to our appetites. Don't envy a lesser and lower life.

When I was in junior high school, I would get out of bed on cold winter mornings and head for the heat vent to get warm. The family cat would always beat me there, so I would gently shoo her away and sit down. Soon my mother would tell me it was time to leave for school. I would look out at the icicles on the house and dread going out into the cold, let alone begin another day of school.

## CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

As I kissed my mother good-bye and went out the door, I would look longingly at my comfortable spot in front of the heat vent and find that the cat had repossessed it. How I envied that cat! If that weren't enough, she would look up at me with heavy eyelids and an expression as if to laugh at me and say, "Have fun in school, Glenn. I'm sure glad I'm not a human!" I hated it when she did that!

However, an interesting thing would happen as the day went on. I would come home after experiencing the joys and sorrows of the school day and see that lazy cat still curled up in front of the vent, and I would smile and say to her, "I'm sure glad I'm not a cat."

To those of you who are inching your way closer and closer to that great and spacious building, let me make it completely clear that the people in that building have absolutely nothing to offer except instant, short-term gratification inescapably connected to long-term sorrow and suffering. The commandments you observe were not given by a dispassionate God to prevent you from having fun, but by a loving Father in Heaven who wants you to be happy while you are living on this earth as well as in the hereafter.

Compare the blessings that come from living the Word of Wisdom to those available to you if you choose to party with those in the great and spacious building. Compare the joy of intelligent humor and wit to drunken, silly, crude, loud laughter. Compare our faithful young women who still have a blush in their cheeks with those who, having long lost their blush, try to persuade you to join them in their loss. Compare lifting people up to putting people down. Compare the ability to receive personal revelation and direction in your life to being tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. Compare having the blessings of the priesthood of God with anything you see going on in that great and spacious building.

The members of many churches in the world have been putting pressure on their leaders to change doctrine to fit the changing life-style of the members. Many have been successful, and more and more we see churches made up of the doctrines of men. There are absolute truths of eternity. They do not change as a society drifts from them. No popular vote can change an absolute, eternal truth. Legalizing an act does not make it moral. Don't be fooled by the argument "Everybody's doing it." Your spirit should be offended and your intelligence insulted by such reasoning.

When all of the evidence is in, the world's graduate school of hard knocks will teach what you young people were taught in the kindergarten of your spiritual training, "Wickedness never was happiness" ([Alma 41:10](#)). Why wait for finite man to prove what his infinite Creator has already revealed to his prophets?

I know how much you like thrills, adventure, and excitement. Do you want excitement? I'll give you excitement. Do you realize you are outnumbered in the world 1,000 to 1? The sons of Helaman didn't face those odds. As the winds of popular opinion intensify and the mocking increases from those who are trying to justify their own unrighteous actions, you will be required to put on the full armor of God. You will need to fight with all of your strength to keep unspotted from the world. We plead with you to stay true—not for us, but for you.

With odds of 1,000 to 1, shall the youth of Zion falter? I give a firm testimony. No! Never! The youth of the kingdom will emerge victorious. Now that's exciting! What adventure in that great and spacious building would you trade for the thrill and excitement of building the very kingdom the Savior will come to the earth to govern?

We love you, the youth of the Church, and we know you will collectively succeed. However, we have great anxiety for individuals we may lose along the way. Speaking as a father, I can tell you the loss of one of you is too many. We want each and every one of you to succeed, not just the majority.

To those of you who are struggling and losing ground, you who have been lured into that building through one of its many doors and now find no doors going out, you who feel trapped and defeated, we assure you there is hope, and all is not lost. Through his atonement, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has provided a way for you to escape that awful place. He knows you intimately. He knows your name, and he knows your pain. If you will approach your Father in Heaven with a broken heart and contrite spirit, you will find yourself miraculously lifted out of that great and spacious building and into the loving and comforting arms of the Savior of mankind.

At your earthly home, you will find your father's arms have always been open for you and that during your absence your mother never stopped setting your place at the table in front of your empty chair. You will see clearly the difference between telestial happiness and celestial happiness, and you will experience and savor celestial joy through this life and throughout all eternity.

FREEDOM OF TRUTH

Elaine Cannon

Some people think freedom is the ability to do anything they want. We do have freedom to choose, but we do not have freedom from the consequences of our choices.

We are free to lie.

We are free to cheat.

We are free to steal.

We are free to kill.

We are also free to sluff school, skip home assignments, sneak a peak at pornographic pictures, or think dirty thoughts. We're free to smoke. We're free to eat foolishly and mistreat our bodies.

Some people forget that we lose freedom by choosing freely to do the wrong things; or by not knowing what is right, what is truth; or by refusing to listen and believe; or by ignoring laws and breaking commandments.

The consequences of wrong choices can limit our freedom in making other choices along the steps of life. For instance, we can no longer "choose" to go on a mission or enter the temple if we have already "chosen" to be unclean, unworthy. We can't go ahead with college plans if we have chosen to be a high school dropout. We're no longer free to date and enjoy the carefree times of youth if we choose to marry too young.

You want to be worthy of every blessing the Lord has in store for His choice children. Start now to build your strength to live the gospel.

Exercise your spiritual muscles by:

Bearing your testimony

Accepting Church assignments

Listening more and talking less

Praying, praying, praying

Living clean

Doing good

Keeping the commandments of God

We are like children walking a path in the rain. We can walk in or around the mud of life as we desire, but with our choices come the consequences. And we are rapidly becoming what we are choosing to be for all eternity.

Spiritual maturity is understanding that we cannot blame anybody else for our actions. Some factors may make it harder for us to perform according to God's plan for us, but being accountable for how we use our agency means being answerable for our own behavior...

I sometimes wonder if we know God's will for us, if we know what is hurtful or sinful and why, if we know God's will for us, if we know what is hurtful or sinful and why, if we have the faintest notion, on the other hand, of the glories He has in store for our reward, here as well as hereafter, if we are obedient. I wonder if mothers have really taught daughters about truth, agency, and accountability. Are daughters sharing with mothers their own learnings? Individuals and families are strengthened as we help each other grow in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

-- Elaine Cannon

### V.I.S.

by Elizabeth Cottrell

It was a beautiful September day with warm sun shining. It was even still warm enough to water-ski, but I was sitting in seminary. It was only the beginning of the year, but I was already anxious to finish high school and seminary forever.

“And this scripture I want you to mark with a V.I.S.,” said Brother Eliason, my seminary teacher. It was Genesis 39:9 [[Gen. 39:9](#)], and I automatically colored in the scripture, emphasizing “... how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” We skipped to verse 12 and darkened “... fled, and got him out.” Then I wrote V.I.S. in the margin, which was Brother Eliason’s code for “Very Important Scripture.”

He told us about Joseph’s situation and how it took a great deal of strength for him to run away from Potiphar’s wife. Joseph knew he was in a situation where he needed to have made his decision beforehand. Then Brother Eliason said, “If you ever remember a scripture in your life, remember this one.”

“Then why did you tell us last week that we have to memorize 40 of them?” someone wisecracked from the back of the room. The bell drowned out Brother Eliason’s answer, and we all filed out of class.

Soon, that day was over, then that week, the month, and then the year. I was planning to go to school in the fall, but my plans changed drastically when my mother was diagnosed with cancer. She and my stepfather and I moved to a small apartment in Houston to be close to the hospital she needed.

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My stepfather and I took turns driving Mom to the hospital. The chemotherapy made her terribly sick, and soon she lost all of her hair. She had been a strong woman who had survived the death of a husband and the problems of blending two families, so to see her like that was very depressing for me.

I enrolled in a community college to take classes and get out of the house, and it was there that I met Ron. He was the friend I needed, and we soon started spending all of our time together. He was older, although he’d never been married, and he had a nice sports car, a house, and a boat. He was not a member of the Church.

It was easy to forget my problems at home when I was with him, because we did so many fun things together. He even came to church with me regularly. But soon he was suggesting that we spend the night together, since that was the way his relationships usually progressed. I repeatedly told him about my religious conviction against this, but he didn’t give up.

I needed a friend, and I mistakenly continued to see him. I started to weaken at the same time I knew being with him was wrong. I was weak and vulnerable, and it became easier to ignore the Spirit.

Then one night, in one of my weakest times, I started to rationalize. I believed that Ron loved me, and I knew he could take care of me. I suddenly felt very secure in his arms. Then I heard a voice in my head that said, “... fled, and got him out.” I was startled that I would remember that phrase after all that time. Then the voice seemed to come even louder, “... fled, and got him out.” Without another thought I literally fled from the room and the situation.

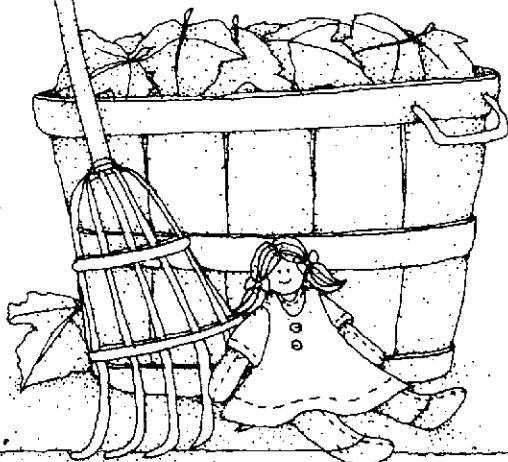
When my head cleared, I could see how close I had come to making a mistake that would have changed my life forever. I could see how Satan used my emotions to cloud my judgment, and I could also see how one scripture had saved my life.

I often wonder if Brother Eliason knew the impact of what he was teaching us on that ordinary fall day. I am thankful for him and for both a Heavenly Father and an earthly father that love me more than Ron ever did. And I’m thankful for the scriptures—especially for the one I remembered so well.

# GOOD WORKS

"Therefore let your light  
so shine before this  
people, that they may  
see your good works and  
glorify your Father who  
is in heaven."

3 Nephi 12:16



*I will nurture others and build the kingdom through righteous service*

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No matter how many stocks and bonds or how much land and other properties we possess, they are not wholly ours. They are the Lord's. He further says that He owns and gives to us all the blessings we have and that He makes us stewards over them, responsible to Him. He makes it clear that it is His purpose to provide for His Saints, but He requires that it be done in His way, which way, He explains, is for those who have to contribute to those who have not. Having made us stewards, He gives us our agency, however, and then lays down the condition that if we accept these blessings and refuse to contribute our share for the care of the poor, we shall go to - well, He tells us where we shall go. - - Marion G. Romney

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A girl all wrapped up in herself makes a mighty small package. You start to live when you start to give.

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On the streets I saw a small girl cold and shivering in a thin dress, with little hope of a decent meal. I became angry and said to God, "Why did you permit this? Why don't you do something about it?" For awhile God said nothing. That night He replied, quite suddenly, "I certainly did something about it. I made you."

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THE RICH FAMILY IN OUR CHURCH

By Eddie Ogan

I'll never forget Easter 1946. I was 14, my little sister Ocy 12, and my older sister Darlene 16. We lived at home with our mother, and the four of us knew what it was to do without many things. My dad had died 5 years before, leaving Mom with seven school kids to raise and no money. By 1946 my older sisters were married and my brothers had left home.

A month before Easter, the pastor of our church announced that a special Easter offering would be taken to help a poor family. He asked everyone to save and give sacrificially. When we got home, we talked about what we could do. We decided to buy 50 pounds of potatoes and live on them for a month. This would allow us to save \$20.00 of our grocery money for the offering. When we thought that if we kept our electric lights turned out as much as possible and didn't listen to the radio, we'd save money on that month's electric bill. Darlene got as many house and yard cleaning jobs as possible and both of us baby sat for everyone we could. For fifteen cents, we could buy enough cotton loops to make three pot holders to sell for one dollar. We made 20 dollars on pot holders. That month was one of the best of our lives. Every day we counted the money to see how much we had saved. At night we'd sit in the dark and talk about how the poor family was going to enjoy having the money the church would give them. We had about 80 people in church, so we figured that whatever amount of money we had to give, the offering would surely be 20 times that much. After all, every Sunday the Pastor had reminded everyone to save for the sacrificial offering.

The day before Easter, Ocy and I walked to the grocery store and got the manager to give us three crisp \$20 bills and one \$10 bill for all our change. We ran all the way home to show Mom and Darlene. We had never had so much money before. That night we were so excited we could hardly sleep. We didn't care that we wouldn't have any new clothes for Easter; we had \$70.00 for the sacrificial



offering. We could hardly wait to get to church!

On Sunday morning, rain was pouring. We didn't own an umbrella, and the church was over a mile from our home, but it didn't seem to matter how wet we got. Darlene had cardboard in her shoes to fill the holes. The cardboard came apart, and her feet got wet. But we sat in church proudly. I heard some teenagers talking about the Smith girls having on their old dresses. I looked at them in their new clothes, and I felt so rich. When the sacrificial offering was taken, we were sitting on the second row from the front. Mom put in the \$10 bill, and each of us girls put in a \$20. As we walked home after church, we sang all the way. At lunch Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs, and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes!

Late that afternoon the minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment, and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn't say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp \$20 bills, one \$10 and seventeen \$1's. Mom put the money back in the envelope. We didn't talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling like poor white trash. We kids had had such a happy life that we felt sorry for anyone who didn't have our mom and dad for parents and a house full of brothers and sisters and other kids visiting constantly. We thought it was fun to share silverware and see whether we got the fork or the spoon that night. We had two knives which we passed around to whoever needed them. I knew we didn't have a lot of things that other people had, but I'd never thought we were poor.

That Easter Day I found out we were. The minister had brought us the money for the poor family, so we must be poor. I didn't like being poor. I looked at my dress and worn-out shoes and felt so ashamed that I didn't want to go back to church. Everyone there probably already knew we were poor. I decided I could quit school since I had finished the eighth grade. That was all the law required at that time.

We sat in silence for a long time. Then it got dark, and we went to bed. All that week, we girls went to school and came home, and no one talked much. Finally on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We'd never known we were poor.

We didn't want to go to church on Sunday, but Mom said we had to. Although it was a sunny day, we didn't talk on the way. Mom started to sing, but no one joined in and she only sang one verse. At church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun-dried bricks, but they need money to buy roofs. He said \$100 would put a roof on a church. The minister said, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people? We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week. Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me, and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering. When the offering was counted, the minister announced that it was a little over \$100.00. The missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this church."

Suddenly it struck us! We had given \$87.00 of that "little over \$100." We were the rich family in the church! Hadn't the missionary said so? From that day on I've never been poor again. I've always remembered how rich I am because I have Jesus.

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I have been impressed with the fact that there is a spirit growing in the world today to avoid giving service, an unwillingness to give value received, to try to see how little we can do and how much we can get for doing it. This is all wrong. Our spirit and aim should be to do all we possibly can, in a given length of time, for the benefit of those who employ us and for the benefit of those with whom we are associated.

The other spirit -- to get all we can, and give as little as possible in return -- is contrary to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not right to desire something for which we do not give service or value received. That idea is all wrong, and it is only a question of time when the sheep and the goats will be separated. -- Heber J. Grant

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RIPPLES ON THE LAKE

Ann Margetson

As I stood at the beginning of the New Year,  
A special thought came to me so very strong  
That I should plough forward and right every wrong,  
That I should make the world much better than before.  
I read of mighty men and their wonderful deeds so great,  
I bowed my head and thought what difference could I make?  
I can not make a ripple even on the smallest lake,  
How could someone like me stop hunger, war and hate?  
That night I prayed to God, for I knew my thought was good.  
How can I right each wrong done? How can I stop hate and war?  
How can I with such puny strength an my limited means, sour  
To lofty heights to help all my fellow men? Please show me Lord.  
That night I had a dream, like small visions in my troubled mind.  
I saw a child being bullied by friends, I took him upon my knee.  
I saw an old woman who lives all alone, as happy as could be  
Because I was in her kitchen, both of us talking and chatting happily.  
I saw someone by a grave, with tear stained face and broken heart,  
I took him by the hand and let him talk of his sweet wife and his love,  
I listened and shed with him some tears, then sweet peace like a dove  
Rested on his broken heart, and he thanked me for friendship true.  
Next morning walking by the lake, I threw in a tiny stone to see  
How many ripples it would make on that water strong and still.  
It landed with a gentle touch, but oh, the circles went on till  
At last they reached the shore and caused small waves to form.  
Then I knew that my dream meant for me to try, within my own realm,  
To make some kind of difference to a few of my fellow men.  
There will be some small thing I may do, although I don't know when,  
That could make a child feel safe, and a lonely soul feel whole again.



WHO DOES GOD'S WORK WILL GET GOD'S PAY

Who does God's work will get God's pay  
However long may seem the day  
However weary be the way  
No mortal hand, God's hand can stay  
He may not pay as others pay  
In gold or skills or raiment's gay  
In goods that perish and decay  
But His high wisdom knows a way  
And this is sure let come what may  
Who does God's work will get God's pay

DEDICATION

This day I will dedicate my labors  
To serve God and keep His commandments.

These things I do with love.

This dedication is an offering to the Lord  
And He will strengthen my hand in His work.

For the Lord will judge me by my works,

And by the desires of my heart.

He will judge me by His commandments

And by my obedience and love.

This day I will dedicate my labors  
To serve God and keep His commandments.

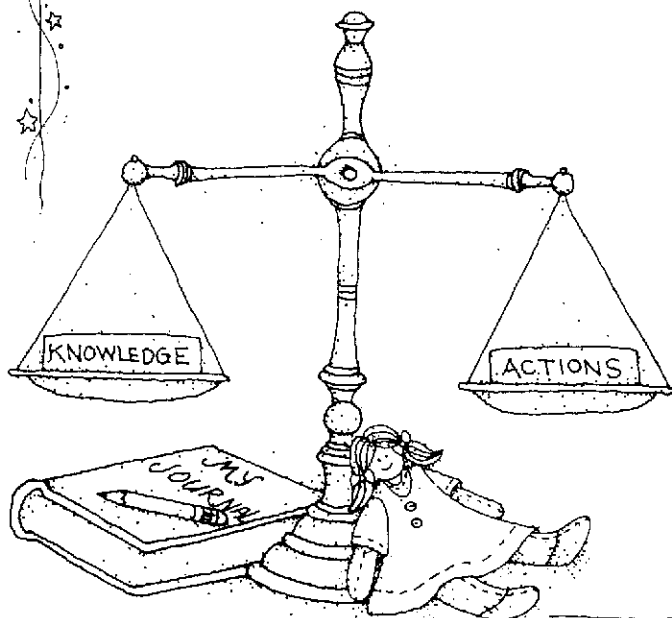
These things I do with love.

Beverly J. Pond

# INTEGRITY

"God forbid that I  
should justify you: till I  
die I will not remove  
mine integrity from me."

Job 27:5



*I will have the moral courage to make my actions consistent with my knowledge of right and wrong.*

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One reason for the decline in moral values is that the world has invented a new, constantly changing and undependable standard of moral conduct referred to as 'situational ethics.' Now, individuals define good and evil as being adjustable according to each situation; this is in direct contrast to the proclaimed God-given absolute standard: 'Thou shalt not!'_as in 'Thou shalt not steal' (Ex. 20:15).

David B. Haight

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I would say to him, do not lie. Just one lie told and you have committed yourself to remember every facet of the situation to protect that lie. Furthermore, once you lie and are discovered, just once, all the rest of your life that person will not trust you. Every time your name comes up, if he is in a position to give you some position or advantage involving trust, that lie will be remembered, and he will not have confidence. You may have repented long since and have been forgiven, even by him, but in spite of himself, he will wonder if you truly have repented. On the other hand, if you tell the truth always, no matter what, it will someday save your reputation and perhaps your honor."

S. Dilworth Young

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Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of intentions. And the actions which speak louder than words.

It is making the time when there is none. Coming through time after time after time, year after year after year after year.

Commitment is the stuff character is made of; the power to change the face of things.

It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism.

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**Do Not Despair**

Our values, our road signs that keep us on course and on schedule, are not to be tucked away in a drawer for safekeeping but carried daily, used continuously, tested against our performance regularly, and literally worn out as a constant measuring device that keeps us accountable.

The powers and plans of Satan are cunning and subtle and very real. You are not unfamiliar

with the pirates that would attempt to board your ship almost daily, who would rob you of your treasures, your peace of mind, your self-discipline, your clear conscience, your commitment, your integrity, your morality, even your eternal destiny if possible, and leave you shipwrecked, washed up on shore. I believe the most destructive threats of our day are not nuclear war, not famine, not economic disaster, but rather the despair, the discouragement, the despondency, the defeat caused by the discrepancy between what we believe to be right and how we live our lives. We are on a stormy sea. These are threatening times and we may be ignoring or even cutting ourselves loose from the very signals that would save us. --

Ardeth G. Kapp,

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INTEGRITY

I know that frequently it is not easy to face up to that which is expected of us. Many think they cannot do it. We need a little more faith. We should know that the Lord will not give us commandments beyond our power to observe. He will not ask us to do things for which we lack the capacity. Our problem lies in our fears and in our appetites. -- Gordon B. Hinckley

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Church members commit to do many things. We agree to serve one another, to mourn with those that mourn, to comfort those that stand in need of comfort. We promise to visit each other. We make covenants. We agree to share the gospel and do vicarious work for the dead. And just like that incident in the car so many years ago, we sometimes fail to do what we have agreed to do.

Our justifications are many. We say we will do it later. We have something more important to do right now. We don't feel well or we don't feel qualified or we don't want to be fanatical about it.

When I listen to people say they have something more important to do, I wonder what it could possibly be. What could be more important than keeping a commitment we have made with the Lord?

The Church does have many needs, and one of them is for more people who will just do what they have agreed to do. People who will show up for work and stay all day; who will quietly, patiently, and consistently do what they have agreed to for as long as it takes--and who will not stop until they have finished. We are a covenant people. If there is a distinguishing feature about members of the Church, it is that we make covenants. We need to be known as a covenant-keeping people as well. Making promises is easy, but to follow through and do what we have promised is another matter. That involves staying the course, being constant and steadfast. It means keeping the faith and being faithful to the end despite success or failure, doubt or discouragement. It is drawing near to the Lord with all our hearts. It is doing whatever we promise to do with all our might--even when we might not feel like it. I once attended a funeral service with Elder M. Russell Ballard. A statement he made there has remained with me to this day. He said, "Life isn't over for a Latter-day Saint until he or she is safely dead, with their testimony still burning brightly." "Safely dead"--what a challenging concept. Brothers and sisters, we will not be safe until we have given our hearts to the Lord--until we have learned to do what we have promised.

-- Howard F. Burton

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The definition of integrity is - I will have the moral courage to make my actions consistent with my knowledge of right and wrong.

The dictionary defines integrity as the state of being complete, undivided or unbroken. With this definition it is easy to see when an object has integrity.

But how can we tell if a person has integrity? A person is complete, undivided or unbroken when his beliefs and actions are the same. If he believes one thing BUT does another, then he is lacking integrity. How can you test yourself to see if you have integrity? Here is how.

If you are entirely alone, unseen by anyone else, would you cheat on a test or read dirty literature? Would you take anything that doesn't belong to you, break a promise or disobey your parents? On the other hand, if you were given, for example, a cleaning job to do, would you do the best you could possibly do, or would you clean only the most noticeable places and skip the hard-to-see ones.

To summarize - if your beliefs and actions are the same and if you act in the same way when you are alone as when you are with someone, then you have integrity.

Have you ever wondered why Integrity is the last value? Integrity is the results when the other six values have been developed.

INTEGRITY

The scripture reference of Integrity is: Job 27:5: "Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me."

Reading about Job can be humbling as you come to realize how much suffering he endured. (could mention some of his sufferings) Yet he never gave up his belief that Heavenly Father knew his situation and was helping him, even though he was still allowed to suffer. Job never wavered in keeping the commandments or loving and praising God, even though it might have seemed easier to give in to hate and revenge. His actions matched his knowledge of what was right and wrong, and he consistently chose to do what was right even though it required a great deal of courage.

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..."till I die will not remove mine integrity from me." (Job 27:5)

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I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true; I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. -- Abraham Lincoln

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"He is true to God who is true to man. -- James Russell Lowell

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Be virtuous and pure; be men of integrity and truth; keep the commandments of God and then you will be able to understand between the things of God and the things of man.

-- Joseph Smith

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Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places]. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; We believe in no man's infallibility, but it is restful to feel sure of one man's integrity. (Ephesians 6:10-18)

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Integrity is the foundation of our character.

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The question shouldn't be: "What will people think?" but "What will I think of myself?" When pleasing Heavenly Father matters more to you than pleasing others, you have become a young woman of integrity.

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I like to think of reputation as a window, clearly exhibiting the integrity of one's soul.

-- O. Leslie Stone

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# INTEGRITY

I have a very good friend whose name is Gandhi. He's the little Indian who won the independence of India for England. Gandhi weighed 102 pounds; went around 4/5 naked. He lived in a mud hut which never had an electric light, telephone or running water. He didn't own an automobile. He never sought or held a public office. He had no armies, no diplomats, no statesmen. He was with no political post, without academic distinction, scientific achievement or artistic gifts. Yet men with great governments and powerful armies behind them paid homage to this little man.

Gandhi started out with a very unpromising beginning. He was a coward. He was afraid of the dark. He was afraid of the serpent. He was afraid of people. He was afraid of himself. He had a very bad temper. Realizing the disadvantages these undesirable traits gave him, he deliberately started out to remake himself. And he later called himself, "A self remade man."

Now if you would like one of the best phrases that I know anything about, there it is. I suppose that after all, all of us are self remade men.

When Gandhi was very young, he took a pledge from his mother that he would remain a vegetarian throughout his life. Many years after his mother had died, Gandhi became very ill and the doctors tried to persuade him that if he would drink a little beef broth, it may save his life. But Gandhi said, "Even for life itself we may not do certain things. There is only one course open to me -- to die -- but never to break my pledge." Now just suppose that we could infuse ourselves with this kind of integrity.

- Sterling W. Sill

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"He said he would do it, so I know it will be done" is too seldom heard these days. More often it is, "He said he would do it, but I don't know whether to count on it or not."

Where is our sense of integrity that once made a man's word as good as his bond? Is it that we are too busy to give much consideration to some of the simple human virtues which are still fundamental? If so, we are busier than we should be. It is not the number of square miles in its area that makes a country great, but the number of square men it produces. Men who cannot be depended upon to fulfill their obligations, to keep their promises, to discharge their responsibilities are no asset to a country or community.

No greater compliment can be paid than, "You can always count on his doing what he says he will do." Would that more of us merited such commendation!

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Integrity is the value we set on ourselves. It is a fulfillment of the duty we owe ourselves. An honorable man or woman will personally commit to live up to certain self-imposed expectations. They need no outside check or control. They are honorable in their inner core.

- Elder James E. Faust

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A person of integrity will assist others to be honest. A person of integrity will ask questions and give answers that are accurate. Integrity makes it possible for us to chart a course of righteous personal conduct long before the time for action arrives.

-- Elder Marvin J. Ashton

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So live that each morning you may kneel in prayer, seeking the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit, as well as its protective power, as you go about your work of the day. So live that each night, before retiring, you may come before the Lord in prayer without shame or embarrassment or the need to plead for forgiveness. I do not hesitate to say that God will bless you if you will do so. Someday you will grow old and look back upon your life. You will be able to say: "I lived with integrity. I cheated no one, not even myself."

-- President Hinckley

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We are double minded, double hearted, double tongued and have a divided heart when who we really are, our thoughts, our speech and our behavior are different depending on who we are with.

- A DOUBLE HEART is when a young woman wears shorter skirts to school than to church because she knows her bishop will see her.
- A DIVIDED HEART is when a young woman says all the right answers at church and then goes home and yells at her family. Or is rude to the new girl at school. Or gossips about her friends.
- DOUBLE MINDED is bearing your testimony or taking the Sacrament and then going too far with your boyfriend, or dating before you're 16.
- DOUBLE TONGUED is acting at church like you know what is right from wrong and then cussing at school or at home.

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RATING MY MORAL COURAGE

1.
  - a. I never tell lies
  - b. I almost never tell lies
  - c. Sometimes I tell lies
  - d. I often tell lies.
  
2.
  - a. I have never cheated on an assignment or test.
  - b. I have cheated very little on assignments and tests.
  - c. Now and then, I cheat on an assignment or test.
  - d. I often cheat on assignments or tests.
  
3.
  - a. I never shoplift.
  - b. I have shoplifted once or twice.
  - c. I shoplift occasionally.
  - d. I shoplift often.
  
4.
  - a. I never gossip
  - b. I gossip very little.
  - c. Now and then I gossip.
  - d. I gossip a lot.
  
5.
  - a. I never take the Lord's name in vain.
  - b. I seldom take the Lord's name in vain.
  - c. Sometimes I take the Lord's name in vain.
  - d. I often take the Lord's name in vain.
  
6.
  - a. I always dress modestly.
  - b. I dress modestly most of the time.
  - c. Sometimes I dress modestly.
  - d. I never dress modestly.

- 7.     a.        I keep the Word of Wisdom even if my friends offer me cigarettes, drugs or alcohol.
- b.        Most of the time I do not accept liquor, drugs or cigarettes from my friends.
- c.        Sometimes I accept drugs, a drink or a cigarette.
- d.        I often accept drugs, a drink or a cigarette.
  
- 8.     a.        I never read, listen to music or watch anything that does not meet church standards.
- b.        I very seldom read, listen to, or watch anything that does not meet church standards.
- c.        I sometimes read, listen to or watch things that do not meet church standards.
- d.        I often read, listen to or watch things that do not meet church standards.

Count the number of a's, b's, c's, and d's. Give yourself four points for each a, three points for each b, two points for each c and one point for each d. What letter would my Heavenly Father have me write each time?

IS YOUR MORAL COURAGE STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND PEER PRESSURE?  
IS BEING POPULAR MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN DOING WHAT IS RIGHT?



True at All Times  
by Elder F. Melvin Hammond

An accident had left me weak and discouraged. But watching those beavers rebuild their dams time after time taught me a great lesson. I was 17 years old and on top of the world. I had a university basketball scholarship, money in the bank from a hard summer's work, a motorcycle and a pickup truck to drive, and all the aspirations of a typical teenager. Two months later I lay in a hospital bed with my body broken and my dreams shattered.

It was a motorcycle wreck-a head-on collision. No one was at fault. It was a stormy night. The driver of the car never saw my motorcycle coming. For two months I lay in bed. Then for six months I moved about on crutches. Weak and discouraged after months of inactivity and desperately needing money to continue my education, I began searching for summer employment.

I took a job with the railroad. Our crew was to patrol and repair a 15-mile stretch of track in a remote area called Little Warm River. Pine trees covered the mountains. Dozens of small streams meandered through the meadows. Large culverts had been placed under the railroad tracks to allow the streams to run freely, but beaver colonies would dam up each stream at the head of the culvert, creating a large reservoir with enough water pressure to wash out the tracks.

Volunteers were asked to crawl through the culvert and tear away the beaver dam, allowing the water to flow freely again. I always volunteered because no one else would, and, frankly, I rather enjoyed it. It was thrilling as I picked away at the dam, knowing that at any moment the water would break through and sweep me along with it head over heels, finally dumping me unceremoniously into the stream 15 yards away. There were times when I thought I would surely drown as I bumped along, submerged in that mighty flow of water and debris.

The next morning, as we would make our daily inspection, we could see that the beavers had already started to rebuild their dams. Within a short time, they would be totally reconstructed. It didn't matter how many times we destroyed those dams, the beavers never seemed discouraged but steadily kept at their task. Those animals taught me a great lesson about never being discouraged, especially with things I could not control.

I loved that summer. The work was hard and sometimes I was homesick, but I recovered from the effects of that terrible motorcycle wreck. My body became strong once again. In the evening after

work I walked those timbered mountains. I sat near those beaver dams with no other human being within miles to disturb my meditation. I had many solitary moments to think about the importance of being steady and constant.

We are all faced with challenges that test our courage and strength. Perhaps it is the awfulness of drugs. Some are caught in the web of immorality. Others struggle just to be honest. There may even be times when we feel that our parents contribute to our problems. Maybe in our eyes they don't measure up to our personal standards of righteousness. On the other hand, they might be so committed to the Lord and His church that we feel they overlook our desires and needs.

I am reminded of a group of young men. Their parents had covenanted with God that they would never take up arms, even at the expense of their own lives. Finally when freedom and life were threatened by invading armies, the young men, who had not made the same covenant, volunteered to fight in place of their parents. Led by the prophet Helaman, they fought ferociously, vanquishing every foe. Every one of them was wounded, but not one was killed.

"And they were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted" (Alma 53:20).

I am impressed with the words "true at all times." Helaman did not have to worry if they would show up. He was not concerned about some of them surrendering before the battle began. They did not blame their righteous parents for causing them to suffer injury and pain. Rather, they "did think more upon the liberty of their fathers than they did upon their lives" (Alma 56:47). Although the fighting was awful and they were terribly outnumbered, those young men could be counted upon.

I know of young people today who demonstrate a similar commitment. Tara had recently moved from the United States to a foreign land. She was petitioned by the local high school coach to come out for the basketball team. It was not likely she would get much playing time as the team was already formed, but it would give her experience for next season. Then one of the regular players was injured, and Tara was thrust into a more prominent role. The schedule of games was presented to the team. To Tara's dismay one of the most important games was scheduled on Sunday. Tara discussed the problem with her parents. They assured her of their trust and told her this was her decision.

The next day she approached the coach and explained that as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints she was counseled not to participate in school activities on Sunday. The Sabbath was a sacred day for worshiping God. Could she be excused from playing that one game? The coach was sympathetic but wondered why an exception could not be made for the good of the team.

It was an agonizing time. As the new girl, it was important to be accepted. The team knew she could make a difference. What could she do?

All night long Tara wrestled with the decision. She knew who she was and how much she loved the Savior. There was really only one decision. She would not play on the Sabbath. In the morning she told her parents. They assured her all would work out for the best—and it did. The coach accepted her decision. He understood how important her convictions were to her. Tara would be excused from playing on that Sunday, but they needed her for all the rest of the games. She was an important part of the team.

Tara had proven to herself what it means to be "true at all times."

Every mission president prays he will have missionaries who are steady and true. One such missionary anciently was a young man named Shiblon. His father Alma said to him, "And now, my son, I trust that I shall have great joy in you, because of your steadiness and your faithfulness unto God; for as you have commenced in your youth to look to the Lord your God, even so I hope that you will continue in keeping his commandments" (Alma 38:2). This great missionary son had already brought joy to his father for his work among the Zoramites. It also appears that Shiblon never did disappoint Alma, but continued constant to the end. "And he was a just man, and he did walk uprightly before God; and he did observe to do good continually, to keep the commandments of the Lord his God" (Alma 63:2). What a grand tribute!

John the Revelator wrote these words of the Lord, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15). To be lukewarm is to be someone on whom we cannot depend. To be hot or cold, on the other hand, is to be predictable.

In the mission field, the most dependable missionary is not the "flash" who runs hard one day and the next is too exhausted to leave the apartment. Nor

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s it the missionary who teaches 50 discussions one week and then coasts for the rest of the month. It is the steady, hard-working missionary who makes the difference, the one who can be counted on day after day to give his all-like Shibleon. The miracle is that nearly all of the wonderful young men and women called to serve in the mission field fit this model.

Think of the power in the Church if every member were to attend every meeting every Sunday. Think of the faith produced if every member were to worthily partake of the sacrament. Think of the knowledge obtained if every young person graduated from seminary. Think of the peace obtained if we always controlled our temper. Think of the strength generated if every young man and young woman honored the priesthood and prepared for the temple. Think what it would mean if we were the solution to the problem rather than the problem.

How important it is to make our own decisions for right, to be steady, constant, and true at all times. Not only can we make such decisions, but we will! I know we will!

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Integrity is the core of our character. Without integrity we have a weak foundation upon which to build other Christ-like characteristics.

- L. Lionel Kendrick

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You might ask, how can we be completely honest? To be completely honest, we must look carefully at our lives and have the courage to face the whole truth. If there are ways in which we are being even the least bit dishonest, we should begin at once to repent from them. When we are completely honest, we cannot be corrupted. We are true to every trust, duty, agreement, and covenant, even if it costs us money, friends, or our lives. Then we can face the Lord, ourselves, and others without shame.

- L. Tom Perry

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