

So girls, Whooo are you becoming? If you don't know, let this program and all of the aspects just discussed guide you, shape you, and lead you on the path to who I know and Heavenly Father knows you can become! Each of the YW has talked about small part of the Young Women's program. But Karla discussed the purpose. Did you hear what she said? The purpose is to help you be worthy to enter the temple. I want to talk about all the other aspects of the program and how what we learn leads us down the path towards the temple.

The Standards in **For the Strength of Youth** should become your guidebook for getting through school and everyday life as a teenager. If you know and accept these standards for yourself, many of the tough decisions you will face will already be answered! The **motto and logo** declares to you and everyone that you know what is right and you are determined to stay on the path. We repeat the **Theme** each week in opening exercises of YWs to help us remember who we are and where we are going. When this Young Women's theme and values were first presented many years ago after much fasting and prayer, they were not put together in a random order. They were put together with a purpose, in a specific order, because each value builds upon the next.

**Faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle and ordinance of the gospel. Faith isn't the first value because it's the easiest – it's the first value because it's the foundation for all the other values, and for every other gospel principle. When we have faith in Jesus Christ and faith that we are daughters of a Heavenly Father who loves us, we will have that shield to help protect us from temptation, and keep us making right choices on the path towards the temple.

Upon this foundation of faith, we begin to see that each child of God has **divine nature**. We have inherited divine qualities from our heavenly parents. Divine Nature helps us to see that we can become more than we are now. It helps us to see who we are to become. As we grow in our divine nature, we understand more fully our roles as women and sisters in our homes and families, and we understand the roles we will someday fulfill as wives, mothers and eternal companions when we are sealed in the temple.

When we know that we are daughters of God who are of **infinite worth**, we come to understand God's love and plan for us. Elder H. Burke Peterson said, "Do you think for a moment that Heavenly Father would have sent one of His children to this earth by accident, without the possibility of a significant work to perform?...My dear friends, you are a royal generation. You were preserved to come to the earth in this time for a special purpose. Not just a few of you, but all of you."<sup>3</sup> Heavenly Father has a plan for each and every one of us. He doesn't make mistakes. Everything he creates is beautiful and worthwhile. When we come to understand that the worth of our souls is great in the sight of God, we will have a desire to fulfill his plan for each of us, and that starts by entering the temple.

We have access to more **knowledge** in our day and age than ever before in the history of our world. We have inventions that save lives, improve quality of living, and take us places that were once never thought possible. Elder Faust said, "I do not believe that this great

outpouring of knowledge happened by chance. All of this... knowledge did not come solely from the creative minds of men and women. Man has never discovered anything that God has not already known.”<sup>1</sup> It is our Heavenly Father who inspires our minds as we learn. When we develop a love for learning we will thirst for His knowledge as well, and we will have a desire to go to the temple. There is no place on earth that we can receive more personal knowledge and inspiration from our Heavenly Father than in the temple.

Now that we have these other values as stepping stones, we are prepared to make good choices, we have a *desire* to make good choices, and we are prepared to accept the **responsibility for those choices**. Our older girls just attended Youth Conference and learned how every choice comes with a consequence. Like a pair of shoes, they cannot be divided. When we make a decision, we get the matching consequence. They also learned that sometimes making decisions is not very fun, or easy, but God does not leave us alone! He has given us his prophets, the scriptures, the For The Strength of Youth Pamphlet, and the guidance of loving parents and leaders, to help us make correct choices. When we choose to follow these helps that our Father in heaven has given us, and accept responsibility for our actions, we will be choosing a path that leads directly to the doors of the temple.

**Service** is an integral part of the church. We take meals to the hungry, we give blessings to the sick, we donate clothing to those in need, and provide shelter for the homeless. We give fast offerings, clean our ward buildings, and provide humanitarian relief around the world. The more we come to love our Savior, the more we will come to love those around us, and we will have a desire to serve them. This desire to serve will extend to every part of our lives, whether it be serving in the church, fulfilling a full-time mission, or serving in the temple. In the temple we covenant to consecrate our time and talents for the welfare of others. Elder Oaks said Temple work has “no motive other than love and service for our fellowmen, living and dead.”<sup>5</sup> It is perhaps the most unselfish act we can perform in this life.

All the values we have talked about so far become a driving influence in our lives only as we embrace **integrity**, which is defined as making our actions consistent with our knowledge of right and wrong in all aspects of our lives. You may have heard the common saying, “Your actions speak louder than words.” Learning to live with integrity prepares us for the sacred covenants we will make in the temple by the way we learn to live consistent with our beliefs, no matter the situation. If honesty and integrity are more important than temporal wants or peer pressure, then our temple covenants will be as well. When we are true to the sacred principles of honesty and integrity, we are true to our faith, we are true to our covenants and we are true to ourselves.

Virtue is defined as high moral standards in our thoughts and our actions. There has never been a time in this world when the value of **virtue** has been under more attack. Everywhere we look, the world tells us that high moral standards are old fashioned and un-popular. But the Lord teaches us a virtuous woman has a price far above rubies. Sister Dalton says, “Your

personal virtue will not only enable you to have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, but it will also enable you to make the decisions that will help you be worthy to enter the temple and there make and keep sacred covenants and receive the blessings of exaltation.”

The **Personal Progress** program helps you to grow and learn more about who you are, what blessings the Lord has given to you personally, and how to grow closer to our Heavenly Father and Savior, Jesus Christ. I want to read you a quote from President Ezra Taft Benson, that is found in your personal progress manual. It says, “Give me a young woman who loves home and family, who reads and ponders the scriptures daily, who has a burning testimony of the Book of Mormon. Give me a young woman who faithfully attends her church meetings, who is a seminary graduate, who has earned her Young Womanhood Recognition Award and wears it with pride! Give me a young woman who is virtuous and who has maintained her personal purity, who will not settle for less than a temple marriage, and I will give you a young woman who will perform miracles for the Lord now and throughout eternity.”<sup>7</sup>

**Camp & Mutual** are the two aspects of YW that allows us to relax, hang out, and have a lot of fun...not that the other aspects of YW aren't fun, but there is something special that happens at camp when we leave our everyday lives of t.v., cell phones, texting, and iPods behind to spend time in nature with tons of other girls who, just like you, are striving each day to be better than they were yesterday so they can be worthy to go to the temple. **Mutual** activities allow us to have fun, feel the spirit, serve, grow, and take steps together on our path to the temple.

The new curriculum we started this year, is quickly becoming my favorite part of the YW program. **Come, Follow Me** gives each girl the opportunity and responsibility to really learn the gospel for herself. It puts her in charge and empowers her to teach others the way the Savior did. I know that as each of you take the time everyday to prepare for our Sunday lessons, you will grow closer to your Savior. He will be your best friend if you let Him. He will walk, and even carry you at times, as you strive to live the gospel and stay on the path to the temple.

Sister Acker made these adorable owls for you to put somewhere you will see it everyday to remind yourself of who you can become and where you want to end up. I testify to you, that when you strive to ACCEPT & ACT upon the values and make all the aspects of the YW program part of your lives and your character, the result will be a young woman whooo knows who she is, whooo loves the Lord, whooo cares for others, and whoooo is worthy to enter the temple of the Lord.