

For the Strength of

YOUTH

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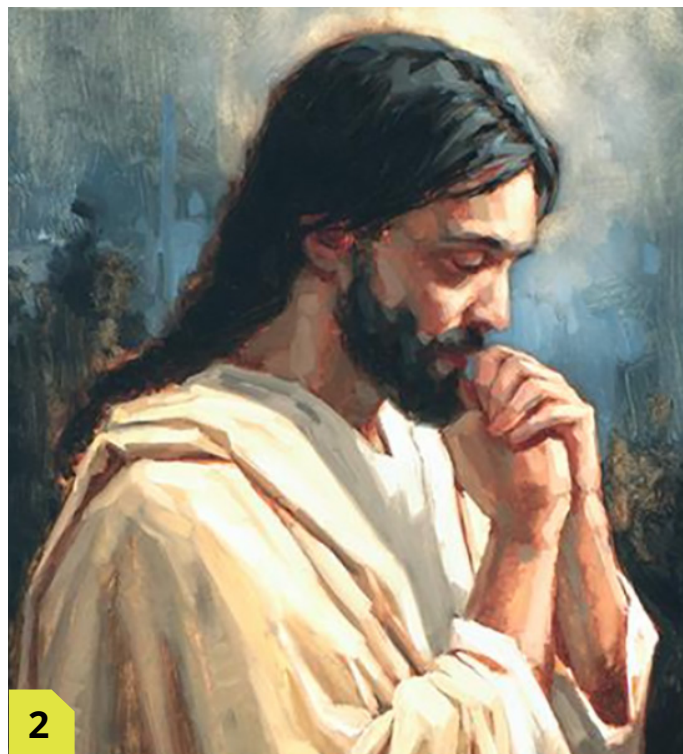
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HELP FOR THE HARD DAYS

Life doesn't always go the way we hope it will. We all love days filled with celebration and joy, but some days are filled with disappointment. In this issue, you'll find help for those days (see pages 8, 14, and 22).

One of my favorite scriptures contains a piece of advice and a promise for the hard days. It reads, "Be patient in afflictions, for thou shalt have many; but endure them, for, lo, I am with thee, even unto the end of thy days" (Doctrine and Covenants 24:8). The advice is to *endure*.

At its root, *endure* means to remain firm within. That can be hard to do, which is why I love the promise "I am with thee." That promise means we don't have to get through the hard days alone. The Lord will help us remain firm within.

No matter what is happening in our lives, the best way to connect with the Father is to pray. He is really there. He will hear and answer our prayers. God hears and speaks to His children on good days and on bad days (see page 2). He has promised to be with us.

With love,

Emily Belle Freeman

Young Women General President



Learn more about FSY conferences at fsy.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.



Check out **@StrivetoBe** Instagram and **Gospel Living** app messages, available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Japanese.

*Have faith that your
Heavenly Father is
speaking to you.
He is there and loves
you more than words
can say.*

Your Heavenly Father Wants to **SPEAK TO YOU**



**BY ELDER
NEIL L. ANDERSEN**

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

We are sons and daughters of God, sharing the earth together far from our heavenly home. This is mortality, a time to receive our body, choose good over evil, grow our faith in our Savior Jesus Christ and His sacred Atonement, and embrace our Father's plan of happiness.

Without a memory of our premortal life, we, at times, feel lonely for the world we left behind. Our Father has given us a spiritual gift to remain connected to Him and to receive guidance, direction, and comfort from Him. We know this gift very well; it is called prayer.

Pray to Your Heavenly Father

An angel instructed Adam and Eve and all who would follow them to "repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore" (Moses 5:8).

Jesus taught:

- "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7).
- "When thou prayest, . . . pray to thy Father . . . in secret" (Matthew 6:6).
- "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9).

Jesus prayed continually to His Father (see Luke 6:12; Mark 6:46).

At Gethsemane, He told His disciples, "Sit ye here, while I shall pray" (Mark 14:32). While on the cross, Jesus prayed for the soldiers who crucified Him: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

We are counseled to "pray always."¹ As we "counsel with the Lord in all [our] doings, . . . he will direct [us] for good" (Alma 37:37). In addition, we "render all the thanks and praise which [our] whole soul has power to possess" (Mosiah 2:20).

But even more glorious, our Father in Heaven responds to our prayers! A thoughtful question for us is how do we better receive and understand the answers, direction, and comfort coming from our Father?

Receiving answers to our prayers begins with faith in Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. We trust in our Father, do our very best to keep the commandments, and look for His hand in all things (see Doctrine and Covenants 59:21).

Your Heavenly Father will stand by you, strengthen your abilities, comfort you, and "consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain" (2 Nephi 2:2) as you call upon Him.



“ Our Father has given us a spiritual gift to remain connected to Him and to receive guidance, direction, and comfort from Him.



“**The voice of heaven can come unexpectedly often in quiet spaces and sacred places.**”

Hear His Voice

As we exercise faith in God and keep His commandments, we naturally learn to better hear His voice.

In 1993, President James E. Faust (1920–2007), then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, invited my wife, Kathy, and me to attend a devotional at Brigham Young University with him. This devotional occurred well before the widespread availability of smartphones, social media, and the internet.

In his talk, President Faust warned: “In your generation you will be barraged by multitudes of voices telling you how to live, how to gratify

your passions, how to have it all.” But “the voice you must learn to heed is the voice of the Spirit.” To do so, “we . . . must open our ears, turn the eye of faith to the source of the voice, and look steadfastly towards heaven.”²

Years later, President Russell M. Nelson taught, “If you are paying more attention to feeds from social media than you are to the whisperings of the Spirit, then you are putting yourself at spiritual risk.”³

The voice of the Spirit comes both to our intellect and our feelings. “I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your

heart” (Doctrine and Covenants 8:2). Listen to your conscience—revelation often begins there.

Pray with a Believing Heart

Answers and impressions from God cannot be forced. We pray and wait with a believing heart. Some answers will not come in this life, but to the righteous, the Lord will always send His peace (see John 14:27). At times, answers come “line upon line, precept upon precept” (Doctrine and Covenants 98:12).

The voice of heaven can come unexpectedly often in quiet spaces and sacred places. In the stillness of my early morning prayers and ponderings, I find unusual blessings. A daily, personal, uninterrupted reading of the scriptures, while routine at times, can bring the voice of the Spirit into our hearts like fire at other times.

As the noise and distractions of the world swirl around us, the Lord has directed His prophet to build more and more temples. In these sacred houses of the Lord, as we leave our challenges outside and enter with our prayers and concerns, we are taught the truths of eternity. A year ago, President Nelson promised that as we worship in the temple, “Nothing will open the heavens *more*. Nothing!”⁴

Each general conference also brings additional abundant blessings. In the coming month of April, we



will meet once again in general conference to hear the voice of the Lord. I promise that as you prepare and come prayerfully to general conference, you will find answers to your concerns and know that “heaven’s hand” is upon you.⁵

Have faith that your Heavenly Father is speaking to you. He is! Let your faith in Him and His Beloved Son help you part the veil and receive your Father’s voice. I testify He is there and loves you more than words can say. 🏠

NOTES

1. See Luke 21:36; 2 Nephi 32:9; 3 Nephi 18:15; Doctrine and Covenants 10:5; 19:38; 20:33; 31:12.
2. James E. Faust, “The Voice of the Spirit” (Brigham Young University devotional address, Sept. 5, 1993), 2–4, speeches.byu.edu.
3. Russell M. Nelson and Wendy W. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), 14, Gospel Library.
4. Russell M. Nelson, Apr. 2024 general conference (*Liahona*, May 2024, 122).
5. Neil L. Andersen, Oct. 2017 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 126).



*Keeping the second great
commandment is not as
hard as you might think.*

ICE CREAM, FRIENDSHIP, AND LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR

By David Dickson
Church Magazines

When a friend or family member is going through a really hard time, do you ever agonize over how to make their problems go away? Seems like a good idea on the surface.

But imagine that your friend's parents are getting divorced. Or your younger sister is being bullied at school. Or your grandfather is battling severe depression. How do you fix all *that*?

The short answer is you can't. And that's OK. At the same time, though, you can *always* help. And you'd be surprised how much a little help can turn things around.

Big Struggles, Simple Kindness

Foni P. grew up in a single-parent home. During her childhood and teenage years, Foni watched her mom struggle to raise three kids alone. As a result, Foni developed negative feelings toward her father. Then recently, after she turned 19, her father started reaching out to try and connect.

"I was upset," Foni says. "My thinking was, 'He had 19 years to enter my life but didn't. Why now?'" Even though she prayed and pondered, Foni still couldn't find peace. Talking with her mom and aunt helped a little, but it still left her feeling tied in knots. Then something incredible (but simple) happened: Foni's best friend invited her out for ice cream and shopping.

"A lot of people would look at that and think it wasn't a big deal," Foni says, "but it meant so much! I felt the sun on my skin. We were walking outside, and I saw the trees. I felt the



wind, and I felt the Spirit at the same time. It was amazing."

Did this impromptu shopping trip solve Foni's problems? Well, no. Foni admits that her relationship with her father is still challenging. But that simple act of kindness from her friend allowed Foni to feel the Holy Ghost again. She could then better face her struggles with extra strength. "I know she was prompted by the Holy Ghost to take me out of the house," Foni shares.

Who Needs You Today?

In the *For the Strength of Youth* guide, we are invited to "reach out to those who feel lonely, isolated, or helpless. Help them feel Heavenly Father's love through you" (*For the Strength of Youth: A Guide for Making Choices* [2022], 12). That simple act of friendship helped Foni feel God's love during a tough situation. Who can you help feel that same love today?

The Power of Friendship

I never realized that I can help someone feel God's love just by being a good friend! Let's check out the guide for more ideas on this. (See pages 11–14.)



For When You're **DISAPPOINTED**

The Doctrine and Covenants offers help when things don't go your way.

By Jessica Zoey Strong
Church Magazines

Have you ever been disappointed? I have. Actually, I was disappointed just last week. Seriously—tears and all.

The Lord said to Joseph Smith, “Be patient in afflictions, for thou shalt have many.” Gulp. I don't like the sound of that.

But thankfully, the scripture continues: “But endure them, for, lo, *I am with thee*, even unto the end of thy days” (Doctrine and Covenants 24:8, emphasis added). OK. Long breath out.

When I think about it, I realize the Lord has been with me through *every* disappointment I've gone through. Here are some examples:

When I Tried to **OUTSMART** **DISAPPOINTMENT ...**

Sometimes, I tried to completely avoid disappointment. When I was 13 years old and didn't make student council, I never tried again, even though it was something I probably would've enjoyed. I gave up because I was afraid of being disappointed again.

...I NEEDED TO “FEAR NOT”

I needed to remember that the Lord is with us, even in our disappointments. Sometimes things won't go our way, but He can help us face uncomfortable emotions and try new things.

*“Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, **fear not**” (Doctrine and Covenants 6:36–37, emphasis added).*



When I Didn't GET THE PART ...

When I was 15, I auditioned for a play at school. I tried out for the lead role, but in the end, I didn't get the part.

To make things worse, the teacher had already cast all the smaller roles, so there wasn't a part for me at all. She made me the Student Director, and because she felt bad, she also added a new part—I got to come on stage for about 30 seconds as a silent nun.

Yep. I cried.

...THE LORD STRENGTHENED ME

Looking back, I realize the Savior helped me through that disappointing time. He strengthened me to keep a good attitude and develop more humility. In the end, I enjoyed my time in the ninth-grade play.

*"Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, **and for his arm to be revealed**" (Doctrine and Covenants 123:17, emphasis added).*

WHEN SERVING A MISSION Didn't Go as Planned ...

After high school, I decided to serve a mission. But I had some unexpected medical problems that kept me from leaving when I expected to.

I had to be patient, but I was eventually called to the Mexico Guadalajara East Mission. There, I taught many amazing people and even helped some of them be baptized. But even with my faith, obedience, and hard work, none of them stayed active in the Church.

...I TRUSTED IN GOD'S WILL

Often, life events are out of our control. I couldn't instantly solve my medical problems. And I can't force others to live the gospel. But I can trust in the Lord's timing and way.

*"Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; . . . and it shall be **in his own time, and in his own way**, and according to his own will" (Doctrine and Covenants 88:68, emphasis added).*

When Sports **DIDN'T** GO MY WAY ...

In my last year of high school, I wanted to make the varsity (or advanced) tennis team. I had to beat the girl ranked immediately above me to make the team. But when I played her, I lost.

Even though I was disappointed, I played on the junior varsity team. In the final junior varsity tournament, I was ranked in first place. But what do you know? I lost the final match. I cried—again.

I was disappointed again later. After I received an award for earning good grades and playing sports, they decided to take the award away—because apparently, it was only for those who played varsity.

...IT WAS JUST A "SMALL MOMENT"

At the time, tennis was a big part of my life, and those disappointments felt huge. What I didn't realize was that the Savior was always with me, helping me. Those huge disappointments didn't last forever, even if it felt like they would.

*"Peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be **but a small moment**; and then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high" (Doctrine and Covenants 121:7–8, emphasis added).*

How has the Lord helped you as you've faced disappointment?

Email your story to ftsoy@ChurchofJesusChrist.org by May 1, 2025.

When I Was **DISAPPOINTED** LAST WEEK ...

I'm an adult now. But I still get disappointed. Actually, just last week I went to a writing conference. I felt pretty confident about some of my writing, but I received some disappointing feedback from other writers.

...HE WAS WITH ME

Now, I'm trying to trust the Lord a little more. Disappointments are a part of life. They don't mean you're doing anything wrong.

So, back to the scripture from the beginning. Yes, we may have "many" afflictions and disappointments. But I know that the Lord will be with me through all of them. And He will be with you too.

*"Be patient in afflictions, for thou shalt have many; but endure them, for, lo, **I am with thee**, even unto the end of thy days" (Doctrine and Covenants 24:8, emphasis added). 🏰*

CHRIST WILL HELP YOU

"I testify that the Savior's Atonement lifts from us not only the burden of our sins but also the burden of our disappointments and sorrows, our heartaches and our despair. . . . He knows the way out and He knows the way up. He knows it because He has walked it. He knows the way because He *is* the way."

President Jeffrey R. Holland, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2006 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2006, 70–71).



THE SAVIOR HELPED ME CHANGE

I get nervous when I attend Church lessons and seminary and when I give talks in sacrament meeting. But I like to remember Doctrine and Covenants 84:88: “I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up.”

When I read or remember that scripture, I feel that Jesus is watching over me and supporting me. He helps me when I make mistakes.

I feel that Heavenly Father has prepared these opportunities for me. He will make it possible for me to do my best, even if it's difficult.

No matter what happens, I will be OK, because Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ will help me as I act with faith.

Emma Y., age 15, Ibaraki, Japan

Enjoys playing board and video games, playing sports with her family, watching movies, and doing crafts for youth activities.

I kind of have this face where, if I'm not smiling, I look like I'm angry. People would ask, “Why are you frowning? What's your problem?” And I'd say, “I'm not frowning.” But their questions actually did make me angry.

My dad was worried about me. He called me to his room and said, “You know, you can't keep having this angry attitude. What's bothering you?” I decided I wanted to change.

I prayed and cried for Heavenly Father to help me. Over time, I started to feel different. I get less angry, I smile more often, and I love others more. Everybody said, “You are changing.” I know deep down that it isn't by my own strength. It's by the enabling power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

It's hard to become the person you want to be. I can't say I'm there yet, but I'm striving to get there. Our journey is supposed to be with Jesus Christ. We should invite Him along with us.

Victoria E., age 16, Lagos, Nigeria

Likes playing sports, reading, singing, doing hair, and learning new things.



I WILL BE OK



ON THE MOVE WITH THE SPIRIT

Heavenly Father wants to speak to you. Here are ways you can keep that communication going.

By Eric B. Murdock
Church Magazines

Your Heavenly Father knows and loves you. He hears you when you pray, and He wants to speak to you. Discovering how He speaks is important—and it's different for all of us. But often, you can notice Heavenly Father speak to your mind and heart when you're on the move—living your life and acting in faith.

Stay Connected

You can keep your connection with Heavenly Father open as you regularly and sincerely pray to Him. Study His word in the scriptures. Hear and follow His chosen servants—the prophets and apostles. And try your best to keep His commandments.

Staying connected to Heavenly Father brings happiness and meaning to our lives. It helps us better understand His plan and feel His love. We recognize when He speaks as we strive to stay in tip-top spiritual shape.



Be Still

In the scriptures, the Lord reminds us to “be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10; see also Doctrine and Covenants 101:16). The world is filled with noise and distractions, but Heavenly Father is not loud or noisy. He speaks in a “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:12). We can recognize His influence when we are still.

For example, find a quiet place to pray, take time to surround yourself with the beauty of God's creations in nature, or enjoy inspiring music and art. These things help keep our minds and hearts open to special experiences with Heavenly Father.



Follow Promptings

Heavenly Father often speaks to us through promptings. But how can we know for sure if a prompting comes from Him? The prophet Mormon gives a good guide: “Every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God” (Moroni 7:13). President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) once said: “That’s the test, when all is said and done. Does it persuade one to do good, to rise, to stand tall, to do the right thing, to be kind, to be generous? Then it is of the Spirit of God.”¹

Often, a prompting will be to “go and do” (see 1 Nephi 3:7) or to say something. As we act on those promptings—especially the *first* time we feel it—more experiences will come. So, if you feel that you should say or do something good and positive, do it! Confirmation that you are on the right track comes when you make a move.

Move Forward with Faith and Trust

Recognizing when God speaks is a process. It requires both faith and trust that Heavenly Father will speak to you and help you do far more than you can do on your own. It’s also important to remember that Heavenly Father trusts *you* not only to seek His guidance in your own life but also to bless and uplift those around you.

You won’t always have all the answers. You are not expected to. But you *are* encouraged to act with faith. As you do, you’ll find that God can speak in more ways than you can imagine. Over time, His voice will become clearer, His guidance more apparent, and His presence more noticeable to help you become what He knows you can become.

NOTE

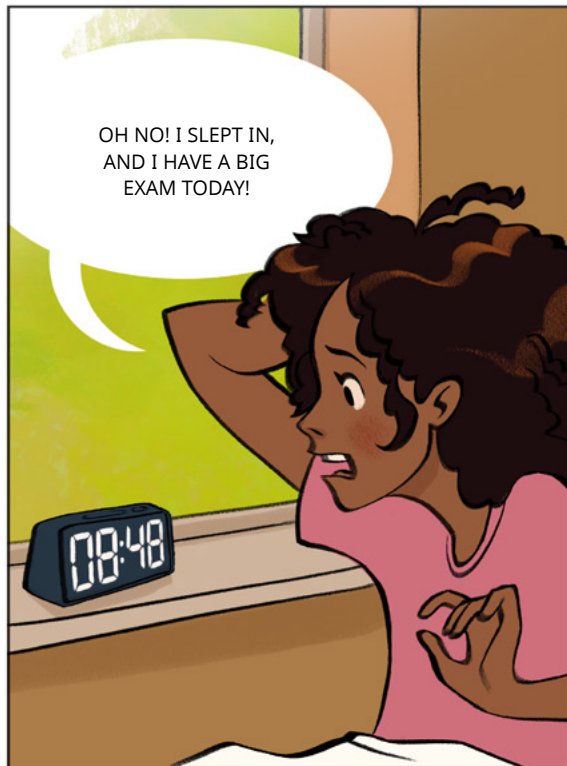
1. In *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (2023), 106.



Watch videos on the **Gospel Living** app of how followers of God have come to #HearHim.

A BAD DAY ***TURNED AROUND***

BY KATE STEWART; ILLUSTRATIONS BY SIMONA LOVE





"The Father is aware of us, knows our needs, and will help us perfectly. Sometimes that help is given in the very moment or at least soon after we ask for divine help."

Elder Brook P. Hales of the Seventy,
Apr. 2019 general conference
(*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 11).

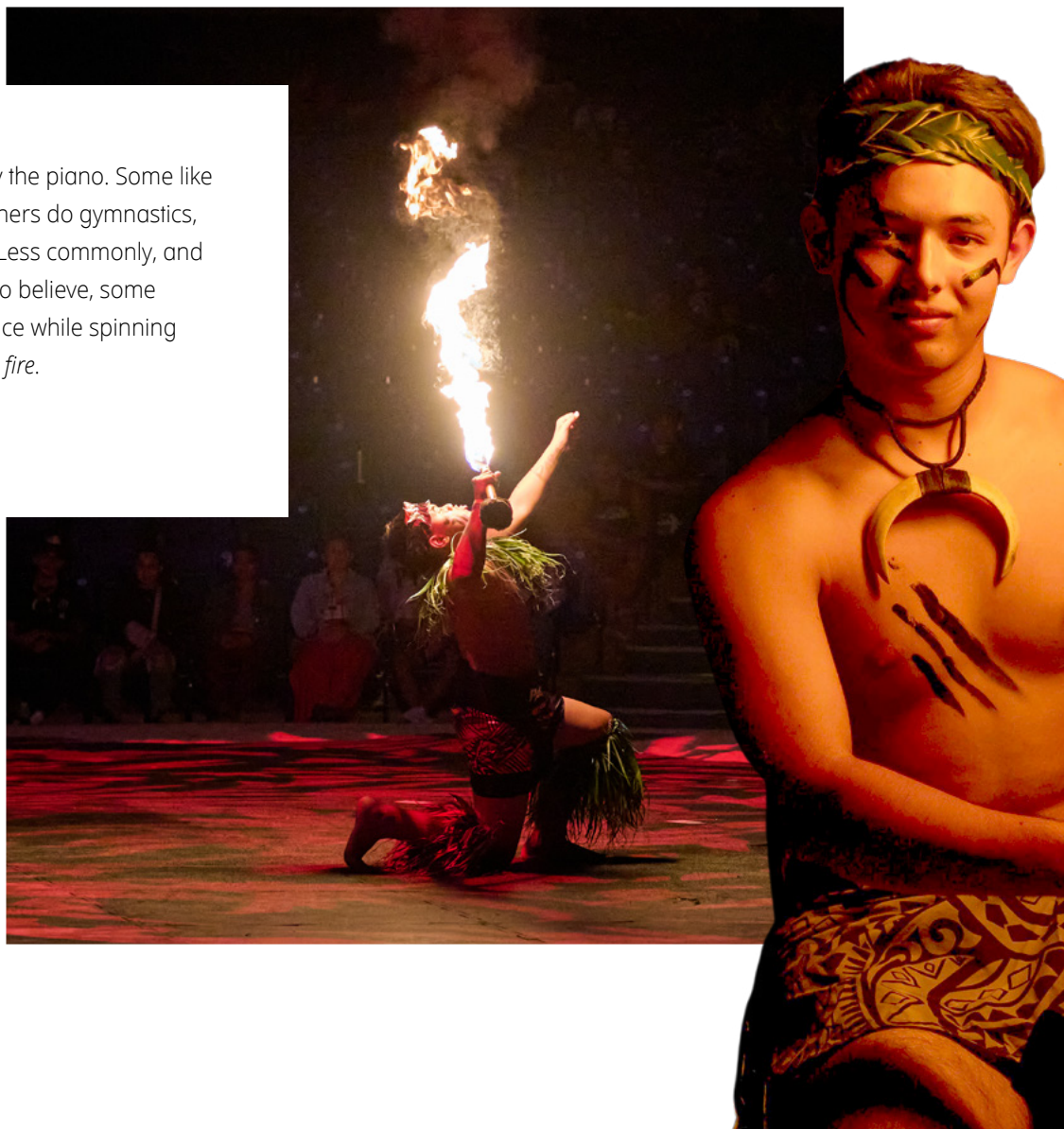


Find some fun prayer-related crafts on the
Gospel Living app this month!



Some people play the piano. Some like to read books. Others do gymnastics, soccer, or chess. Less commonly, and even a little hard to believe, some people like to dance while spinning knives that are *on fire*.

Clockwise, from top left: Manasseh, Kawiki, Nainoa, and Joseph share their cultural heritage through fireknife dancing.



A photograph of a person performing fireknife dancing. The person is shirtless, wearing a grass skirt, and holding a long wooden handle with a flaming knife at the top. The background is a solid light blue.

FIRE. KNIVES. DANCING. AND THE GOSPEL.

Discover how the Samoan Fireknife dance relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ for seven youth in Hawaii, USA.

By Kate Stewart
Church Magazines

THE HISTORY OF FIREKNIFE DANCING

Samoan fireknife dancing, or *ailao afi*, is a modern take on a traditional war dance. It's a unique talent, a form of art and expression, and, for many, a way to honor their culture.

Here's how three youth from Hawaii, USA, explain it:

Vivian, 18: "Traditionally, it was something warriors did with just a knife. Later, fire and the twirling were added. It's pretty similar to baton twirling, just with fire on both ends."

Tui, 12: "Fireknife dancing involves a lot of heat. It's a lot of spinning too. You even toss the knife and move it around while it's spinning."

Joseph, 18: "When the fire is moving, the wind is whistling, and the drums are playing, it's pretty loud. But to be honest, it's kind of a silent spiritual moment for me, because it has so much meaning to me. Fireknife is a way I connect with my family and my culture."

For these youth, fireknife dancing is not just an amazing and rare talent. It has also taught them many valuable life lessons about staying close to the Lord by living the gospel and helping others.

MAKING ROOM FOR THE LORD

Gary K., 16

There's a lot of preparation that goes into fireknife competitions. I practice every day for about six months leading up to the competition.

It can be hard, too, because my schedule is so busy. But I always make room for the Lord by going to church, Young Men activities, and seminary and by reading my scriptures and praying. When I do these things, I notice a difference in my day. Everything just works out.

I definitely feel that Christ is there for me. If you trust in the Lord and strive to put Him first, He will help you with whatever you need to do.




TRUSTING IN THE LORD

Joseph A., 18

When you're dancing fireknife, a lot of things can go wrong. Gasoline can get all over the handle, making it slippery. The wind can also change things up and make the knife difficult to catch. Trusting in the Lord while dancing has been a huge help for me.

One of my favorite scriptures is Proverbs 3:5, which talks about trusting in the Lord with all your heart. I think that's important because in the moment of performing you realize that you put in all that practice, but it really comes down to just you, the fireknife, and Heavenly Father.

I like to pray to Heavenly Father, "OK, I've put in the work, now please guide my hands."



Inspired by her family members, Vivian has gained confidence to carry the flame.

GAINING CONFIDENCE AND INSPIRING OTHERS

Vivian K., 18

Growing up, I watched my uncles and cousins dance fireknife. I thought it was really cool, but I didn't know if I could do it myself. In high school, I made it one of my goals to learn how to do it. After I learned, I made my goal more specific: I wanted to compete in a fireknife competition.

Fireknife has helped me gain confidence in myself. When you're dancing, there're certain moves where you throw the knife up, watch it in the air, and then catch it. I used to run away from the blade after I threw it up. My dad taught me that I needed to commit to the move and be confident in myself.

Over time, I started carrying myself more confidently while performing and in everything else. It's really great now because sometimes girls come up to me after performances and say they were inspired and also want to try fireknife dancing. I'm so excited that I'm inspiring other people to do something they thought they maybe couldn't do.



FIREKNIFE FUN FACT!

Both ends of a fireknife are on fire. To get both sides lit, fireknife dancers will often light one end of the knife, and then transfer the flame to the opposite end *using their tongue*.

This trick takes a lot of practice for the dancers to master.

"I was shocked the first time I put fire on my tongue," Manasseh said.

He also said that it can be scary and hard to do, because the fire can burn your tongue.

Tui said that he has been doing this trick for a while, and it has gotten easier with experience. He believes that Heavenly Father has helped him learn how to do it without burning his tongue anymore.

If you're not an experienced fireknife dancer, this trick isn't safe to try.



Mastering the trick of transferring the fire with his tongue has taken Gary a lot of practice.



SHARING A MESSAGE OF LOVE

Kawiki A., 15

This past summer, we performed fireknife in Romania and Bulgaria. My papa always has us learn "Love at Home" (*Hymns*, no. 294) in the language of the countries we visit. We do this so we can sing it together as a family after we perform.

I think the message of love at home is important because it reminds us to have love everywhere we go. I feel like I'm uplifting other people and making them happy. And even though sometimes they can't speak my language, I know that they have felt the gospel shared through our talents.

Nainoa A., 13

The message of love at home is important because if people don't know that there's love around them, then they might be miserable. When there's love at my home, I feel peaceful and calm.

Although we may not have the talent of fireknife dancing, we do have our own hobbies, talents, and interests.

What are some of the talents Heavenly Father has given you? Take a minute to think about it, and then ponder how you can use them to bless the lives of those around you!

"Praying protects me and helps me have a good dance," says Tui.



OVERCOMING FEAR THROUGH PRAYER

Tui M., 12

When I perform, I don't feel nervous. I feel a thrill. I've learned that even if I mess up, I can turn it into something beautiful. It's almost like painting. When a painter makes a mistake, they might make it into something new. Sometimes I drop my fireknife, but I pick it back up and keep dancing.

Self-encouragement has helped me a lot with my fears. Instead of having thoughts like, "What if I mess up?" I try to have more thoughts like, "Well, what if I do good!"

It's also become a routine for me to say a small prayer every time before a fireknife performance. Praying protects me and helps me have a good dance. When I pray, I feel confident that I'm going to do good.

Manasseh T., 12

Before I perform fireknife, I'm usually nervous. Every time before I go on, I say a prayer. Once, before I went on I said a prayer, and I felt warm and not scared. When I danced, I felt like somebody was standing there beside me.

Prayer really helps me not feel nervous. After I pray, I realize that I'm just having fun!



SHARING LIGHT THROUGH TALENTS

Fireknife dancing is one way these youth shine their light and share their talents with others. "I get to perform and share my talents all around the world with my family. It makes me feel happy inside knowing that if you share your talents, then you'll lift others up," Nainoa says.

Nainoa's older brother, Kawiki, says fireknife dancing reminds him of how light overtakes darkness. To him, sharing his talents is like sharing his light with others.

Joseph says that when we shine, we shine for Heavenly Father. "When we share what we have, not only do we bless ourselves, or bless those who we are sharing our talents with, but we also kind of give praise to our Heavenly Father."

Vivian says her grandpa always shares the scripture Matthew 5:16, which talks about letting our light shine before men. "I think it's a good scripture because you don't have to be good at just fireknife to share the gospel. You can be good at anything and use your talents to share the gospel in that way."



Watch a fire dancing video on the
Gospel Living app this month!

The Secret to **NEVER FAILING** *Again*

*It's simpler
than you
think.*

By Brynn Wengler
Church Magazines

"I love failing!"

That's probably not something you've heard many people say. Most of us aren't thrilled about failure. It can hurt, throw off our plans, and sometimes be downright embarrassing.

But what if there was a secret to never failing again?

"Hold up," you might be thinking. "Nobody's perfect. We all make mistakes. How can someone never fail?"

Thomas Edison discovered the secret as he attempted many times to invent the light bulb. "I didn't fail 1,000 times," he reportedly said. "The light bulb was an invention with 1,000 steps."¹

Edison failed over and over again, but he didn't choose to see it that way. And that's the secret! Shift your perspective! When you shift your perspective, your "failures" can become something new and positive.

Here are four ways to shift your perspective about failure:





1. FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT

CONTROL. Sometimes the things we worry about most aren't in our control. Take applying for a job, for example. You *can* control the effort you put into applying, but you *can't* control the result. Instead of spending energy worrying you'll "fail," try putting effort into what you have control over and trust the Lord. He has promised that "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). And if you don't get that job? You're not a failure! Even if you don't get the result you were hoping for, you gave your best effort, and that's success!

2. GRAB THE GOOD AND KEEP GOING. When you feel like you're failing, try to look deeper at your experience. Didn't make the sports team? Got a disappointing grade on a test? Looking at where you struggled will give you a great map for what you need to do in the future. If an experience makes you feel crummy, acknowledge your feelings and then choose to move on with the good. Failure can actually help you continue forward in new and better directions.

3. REMEMBER THIS ISN'T THE END. There's a common saying: "Everything will be alright in the end. If it's not alright, it's not the end." Moroni teaches something similar. He said, "Has the end come yet? Behold I say unto you, Nay; and God has not ceased to be a God of miracles" (Mormon 9:15). As we trust in God, press forward in faith, and remember that our stories don't end when something goes wrong, miracles can happen and any "failures" we may face can eventually become amazing successes.



4. STAND WITH CHRIST. Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, no failure is ever permanent. We always have the choice to repent, turn our hearts back to God, and ask for His help. President Jeffrey R. Holland, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has taught: "However many mistakes you feel you have made . . . , I testify that you have *not* traveled beyond the reach of divine love. It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ's Atonement shines."² So, in a way, when you stand with Christ, you cannot fail!

As you view your failures as steps to success, you unlock the secret to never truly failing again.

So give it a try! And if you fail? Just remember—you're not *really* failing. You're making progress, one step at a time.

NOTES

1. Thomas Edison, in Zorian Rotenberg, "To Succeed, You Must Fail, and Fail More," Nov. 13, 2013, insightsquared.com.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, Apr. 2012 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 33).





OVERCOMING Prayer Hurdles

*How do we clear
our obstacles to
praying?*

By Eric D. Snider
Church Magazines

"Pray always." The Savior gives this instruction 10 times in the Doctrine and Covenants.¹ We understand that it's figurative—we can't literally be on our knees praying every waking moment—but sometimes it's hard even to pray twice a day! How do we overcome the hurdles?



THE HURDLE: Forgetting

We're human. It happens.

A POSSIBLE SOLUTION:

Associate your prayers with something else you do every day, so that when you think of one, you think of the other. If you find you're too drowsy to have meaningful prayers right when you wake up or before going to sleep, tie your prayers to some other day-and-night routine that you're more alert for, such as brushing your teeth or taking medication. Or set alarms on your phone!



THE HURDLE: Nothing to report

What is there to say in the morning when all you've done since your last prayer is sleep?

A POSSIBLE SOLUTION:

In the morning thank God for your blessings, including individuals who bless your life. Pray for those people. Tell God what you have planned for today and ask for His guidance. At night, report back. Tell Him everything that happened during the day that you are grateful for, that you learned from, or that you found interesting.



THE HURDLE: Negative feelings

Maybe you feel unworthy because of something you did—or are thinking of doing. Maybe you're angry at God for

something. Maybe you're just not in the mood.

THE SOLUTION:

Pray anyway

Whatever your feelings are, God can absorb them. No one is ever, ever "unworthy" to pray, and it's the devil who wants you to think that (see 2 Nephi 32:8). Your Father would rather hear your imperfect, incomplete prayer—the kind where you make a point of not mentioning the Big Thing that you don't feel like addressing yet—than not hear from you at all.

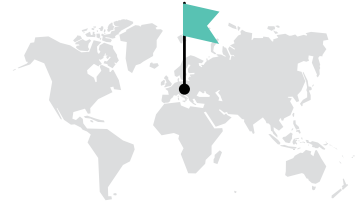
NOTE

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 10:5; 19:38; 20:33; 31:12; 32:4; 61:39; 88:126; 90:24; 93:49–50.



Maja C.

16, DRAVA, SLOVENIA



My mother and father separated when I was two and a half years old. I would go visit my father every month, and when I was younger, this was really fun. But when I got older, we had a couple of disagreements and things got worse and worse.

I remember crying to my mother that I did not want to visit my father anymore. She said, "Pray, and everything will be better." And I did.

God helped me and my father. Now we have a better relationship. We talk, and he calls me when he goes to his home country, Macedonia, so I can talk with my family there.

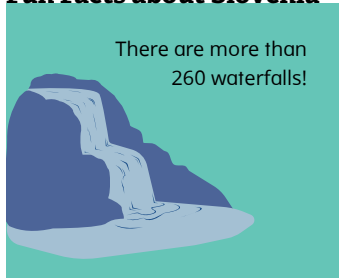
Jesus Christ has always been my strength. When I had big challenges at school or home, He was always there for me. I always felt that He had my back.

I'm grateful that my mother introduced me to the Church and to God, because it's really helped us a lot throughout the years. God and Jesus Christ are always looking out for us.



Jesus Christ
has always been
my strength.

Fun Facts about Slovenia



HIDDEN TREASURES

Dig into the scriptures and you'll find all kinds of things.

By Eric D. Snider and David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

Modern revelation clarifies the scriptures.

Doctrine and Covenants 19

Doctrine and Covenants 19 explains two things about the Savior.

Luke says the Lord's sweat in the Garden of Gethsemane "was as it were great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44). "As it were" suggests that's just a figure of speech.

Jesus clears it up. He says His suffering made Him "bleed at every pore" (Doctrine and Covenants 19:18). No metaphors. His anguish was so great he really did sweat blood.

Elsewhere, the scriptures use phrases like "endless torment" and "eternal punishment." Alma the Younger says he "was racked with eternal torment" (Alma 36:12). But his torment only lasted three days (see Alma 36:16). How is that "eternal"?

Again, Jesus clarifies. Since Heavenly Father and Jesus are eternal and endless, any punishment They give is, by definition, "eternal" or "endless" punishment, regardless of duration (see Doctrine and Covenants 19:6–12). Only the suffering of the sons of perdition will actually last forever (see Doctrine and Covenants 76:30–38).



A NUGGET OF TRUTH: There's Something We Can Do That Brings Joy to the Lord

"How great is his joy in the soul that repenteth!"
(Doctrine and Covenants 18:13).



A NUGGET OF TRUTH: How to Follow the Prophet

Speaking to the Church about the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord said, "His word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, *in all patience and faith*" (Doctrine and Covenants 21:5, emphasis added).

One baptism is enough—but it requires authority.

Doctrine and Covenants 22

Potential converts often ask the missionaries: What if I've already been baptized in another church? Do I need to be baptized again?

The Doctrine and Covenants explains that without the priesthood—the *authority* to act in God's name—"although a man should be baptized an hundred times it availeth him nothing" (Doctrine and Covenants 22:2).

So the answer is essentially: "Your prior baptism was a righteous act based on what you knew at the time. Now you know more, and the Lord wants you to act on that knowledge."



God's house is a house of order.

Doctrine and Covenants 27–28

The Savior often reminded the Prophet Joseph Smith that everything must be done “in order” (see Doctrine and Covenants 20:68; 28:13; 58:55; 107:84). You need rules or there’s chaos.

But that doesn’t mean there’s never any leeway. For example, the Lord told Joseph Smith that “it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament”—as long as you do it in remembrance of His suffering and Atonement (Doctrine and Covenants 27:2).

When it comes to leading the Church, however, there is no leeway.

Only one person at a time can receive revelation for the Church: first Joseph Smith (see Doctrine and Covenants 28:2); then whomever the Lord appointed “in his stead” (Doctrine and Covenants 28:7)—Brigham Young, John Taylor, and so forth down to the prophet today.

Other inspired Church leaders can teach, advise, and give counsel (see Doctrine and Covenants 28:4–5). But only the President of the Church can speak for God on matters that affect the whole Church.



A NUGGET OF TRUTH: We Can Delight the Lord's Soul through Song

Through Joseph Smith, the Lord asked Emma Smith to compile a book of hymns. Then He said: “My soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads” (Doctrine and Covenants 25:12).

Nobody is good at everything. And that's OK.

Doctrine and Covenants 24

The Prophet Joseph Smith wasn't good at business or economics. In worldly terms, he was not a success.

The Lord told him it would be that way: “In temporal labors thou shalt not have strength, for this is not thy calling” (Doctrine and Covenants 24:9).

You will have friends and classmates who go to better universities than you, get more prestigious jobs than you, and have more worldly success than you.

So what?

Life isn't a contest. You should try your best, of course. But don't panic if you see others passing you on the road of life. They might not be heading for the same destination as you! Keep doing what the Lord wants *you* to do—your “calling”—and don't worry about His plans for anyone else.



Do you have any of the lesser-known talents on this list?

FUN STOP

MUSICAL MATH

The Lord loves “the song of the heart” (Doctrine and Covenants 25:__). Find the verse number for this scripture by figuring out what the symbols represent in the math puzzle and then solving the final equation.

MATH PUZZLE:

$$\text{Saxophone} + \text{Xylophone} = \text{Drum} \quad \square + \square = \square$$

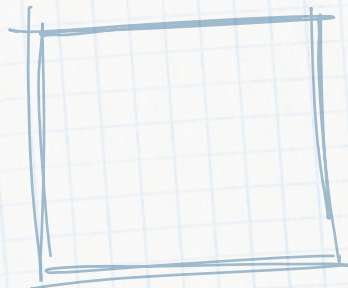
$$\text{Ukulele} - \text{Drum} = \text{Saxophone} \quad 8 - \square = \square$$

$$\text{Ukulele} - \text{Xylophone} = \text{Xylophone} \quad \square - \square = \square$$

FINAL EQUATION:

$$\text{Saxophone} + \text{Xylophone} + \text{Drum} =$$

$$\square + \square + \square =$$



“SEEK” FOR THE BETTER

Doctrine and Covenants 25:10 invites us to “lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better.” Seek (and find) these five different images of the Savior throughout this issue of the magazine.



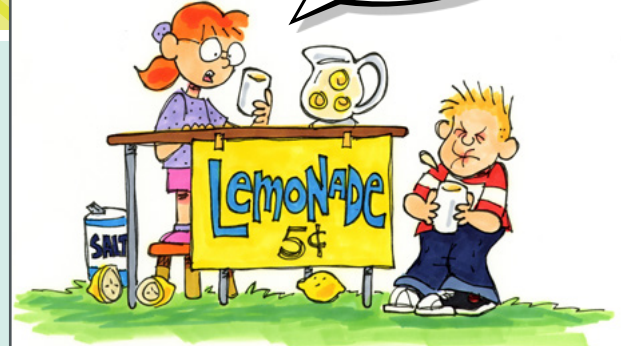
Some vinegar, onion, lemon juice, and a dash of black pepper! Yessir! A spoonful of Grandma's medicine will fix you right up!

Um . . . you know what? I'm just gonna stay sick.

I guess you were right. You can't substitute sugar with salt.



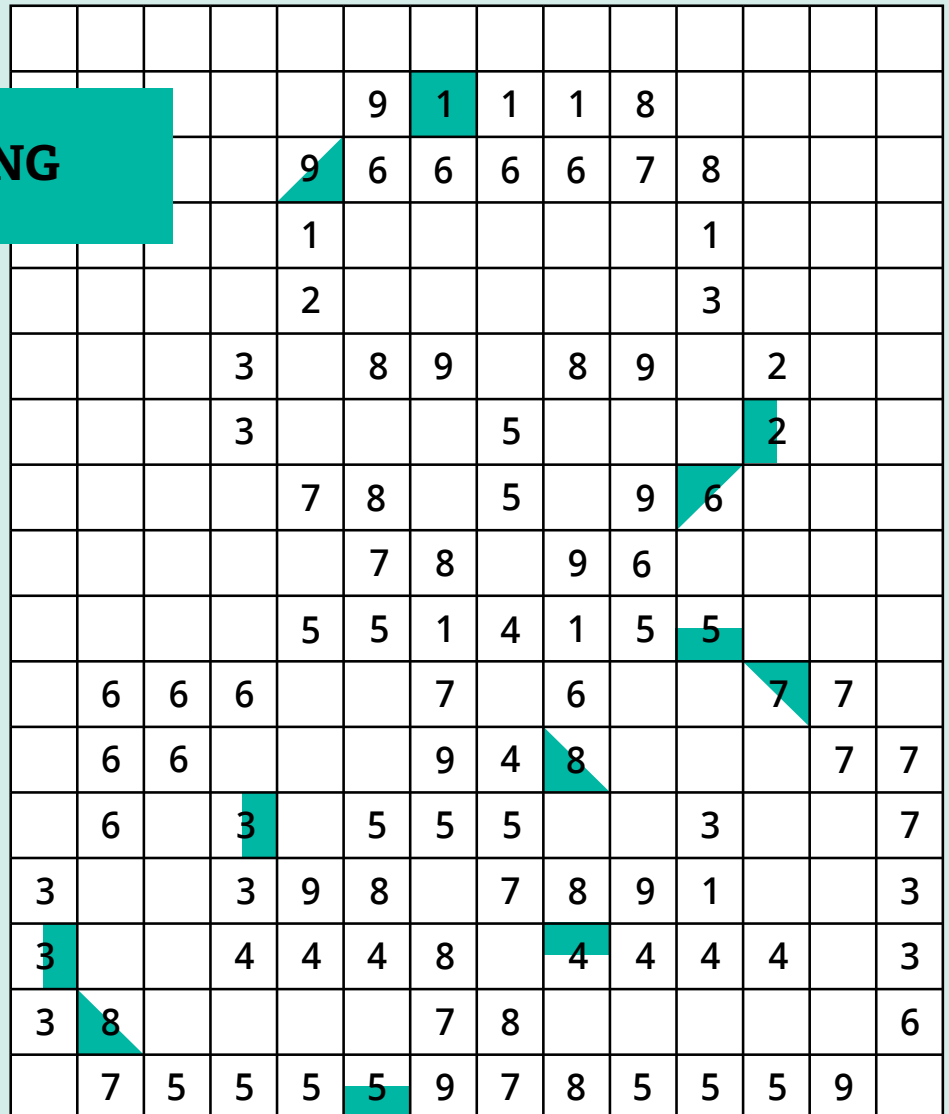
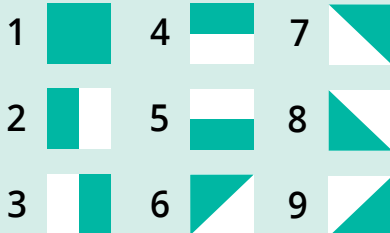
RYAN STOKER



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

CODED COLORING

Heavenly Father hears and answers your prayers. Color by number according to the code below to reveal the image.





QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



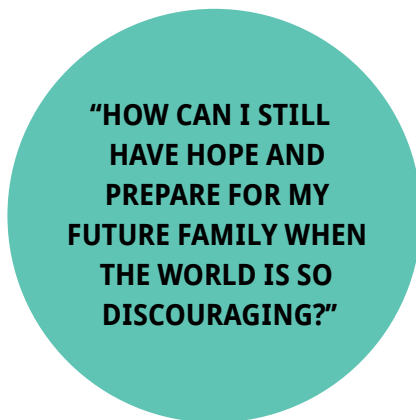
"We should place our trust in God and cultivate a positive mindset. We can draw inspiration from others who have overcome similar challenges. Also, keeping the commandments, especially the law of chastity and being virtuous, lays a strong foundation for building a fulfilling family life despite external discouragement."

Divine O., 19, Lagos, Nigeria



"I find hope when I exercise faith in God and His plan for me. When the world is discouraging, I can turn to Him for peace. My patriarchal blessing helps me know that my Father in Heaven knows me better than anyone and loves me. It gives me confidence that everything will work out."

Logan A., 16, Texas, USA



"HOW CAN I STILL HAVE HOPE AND PREPARE FOR MY FUTURE FAMILY WHEN THE WORLD IS SO DISCOURAGING?"



"The Lord has commanded us to multiply and replenish the earth and promised to protect us through the covenants we've made with Him. God's plan is perfect. I know that when I have children—if I obey what He has commanded me—He is bound to bless and protect me and my family according to His wisdom."

Ziona O., 16, Hawaii, USA



"Find joy in Christ, the scriptures, and prayer. If we can learn that the only opinion that matters is the Savior's, it will make life a lot easier. Making decisions based on the opinions of people around us can force us to make negative decisions."

Cash P., 16, Utah, USA



"It helps me to know that God loves me, has a plan for me, and will help me through hard times. It also helps knowing that my covenants bind me to Christ and give me access to His power and strength."

Lydie L., 18, Utah, USA

"As we think about the future, we should be filled with faith and hope. Always remember that Jesus Christ—the Creator of the universe, the architect of our salvation, and the head of this Church—is in control. . . . He will be victorious over all darkness and evil."

President M. Russell Ballard (1928–2023), Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Face the Future with Faith and Hope," *Ensign*, Jan. 2014, 26.

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

HOW DO WE LIVE IN THE WORLD AND “LAY ASIDE THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD”?

THE LORD HAS said, “Thou shalt lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better” (Doctrine and Covenants 25:10). This doesn’t mean that we ignore our temporal and material needs, but it does mean that we don’t set our hearts on wealth, power, position, or the world’s approval. Here are some principles we have been taught about living in the world:

Put the things of God first. “Seek ye first the kingdom and God, and his righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). In our hearts and our lives, God’s commandments and our covenants with Him are our priority.

Seek learning. “As you learn about the world around you, learn also about the Savior. . . . The more you learn, the more you can help build God’s kingdom and influence the world for good” (*For the Strength of Youth: A Guide for Making Choices* [2022], 31, 32).

Work. “Work is an important gospel principle. It fosters growth and develops us. . . . The Lord not only wants us to provide for our families but to be ‘anxiously engaged in a good cause’ [Doctrine and Covenants 58:27]” (“Employment,” Topics and Questions, Gospel Library).



What Do You Think?

“How can I make things right with someone I gossiped about?”

Send your answer and photo by April 15, 2025.

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

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

FUN STOP ANSWERS: Musical Math: Verse: 12. (Saxophone: 2, Xylophone: 4, Drum: 6, Guitar: 8.) **Seek for the Better:** Pages 3, 10, 27, 31, and the back cover

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WHERE CAN YOU FIND STRENGTH When You Feel Rejected?

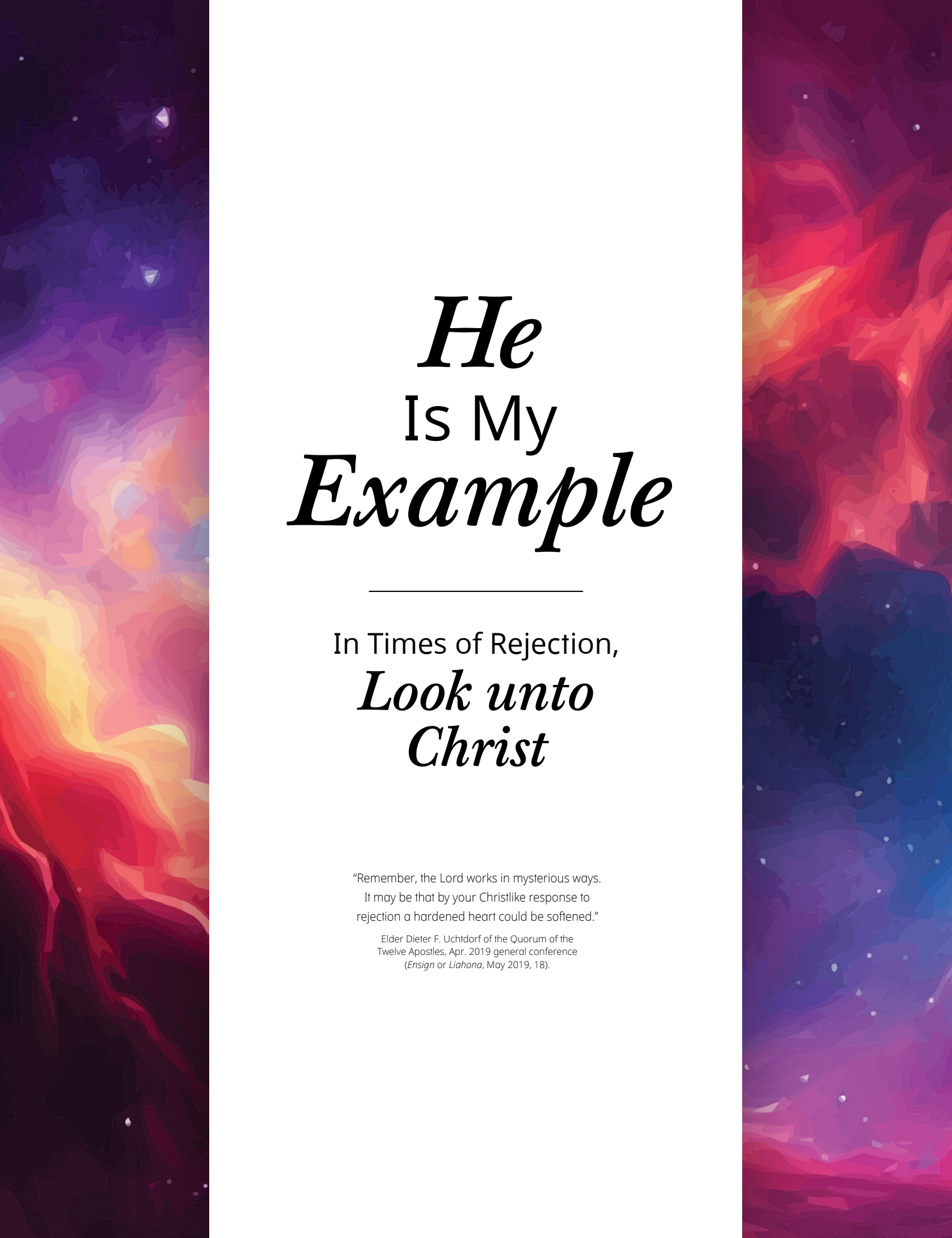
A few years ago, I participated in an activity with other youth and several missionaries. Our goal was to invite people to come and attend a special sacrament meeting.

I was excited to put myself in the shoes of our missionaries. We managed to distribute our invitations to a few people we met. When it was time to give out the last card, the Spirit prompted me to go to a specific person. But she reacted badly to our invitation and sent us away.

It made me sad to see this person rejecting the love of our Savior. I know that many people refuse Christ's invitation to come to Him. But I also know that by simply extending this invitation, we are planting a seed in people's hearts. This experience strengthened my testimony even though my invitation was rejected. I know that with Christ, anything is possible, and I have continued preparing to serve a mission and bring others to Him and our Heavenly Father.

Jalil T., age 17, South Province, New Caledonia

Enjoys music, soccer, and camping and hiking with his family.

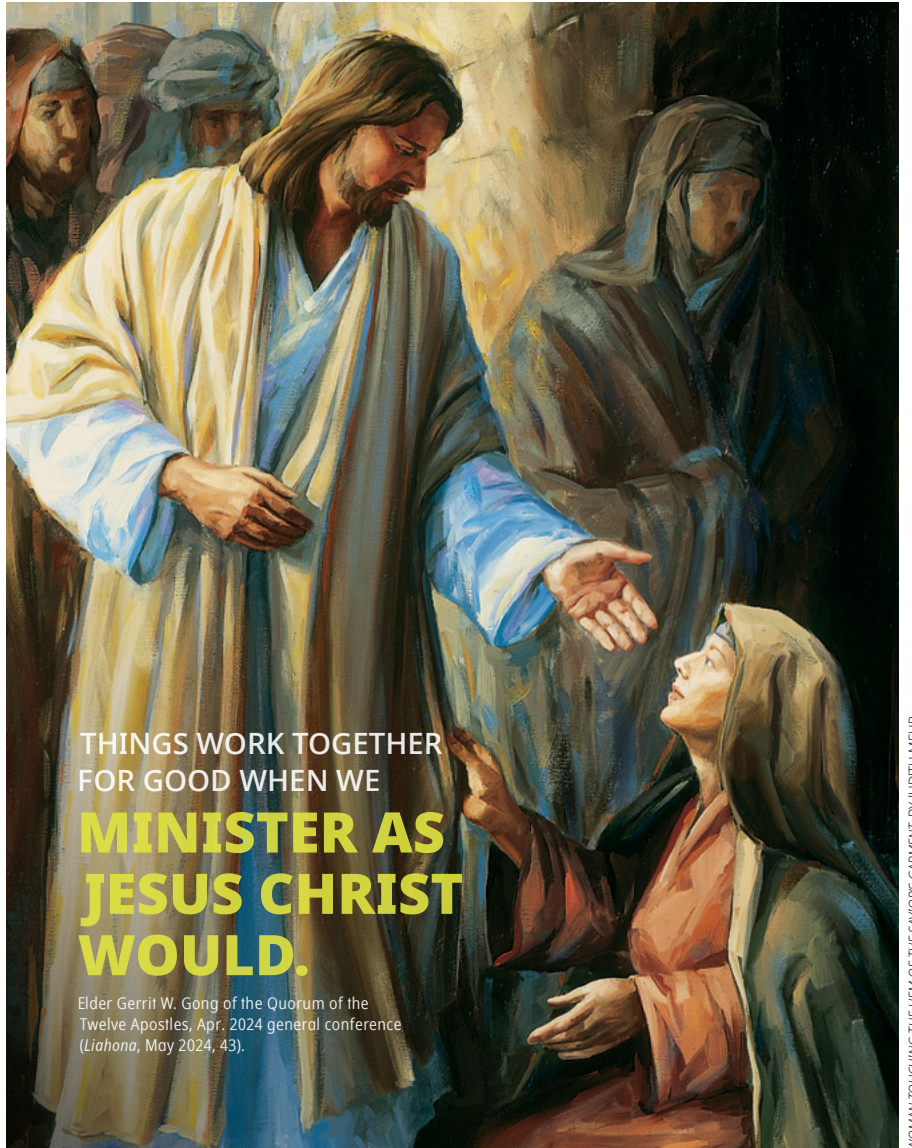


He Is My *Example*

In Times of Rejection,
Look unto
Christ

"Remember, the Lord works in mysterious ways.
It may be that by your Christlike response to
rejection a hardened heart could be softened."

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2019 general conference
(*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 18).



THINGS WORK TOGETHER
FOR GOOD WHEN WE

MINISTER AS JESUS CHRIST WOULD.

Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2024 general conference
(*Liahona*, May 2024, 43).

WOMAN TOUCHING THE HEM OF THE SAVIOR'S GARMENT, BY JUDITH MEHR

