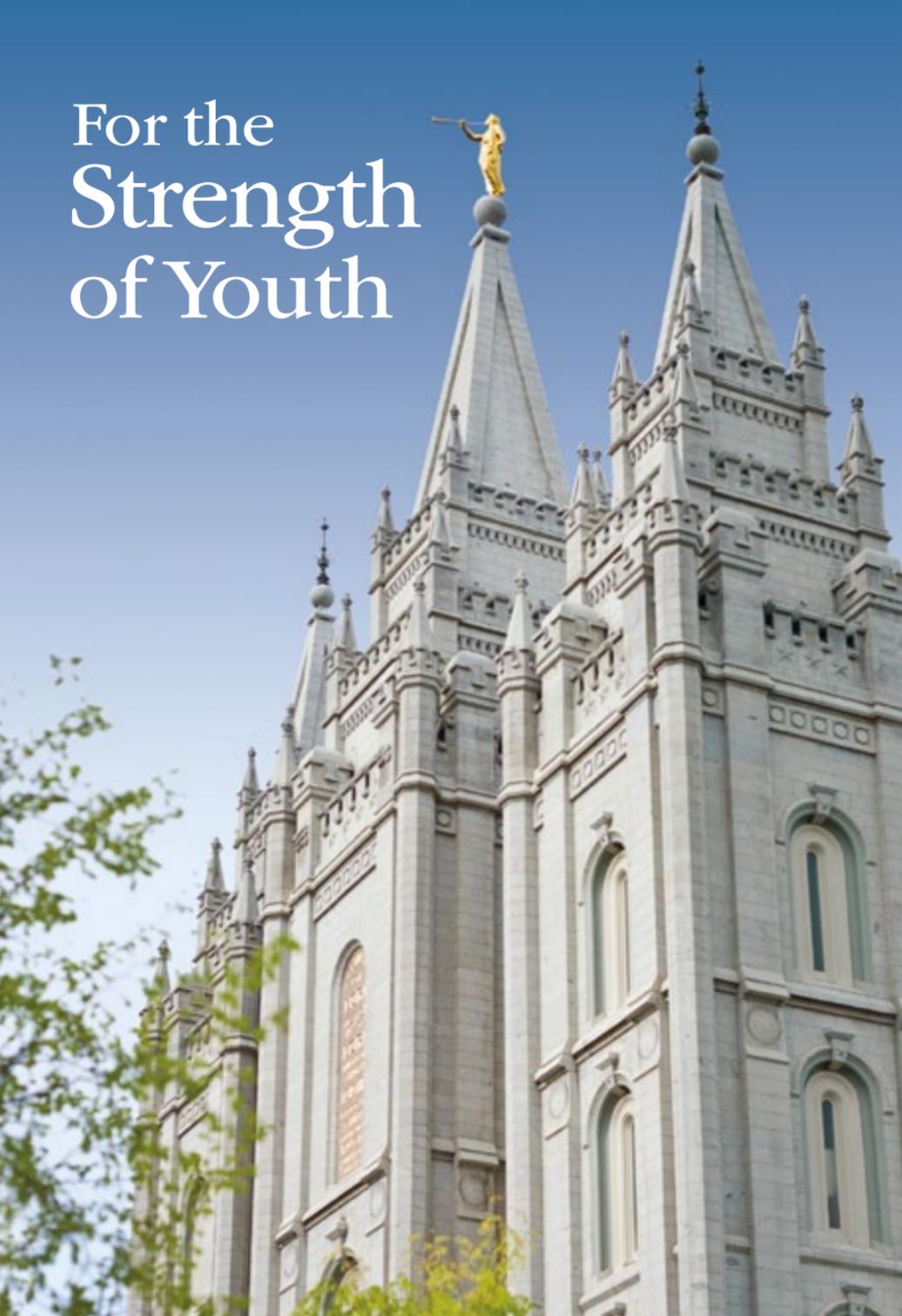
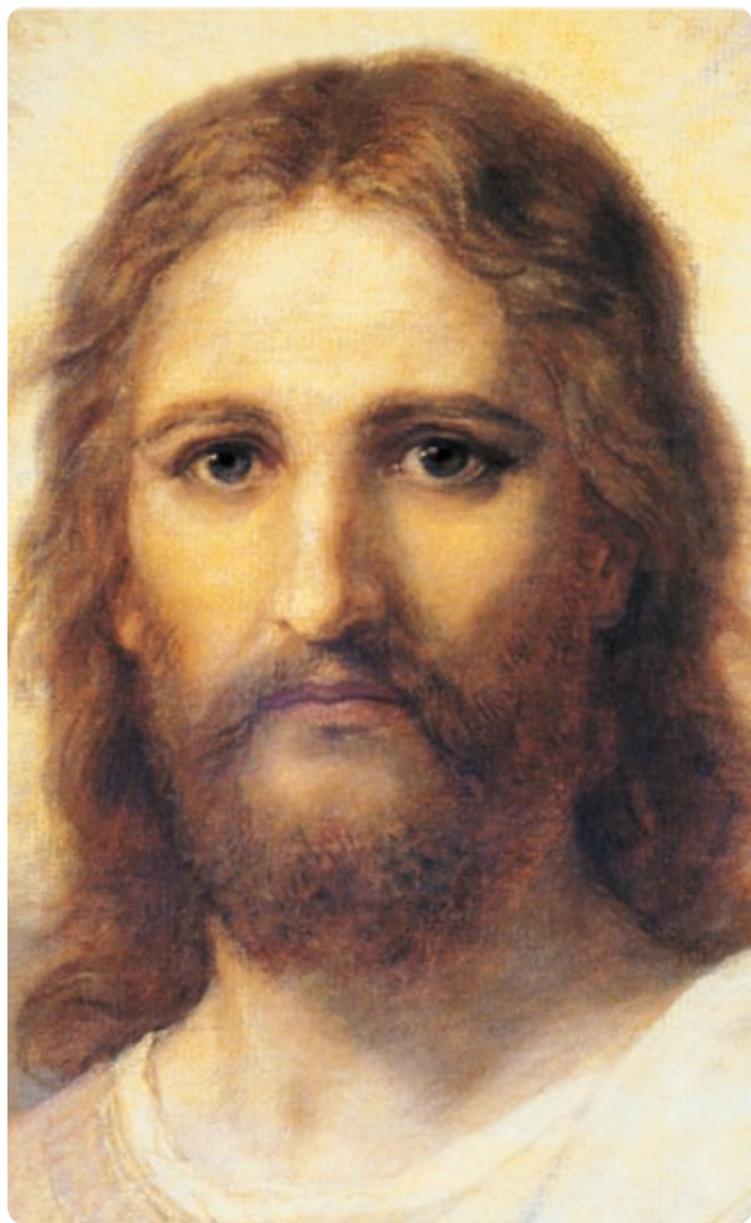


For the  
Strength  
of Youth







# Message to the Youth from The First Presidency

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**OUR DEAR YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN,** we have great confidence in you. You are beloved sons and daughters of God and He is mindful of you. You have come to earth at a time of great opportunities and also of great challenges. The standards in this booklet will help you with the important choices you are making now and will yet make in the future. We promise that as you keep the covenants you have made and these standards, you will be blessed with the companionship of the Holy Ghost, your faith and testimony will grow stronger, and you will enjoy increasing happiness.

In all that you do, stay focused on the temple. In the temple you will receive the greatest of all the Lord's blessings, including marriage for time and all eternity. Keeping the standards in this booklet will help you be worthy to attend the temple, where you can perform sacred ordinances for your ancestors now and make essential covenants for yourself in the future.

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Our Father in Heaven has placed great trust in you. He has a work for you to do. Seek His guidance in prayer, and counsel with your parents and leaders. The decisions you make now will set the course for much of what will follow during your mortal life and throughout eternity.

We testify that God lives. It is our fervent prayer that you will remain steadfast and valiant throughout your lives and that you will trust in the Savior and His promises. As you do this, you will be an influence for good in helping to build the kingdom of God and prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Savior.

### **The First Presidency**

Learn more by visiting the  
*For the Strength of Youth* website:  
[standards.lds.org](http://standards.lds.org)

The doors of the Salt Lake Temple



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# Agency and Accountability

*Wherefore, men . . . are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death. 2 Nephi 2:27*

Heavenly Father has given you agency, the ability to choose right from wrong and to act for yourself. Next to the bestowal of life itself, the right to direct your life is one of God's greatest gifts to you. While here on earth, you are being proven to see if you will use your agency to show your love for God by keeping His commandments. The Holy Ghost can guide you in using your agency righteously.

You are responsible for the choices you make. God is mindful of you and will help you make good choices, even if your family and friends use their agency in ways that are not right. Have the moral courage to stand firm in obeying God's will, even if you have to stand alone. As you do this, you set an example for others to follow.

While you are free to choose your course of action, you are not free to choose the consequences. Whether for good or bad, consequences follow as a natural result of the choices you make. Some sinful behavior may bring temporary,



worldly pleasure, but such choices delay your progress and lead to heartache and misery. Righteous choices lead to lasting happiness and eternal life. Remember, true freedom comes from using your agency to choose obedience; loss of freedom comes from choosing disobedience.

You are also responsible for developing the talents and abilities Heavenly Father has given you. You are accountable to Him for what you do with your talents and how you spend your time. Choose to do many good things of your own free will.

*Matthew 25:14–29; Moroni 7:15–19; Doctrine and Covenants 58:27–28*

**Are my choices leading me toward lasting happiness?**

# Dating

*Virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light.* Doctrine and Covenants 88:40



A date is a planned activity that allows a young man and a young woman to get to know each other better. In cultures where dating is acceptable, it can help you learn and practice social skills, develop friendships, have wholesome fun, and eventually find an eternal companion.

You should not date until you are at least 16 years old. When you begin dating, go with one or more additional couples. Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person. Developing serious relationships too early in life can limit the number of other people you meet and can perhaps lead to immorality. Invite your parents to become acquainted with those you date.

Choose to date only those who have high moral standards and in whose company you can maintain your standards. Remember that a young man and a young woman on a date are responsible to protect each other's honor and virtue.

Plan dating activities that are safe, positive, and inexpensive and that will help you get to know each other. Go only to places where you can maintain your standards and remain close to the Spirit.



Young men generally take the initiative in asking for and planning dates. Always be kind and respectful when you ask for a date or when you accept or decline one. While on a date, be courteous as you listen to others and express your own feelings.

As you enter your adult years, make dating and marriage a high priority. Seek a companion who is worthy to go to the temple to be sealed to you for time and all eternity. Marrying in the temple and creating an eternal family are essential in God's plan of happiness.

*1 Corinthians 11:11; Doctrine and Covenants 46:33*

**What can I do to be a righteous influence on those I date?**

# Dress and Appearance

*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? . . . The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

*1 Corinthians 3:16–17*



Your body is sacred. Respect it and do not defile it in any way. Through your dress and appearance, you can show that you know how precious your body is. You can show that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ and that you love Him.

Prophets of God have continually counseled His children to dress modestly. When you are well groomed and modestly dressed, you invite the companionship of the Spirit and you can be a good influence on others. Your dress and grooming influence the way you and others act.

Never lower your standards of dress. Do not use a special occasion as an excuse to be immodest. When you dress immodestly, you send a message that is contrary to your



identity as a son or daughter of God. You also send the message that you are using your body to get attention and approval.

Immodest clothing is any clothing that is tight, sheer, or revealing in any other manner. Young women should avoid short shorts and short skirts, shirts that do not cover the stomach, and clothing that does not cover the shoulders or is low-cut in the front or the back. Young men should also maintain modesty in their appearance. Young men and young women should be neat and clean and avoid being extreme or inappropriately casual in clothing, hairstyle, and behavior. They should choose appropriately modest apparel when participating in sports. The fashions of the world will change, but the Lord's standards will not change.

Do not disfigure yourself with tattoos or body piercings. Young women, if you desire to have your ears pierced, wear only one pair of earrings.

Show respect for the Lord and yourself by dressing appropriately for Church meetings and activities. This is especially important when attending sacrament services. Young men should dress with dignity when officiating in the ordinance of the sacrament.

If you are not sure what is appropriate to wear, study the words of the prophets, pray for guidance, and ask your parents or leaders for help. Your dress and appearance now will help you prepare for the time when you will go to the temple to make sacred covenants with God. Ask yourself, “Would I feel comfortable with my appearance if I were in the Lord’s presence?”

*Genesis 1:27; Alma 1:27*

**How does my testimony of the gospel influence my choice of clothing?**

# Education

*Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 130:18*



Education is an important part of Heavenly Father's plan to help you become more like Him. He wants you to educate your mind and to develop your skills and talents, your power to act well in your responsibilities, and your capacity to appreciate life. The education you gain will be valuable to you during mortality and in the life to come.

Education will prepare you for greater service in the world and in the Church. It will help you better provide for yourself, your family, and those in need. It will also help you be a wise counselor and companion to your future spouse and an informed and effective teacher of your future children.

Education is an investment that brings great rewards and will open the doors of opportunity that may otherwise be closed to you. Plan now to obtain an education. Be willing to work diligently and make sacrifices if necessary. Share your educational goals with your family, friends, and leaders so they can support and encourage you.

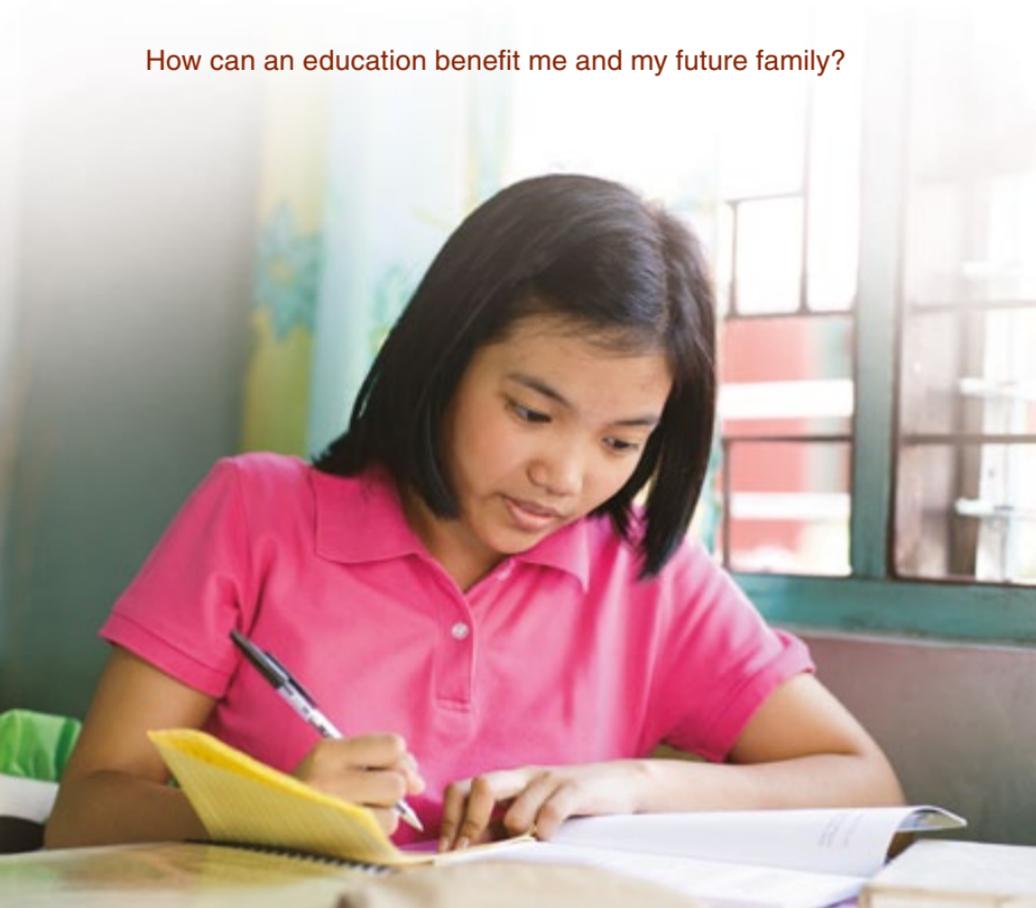
## *Education*

Maintain an enthusiasm for learning throughout your life. Find joy in continuing to learn and in expanding your interests. Choose to actively participate in the learning opportunities available to you.

Your education should include spiritual learning. Study the scriptures and the words of the latter-day prophets. Participate in seminary and institute. Continue throughout your life to learn about Heavenly Father's plan. This spiritual learning will help you find answers to the challenges of life and will invite the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

*Alma 37:35; Doctrine and Covenants 88:77–80*

**How can an education benefit me and my future family?**



# Entertainment and Media

*If there is anything virtuous, lovely,  
or of good report or praiseworthy,  
we seek after these things. Articles of Faith 1:13*

You live in a day of marvelous technologies that give you easy access to a wide variety of media, including the Internet, mobile devices, video games, television, movies, music, books, and magazines. The information and entertainment provided through these media can increase your ability to learn, communicate, and become a force for good in the world. However, some information and entertainment can lead you away from righteous living. Choose wisely when using media, because whatever you read, listen to, or look at has an effect on you. Select only media that uplifts you.

Satan uses media to deceive you by making what is wrong and evil look normal, humorous, or exciting. He tries to mislead you into thinking that breaking God's commandments is acceptable and has no negative consequences for you or others. Do not attend, view, or participate in anything that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way. Do not participate in anything that presents immorality or violence as acceptable. Have the courage to walk out of a movie, change your music, or turn off a computer, television, or mobile device if what you see or hear drives away the Spirit.

Pornography in all forms is especially dangerous and addictive. What may begin as an unexpected exposure or a curious exploration can become a destructive habit. Use of pornography is a serious sin and can lead to other sexual transgression. Avoid pornography at all costs. It is a poison that weakens your self-control, destroys your feelings of self-worth, and changes the way you see others. It causes you to lose the guidance of the Spirit and can damage your ability to have a normal relationship with others, especially your future spouse. It limits your ability to feel true love. If you encounter pornography, turn away from it immediately.

If you are involved in pornography, cease now. Seek the help you need. Your parents and bishop can help you take the steps necessary to repent and rid yourself of this destructive habit.

Take care that your use of media does not dull your sensitivity to the Spirit or interfere with your personal relationships with



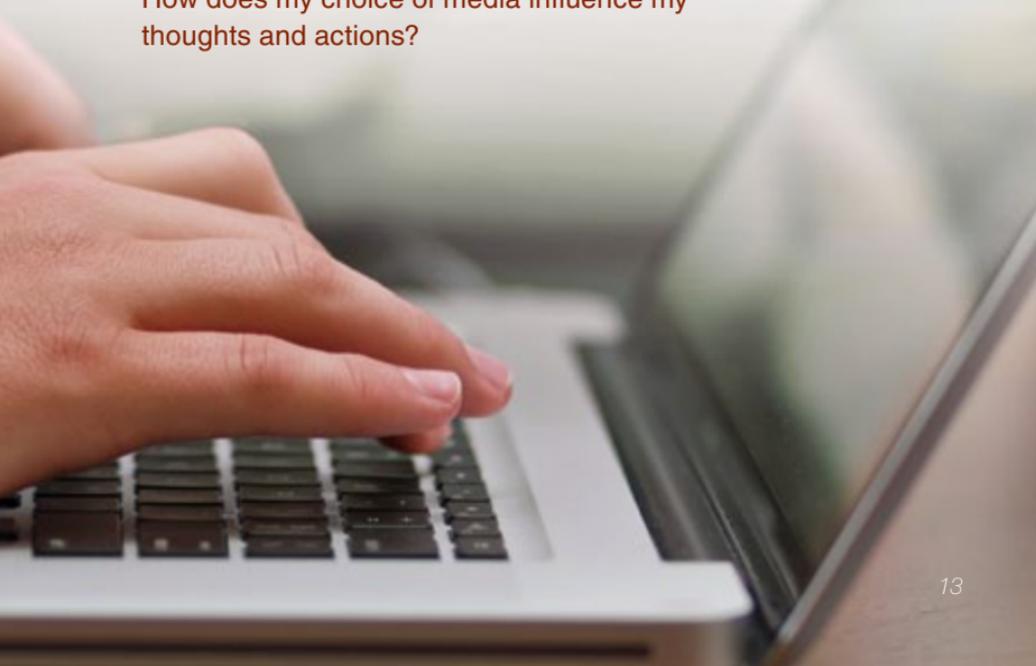
others. Spending long periods of time using the Internet or a mobile device, playing video games, or watching television or other media can keep you from valuable interactions with other people. Be careful that your use of social media does not replace spending time with your family and friends.

Guard your safety and the safety of others by taking great care about what personal information and images you share through technology. Do not communicate anything over the Internet or through texting that would be inappropriate to share in person. Obey the laws that govern sharing music, movies, and other copyrighted items.

If you are not sure whether something is appropriate to watch or listen to, talk to your parents and other adult leaders. The Holy Ghost will give you strength to make correct choices.

*Moroni 10:30; Doctrine and Covenants 121:45*

**How does my choice of media influence my thoughts and actions?**



# Family

*The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. . . . Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”*

Being part of a family is a great blessing. Your family can provide you with companionship and happiness, help you learn correct principles in a loving atmosphere, and help you prepare for eternal life.

Strong families require effort. Your family will be blessed as you do your part to strengthen it. Be cheerful, helpful, and considerate of family members. Many problems in the home come from family members speaking and acting selfishly or unkindly. Seek to be a peacemaker rather than to tease, fight, and quarrel. Show love for your family members each day. Share your testimony with your family through words and actions. Your righteous example can make a difference in strengthening your family.

Honor your parents by showing love and respect for them. Obey them as they lead you in righteousness. Willingly help in your home. Participate in wholesome family activities and traditions. Join your family in family prayer, family scripture study, and family home evenings. Keeping these

commandments strengthens and unifies families. If your family does not do these things together, pray and study the scriptures yourself. Your example may encourage your family members to join you.

Strengthen your relationships with your brothers and sisters. They can become your closest friends. Support them in their interests, and help them with challenges they may be facing.

God desires that all of His children come into the world as part of an eternal family with a mother and father who love and care for each other and for their children. If this is not your experience, be patient and continue to live righteously. Look for worthy role models. Prepare now to fulfill your divine roles as a husband or wife and as a parent. Commit to marry in the temple and establish your own eternal family.

*Ephesians 6:1–3; Mosiah 4:14–15*

**How sensitive am I to the needs and desires of my family members?**



# Friends

*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Matthew 25:40*



Everyone needs good and true friends. They will be a great strength and blessing to you. They will influence how you think and act, and even help determine the person you will become. They will help you be a better person and will make it easier for you to live the gospel of Jesus Christ. Choose friends who share your values so you can strengthen and encourage each other in living high standards.

To have good friends, be a good friend. Show genuine interest in others; smile and let them know you care about them. Treat everyone with kindness and respect, and refrain from judging and criticizing those around you. Do not participate in any form of bullying. Make a special effort to be a friend to those who are shy or lonely, have special needs, or do not feel included.

As you seek to be a friend to others, do not compromise your standards. If your friends urge you to do things that are wrong, be the one to stand for the right, even if you stand alone. You may need to find other friends who will support



you in keeping the commandments. Seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost as you make these choices.

As you strive to live the gospel, you will encourage your friends to do likewise. Set an example of keeping the commandments, participating in Church activities, preparing to serve the Lord throughout your life, and remaining worthy to attend the temple.

Invite your friends of other faiths to your Church meetings and activities. Help them feel welcome and included. Many people have joined the Church through the example and fellowship of their friends. Also make a special effort to reach out to new converts and to those who are less active.

*1 Timothy 4:12; Alma 17:1–2*

**What kind of friend am I?**

# Gratitude

*He who receiveth all things with thankfulness shall be made glorious.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 78:19*



The Lord wants you to have a spirit of gratitude in all you do and say. Live with a spirit of thanksgiving and you will have greater happiness and satisfaction in life. Gratitude will turn your heart to the Lord and help you recognize His influence and blessings in your life. Even in your most difficult times, you can find much to be grateful for. Doing so will strengthen and bless you.

In your prayers, pour out your heart to your Father in Heaven in thanks for the blessings you have received. Be specific in thanking Him for His goodness, for your family, for friends, for leaders and teachers, for the gospel, and for His Son, Jesus Christ.

You also express gratitude to the Lord by the way you live. When you keep His commandments and serve others, you show that you love Him and are grateful to Him. Express your gratitude to others for the many ways they bless your life.

*Luke 17:12–19; Alma 34:38*

**How can I express sincere gratitude for my blessings?**

# Honesty and Integrity

*Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Exodus 20:15–16*

Be honest with yourself, others, and God at all times. Being honest means choosing not to lie, steal, cheat, or deceive in any way. When you are honest, you build strength of character that will allow you to be of great service to God and others. You will be blessed with peace of mind and self-respect. You will be trusted by the Lord and will be worthy to enter into His holy temples.

Dishonesty harms you and harms others as well. If you lie, steal, shoplift, or cheat, you damage your spirit and your relationships with others. Being honest will enhance your future opportunities and your ability to be guided by the Holy Ghost. Be honest at school; choose not to cheat in any way. Be honest in your job, giving a full amount of work for your pay. Do not rationalize that being dishonest is acceptable, even though others may think it does not matter.

Closely associated with honesty is integrity. Integrity means thinking and doing what is right at all times, no matter what the consequences. When you have integrity, you are willing to live by your standards and beliefs even when no one is watching. Choose to live so that your thoughts and behavior are always in harmony with the gospel.

*Alma 27:27; 53:20*

**Am I honest in all my conversations and dealings?**

# Language

*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good. Ephesians 4:29*



How you communicate should reflect who you are as a son or daughter of God. Clean and intelligent language is evidence of a bright and wholesome mind. Good language that uplifts, encourages, and compliments others invites the Spirit to be with you. Our words, like our deeds, should be filled with faith, hope, and charity.

Choose friends who use good language. Help others improve their language by your example. Be willing to politely walk away or change the subject when those around you use inappropriate language.

Speak kindly and positively about others. Choose not to insult others or put them down, even in joking. Avoid gossip of any kind, and avoid speaking in anger. When you are tempted to say harsh or hurtful things, leave them unsaid.

Always use the names of God and Jesus Christ with reverence and respect. Misusing the names of Deity is a sin. When you pray, address your Father in Heaven in reverent and respectful language. The Savior used such respectful language in the Lord's Prayer (see Matthew 6:9–12).



Do not use profane, vulgar, or crude language or gestures, and do not tell jokes or stories about immoral actions. These are offensive to God and to others.

Remember that these standards for your use of language apply to all forms of communication, including texting on a cell phone or communicating on the Internet.

If you have developed the habit of using language that is not in keeping with these standards—such as swearing, mocking, gossiping, or speaking in anger to others—you can change. Pray for help. Ask your family and friends to support you in your desire to use good language.

*Exodus 20:7; James 3:2–13; Mosiah 4:30*

**What do the words I use say about me?**

# Music and Dancing

*Praise the Lord with singing,  
with music, with dancing.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 136:28*



Music can enrich your life. It can edify and inspire you and help you draw closer to Heavenly Father. Music has a profound effect on your mind, spirit, and behavior.

Choose carefully the music you listen to. Pay attention to how you feel when you are listening. Some music can carry evil and destructive messages. Do not listen to music that encourages immorality or glorifies violence through its lyrics, beat, or intensity. Do not listen to music that uses vulgar or offensive language or promotes evil practices. Such music can dull your spiritual sensitivity.

Learn and sing the hymns. Hymns can lift your spirit, move you to righteous action, and help you withstand the temptations of the adversary.

When listening to music, be courteous to those around you. Keep your music at a reasonable volume, and remove your earphones when others are talking to you or want you to be part of their activities. Remember that the Spirit speaks with



a still, small voice. If you listen to music constantly, you may not have the quiet time you need for thinking, feeling, and receiving spiritual guidance.

Dancing can be fun and can provide an opportunity to meet new people. However, it too can be misused. When dancing, avoid full body contact with your partner. Do not use positions or moves that are suggestive of sexual or violent behavior or are otherwise inappropriate.

Attend only those dances where dress, grooming, lighting, lyrics, music, and entertainment contribute to a wholesome atmosphere where the Spirit may be present.

*Doctrine and Covenants 25:12*

**Does the music I listen to invite the Spirit?**



# Physical and Emotional Health

*All saints who remember to keep and do these sayings . . . shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones; and shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–19*

Your body is a temple, a gift from God. You will be blessed as you care for your body. Choose to obey the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89). When you are obedient to this law, you remain free from harmful addictions and have control over your life. You gain the blessings of a healthy body, an alert mind, and the guidance of the Holy Ghost. You will be prepared to serve the Lord. Never let Satan or others deceive you into thinking that breaking the Word of Wisdom will make you happier, more popular, or more attractive.

To care for your body, eat nutritious food, exercise regularly, and get enough sleep. Practice balance and moderation in all aspects of your physical health. Also, avoid extremes in diet that could lead to eating disorders. Do not intentionally harm your body. Avoid dangerous activities that put your body at risk of serious injury.

Do not drink coffee or tea. Never use tobacco products or any form of alcohol; they are addictive and harmful to your body and spirit. Being under the influence of alcohol weakens your judgment and self-control. Drinking can also lead to alcoholism, which destroys individuals and families.

Avoid any drink, drug, chemical, or dangerous practice that is used to produce a “high” or other artificial effect that may harm your body or mind. Some of these include marijuana, hard drugs, prescription or over-the-counter medications that are abused, and household chemicals. Use of these substances can lead to addiction and can destroy your mind and your body.



Addictions harm your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. They damage relationships with family and friends and diminish your feelings of self-worth. They limit your ability to make choices for yourself. If you are struggling with any type of addiction, seek help from your parents and your bishop now.

Your emotional health is also important and may affect your spiritual and physical well-being. Disappointment and occasional sadness are part of this mortal life. However, if you have prolonged feelings of sadness, hopelessness, anxiety, or depression, talk with your parents and your bishop and seek help.

In all aspects of your life, seek healthy solutions to problems. Do all you can to safeguard your physical and emotional health so that you can fulfill your divine potential as a son or daughter of God.

*Daniel 1:3–20; Alma 53:20*

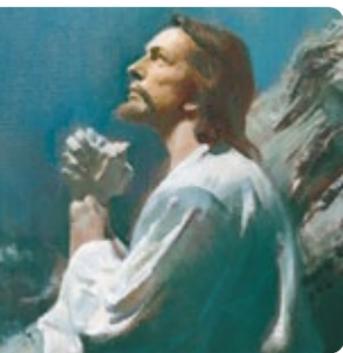
**What am I doing each day to care for my body?**



# Repentance

*By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 58:43*



The Savior suffered for our sins and gave His life for us. This great sacrifice is called the Atonement. Through the Atonement, you can receive forgiveness and be cleansed from your sins when you repent.

Repentance is more than simply acknowledging wrongdoings. It is a change of mind and heart. It includes turning away from sin and turning to God for forgiveness. It is motivated by love for God and the sincere desire to obey His commandments.

Satan wants you to think that you cannot repent, but that is absolutely not true. The Savior has promised you forgiveness if you will humble yourself and make the effort that repentance requires. If you have sinned, the sooner you repent, the sooner you begin to make your way back and find the peace and joy that come with forgiveness. If you delay repentance, you may lose blessings, opportunities, and spiritual guidance. You may also become further entangled in sinful behavior, making it more difficult to find your way back.



Some people knowingly break God's commandments, planning to repent later, such as before they go to the temple or serve a mission. Such deliberate sin mocks the Savior's Atonement.

To repent, you need to confess your sins to the Lord. Then seek forgiveness from those you have wronged, and restore as far as possible what has been damaged by your actions. As you strive to repent, seek help and counsel from your parents. Serious sins, such as sexual transgression or use of pornography, need to be confessed to your bishop. Be completely honest with him. He will help you repent. If you have a question about what should be discussed with the bishop, talk with your parents or with him.

When you do what is necessary to repent and receive forgiveness, you will know for yourself the power of the Atonement and the love God has for you. You will feel the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ, which will bring you great strength, and you will become more like Him.

*Alma 36:6–24; Doctrine and Covenants 58:42; 88:86*

**How can I bring the power of the Atonement into my life?**

# Sabbath Day Observance

*Remember the sabbath day,  
to keep it holy. Exodus 20:8*



The Lord has given the Sabbath day for your benefit and has commanded you to keep it holy.

Honoring the Sabbath day includes attending all your Church meetings. Go to sacrament meeting prepared to worship the Lord and partake worthily of the sacrament. During sacrament meeting, be reverent and willing to learn. Refrain from activities that would

distract you or others during this sacred meeting. Be on time for your meetings. As you do these things, you invite the Spirit of the Lord to be with you.

Prepare during the week so that you can reserve Sunday for the many uplifting activities that are appropriate for the Sabbath day. Such activities include spending quiet time with your family, studying the gospel, fulfilling your Church callings and responsibilities, serving others, writing letters, writing in your journal, and doing family history work. Your behavior and dress on the Sabbath should show respect for the Lord and His holy day.



Sunday is not a day for shopping, recreation, or athletic events. Do not seek entertainment or make purchases on this day. Let others know what your standards are so they can support you. When seeking a job, share with your potential employer your desire to attend your Sunday meetings and keep the Sabbath day holy. Whenever possible, choose a job that does not require you to work on Sundays.

Observing the Sabbath will bring you closer to the Lord and to your family. It will give you an eternal perspective and spiritual strength.

*Isaiah 58:13–14; Doctrine and Covenants 59:9–13*

**What more can I do to keep the Sabbath day holy?**

# Service

*When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God. Mosiah 2:17*



Service to others is an important characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ. A disciple is willing to bear other people's burdens and to comfort those who need comfort. Often Heavenly Father will meet the needs of others through you.

There are many ways to serve others. Some of the most important service you can give will be within your own home.

You can also serve in your Church assignments, school, and community. You can serve by doing temple and family history work. You can serve by sharing the gospel with others now and as a full-time missionary in the future. Often the most meaningful service is expressed through simple, everyday acts of kindness. Seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost each day to know whom to serve and how to help meet their needs. Follow the example of the Savior as you serve others.



As you devote yourself to serving others, you will draw closer to Heavenly Father. Your heart will be filled with love. You will learn that service and sacrifice are ways to overcome selfishness. You will enjoy happiness that comes only from giving service to God and others. Your capacities will increase, and you will be an instrument in God's hands to bless the lives of His children.

*Luke 10:25–37; Mosiah 18:8–9*

**What opportunities do I have to serve others?**



# Sexual Purity

*The sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.*

*“The Family: A Proclamation to the World”*

Physical intimacy between husband and wife is beautiful and sacred. It is ordained of God for the creation of children and for the expression of love between husband and wife. God has commanded that sexual intimacy be reserved for marriage.

When you are sexually pure, you prepare yourself to make and keep sacred covenants in the temple. You prepare yourself to build a strong marriage and to bring children into the world as part of an eternal and loving family. You protect yourself from the spiritual and emotional damage that come from sharing sexual intimacy outside of marriage. You also protect yourself from harmful diseases. Remaining sexually pure helps you to be confident and truly happy and improves your ability to make good decisions now and in the future.

The Lord’s standard regarding sexual purity is clear and unchanging. Do not have any sexual relations before marriage, and be completely faithful to your spouse after marriage. Do not allow the media, your peers, or others to persuade you that sexual intimacy before marriage is acceptable. It is not.

In God's sight, sexual sins are extremely serious. They defile the sacred power God has given us to create life. The prophet Alma taught that sexual sins are more serious than any other sins except murder or denying the Holy Ghost (see Alma 39:5).

Never do anything that could lead to sexual transgression. Treat others with respect, not as objects used to satisfy lustful and selfish desires. Before marriage, do not participate in passionate kissing, lie on top of another person, or touch the private, sacred parts of another person's body, with or without clothing. Do not do anything else that arouses sexual feelings. Do not arouse those emotions in your own body. Pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit so that you can be clean and virtuous. The Spirit of the Lord will withdraw from one who is in sexual transgression.

Avoid situations that invite increased temptation, such as late-night or overnight activities away from home or activities where there is a lack of adult supervision. Do not participate in discussions or any media that arouse sexual feelings. Do not participate in any type of pornography. The Spirit can help you know when you are at risk and give you the strength to remove yourself from the situation. Have faith in and be obedient to the righteous counsel of your parents and leaders.

Homosexual and lesbian behavior is a serious sin. If you find yourself struggling with same-gender attraction or you are being persuaded to participate in inappropriate behavior, seek counsel from your parents and bishop. They will help you.

Victims of sexual abuse are not guilty of sin and do not need to repent. If you have been a victim of abuse, know that you are innocent and that God loves you. Talk to your parents or another trusted adult, and seek your bishop's counsel immediately. They can support you spiritually and assist you



in getting the protection and help you need. The process of healing may take time. Trust in the Savior. He will heal you and give you peace.

If you are tempted to commit any form of sexual transgression, seek help from your parents and bishop. Pray to your Father in Heaven, who will help you resist temptation and overcome inappropriate thoughts and feelings. If you have committed sexual transgression, talk to your bishop now and begin the process of repentance so that you can find peace and have the full companionship of the Spirit.

Make a personal commitment to be sexually pure. By your words and actions, encourage others to do the same.

*Genesis 39:1–12; Doctrine and Covenants 38:42*

**Do I understand why sexual purity is essential to being truly happy?**

# Tithes and Offerings

*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing. Malachi 3:10*

Choosing to live the law of tithing will be a great blessing throughout your life. A tithing is one-tenth of your income. In order to enter the temple, you must be a full-tithe payer.

Paying tithing is a sacred privilege. When you pay tithing, you show gratitude for all that God has given you and return to Him a portion of what you have received. Tithing is used to build temples and meetinghouses, translate and publish the scriptures, do missionary and family history work, and in other ways build God's kingdom on earth.

Your attitude is important in paying tithing. Pay it because you love the Lord and have faith in Him. Pay it willingly with a thankful heart. Pay it first, even when you think you do not have enough money to meet your other needs. Doing so will help you develop greater faith, overcome selfishness, and be more receptive to the Spirit.

Each year, schedule a time for tithing settlement with your bishop. This is a meeting in which you review your contributions and declare whether you have paid a full tithe.



Obey the law of the fast by fasting each month, if health permits. Fast Sunday is usually on the first Sunday of the month. A proper fast day observance includes not eating or drinking for two consecutive meals and giving a generous fast offering to help care for those in need. Fast with a purpose. Begin and end your fast with prayer, expressing gratitude and asking for help with special needs you or others may have. Fasting will strengthen your self-discipline, fortify you against temptations, and bring the Lord's blessings into your life.

As you obey the law of tithing and the law of the fast, the Lord will bless you both spiritually and temporally.

*Jacob 2:17–19; Doctrine and Covenants 119:3–4*

**Do I recognize that all I have comes from the Lord?**

# Work and Self-Reliance

*Thou shalt not idle away thy time,  
neither shalt thou bury thy talent.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 60:13*

Work is honorable. Developing the capacity to work will help you contribute to the world in which you live. It will bring you an increased sense of self-worth. It will bless you and your family, both now and in the future.

Learning to work begins in the home. Help your family by willingly participating in the work necessary to maintain a home. Learn early to handle your money wisely and live within your means. Follow the teachings of the prophets by paying your tithing, avoiding debt, and saving for the future.

Set high goals for yourself, and be willing to work hard to achieve them. Develop self-discipline, and be dependable. Do your best in your Church callings, schoolwork, employment, and other worthwhile pursuits. Young men should be willing to do what is needed to be prepared to serve a full-time mission. Heavenly Father has given you gifts and talents and knows what you are capable of achieving. Seek His help and guidance as you work to achieve your goals.

The Lord has commanded us not to be idle. Idleness can lead to inappropriate behavior, damaged relationships, and sin. One form of idleness is spending excessive amounts of time in activities that keep you from productive work, such as using the Internet, playing video games, and watching television.



Do not waste your time and money in gambling. Gambling is wrong and should not be used as a form of entertainment. It is addictive and can lead to lost opportunities, ruined lives, and broken families. It is false to believe that you can get something for nothing.

One of the blessings of work is developing self-reliance. When you are self-reliant, you use the blessings and abilities God has given you to care for yourself and your family and to find solutions for your own problems. Self-reliance does not mean that you must be able to do all things on your own. To be truly self-reliant, you must learn how to work with others and turn to the Lord for His help and strength.

Remember that God has a great work for you to do. He will bless you in your efforts to accomplish that work.

*2 Nephi 5:17; Doctrine and Covenants 58:26–27*

**Am I dependable and willing to do what I say I will do?**

# Go Forward with Faith

*By small and simple things are great things brought to pass. Alma 37:6*



The standards presented in this booklet are a guide to help you make correct choices. Review the standards often and ask yourself, “Am I living the way the Lord wants me to live?” and “How have I been blessed by living these standards?”

To help you become all that the Lord wants you to become, kneel each morning and night in prayer to your Father in Heaven. Express to Him your gratitude and the desires of your heart. He is the source of all wisdom. He will hear and answer your prayers.

Study the scriptures each day and apply what you read to your life. The scriptures are a powerful source of personal revelation and guidance and a constant strength to your testimony.

Strive each day to be obedient. Follow the standards in this booklet, and encourage others to live them as well. Remember the covenants that you have made and that you have the opportunity to renew each week when you partake

of the sacrament. Strive to keep these covenants. If you make a mistake, don't give up on yourself. Your Heavenly Father loves you and wants you to seek His help and keep trying.

When possible, attend the temple and feel the joy and peace that come from serving in the house of the Lord. Prepare yourself for the temple covenants you will make in the future.

Young men of the Aaronic Priesthood, commit to serve a full-time mission. This is a priesthood duty. Keep yourself clean and worthy, and work diligently to prepare yourself to represent the Lord as a missionary.

In all circumstances, follow the teachings of the prophets, the other authorities of the Church, and your local leaders. They will lead you in paths of happiness.

Be humble and willing to listen to the Holy Ghost and respond to His promptings. Place the wisdom of the Lord above your own wisdom.

As you do these things, the Lord will make much more out of your life than you can by yourself. He will increase your opportunities, expand your vision, and strengthen you. He will give you the help you need to meet your trials and challenges. You will gain a stronger testimony and find true joy as you come to know your Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, and feel Their love for you.

*2 Nephi 31:16–21*

# The Commandments

## *The Two Great Commandments*

1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.
2. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

*Matthew 22:37–40*

## *The Ten Commandments*

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . .
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. . . .
4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. . . .
5. Honour thy father and thy mother. . . .
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
10. Thou shalt not covet.

*Exodus 20:3–4, 7–8, 12–17*



Verily I say  
unto you all:  
Arise and shine forth,  
that thy light may  
be a standard for  
the nations.

*Doctrine and Covenants 115:5*

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

