

Answers to Commonly Asked Questions

John Hilton III, Education Week 2006

Some “Whys” of Morality

Alma 39:5
1 Corinthians 3:16-17
1 Corinthians 6:19-20

“Do not be misled by Satan’s lies. There is no lasting happiness in immorality. There is no joy to be found in breaking the law of chastity. Just the opposite is true. There may be momentary pleasure. For a time it may seem like everything is wonderful. But quickly the relationship will sour. Guilt and shame set in. We become fearful that our sins will be discovered. We must sneak and hide, lie and cheat. Love begins to die. Bitterness, jealousy, anger, and even hate begin to grow. All of these are the natural results of sin and transgression (President Ezra Taft Benson, *New Era*, Jan. 1988, 5–6).

Standards

“Firmly establish personal standards. Choose a time of deep spiritual reflection, when there is no pressure on you, and you can confirm your decisions by sacred impressions. Decide then what you will do and what you will not do to express feelings. The Spirit will guide you. Then do not vary from those decisions no matter how right it may seem when the temptation comes. The realization of your dreams depends upon your determination to never betray your standards” (Elder Richard G. Scott, *BYU Devotional*, 3 March 1996).

“Before marriage, do not do anything to arouse the powerful emotions that must be expressed only in 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 allow anyone to do that with you. Do not arouse those emotions in your own body...Do not participate in talk or activities that arouse sexual feelings” (*For the Strength of Youth*, 27).

Dating

“Some young people under 16 try to explain that they aren’t really dating. They try to make it seem all right by saying they are just being good friends. But by pairing up as boyfriend and girlfriend, they are imitating a dating relationship. And it can be harmful” (*New Era*, July 1995, 17-18).

“When you are young, do not get involved in steady dating. When you reach an age where you think of marriage, then is the time to become so involved. But you boys who are in high school don’t need this, and neither do the girls” (President Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 51).

Repentance

For a moment I speak to anyone that has succumbed to serious temptation. Please stop now...Serious transgression such as immorality requires the help of one who holds keys of authority, such as a bishop...Do not...assume that because someone did not ask you all the important details of a transgression, that you need not mention them. You personally must make sure that the bishop or stake president understands those details so that he can help you properly through the process of repentance for full forgiveness (Elder Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 69-70).

Gaining a Vision of What you can Become

“This is the great day of decision for each of us. For many it is the time of beginning something that will go on for as long as you live. I plead with you: don’t be a scrub! Rise to the high ground of spiritual, mental, and physical excellence. You can do it. You may not be a genius. You may be lacking in some skills. But so many of us can do better than we are now doing....We are people with a present and with a future. Don’t muff your opportunities. Be excellent” (President Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Sept. 1999, 4–5).

“The Lord has placed currents of divine influence in your life that will lead you along the individual plan He would have you fulfill here on earth...I do not fully understand how it is done, but this divine current does not take away your moral agency. You can make the decisions you choose to make” (Elder Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 87). “You can ponder and let the Lord establish the direction of your life” (Elder Scott, *Ensign*, June 2002).

“The Lord has a purpose for you, individually.... Discover it and fulfill it. It will likely not be revealed all at once but will be unfolded line upon line. As you pray and work hard, you will find threads of understanding that will lead you to the path the Lord wants you to follow for the greatest enduring, meaningful attainment, contribution, joy, and peace of mind. Faithfully and courageously follow those threads of understanding and direction” (Elder Richard G. Scott, *BYU Devotional*, “Learning to succeed in life,” 15 Sept. 1998).

“I believe that in our own individual ways, God takes us to the grove or the mountain or the temple and there shows us the wonder of what his plan is for us. We may not see it as fully as Moses or Nephi or the brother of Jared did, but we see as much as we need to see in order to know the Lord’s will for us and to know that he loves us beyond mortal comprehension” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, *BYU Devotional*, 2 March 1999).

Recognizing the Influence of the Spirit

“If you and I have a sincere desire for the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, invite His influence into our lives through our obedience and actions, and learn to heed simple promptings and to do so quickly, then I testify and promise that we will be able to tell the difference between our own emotions telling us what we want to hear and the Holy Ghost telling us what we need to hear” (Elder David A. Bednar, *BYU-Idaho Devotional*, August 31, 1999).

Testimony

“There is nothing more important in all the world than to have in our hearts a testimony...of the reality of God the Eternal Father and His Son, the risen Lord, the Redeemer of the world” (President Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, August 2000, 3)

“Those who have prepared [to bear their testimony] won’t give sermons or exhortations or travel reports or try to entertain as they bear witness. Because they will have already expressed appreciation to people privately, they will have less need to do it publicly. Neither will they feel a need to use eloquent language nor to go on at length” (Elder Henry B. Eyring, *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 32).

“Your personal security and happiness depend upon the strength of your testimony” (Elder Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 87).