

# “Avoid It”

LYNN G. ROBBINS

## **Introduction—It Is Easier to Avoid Temptation Than It Is to Resist Temptation**

The focus of my message today is based on a proverb from Solomon, who was given a gift from God of “exceeding” wisdom, “and his fame was in all nations round about. . . . And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon.”<sup>1</sup> Even 3,000 years later, when we read Solomon’s proverbs we often nod in agreement with his profound wisdom because life has also taught us the same lesson—often through a trying or difficult experience.

If life hasn’t yet taught you the wisdom of the proverb I am about to share, it would be my prayer that by the end of my remarks it will have enlightened your understanding and touched your hearts sufficiently to motivate you to make some helpful and wise changes in your life. Here is the proverb: “Enter not into the path of the wicked. . . . Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.”<sup>2</sup> The wisdom of Solomon in this passage is to be discovered in the word *avoid*. Solomon had discovered, as all wise people do, one of life’s most helpful guiding principles: *It is easier to avoid temptation than it is to resist temptation.*

## **Chocolate Chip Cookies**

To illustrate the wisdom of this principle, let’s suppose my great temptation in life is

chocolate chip cookies and I’m trying to conquer the temptation. It is easier for me not to have the cookies in the house than it is to walk through the front door and smell two dozen of them fresh out of the oven—warm, moist, and smelling good. At that moment I am no longer simply fighting temptation; I am also fighting chemistry. The aroma triggers the pleasure center of my brain. My mouth begins to water in preparation for the cookies. With each tempting breath my resistance grows weaker as my craving grows stronger and my appetite begins to overpower my reason and resolve.

My other self—the one that is carnal<sup>3</sup>—argues in favor of the cookies: “You know, dieting doesn’t have to mean deprivation. It’s your overall effort that counts, and one cookie certainly isn’t going to blow your diet.” With my pleasure center activated, I don’t need much convincing, and I yield to the cookie’s enticing aroma.

How easy is it to stop when that first cookie only intensified your appetite rather than satisfied it? That same voice says, “Well, you’ve blown it now! You may as well enjoy yourself

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and recommit to your diet tomorrow.” So after I’ve eaten about six cookies, maybe with a glass of milk, I begin to feel remorseful about breaking my resolution and diet.

### **Hormones, Intimacy, and Families**

I hope you will understand the metaphor as I now apply it to a far stronger desire. The Lord has blessed each of us with powerful hormones that also link to the brain’s pleasure center. It is a very desirable attraction that begins to occur in adolescence toward the opposite sex.

Along with the many spiritual reasons that inspire a person to get married, the Lord has also blessed us with this powerful physical drive, with this intense chemistry, to motivate us to get married—to be fathers and mothers, to have children and a family of our own, and to strengthen the loving bonds between husband and wife. Why? According to “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” it is because “the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”<sup>4</sup> The proclamation also states “that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.”<sup>5</sup>

The booklet *For the Strength of Youth* (which could also be called *For the Strength of Young Single Adults*) states:

*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.*<sup>6</sup>

Youth often grow up with an incorrect understanding of intimacy and an unhealthy attitude toward it because it is often treated as a taboo topic rather than as a sacred one. Because intimacy in marriage is beautiful, sacred, and ordained of God, it is important to understand that sexual sin isn’t the use of

something inherently bad but the misuse of something inherently good and beautiful.

In the Book of Mormon, Alma taught his son Corianton that the misuse of the sacred procreative powers outside the bonds of marriage was “most abominable above all sins save it be the shedding of innocent blood or denying the Holy Ghost.”<sup>7</sup> Alma cautioned his son to “go no more after the lusts of [his] eyes”<sup>8</sup>—a phrase that could easily apply to pornography in these latter days.

### **David and Joseph**

In the Old Testament we read the story of David, who did go after the lusts of his eyes. Arising from his bed at “an eveningtide,” he “walked upon the roof of the king’s house.” And from the roof he looked down and saw a lovely chocolate chip cookie—out of its wrapping. The cookie “was very beautiful to look upon” and smelled really good.<sup>9</sup> David was not simply dealing with temptation but also with powerful chemistry, and he succumbed to the enticing power and aroma of the cookie.

Conversely, we have the story of Joseph, who was in Potiphar’s house when his master’s wife began to seduce him. He was in the kitchen with the cookies. What did Joseph do? Well, he didn’t stick around to smell the cookies. “He left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.”<sup>10</sup> He got out of the kitchen. It is easier to avoid temptation than to resist it.

### **The Lord’s Prayer**

A humorous bumper sticker states, “Lead me not into temptation. I can find it myself!” What the Lord’s Prayer actually states, according to the Joseph Smith Translation, is, “Suffer us not to be led into temptation.”<sup>11</sup> The Savior’s counsel in this phrase is to pray for help in *avoiding* temptation. Ponder on these several additional avoid scriptures:

*Come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things.*<sup>12</sup>

*Keep . . . uncleanness far from you.*<sup>13</sup>

*Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved.*<sup>14</sup>

In teaching prayer, one of the foremost principles taught by the Savior was avoiding temptation, such as in this counsel that is repeated in many scriptures:

*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*<sup>15</sup>

This entreaty of the Savior to avoid temptation consists of two acts of faith: to watch and to pray. The Guide to the Scriptures teaches us that to *watch* means “to be vigilant, to [be on] guard,” which is wise advice in defending ourselves against a very real and ever-lurking enemy. And the corollary to the Savior’s wise advice to pray to avoid temptation is that without prayer, we will not have the spiritual strength or stamina to win this battle on our own.

#### **“Sin Lieth at the Door”**

How can we pray that we enter not into temptation if we don’t pray in faith or, in other words, do all in our power to make the prayer come true? The first step we should take, if we have prayed in faith to avoid temptation, is to close the door on it and avoid it completely.

It has been said that “temptation usually comes in through a door that has deliberately been left open.”<sup>16</sup> Many pray to be delivered from temptation, but they leave the doorway to temptation cracked just a bit, convincing themselves that nibbling isn’t partaking and that the Lord “will justify in committing a little sin.”<sup>17</sup>

An age-old proverb states, “An open door may tempt a saint.” Moses warned of the danger of leaving the door ajar: “Sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee.”<sup>18</sup> All Satan needs to gain access to your pleasure

center is a cracked door and a sweet aroma. From there, President Spencer W. Kimball said, “Lucifer . . . will use his logic to confuse and his rationalizations to destroy. He will shade meanings, open doors an inch at a time, and lead from purest white through all the shades of gray to the darkest black.”<sup>19</sup> The key is to not leave the door cracked open. Satan cannot open the door from the outside.

“Of a truth,” said Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “temptation is not a gate that can be opened by force of arms; it opens only inward, as moved by the arm within, for each man is the gatekeeper of his soul.”<sup>20</sup>

#### **The People of Ammon**

When the people of Ammon were converted to the Lord, they didn’t hang their swords above the mantel. They buried them. They were not only avoiding temptation but completely closing the door on temptation. They were also putting reminders of their past behind them in a spirit of true repentance:

*We will hide away our swords, yea, even we will bury them deep in the earth, that they may be kept bright, as a testimony that we have never used them, at the last day. . . .*

*And this they did, it being in their view a testimony to God, and also to men, that they never would use weapons again.*<sup>21</sup>

We are taught to not touch the “unclean things”<sup>22</sup> and to avoid even the very “appearance of evil.”<sup>23</sup> Our prayer should be as Nephi’s: “Wilt thou make me that I may shake at the appearance of sin?”<sup>24</sup>

The following are examples of things we might do to close the door on temptation and act in faith to fulfill our prayer to avoid temptation:

- For dieters, it would be wise to get rid of the junk food in the cupboard and to not go grocery shopping when you are hungry.

- For Internet junkies, it may mean deleting the game on your smartphone that you are addicted to.
- Many married people unwisely crack the door to temptation by “friending” old boy-friends or girlfriends on their social media site. Avoiding temptation would mean to unfriend them before Satan cunningly destroys a marriage.
- Avoiding temptation may mean putting a filter on your computer that blocks the material that is offensive to the Spirit.
- It may mean programming your television to block certain channels or even unsubscribing to a cable or streaming service that is enticing you with inappropriate offerings.
- And it may mean breaking up with that boyfriend or girlfriend who has not demonstrated virtuous thoughts or behavior.

I invite you to think about your greatest temptations and then to ponder and pray about what you can do to avoid them in the future. I then invite you to wisely follow through on the avoidance revelation that comes to you.

#### “Never Make the Same Mistake Once”

Another nugget of wisdom and counsel on avoiding temptation comes from President Boyd K. Packer, president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. You’ll have to pay close attention to capture the deeper meaning of this one-sentence sermon: “Never make the same mistake once.”<sup>25</sup>

The wisdom of this intriguing principle alerts us to the danger of traps that are so effective that they don’t need a second chance to ensnare their victims—think of a spider web. Satan would have you believe that there is little or no lasting harm in trying something just once. But yielding to Satan—even once—has trapped many curious victims in a lifelong battle against that vice.

President George Albert Smith cautioned:

*If you cross to the devil’s side of the line one inch, you are in the tempter’s power, and if he is successful, you will not be able to think or even reason properly, because you will have lost the spirit of the Lord.*<sup>26</sup>

When we yield to temptation just once, we give Satan ammunition in the form of a memory. What makes Satan the tempter is his ability to plant thoughts in our mind. In a moment of weakness he can tempt us with the memory of our experience, which multiplies the potency of the temptation—like the mouth-watering memory of enjoying a delicious chocolate chip cookie.

For the curious, you don’t have to yield to temptation to acquire a knowledge of the vice. Benjamin Franklin wisely counseled, “‘Wise men,’ as Poor Richard says, ‘learn by others’ harms; fools scarcely by their own.’”<sup>27</sup> Observing the life-shattering effects that sin and addictions have had on the lives of others should terrify you of ever getting near that vice—even once. “‘Tis easier to prevent bad habits than to break them,” Franklin said.<sup>28</sup>

For an alcoholic, which of the thousands of glasses drunk over years and decades was the most dangerous? Número uno. It is easier to avoid the first glass than to resist the thousands that will likely follow. Not doing something the first time is avoiding; the second time and beyond is resisting. President Packer’s counsel is profound: “Never make the same mistake once.”

#### He Will Lull Them

Another cunning strategy used by Satan to trick good people into temptation was foreseen by Nephi: “At that day [meaning our day] will he *pacify*, and *lull* them away into carnal security, . . . and [lead] them away carefully down to hell.”<sup>29</sup> The words *pacify* and *lull* in this verse are synonymous with the word *desensitize*.

Let me show you a picture from a Mormonad of a frog jumping from a pan of

hot water.<sup>30</sup> If Satan wanted to boil a frog, he wouldn't put it in a pan of hot water—it would instinctively jump. His strategy would be to put it in cold water, because that is what the frog is used to. He would then turn on the heat, unbeknownst to the frog. Satan would make sure that the temperature rose so gradually that the frog would never notice it change from cold to cool, from cool to tepid, from tepid to warm, from warm to hot, from hot to energy-sapping hot, and from there to boiling.

How many of you women have gone into a department store to purchase a bottle of perfume? What happens to your nose after you smell about five or six bottles of perfume? Your nose becomes desensitized from overexposure to too much stimuli. Wikipedia defines *desensitization* as “diminished emotional responsiveness to . . . stimulus after repeated exposure to it.”<sup>31</sup>

Avoiding temptation protects us from becoming desensitized to it. But if we tolerate it while striving to resist it, we can gradually become desensitized without even knowing it.

### Movies

Let's take movies as an example. We know that “the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance,”<sup>32</sup> but Hollywood can and does! And many good members of the Church allow themselves to “look upon sin” in movie theaters with a great degree of allowance or tolerance, justifying it in the name of “good entertainment with just a few bad parts.”

Let's assume that the two ends of the basketball court here at the Marriott Center represent the two extremes of movies that Hollywood produces. We will have this end area at my extreme right represent G-rated movies. At the other extreme to my left is what Hollywood calls “adult entertainment.” In between the two extremes the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) gives movies ratings of PG and PG-13. We will have

this pulpit represent R rated, then NC-17, and adults only. In between the two extremes, where do we draw the line over which it would be dangerous to cross?

It is risky for the Church to draw a line. If the speed on the freeway is sixty-five miles per hour, how fast will people drive? Well, they will feel free to drive as fast as the limit. If the Church were to draw a line with movies, that would be like giving permission to watch everything up to the line. President Gordon B. Hinckley never drew a line. Neither has President Thomas S. Monson. But the prophets have taught us principles found in *For the Strength of the Youth*, such as the following:

*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.*<sup>33</sup>

President Hinckley taught, “Avoid pornography as you would a plague.”<sup>34</sup> Did you notice his use of the word *avoid*? President Monson has said, “Avoid any semblance of pornography. It will desensitize the spirit and erode the conscience.”<sup>35</sup> *For the Strength of Youth* states:

*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.*<sup>36</sup>

Did you catch that? It can damage your ability to have a normal relationship with your future spouse. That isn't merely conjecture. Thousands of cases bear witness of its destructive impact on the marriage relationship.

In 1986 President Ezra Taft Benson warned members of the danger of anything “R rated” or beyond.<sup>37</sup> The members thought he had drawn a line. I know that because I have heard many members of the Church say, “Oh, we

can watch that movie. It's only a PG-13. The prophet gave us permission." They don't say that last part, but that is what they are thinking, because they thought he posted a speed limit, so to speak.

But what would a movie given an R rating in 1986 be rated today? Would you agree that Hollywood has relaxed its standards? It is referred to as "ratings creep." Hollywood has gradually allowed more vulgarity, profanity, nudity, violence, sex, etc., over the decades while maintaining the same ratings. Does the word *creep* remind you of "the serpent [that] was more subtle than any beast of the field," as we read in both the book of Moses and Genesis?<sup>38</sup> Well, you don't need a study to verify the reality of ratings creep. If you are unaware of this creeping phenomenon, it is likely good evidence that you have become desensitized yourself to this dangerous trend and are in a pot of water with the temperature on the rise.

The cunning result of this creeping trend is that the 1986 R-rated movie has deceptively become a PG-13 or PG movie in 2013. The shifting or creeping of the line could be compared to the mists in Lehi's dream that "blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost."<sup>39</sup> As members justify the viewing of such movies based upon a deceptive rating, they become more and more desensitized to inappropriate material that a prophet identified as dangerous back in 1986. Those so deceived are pacified and lulled into Satan's territory; hence this warning in *For the Strength of Youth*: "Take care that your use of media does not dull your sensitivity to the Spirit."<sup>40</sup>

If "virtue [is to] garnish [our] thoughts unceasingly,"<sup>41</sup> then as we pray in faith to avoid temptation, we especially need to be watchful and on guard with today's media, whether on TV or online, as it is perhaps the greatest spoiler of virtuous thinking. The movie rating or principle we should use is

from the thirteenth article of faith: "We seek after"—or in this case "watch or view"—that which is "virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy." The Holy Ghost should be our Internet, movie, and TV guide.

### Dating

Let's shift the spectrum we are considering from movies to dating. This time we will let my far right represent holding hands and my far left represent fornication. Between these two extremes, where do we draw the line over which we should not cross? For example, can a young man and a young woman kiss? I'm sure there are many in the audience who are thinking, "I sure hope so!" I'm not going to answer this question with a line but rather with a principle from *For the Strength of Youth*: "Do not do anything . . . that arouses sexual feelings."<sup>42</sup>

When my oldest daughter was dating, I taught her this same principle in this way: "When a person does anything on purpose, outside the bonds of marriage, to sexually arouse another person, he or she is crossing over a line into sacred territory."

She said, "Dad, that can't be entirely true, because a man may see a beautiful woman walking down the street and become aroused."

I responded, "But did she do anything on purpose to arouse him? If she was dressed modestly, she didn't do anything wrong. But if she was dressed immodestly, then she crossed over the line in the way she dressed."

When you ponder on this principle, you will realize that a person can cross over that sacred line in the way they dress, in their conversation, in the way they dance, and clearly in the way they act and touch each other.

With this principle in mind, let me return to the question of kissing. Can a young man and a young woman kiss? Well, the correct answer to that question is "It depends."

*For the Strength of Youth* cautions young people to "not participate in passionate kissing."<sup>43</sup> Why? Because passionate kissing puts

the chocolate chip cookie in your hand—warm and moist and smelling good, and your body begins to prepare itself for the cookie. You are no longer simply fighting temptation but also fighting some powerful body chemistry and inviting temptation, not avoiding it. That kind of kissing should be reserved for marriage.

President Spencer W. Kimball said, “Even if timely courtship justifies the kiss, it should be a clean, decent, sexless one.”<sup>44</sup> Did you notice that President Kimball used the singular form of the word *kiss*? *Kiss-es*, the plural form, will likely violate the principle we just learned of beginning to “arouse” each other.

To help you keep the spirit of President Kimball’s counsel, let me also add that it should be a brief kiss when courting, as a prolonged kiss will also shift your body’s chemistry into high gear.

### **Trust—The Best Wedding Gift**

Many years ago, while I was serving as a bishop, I had one of my beautiful Laurels come into the bishop’s office to let me know that she and her boyfriend had been nibbling on the cookies—meaning passionate kissing—which had escalated to eating the entire cookie. During the conversation she said, “But Bishop, we are going to get married.”

I said, “If it is true that you are going to get married, you have demonstrated to each other that you aren’t wise enough to avoid nor strong enough to resist the cookies. You have demonstrated to each other that you can’t fully trust each other.”

After marriage, when life has become routine and less glamorous than during courtship, will you be able to fully trust your husband when an attractive woman at work or elsewhere—not a chocolate chip cookie this time but a cute little snickerdoodle—starts flirting with him? What will your level of trust be in him when he has demonstrated to you his weakness with cookies?

And will he be able to fully trust you when life becomes a little humdrum, you are feeling neglected by your husband, and some other man begins to make you feel important and shows interest in you? Not a chocolate chip cookie this time, but a white-chocolate-chunk macadamia cookie?

The best wedding gift you can give your future spouse is the gift of trust, a gift given by covenant at the altar in the temple but created as you mutually demonstrate respect, loyalty, and strength of character with each other during courtship. For a marriage that did not begin with this priceless gift, the trust can be earned, but only through sincere repentance. It will also take some time, as trust is built on demonstrated behavior as evidence of the truly penitent.

To help you develop the gift of trust during courtship, *For the Strength of Youth* shares the following *avoid* principles:

*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.*<sup>45</sup>

*Go only to places where you can maintain your standards and remain close to the Spirit.*<sup>46</sup>

*When you begin dating, go with one or more additional couples.*<sup>47</sup>

All of these wise principles will help you *avoid* tempting situations.

### **Resisting**

Avoiding temptation should be our first line of defense. However, we live in a world in which the wheat is growing together with the tares and in which it is impossible to completely avoid temptation. But it would be wise to minimize it to the extent possible.

When we are faced with temptation, we should resist it with an avoidance mentality. “Get thee behind me”<sup>48</sup> was the Savior’s example of resisting with an avoidance mentality. “He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them.”<sup>49</sup> When we are faced with temptation, it would be wise to follow the Savior’s example by dismissing Satan without any further argument or discussion—immediately and swiftly. Joseph fleeing from the rapacious arms of Potiphar’s wife is another good example of this principle.

### The Savior’s Grace and Repentance

There may be some here who have nibbled on or yielded completely to the “cookies,” speaking metaphorically. If that includes you, please see your bishop. He loves you and will help you through the repentance process. It would be my hope that you would leave his office feeling the love of the Savior through him and the hope, happiness, and forgiveness that come from the Savior’s grace to those who truly repent.

Whatever your weakness or temptation is—and we all have them—if your desire is to avoid that temptation in the future, remember that the Savior wants to help you. As noted under *grace* in the Guide to the Scriptures, His grace is a divine source of “help or strength [that] is given through the mercy and love of God. Every mortal person needs divine grace because of Adam’s fall and also because of man’s weaknesses.” He understands what we are dealing with, as this scripture teaches: “Jesus Christ . . . knoweth the weakness of man and how to succor them who are tempted.”<sup>50</sup> And how does He know how to succor those who are tempted? Because “he himself hath suffered being tempted, [therefore] he is able to succour them that are tempted.”<sup>51</sup>

Alma the Younger is one who was referred to as “very wicked”<sup>52</sup> and, along with the sons of Mosiah, as the “vilest of sinners.”<sup>53</sup> Unlike

the Savior, who never paid heed to temptation, Alma had. After repenting of his sins, Alma described the incredible clean feeling that came to him through the Savior’s love and grace: “There can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy.”<sup>54</sup>

Because he knew what it was like to face temptation and succumb, Alma gave his own “avoid-it” or “watch-and-pray” advice to those who are in a similar situation:

*And now, my brethren, I wish from the inmost part of my heart, yea, with great anxiety even unto pain, that ye would hearken unto my words, and cast off your sins, and not procrastinate the day of your repentance;*

*But that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and **watch and pray continually**, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear.*<sup>55</sup>

My parting prayer is similar: that the Lord will bless each of you with the same wisdom with which he blessed Solomon; help you avoid temptation rather than trying to resist it; and give you the strength to quickly dismiss temptation in those situations in which it is impossible to completely avoid it, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### Notes

- 1 Kings 4:29, 31, 34.
- Proverbs 4:14–15.
- See Alma 42:10.
- “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, November 1995, 102.
- “The Family,” 102.
- For the Strength of Youth* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2011), 35.
- Alma 39:5.
- Alma 39:9.
- 2 Samuel 11:2.
- Genesis 39:12.
- JST, Matthew 6:14; see also Matthew 6:13.



12. Alma 5:57.
13. D&C 90:18; emphasis added.
14. D&C 87:8—this one you may recognize as this year’s youth theme.
15. Matthew 26:41; see also Mark 14:38; Luke 22:40; Alma 34:39; 3 Nephi 18:15, 18; D&C 31:12.
16. Arnold H. Glasow, in *Reader’s Digest Quotable Quotes: Wit and Wisdom for Every Occasion* (Pleasantville, New York: Reader’s Digest Association, 1997), 91.
17. 2 Nephi 28:8.
18. Moses 5:23.
19. Spencer W. Kimball, “President Kimball Speaks Out on Morality,” *Ensign*, November 1980, 94; quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006), 104 (see entire chapter 10, “Fortifying Ourselves Against Evil Influences”).
20. Neal A. Maxwell, *The Enoch Letters* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 42.
21. Alma 24:16, 18.
22. Alma 5:57; see also 3 Nephi 20:41.
23. 1 Thessalonians 5:22.
24. 2 Nephi 4:31.
25. Boyd K. Packer, *Mine Errand from the Lord: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Boyd K. Packer*, comp. Clyde J. Williams (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2008), 65.
26. George Albert Smith, *Sharing the Gospel with Others: Excerpts from the Sermons of President Smith*, comp. Preston Nibley (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1948), 43.
27. Benjamin Franklin, *Poor Richard’s Almanac* (1758), “Preface: Courteous Reader.”
28. *Poor Richard’s Almanac* (1745), October.
29. 2 Nephi 28:20–21; emphasis added.
30. See *New Era* Poster, “Stay Out of Hot Water” (Mormonad poster), *New Era*, May 2003, 19.
31. Wikipedia, s.v. “desensitization (psychology),” [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desensitization\\_\(psychology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desensitization_(psychology)).
32. Alma 45:16; D&C 1:31.
33. *For the Strength of Youth*, 11.
34. Gordon B. Hinckley, “First Presidency Message: Overpowering the Goliaths in Our Lives,” *Ensign*, January 2002, 6; emphasis added.
35. Thomas S. Monson, “True to the Faith,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 18; emphasis added.
36. *For the Strength of Youth*, 12; emphasis added.
37. See Ezra Taft Benson, “To the Youth of the Noble Birthright,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 45; see also Benson, “To the Young Women of the Church,” *Ensign*, November 1986, 84.
38. Moses 4:5; see also Genesis 3:1.
39. 1 Nephi 12:17.
40. *For the Strength of Youth*, 12.
41. D&C 121:45.
42. *For the Strength of Youth*, 36.
43. *For the Strength of Youth*, 36.
44. TSWK, 281.
45. *For the Strength of Youth*, 4.
46. *For the Strength of Youth*, 4.
47. *For the Strength of Youth*, 4.
48. Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33; Luke 4:8.
49. D&C 20:22; see also Hebrews 4:15.
50. D&C 62:1.
51. Hebrews 2:18.
52. Mosiah 27:8.
53. Mosiah 28:4.
54. Alma 36:21.
55. Alma 13:27–28; emphasis added.