

Living Worthy of the Girl You Will Someday Marry

President Gordon B. Hinckley

Make yourself worthy of the loveliest girl in all the world. Keep yourself worthy through all the days of your life. A week ago President Faust and the Young Women general presidency spoke to the young women of the Church in this tabernacle. As I looked at that gathering of beautiful young women the question moved through my mind, “Are we rearing a generation of young men worthy of them?”

Those girls are so fresh and vibrant. They are beautiful. They are bright. They are able. They are faithful. They are virtuous. They are true. They are simply wonderful and delightful young women. And so tonight, in this great priesthood meeting, I wish to speak to you young men, their counterpart. The title of my talk: “Living Worthy of the Girl You Will Someday Marry.”

The girl you marry will take a terrible chance on you. She will give her all to the young man she marries. He will largely determine the remainder of her life. She will even surrender her name to his name.

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as young men holding the priesthood of God, you have a tremendous obligation toward the girl you marry. Perhaps you are not thinking much of that now. But the time isn't far away when you will think of it, and now is the time to prepare for that most important day of your lives when you take unto yourself a wife and companion equal with you before the Lord.

That obligation begins with absolute loyalty. As the old Church of England ceremony says, you will marry her “for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, for better or for worse.” She will be yours and yours alone, regardless of the circumstances of your lives. You will be hers and hers alone. There can be eyes for none other. There must be absolute loyalty, undeviating loyalty one to another. Hopefully you will marry her forever, in the house of the Lord, under the authority of the everlasting priesthood. Through all the days of your lives, you must be as true one to another as the polar star.

The girl you marry can expect you to come to the marriage altar absolutely clean. She can expect you to be a young man of virtue in thought and word and deed.

I plead with you boys tonight to keep yourselves free from the stains of the world. You must not indulge in sleazy talk at school. You must not tell sultry jokes. You must not fool around with the Internet to find pornographic material. You must not dial a long-distance telephone number to listen to filth. You must not rent videos with pornography of any kind. This salacious stuff simply is not for you. Stay away from pornography as you would avoid a serious disease. It is as destructive. It can become habitual, and those who indulge in it get so they cannot leave it alone. It is addictive.

It is a five-billion-dollar business for those who produce it. They make it as titillating and attractive as they know how. It seduces and destroys its victims. It is everywhere. It is all about us. I plead with you young men not to get involved in its use. You simply cannot afford to. The girl you marry is worthy of a husband whose life has not been tainted by this ugly and corrosive material.

Look upon the Word of Wisdom as more than a commonplace thing. I regard it as the most remarkable document on health of which I know. It came to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1833, when relatively little was known of dietary matters. Now the greater the scientific research, the more certain becomes the proof of Word of Wisdom principles. The evidence against tobacco is now overwhelming, yet we see a tremendous increase in its use by young men and women. The evidence against liquor is just as great.

Stay away from it. It will do you no good. It could do you irreparable harm. Suppose you drink and drive and cause the death of someone. You will never get over it as long as you live. It will haunt you night and day. The one simple thing to do is simply to not touch it. Likewise, stay away from illegal drugs. They can absolutely destroy you. They will take away your powers of reason. They will enslave you in a vicious and terrible way. They will destroy your mind and your body. They will build within you such cravings that you will do anything to satisfy them.

Would any girl in her right mind ever wish to marry a young man who has a drug habit, who is the slave of alcohol, who is addicted to pornography?

Avoid profanity. It is all around you in school. Young people seem to pride themselves on using filthy and obscene language as well as indulging in profanity, taking the name of our Lord in vain. It becomes a vicious habit which, if indulged in while you are young, will find expression throughout your life. Who would wish to be married to a man whose speech is laden with filth and profanity?

There is another serious thing to which many young men become addicted. This is anger. With the least provocation they explode into tantrums of uncontrolled rage. It is pitiful to see someone so weak. But even worse, they are prone to lose all sense of reason and do things which bring later regret. We hear much these days of the phenomenon called road rage. Drivers become provoked over some small irritation. They fly into a rage, even resulting in murder. A life of regret follows. If you have a temper, now is the time to learn to control it. The more you do so while you are young, the more easily it will happen. Let no member of this Church ever lose control of himself in such an unnecessary and vicious manner. Let him bring to his marriage words of peace and composure.

I constantly deal with those cases of members of the Church who have been married in the temple and who later divorce and then apply for a cancellation of their temple sealing. When first married, they are full of great expectations, with a wonderful spirit of happiness. But the flower of love fades in an atmosphere of criticism and carping, of mean words and uncontrolled anger. Love flies out the window as contention enters. I repeat, my brethren, if any of you young men have trouble controlling your temper, I plead with you to begin the work of making that correction now. Otherwise you will bring only tears and sorrow into the homes which you will

someday establish. Jacob, in the Book of Mormon, condemns his people for their wickedness in marriage. Says he: “Behold, ye have done greater iniquities than the Lamanites, our brethren. Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you. And because of the strictness of the word of God, which cometh down against you, many hearts died, pierced with deep wounds” ([Jacob 2:35](#)).

Work for an education. Get all the training that you can. The world will largely pay you what it thinks you are worth. Paul did not mince words when he wrote to Timothy, “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” ([1 Tim. 5:8](#)). It is your primary obligation to provide for your family. Your wife will be fortunate indeed if she does not have to go out and compete in the marketplace. She will be twice blessed if she is able to remain at home while you become the breadwinner of the family. Education is the key to economic opportunity. The Lord has laid a mandate upon us as a people to acquire learning “by study, and also by faith” ([D&C 109:14](#)). It is likely that you will be a better provider if your mind and hands are trained to do something worthwhile in the society of which you will become a part.

Be modest in your wants. You do not need a big home with a big mortgage as you begin your lives together. You can and should avoid overwhelming debt. There is nothing that will cause greater tensions in marriage than grinding debt, which will make of you a slave to your creditors. You may have to borrow money to begin ownership of a home. But do not let it be so costly that it will preoccupy your thoughts day and night. When I was married my wise father said to me, “Get a modest home and pay off the mortgage so that if economic storms should come, your wife and children will have a roof over their heads.” The girl who marries you will not wish to be married to a tightwad. Neither will she wish to be married to a spendthrift. She is entitled to know all about family finances. She will be your partner. Unless there is full and complete understanding between you and your wife on these matters, there likely will come misunderstandings and suspicions that will cause trouble that can lead to greater problems.

She will wish to be married to someone who loves her, who trusts her, who walks beside her, who is her very best friend and companion. She will wish to be married to someone who encourages her in her Church activity and in community activities which will help her to develop her talents and make a greater contribution to society. She will want to be married to someone who has a sense of service to others, who is disposed to contribute to the Church and to other good causes. She will wish to be married to someone who loves the Lord and seeks to do His will. It is well, therefore, that each of you young men plan to go on a mission, to give unselfishly to your Father in Heaven a tithe of your life, to go forth with a spirit of total unselfishness to preach the gospel of peace to the world wherever you may be sent.

If you are a good missionary, you will return home with the desire to continue to serve the Lord, to keep His commandments, and to do His will. Such behavior will add immeasurably to the happiness of your marriage.

As I have said, you will wish to be married in one place and one place only. That is the house of the Lord. You cannot give to your companion a greater gift than that of marriage in God’s holy

house, under the protective wing of the sealing covenant of eternal marriage. There is no adequate substitute for it. There should be no other way for you.

Choose carefully and wisely. The girl you marry will be yours forever. You will love her and she will love you through thick and thin, through sunshine and storm. She will become the mother of your children. What greater thing in all this world can there be than to become the father of a precious child, a son or daughter of God, our Father in Heaven, for whom we are given the rights and responsibilities of mortal stewardship.

How precious a thing is a baby. How wonderful a thing is a child. What a marvelous thing is a family. Live worthy of becoming a father of whom your wife and children will be proud. The Lord has ordained that we should marry, that we shall live together in love and peace and harmony, that we shall have children and rear them in His holy ways.

And so, my dear young men, you may not think seriously about it now. But the time will come when you will fall in love. It will occupy all of your thoughts and be the stuff of which your dreams are made. Make yourself worthy of the loveliest girl in all the world. Keep yourself worthy through all the days of your life. Be good and true and kind one to another. There is so much of bitterness in the world. There is so much of pain and sorrow that come of angry words. There is so much of tears that follow disloyalty. But there can be so much of happiness if there is an effort to please and an overwhelming desire to make comfortable and happy one's companion.

When all is said and done, this is what the gospel is about. The family is a creation of God. It is the basic creation. The way to strengthen the nation is to strengthen the homes of the people. I am satisfied that if we would look for the virtues in one another and not the vices, there would be much more of happiness in the homes of our people. There would be far less of divorce, much less of infidelity, much less of anger and rancor and quarreling. There would be more of forgiveness, more of love, more of peace, more of happiness. This is as the Lord would have it.

Young men, now is the time to prepare for the future. And in that future for most of you is a beautiful young woman whose greatest desire is to bond with you in a relationship that is eternal and everlasting. You will know no greater happiness than that found in your home. You will have no more serious obligation than that which you face in your home. The truest mark of your success in life will be the quality of your marriage.

God bless you, my dear young men. I could wish for you nothing more wonderful than the love, the absolute total love, of a companion of whom you are proud and worthy in every respect. This choice will be the most important of all the choices you make in your life. I pray that heaven may smile upon you in the choice you make, that you may be guided, that you may live without regret, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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