

Entertainment Should Edify

“That which does not edify is not of God and is darkness.” -D&C 50:23



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Introduction

“That which does not edify is not of God and is darkness.” (D&C 50:23). What does this mean? Edify means to build. Therefore, if something just dulls and numbs, if it just entertains and lulls, if it just passes the time, it does not build, and is not worthy of our time.



Prophets have assured us that recreation, “unstringing the bow” as Joseph Smith said, is necessary. As we approach this exciting commandment, let’s make sure we understand the doctrines surrounding the subject so that we do not exceed the bounds the Lord has set. There is so much that is good & beautiful, that we don’t need to bother with lesser things. We can become confident that our choices and standards are creating a strong family environment & culture of faith that will span generations. We all need to take care of ourselves if we are to be able to care for others. Without overstepping these bounds into ‘toxic self-care-ism’, we can find ways to maintain ourselves which please God in that they lead to our eternal happiness in his kingdoms of glory.

God expects us to enjoy life. We preach, we work hard, but we also play hard. Of course God’s work is often fun and any work we do building His kingdom is but a small token of gratitude, but we are also afforded the opportunity to seek wholesome recreation. In fact, due to its power to keep us and our relationships running smoothly, we could even consider recreation a commandment.

Christ was a man of sorrows acquainted with grief, and we should always maintain a sober view toward life & our need to serve the needy. We avoid loud laughter and trivial forms of recreation. Many claim the couch lounging hours are their needed recreation, but we will look at higher and holier ways to fulfill this need.

In this book we will take a bold look questioning some popular forms of entertainment. In an attempt to be non-dogmatic, I present both

sides of several controversial subjects such as movie guidelines, music guidelines, the use of fictional and fantasy novels, video games, and other controversial topics, letting you choose for yourself with significant evidences at your view. We will look extensively at why to question pop rock and rap music. We will look into not only harmful messages, but harmful rhythms and beats.

There is a way of manhood, of the true man, even God our father, and we becoming like him, shed various things which are not compliant with the **standard** of his **character** (and there is a female counterpart hidden presently from view for sacred protection which pertains to our trial; we know she exists but do not as yet see her nor know her name). This letting go will include sloppy whiney unnaturally sounding **music**. It will include being unclean and disorderly in dress and maintenance of **possessions**. It will include the dedication of one's **time** to building the kingdom of God and learning useful things and becoming **skilled** persons, with **knowledge** of truth, and love of **beauty** and excellence. Lesser things will be let go, and higher things adopted, until the highest is obtained. Many argue in favor of sloppiness, vanity, and claim that those who finer things are simply bias, and that various scenarios of varying valor coexist in the kingdom of God. But these opinions are merely reflections of weak **character** which will be purified. The person atop the mount must not be persuaded to come down but wait patiently for others to likewise rise. The kingdom of God is like unto various cities, some greater and some lesser, but those of the lesser will always be constrained to honestly confess that the higher are indeed higher! The man whose moral convictions are atop the mountain is Jesus Christ, and he will not come down.

When looking at specific media things get difficult. Decisions along these lines can be quite personal and based on many factors. I will however endeavor to give some personal opinions.

As we look at these specific resources, remember that each person ultimately must bear in mind correct principles, and use those to govern themselves.

My general feeling about entertainment is that it is important, but must be kept carefully within the bounds the Lord has set.

Often, we can do things which help us recreate, but which are also educational. We can seek entertainment which isn't just fun or leisure, but also builds character, knowledge, faith, etc.

President Nelson has been very specific in teaching that if we chose unwholesome entertainment, that the Holy Ghost will leave our home. Remember, he has called for our homes to be sanctuaries of faith. Let us also remember the prophet Isaiah's stern warnings about being overly consumed with violence for its own sake.

President Nelson walks out of movies where there is contention (see Wendy Nelson's book "The Heavens are Opened"). We should seek to follow his example as guided by the Holy Ghost. There is a trend in Hollywood etc. to make stories far too graphic and disturbing, beyond what is required by the plot. Often we excuse horrifying scenes because "they're the bad guys doing bad things", but I feel these scenes often are not pleasing to the Lord, and that the theme of the negative consequences of evil can often be taught without being overly explicit and graphic. You can and should skip bad scenes, but try to focus on materials which are beyond that need. Take into account the age of the audience, and skip scenes in films which are not age appropriate.

Movies books games music etc. can teach of the complexities of life and its challenges but remember there are limitations to what should be presented, especially with the age of the audience.

Holy meaning sacred, wood meaning a tree, thus it's an idol set up that they worship, a false god. For oh how many people dedicate their lives to its teachings! Is that not the sumim-bonim of worship? Consider persons chasing Hollywood versions of love etc., at the price of leaving behind one desolated person after another in their path, in their addiction, seeking the larger high relentlessly in their dissatisfaction. All of this reminds me of the unforgiving declaration of President Boyd K Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, that because of Television, our generation is LIVING INSIDE the great and spacious building (the pride of the world) (ref).

Scriptures & Quotes on Living Differently Than The World

”No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other ; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24.

“For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.” Mosiah 3:19.

“Behold, I, the Lord, who was crucified for the sins of the world, give unto you a commandment that you shall forsake the world.” D&C 53:2.

“I give not unto you that ye shall live after the manner of the world.” D&C 93:13.

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” Revelation 3:16.

-2 Ne. 28:14 Nephi taught that many in our day would be lead away by false philosophies because we turn to the learning of men for our understanding as opposed to relying upon the arm of the Lord.

-Brigham taught “It is impossible to unit Christ and Baal – their spirits cannot unite, their objects and purposes are entirely different; the one leads to eternal life and exaltation, the other to death and final destruction.” (JD vol. 11; “Union. Persecution. The Nature of the Kingdom of God.)

We are Living in The Great and Spacious Building, A Post-Christian World – Quotes

-Lehi had a dream (1 Nephi 8) representing the love of Christ vs the evil of Satan. There was a great and spacious building floating in the air where people made fun of Christ.

-“Largely because of television, instead of looking over into that spacious building, we are, in effect, living inside of it. That is your fate in this generation. You are living in that great and spacious building.”
(President Boyd K. Packer)

- “The goal of honoring the Lord and submitting ourselves to His will is not as valued in today’s society as it has been in the past. Some Christian leaders of other faiths believe we are living in a post-Christian world.”
(Elder Quinton L. Cook)

Edifying Recreation: More Than Just Fun



“Too often we use many hours for fun and pleasure, clothed in the euphemism ‘I’m recharging my batteries.’ Those hours could be spent reading and studying to gain knowledge, skills, and culture.”

(President Henry B Eyring in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

Is the fact that something is fun or pleasurable sufficient reason for it to occupy our time thoughts and resources? I should say not.

We all need recreation, but there are many toxic venues which promise recreation.

To be effective, Satan doesn’t need to use evil, but merely to distract. Distraction then becomes a form of evil. Sins are not only of commission, but omission.

The Family Proclamation speaks of “wholesome recreation” being an important part of strong families. We should consider the word wholesome. Surely it suggests activities which invigorate the spirit mind relationships and body. It is hard to see how many popular forms of entertainment today would qualify in these categories as wholesome.

Perhaps an activity doesn’t need to inherently nurture all 4 of these categories (spirit body mind relationships) simultaneously, but some activities are inherently lacking in any one of these. Further, if an activity is good in one area but has a negative effect in any of the other 4, there is concern (particularly when any harm the spirit).

Further, the addictive nature of some forms of entertainment cause what started as innocent to become a beast, devouring time and energy far beyond the original intent.

Remember that the Holy Ghost is a sensitive companion, and leaves when his standards are violated. When we offend the spirit in an attempt to meet an innate need of some kind, we like Esau, trade our birthright for a mess of porridge.

In these last days of mass deception by conspiring men, we must use utmost caution that the content and culture of our leisure activities are not tainted with the ways of the world. To get a better idea of what does and does not qualify, we must look at not only how a certain activity immediately affects us, but now it affects people in general. Surely we do not want to foster a culture of recreation which statistically leads many to lose their morals. Some things which are innocent on one level should be avoided as they are corrupt on another level.

May we ensure our choices align with what we would do were the Savior present, and Zion redeemed. The way to judge is clear when guided by the Holy Ghost, and judge we must.

In all things, even recreation and art, we should be our best, and be reverent toward God. The great composer Haydn “dressed in his **best clothes to compose** because he said he was **going before his maker.**” (Reid Nibley, in Hal Williams, “Dr. Reid Nibley on Acquiring a Taste for Classical Music,” *BYU Today*, April 1980, 14.)

Recreation & Dimensions of Good

Does a thing need a moral “lesson” to be “good”?

There are **many dimensions of good**. There are good morals. There are things good for the strength of the body but otherwise meaningless. There are things good for gladdening the heart but otherwise meaningless. There are things which are good because they are fun. Some things meet several levels of good and are therefore particularly good. But we honor each category of good.

Sometimes we can reach for highest good. Handel said after writing the Messiah symphony, that he would be terribly disappointed if all it did was entertain people. It had a much deeper/higher purpose.

But we need not throw things out which do not simultaneously meet all the levels of good. Basketball for instance, a favorite of President Kimball, won't get you to heaven, but it will help you keep the commandment to take care of your body and enjoy life.

Should we have a steady diet of only the fluff, only the ‘trivial’? No, but we need not entirely ban it either.

A boy who enjoys a sport does it because he enjoys it. At the same time, he is strengthening his muscles, and extending his lifespan, which are good things. The same can be said of someone who enjoys a mentally stimulating video game or novel, it can exercise those organs and faculties. He does it because he enjoys it, but it also serves to exercise his faculties. All of this said, we must have moderation in all things. Someone who just plays ball all day and someone who just plays games or reads novels all day, they all need serious course correction, and to become more in tune with the faculties which they are neglecting. Video games, sports, novels, these can be downright edifying sometimes, we just need to make sure we are staying balanced and keen to the promptings of the Lord.

We may not need excessive time to relax and unwind, we may be quite able to unwind very well in more useful endeavors. It may be wise to keep recreational pursuits in general at a minimum. The Bruce R McConkie family certainly kept entertainments to a minimal. They were a gospel and learning oriented family, they hardly even did sports together.

Here is an analogy of 3 kingdoms. They are all good places, but one better than the other, and the last being best of all. The good, we will call it ‘telestial’, has quality art and performance. The better, the

‘terrestrial’, has not only fine performance, but a moral backdrop to drive the art. Finally, the highest best ‘celestial’ is not only good, but is holy. Not just fair, but self sacrificing. Not only justice, but mercy.

Where possible, we can seek art and recreation which are beautiful on multiple levels. We can refrain from being hostile with the goods that others chose while using moderation and wisdom to have joy in life as we look forward to the higher realms.

Joy of the Saints - Hugh Nibley Excerpts

Highlights from Book of Mormon & Pearl of Great Price Lectures

-Mosiah 4:11-12 is the key, always remember your own nothingness and the goodness, of God, and you'll always rejoice!

(Me Nothing + Good God = Rejoice!)

-Nephi said he lived after the manner of happiness, which

means they were happy all the time and so should we be.

-There is no end to what we can and will receive so long as we don't reject it.

-Shakespeare was right about this world being a dross and sleep, but when the gospel in fullness you find, all else is cast aside, it's not just fine arts where you look at the menu, it's the feast.

-5 times Brigham Young was driven out entirely. He said let 'em burn the temple the earth is the Lords and the fullness thereof. Let go of all and go worship. Things will care to themselves. Nothing has worn to me a gloomy aspect since I got the gospel. Even facing mobs. All works toward the good of the Kingdom.

-Never you find a sad true Saint. Joy to each needed measure. Brigham Young saw the temple burning and said "Good. 3 cheers." What the Lord lets go, we do too, with joy. All that matters is the work the Lord has for me to do today. This is what Brigham Young was known to say.

-Visions of minds being opened isn't like a symphony, but much more.

-Who live as they should constantly see glimpses of eternity.

-Brigham Young said 'The secret of mine is to never worry. I never do.' Also, Joseph Smith came to Brigham Young oft and said don't be in a hurry.

-Greek tragedies show what life is like without the Atonement of Jesus Christ.



Approaching Zion: To Our Glory or To Our Condemnation by Hugh Nibley – Lecture Highlights

Here Hugh Nibley explains key differences between Zion and Babylon.

Topics: economics, environment, Satan, Babylon, Zion, paradise, academics, money, career, beauty, Eden

-Jewish legend that Adam was only allowed to the parts of the earth that he worked in. That he tilled and cared for.

-There is a difference between working to make a living and taking from the earth. Many of us rob the earth of its beauty for thousands of years in order to live in wealth for a little season. It's easy to do; all you do is sign a few papers.

-Zion is to be beautiful. It's always said that Zion is beautiful, then joyful. They come in that order because the beauty is what makes Zion glad. This is not to be mistaken with Babylon, who is described as being beautiful in the scriptures.

-**Children are reckless in part because their parents are.** The parents go around wasting time but in different forms, like watching football games, watching R rated movies, driving cars, etc.

-Heaven is to be a paradise. So, make Zion that way. Brigham Young said we should plant shade trees and flowers and make rivers until this earth appears as the Garden of Eden. We preach the gospel by how beautiful our towns are. People see it and think, wow this is paradise!

-Brigham Young said that **beauty is our surest safeguard**. When we see beauty we feel joy. We can trust those feelings to guide us a right!

-Making earth as Eden is not a one-crop enterprise.

-Historically we read of Satan, Cain, Cesar, etc., getting dominion over things by force, and burning wildlife, and killing animals and humans.

-We read of great hunters like Nimrod Cain etc. that kill for sport.

Brigham Young said this is sinful, and only to kill animals as we need to for survival.

-Just as sure that Zion will be established, **Babylon will be destroyed. She won't be converted.** No, she won't have that. Her destiny is to be destroyed.

-Babylon is the inverse image of Zion.

- Babylon is the center for commerce and business.
- The economy of Babylon is built on deception.
- Babylon lusts after human slaves.
- When Babylon falls the entire world will be involved. She thinks none see her, but that is not the case. (*She is to be exploited every whit).
- Rome itself was Babylon the great in every respect.
- The Roman Church called itself the church at Babylon.
- The plan Satan proposed to Adam that Adam rejected was to put everything on the earth up for sale, so that you could have anything in this world for money. But you had to have money!
- We are like children in our understanding for **we think it's silly to wander in gardens** with seemingly nothing to do and would rather be in the marketplace.
- There is an **unbridgeable gap** between Babylon and Zion for they lead in two opposite ways.
- Many LDS people teach mixing Babylon with Zion but when that occurs Babylon is already won.
- Hebrew word for money is mammon, and pertains to money and people who deal with money. Thus the financing business is of the devil. Jesus taught we are to avoid such at all costs, and **only befriend the mammon of unrighteousness to the needed degree to survive.**
- Our society is not like the earth that God designed us to have. There have been times when people have lived without doctors, lawyers, beauticians, auto mechanics, dentists, generals, used car salesmen, garbage men, prostitutes, etc. Some of these can be an unpleasant necessity because of the society we have set up. These are unnecessary just as Kings and Dukes are not necessary in the United States. We are not living in the world the way God intended it to be and we need to get it that way. These things pertain to our glory or our condemnation.
- Nature admonishes that paradise is a reality. Modern revelation tells us that Zion is a reality, and paradise is the natural state of Zion
- We all have full time employment discovering the world**

Introductory Quotes Encouraging Wise Use of Recreation

“Make your children as happy as they can be.” -Brigham Young (I heard this but haven’t pinned down the source and quote yet.)

"Play is not recess from education; it IS education. Children learn far more in play, and with far more joy, than they could possibly learn in a classroom." -Peter Gray

“Refrain from illusions and seek divine and scientific truth” – Mother of Dimitri Mendeleev, her last words to him.

“Just as honest toil gives rest its sweetness, wholesome recreation is the friend and steady companion of work... Music, literature, art, dance, drama, athletics—all can provide **entertainment to enrich one’s life and further consecrate it...**” (Elder Christofferson in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

Make your entertainment high quality culture: “Too often we use many hours for fun and pleasure, clothed in the euphemism **‘I’m recharging my batteries.’ Those hours could be spent reading and studying to gain knowledge, skills, and culture.**” (President Henry B Eyring in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

“And again I would exhort you that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing” (Moroni 10:30)

"You must excuse me, but when I'm with the boys I make all the fun I can." -Joseph Smith (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

Brigham Young says theatre can aid the pulpit: “Upon the stage of a theater can be represented in character, evil and its consequences, good and its happy results and rewards; the weakness and the follies of man, the magnanimity of virtue and the greatness of truth. The stage can be made to aid the pulpit in impressing upon the minds of a community an enlightened sense of a virtuous life, also a proper horror of the

enormity of sin and a just dread of its consequences. The path of sin with its thorns and pitfalls, its gins and snares can be revealed, and how to shun it.” (Brigham Young, JD 9:242; Remarks by President Brigham Young, made at the Dedication of the New Theater in Great Salt Lake City, March 6, 1862. Reported By: G. D. Watt.)

Brigham Young says we need the arts to be healthy: “There are many of our aged brethren and sisters, who, through the traditions of their fathers and the requirements of a false religion, were never inside a ballroom or a theater until they became Latter-day Saints, and now they seem more anxious for this kind of amusement than are our children. This arises from the fact they have been starved for many years for that amusement which is designed to buoy up their spirits and make their bodies vigorous and strong, and tens of thousands have sunk into untimely graves for want of such exercises to the body and the mind. They require mutual nourishment to make them sound and healthy. Every faculty and power of both body and mind is a gift from God. Never say that means used to create and continue healthy action of body and mind are from hell. Such means never originated there.” (Brigham Young, JD 9:242; Remarks by President Brigham Young, made at the Dedication of the New Theater in Great Salt Lake City, March 6, 1862. Reported By: G. D. Watt.)

“A man may be judged by his standard of entertainment as easily as by the standard of his work.” (Ben Shapiro)

“Largely because of television, instead of looking over into that spacious building, we are, in effect, living inside of it. That is your fate in this generation. You are living in that great and spacious building.” (President Boyd K. Packer, [Lehi’s Dream and You, BYU Speech, 2007](#))

“Why do people feel guilty about TV? What is wrong with it? Just this: it shuts out all the wonderful things of which the mind is capable, leaving it drugged in a state of thoughtless stupor.” (Hugh Nibley)

“All movies are made for a religion. Many G rated movies are made for Satan.” -James Stoddard of The Joseph Smith Foundation



“When a community or nation grows careless in its Sabbath activities, its religious life decays and all aspects of life are negatively affected. The blessings associated with keeping the Sabbath day holy are lost. We should refrain from shopping on the Sabbath and participating in other commercial and sporting activities that now commonly desecrate the Sabbath. Latter-day Saints should set this holy day apart from activities of the world by entering into a spirit of worship, thanksgiving, service, and family-centered activities appropriate to the Sabbath. As Church members endeavor to make their Sabbath activities compatible with the intent and Spirit of the Lord, their lives will be filled with joy and peace.” (Preach My Gospel: What Should I Study And Teach: The Commandments: Keep the Sabbath Day Holy;

<https://www.lds.org/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service/lesson-4-the-commandments?lang=eng>)

“When some music has passed the tests of time and been cherished by the noble and refined, our failure to appreciate it is not an indictment of grand music. The omission is within. If a young person grows up on a steady diet of hamburgers and french fries, he is not likely to become a gourmet. But the fault is not with fine food. He just grew up on something less. **Some have grown up on a steady diet of musical french fries.**” (Your Refined Heavenly Home by Douglas L. Callister, A BYU speech given September 19, 2006,

<https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/douglas-l-callister/refined-heavenly-home/>)

“We . . . live in a world that is too prone to the tasteless, and we need to provide an opportunity to cultivate a taste for the finest music.

And, likewise, we're in a world that's so attuned to the now that we need to permit people to be more attuned to the best music of all the ages." (Neal A. Maxwell, remarks at the inauguration of KRIC-FM, Ricks College, May 1984.)

"My lord, I should be sorry if I only entertained them; I wish to make them better." (said by Handel after writing Messiah, In George Hogarth, Musical History, Biography, and Criticism (New York: J. S. Redfield, 1848), 67; see "A Tribute to Handel," Improvement Era, May 1929, 574)

"There is no music in hell, for all good music belongs to heaven." (Brigham Young, JD 9:244.)

"To be vulgar is to do that which is not the best of its kind. It is to do poor things in poor ways, and to be satisfied with that. . . . It is vulgar to wear dirty linen when one is not engaged in dirty work. It is vulgar to like poor music, to read weak books, to feed on sensational newspapers, . . . to find amusement in trashy novels, to enjoy vulgar theatres, to find pleasure in cheap jokes." (David Starr Jordan (Former President of Stanford University), The Strength of Being Clean: A Study of the Quest for Unearned Happiness (New York: H. M. Caldwell Co., 1900), 25.)

"Let us . . . show to the world that we have talent and taste, and prove to the heavens that our minds are set on beauty and true excellence, so that we can become worthy to enjoy the society of angels." (Brigham Young, JD 11:305.)

"Run and not be weary, walk and not faint." -D&C 89

Pres. Hinckley to seminary/institute teachers:

"what a frightening change in our culture. much sleaze. language on campus today never before. internet and porn to deliver filth and evil into our homes. it's taking it's toll. this is the era of gutter talk, of sloppy ways. at the same time this is the season when so many of our youth show such capacity to do right. they are more educated, know the scriptures better, go on missions more prepared, and become better parents. you have both kinds of students. try to hold onto who are being pulled away. now people want to leave the holy and go to the sleaze. music and entertainment are a part. there is no melody or uplift in the music. there is no beauty in it. here they hop and swoon and act like animals acting to their passions. drugs are often involved and destroys

most of them except a few that get away via great pain. sex becomes all a part of it too.”

Fun (Worldly, Aimless) vs Joy (Heavenly, Purposeful): Thoughts from a Friend

To summarize: Fun is from selfish indulgence, joy is a fruit of the spirit from selfless well doing.

This definition can be seen in different ways, some could say fun is a natural good thing, but here I'll suggest that joy is a higher way to have fun, so to speak.

Saying it is ok to do something merely because it isn't overtly bad, is entirely missing the mark.

Merely avoiding the bad is nowhere near good enough. We need to be aiming for things that are good, better, and best. In reverse order. We should be happy and joyful while doing all of it or then we know the spirit isn't with us. We shouldn't let the adversary convince us that we can only enjoy ourselves in pursuit of selfish pleasures because that kind of empty pursuit will never satisfy us.

The pursuit of fun for fun's sake is a false idol that always feels empty soon after it's done. If we have the spirit with us, regardless of what that is, work included, we can have real joy no matter what we have to do. The most enjoyable things I have ever done was to work alongside others in some sort of productive way to serve others, serve the Lord. Pursuing "fun" makes my skin crawl it's so frequently said by most and treated like the greatest good but that's just not right. It's inherently selfish.

None of this is to say that we should be severe. Or all work. We should be of good cheer no matter what we are doing but be about doing something with a purpose. A purpose that ultimately serves God. Yes the prophets have said that we should have a little recreation, but there's no reason why it can't have some purpose.

Purposeful Living, Joy Which is Wholesome, Builds God's Kingdom, Not Wasting Time, Too Much Pleasure Seeking: Quotes

“...work is important to human happiness as well as productivity. The world's way, however, places greater and greater emphasis on leisure and upon the avoidance of work.” -Spencer W Kimbal, Family Preparedness

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1976/04/family-preparedness?id=p30#p30>

“The adversary tries to smother this voice with a multitude of loud, persistent, persuasive, and appealing voices: murmuring voices that conjure up perceived injustices, whining voices that abhor challenge and work, seductive voices offering sensual enticements, soothing voices that lull us into carnal security, intellectual voices that profess sophistication and superiority, proud voices that rely on the arm of the flesh, flattering voices that puff us up with pride, cynical voices that destroy hope, entertaining voices that promote pleasure seeking, commercial voices that tempt us to “spend money for that which is of no worth” and our “labor for that which cannot satisfy” (2 Ne. 9:51), and delirious voices that spawn the desire for a “high.” Elder Faust

The Voice of the Spirit

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1994/04/the-voice-of-the-spirit?id=p10#p10>

"But, you say, we must have recreation; what shall we do? Turn to domestic [home] enterprises, and to the gaining of useful knowledge of the gospel. Let the love of reading good and useful books be implanted in

the hearts of the young, let them be trained to take pleasure and recreation in history, travel, biography, conversation and classic story." Smith, Joseph F. Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith, Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1920. 329-30. Print.; Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 38, September 1, 1903, p. 529

"We should train ourselves to find pleasure in that which invigorates, not stupefies and destroys the body; that which leads upward and not down; that which brightens, not dulls and stunts the intellect; that which elevates and exalts the spirit, not that clogs and depresses it. So shall we please the Lord, enhance our own enjoyment, and save ourselves and our children from impending sins."

Smith, Joseph F. Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith, Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1920. 329-30. Print.; Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 38, September 1, 1903, p. 529

"One's character may be determined in some measure by the quality of one's amusements. Men and women of industrious, business-like, and thoughtful habits care little for frivolous pastimes, for pleasures that are sought for their own sake. It is not easy to imagine that leading men in the Church would find any pleasure that was either inspiring or helpful at the card table; indeed the announcement that a president of a stake, bishop of a ward, or other leading official of the Church was fond of card playing would be a shock to every sense of propriety even among young people who are not seriously inclined to the duties and responsibilities of life. Such a practice would be looked upon as incompatible with the duties and responsibilities of a religious life" Smith, Joseph F. Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith,

Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1920. 329-30. Print.; Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 38, September 1, 1903, p. 529

"Tell me what amusements you like best and whether your amusements have become a ruling passion in your life, and I will tell you what you are. You tell me what you think about when you do not have to think, and I'll tell you what you are."David O. McKay, *Pathways to Happiness*, comp. Llewelyn R. McKay (1957), 257

"Truly we live in a time of which Paul prophesied, when "men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

"Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

"... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:2-5).

Does this sound familiar, brethren? To me it sounds like a night of prime-time television." Elder Ballard Gen. Conf. Oct. 2002

“John Adams understood the potential of righteous government when he wrote: “Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only law book and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited. Every member would be obligated in conscience to temperance and frugality and industry; to justice and kindness and charity towards his fellowmen; and to piety, love and reverence toward Almighty God. In this commonwealth, no man would impair his health with gluttony, drunkenness or lust. No man would sacrifice his precious time to cards or any other trifling and mean amusement. No man would steal or lie or in anyway defraud his neighbor, but would live in peace and good will with all men. And no man would blaspheme his maker or profane his worship. But a rational and manly, a sincere and unaffected piety and devotion would reign in all hearts. What a utopia, what a paradise this region would be.” From the beginning with the creation of the world, we have found order in the Lord’s plan. Thousands of years of history have testified to a consistency in his government as he directs the affairs of mankind. Just as surely as John Adams, we know the results of temperance, frugality, and industry. When they are discovered in the actions of man, wealth, prosperity, and abundance are the sure rewards for his efforts. Justice, kindness, and charity always produce peace, love and harmony. The results of gluttony, drunkenness, and lust are clearly predictable. They will surely destroy the temporal body. We also know of the effects of a weakened physical body on the functions of the mind. The destruction of one clearly has the same effect on the other. The results of stealing, lying and defrauding are also absolute. We know the waste of such activities as they literally rob us of our inheritance.” Elder L Tom

Perry, "As a Man Soweth"

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1976/04/as-a-man-soweth?id=p19-p20#p19>

“I again would urge upon all Saints everywhere a more strict observance of the Sabbath day. The Lord’s holy day is fast losing its sacred

significance throughout the world, at least our world. More and more, man destroys the Sabbath's sacred purposes in pursuit of wealth, pleasure, recreation, and the worship of false and material gods. We continue to urge all Saints and God-fearing people everywhere to observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Businesses will not be open on the Sabbath if they are not patronized on that holy day. The same is true of resorts, sporting events, and recreation areas of all kinds. Pursuit of the almighty dollar is winning, it seems, over the Lord's commandment, "Keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary" (Lev. 19:30). "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46; emphasis added)." President Spencer W Kimbal, "Hold Fast to the Iron Rod"

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1978/10/hold-fast-to-the-iron-rod?id=p15-p16#p15>

"Many are on a giant roller coaster of disaster, seeking the thrills of the moment while sacrificing the joys of eternity. Thus we forfeit peace. We forget how the Greeks and Romans prevailed magnificently in a barbaric world and how that triumph ended—how a slackness and softness finally overcame them to their ruin. In the end, more than they wanted freedom, they wanted security and a comfortable life; and they lost all—comfort and security and freedom. Do not yield to Satan's enticements; rather, stand firm for truth. The unsatisfied yearnings of the soul will not be met by a never-ending quest for joy amidst the thrills of sensation and vice. Vice never leads to virtue. Hate never promotes love. Cowardice never gives courage. Doubt never inspires faith." (President Thomas S. Monson, *The World Needs Pioneers Today*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2013/07/the-world-needs-pioneers-today?id=p15-p17#p15>)

"To say that forsaking the world in favor of receiving "him ... whom God hath ordained" is countercultural in today's world is certainly an

understatement. The priorities and interests we most often see on display around us (and sometimes in us) are intensely selfish: a hunger to be recognized; an insistent demand that one's rights be respected; a consuming desire for money, things, and power; a sense of entitlement to a life of comfort and pleasure; a goal to minimize responsibility and avoid altogether any personal sacrifice for the good of another—to name a few.” Elder Christopherson, *Finding Your Life*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2016/03/finding-your-life?id=p39#p39>

“We play too much. We work too little. We overeat, overdrink, and overplay. We are the richest people in the world, but not the sturdiest. We are at ease in America. And so we need to recapture the spirit of our parents and grandparents.” *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (1988), 581. As quoted by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf gave July 13, 2014, at the Pioneer Days Celebration in Ogden, Utah.

"What is our duty? To promote the kingdom of God on the earth. Every person that confines his thoughts and labors to happifying his own family and immediate friends will come far short of performing the duties devolving upon him. Every sentiment and feeling should be to cleanse the earth from wickedness, to purify the people, sanctify the nations, gather the nations of Israel home, redeem and build up Zion, redeem Jerusalem and gather the Jews there, and establish the reign and kingdom of God on the earth. Let that be the heart's desire and labor of every individual every moment."

--Brigham Young, June 12, 1860, JD 8:294.

"Our Father in heaven, Jesus, our elder brother and the Savior of the world, and the whole heavens, are calling upon this people to prepare to save the nations of the earth, also the millions who have slept without the Gospel, and here we are neglecting our duty, wasting our time, running here and there as though there was nothing to do only to serve ourselves." (Brigham Young, August 31, 1875, JD 18:77)

"I say to our bishops, you might as well try to raise up an athlete on a diet of chocolate bars and soda pop as to attempt to sustain your youth with activity programs only. They may be drawn to them, but they will not be much nourished by them." (Elder packer Gen. Conf. Oct. 1972)

"The blessings of food, sleep, and social enjoyment are ordained of God for his glory and our benefit, and it is for us to learn to use them and not abuse them, that his kingdom may advance on the earth, and we advance in it. That is our errand in the world, and we have no business but to build up the kingdom of God, and preserve it and ourselves in it."

--Brigham Young, December 27, 1857, JD 6:149.

"The Lord will not acknowledge a people who will falsify their word and are unvirtuous; he will not long trust a man of that kind with any of the affairs of his kingdom. He will not trust an unvirtuous people with his Holy Priesthood. He will not trust a people with property— with earthly wealth— who will covet the same and use it to pander to their lusts, and otherwise devote it to the power of the enemy of God and man. "

--Brigham Young, July 13, 1862, JD 9:316.

1 Tim. 6:9: But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Joseph Smith's Learning Habits: Not Indulgent in Entertainment – Also a Personal Account

Joseph did play some casual (not formal) sports at times with children etc. But hear this...

Joseph Smith starts telling his story of the time when he was around 6 or 7 years old. Why? It had so much to do with his spiritual development. Why? When he was laid up 3 years with his leg injury he read. He read a lot. What did he read? The bible. He said he could go learn from going to the woods and reading the bible for 2 hours than from a year of church. He also hung out in the local book store reading, so much that they had to chase him out.

He was well familiar with all the denominations and leaders thereof. He spent his time in the Christian community, and knew the doctrines of each group.

By the way, the statement that he couldn't dictate a coherent sentence by Emma isn't a legitimate statement, and came from her last words, at which time she denied many truths, such as Joseph's plural marriages.

So here is the point I'd like to make in regards to education and recreation: was Joseph reading fantastical magical novels? Was he playing video games? Was he wasting away his time? No! In his free time, he was reading the bible and other religious sermons circulating in his day!

President Boyd K Packer said "no one owes children entertainment." What are we to think of this? It is that life is full of duty, one of which is work, another learning, etc. And we should not be obsessed with the best entertainments.

I have a story along these lines – a child we took in was not used to reading in her free time. She was confused as to why we had so many 'useless books' all over the house. We didn't indulge her in television or gaming. Eventually she learned to love reading and the piano. Those became her recreation. Would this have happened if she had a constant hose of wild music's, games, and television, or other fanciful literature and videos? We did try an experiment with some gaming, and we saw

that as soon as we did, interest in the more wholesome recreations dwindled, she became desensitized, and addicted to the flashy constantly overly stimulating nature of the games. We decided the games do not fit well with the goals and spirit of our home.

Don't Make Entertainment the Top Priority – Quotes



“In a materialistic age, when recreation and convenience are the suggested priorities of our society, we might all well ask ourselves, ‘How well are we providing for the spiritual well-being and strengthening of our families? ...Are we clothing family members with ‘garments of salvation’ as anxiously as we provide clothing for their wardrobe? **Is our diet of entertainment and recreation balanced with the food offered by Him** who said, ‘Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely’ ([Alma 5:34](#)).” (Elder Ballard in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

Make your entertainment high quality culture: “Too often we use many hours for fun and pleasure, clothed in the euphemism ‘**I’m recharging my batteries.**’ Those hours could be spent reading and studying to gain knowledge, skills, and culture.” (President Henry B Eyring in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

“Parents should act to preserve time for family prayer, family scripture study, family home evening, and the other precious togetherness and individual one-on-one time that binds a family together and fixes children’s values on things of eternal worth...Parents **should teach gospel *priorities* through what they do** with their children.” (Elder Oaks in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

Elder Bruce R McConkie’s family was not a recreation-based family. He didn’t play sports with his children, didn’t go to sporting events, didn’t teach them sports because he didn’t know them himself. He did do some running and hiking, but time together in the McConkie family

Joseph Smith Encourages Recreation

"You must excuse me, but when I'm with the boys I make all the fun I can." -Joseph Smith (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)
-Joseph Smith was quite fond of wrestling. Joseph had a clerk to whom he said 'you know if you were bigger I could have some fun with you' he responded 'well don't let that stop you Joseph' then Joseph wrestled him and broke his leg. Joseph carried him home and the clerk said 'when Jacob wrestled an angel he got a blessing. I want a blessing.' Joseph gave him a blessing, and he was miraculously healed. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

-Joseph Smith told one man who had done much work for the building up of God's kingdom, that this brother needed to rest a while, to enjoy himself. The man responded, "I cannot". Joseph said, "then you will die." The man indeed later died a premature death, and Joseph spoke at his funeral. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)



-When others chastised Joseph for playing sports, thinking that a prophet shouldn't do such things, Joseph taught them that if you don't unstring the bow from time to time, it loses its spring. This meant that to be effective he had to relax sometimes.

-Joseph Smith was known to be easily drawn to laughter, and frequently played with children and his brethren, playing sports and joking with them. He said we shouldn't be too involved in the fantastic, but that a good sense of humor is of God. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

-Many saw Hyrum Smith as more prophet-like than Joseph, as Hyrum was less jovial and playful, but we know that these traits of Joseph helped him cope with his many trials, and uplift his fellows. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

-Joseph was hired as a farm hand not only because he was a hard worker, but because he could get the others to work too. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

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-Joseph had a few ministers come over to his home who challenged him in the scriptures. Joseph was able to answer all their questions, and pose questions to them which they could not answer. They decided to leave, and as they did, Joseph went ahead of them, drew a line in the sand, and 'jumped at the mark', meaning measured how far he jumped. Joseph said, 'there you see I bested you in the scriptures, let's see if you can beat me in this!' The men left very disappointed. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

-Joseph was known for excelling at the stick pull, where 2 men pulled on a stick, and the one to pull the other off the ground won. Another version of this was both pulling on a stick, and whose ever hands slipped was the weaker man. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

-Joseph was being pestered by a man volleying threats; Joseph told the man he was with, I think it was Sydney Rigdon to 'throw that man', which his companion did, and the men thenceforth left him alone. (from lectures on the prophets by Truman G Madsen)

-Joseph was about 6'2" and over 200 pounds. He was very strong from all his farm work.

-once all they had was some Johnny cake (corn bread), Joseph prayed 'dear God we thank thee for this Johnny cake, and please send us something better.' Just before their meal was ended, someone knocked on the door and presented him a turkey and a ham. Joseph jumped for joy and said, 'you see Emma, my prayer was answered!' (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

Once Joseph Smith was fund raising to get Porter Rockwell out of jail. He went to the temple building site, told them of the plight of Porter, and asked them to put money in a hat for Porter. Many did so. Joseph saw some people jostling, and decided to wager that he would win in a wrestling match against the strongest many present. The strongest stepped forward, and Joseph won, which helped raise much funds for Porter. After winning the match, Joseph picked up the man by his collar and trousers, and tossed him into a river. After this he hugged the man and spoke of how it was good fun.

One man from another church came to see Joseph, asking if he was the prophet. Joseph said, "I am, do you want to wrestle?" -on one occasion Joseph dressed in as ragged of clothes as he could and rode out to the ship of the most recent arrivals. He asked the first man he saw 'why are you here?' the man said 'I have joined the Mormon church'. Joseph said 'what do you know about Joseph Smith?' the man said 'I know that he is a prophet of God'. Joseph said 'what if I told you I was Joseph Smith?' the man said 'then I would know that you are a prophet of God'. Joseph then got off his horse and shook the man's hand and said 'I am Joseph Smith, and I have dressed like this to show you that if you've come to expect anything more than a man, you may as well get right back on that boat'. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

Other Prophets on Recreation

-Brigham Young: reportedly the night bugle sounded and they were about to end a dance, but Brigham said something to the effect of ‘forget the bugle, I want to dance!’ and proceeded to dance till around 3am (see Truman G Madsen’s lectures on the prophets)

-Brigham said “now we are to rest here” while on the trail. Then he said, “now we dance”. Porter Rockwell said “first he tells us we can rest, now he tells us we must dance!” (see Madsen presidents of the church book)

-the prophetic ‘Family Proclamation to the World’ (1995) teaches that wholesome recreation is one of the key elements to successful family life.

-Elder Neal A Maxwell played tennis even into his late years.

-President Thomas S. Monson **taught old folks in rest homes about how a football game works, so they can understand what is going on the television and enjoy it.** He speaks about current ball games. He says fishing is good and spiritual. He says having animals and going to fairs is joyful. He says road shows and dance festivals are uplifting. He knows about what is going on in the local barber shop. Henry the 8th was his favorite Shakespeare play. Among his favorite theatrical works is the Phantom of the Opera. He enjoyed raising pigeons. (see book To The Rescue by Heidi Swinton)

-President Russel M Nelson skied even into his 90’s.

-President Monson was a regular swimmer.

-“Just as honest toil gives rest its sweetness, wholesome recreation is the friend and steadying companion of work... Music, literature, art, dance, drama, athletics—all can provide **entertainment to enrich one’s life and further consecrate it...**” (Elder Christofferson in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

-Make your entertainment high quality culture: “Too often we use many hours for fun and pleasure, clothed in the euphemism ‘I’m recharging my batteries.’ Those hours could be spent reading and studying to gain knowledge, skills, and culture.” (President Henry B Eyring in “Today’s Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation” at

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-Don't make entertainment your top priority: "In a materialistic age, when recreation and convenience are the suggested priorities of our society, we might all well ask ourselves, 'How well are we providing for the spiritual well-being and strengthening of our families? ...Are we clothing family members with 'garments of salvation' as anxiously as we provide clothing for their wardrobe? Is our diet of entertainment and recreation balanced with the food offered by Him who said, 'Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely' ([Alma 5:34](#)).'" (Elder Ballard in "Today's Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation" at <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

-“Parents should act to preserve time for family prayer, family scripture study, family home evening, and the other precious togetherness and individual one-on-one time that binds a family together and fixes children’s values on things of eternal worth...Parents should teach gospel priorities through what they do with their children.” (Elder Oaks in "Today's Family: Chose Wholesome Recreation" at <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/choose-wholesome-recreation?lang=eng>)

-One of the reasons the Church is commanded to obey a strict health law "The Word of Wisdom" is to enable their spirits to be at peak of intellect, so they can discern better between good and evil, fill the measure of their creation, have joy, and invite others to enjoy the beauty of Zion.

-You can set a good example by not saying of the words that are not polite in the books you must read. Thomas S. Monson encourages the Saints to please not swear (Gen. Conf.).

-We have to be aware of things, reading even Osama Bin Ladin and Scarlet Letter and other things that are very controversial.

-Stay away from "anti-Mormon" books, rather learn what LDS believe by asking LDS.

-Some men are called to review anti-Mormon books, but they are set apart for that, and given a special blessing to be able to discern between truth and error as they do that mission for the church, seeing as it's easy to get deceived in cunning and crafty words, and even blatant lies.

-One example is the Apocrypha, the LDS Bible Dictionary speaks how these documents are not entirely true, but if the reader reads them with the Holy Ghost, he can find much to benefit from them.

-Things like Les Misérables teach how little people had morals and how conditions were, and that there are take aways from such, for the message is that such is bad;

-When we read something the Holy Ghost can teach us of whether it's something we need to put down.

-The Apostles of The Church are not ignorant of what happens in the world but are very aware. They travel all over the world, and are very involved, not out of date (Elder Ballard Gen. Conf. Oct. 2014).

-To a certain degree, what we entertain is up to the interpretation and judgment of the individual.

-We can look for the best versions of things, learn from the best books.

-Greeks in plays did the graphic parts off stage, that respect is gone now.

-Prophet of the LDS Church President Hinckley said no "R" rated movies a long time ago. Since then, now what then would have been x rated is R, and much of what was R then is PG-13 now. There is a lot of politics in film ratings, and there is a lot of compromise and finding ways for something to barely make the cut off for a certain rating.

-The Phantom of the Opera is one of Thomas S Monson's favorite plays (see "To The Rescue").

-Victor Hugo's Les Misérables is often quoted in General Conference.

- "Whatever you read, listen to, or look at has an effect on you.

Therefore, choose only entertainment and media that uplift you. Good entertainment will help you to have good thoughts and make righteous choices. It will allow you to enjoy yourself without losing the Spirit of the Lord. While much entertainment is good, some of it can lead you away from righteous living. Offensive material is often found in web sites, concerts, movies, music, videocassettes, DVDs, books, magazines, pictures, and other media. Satan uses such entertainment to deceive you by making what is wrong and evil look normal and exciting. It can mislead you into thinking that everyone is doing things that are wrong. Do not attend, view, or participate in entertainment that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way. Do not participate in entertainment that in any way presents immorality or violent behavior as acceptable." (from "For the Strength of Youth" at

<https://www.lds.org/manual/for-the-strength-of-youth-fulfilling-our-duty-to-god/entertainment-and-the->

[media?lang=eng&query=clean+entertainment](#)) note: many of the adult leaders of the Church carry this manual with them as these standards apply to all ages.

- Excerpt from latter-day saint guide to the scriptures on cleanliness:
- He that hath clean hands and a pure heart shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord: Ps. 24:3–5;
- Do not call any man common or unclean: Acts 10:11–28;
- Can ye look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands?: Alma 5:19;
- The Lord will chasten Zion until she is clean: D&C 90:36;
- Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord: D&C 133:4–5, 14; (Isa. 52:11;)

For an excellent lecture on the personality and character of Joseph Smith by Truman G. Madsen, including his inclination to play sports and laugh with others: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVXkBX0JNjI>

Caution in Associations

The culture of our peers quickly becomes our own.

We don't need to have a rule of not letting our children play with other children who aren't members of the church (April 2021 General Conference), but we should have standards that discourage our children from frequently associating with children who are godless and unruly. Often we think of sending ourselves or our children into fallen cultures for missionary efforts. These usually result in our sheep being eaten by the wolves.

In the October 2020 General Conference, we were reminded that when Lehi partook of the fruit, he called out from the tree, rather than leaving the tree. He didn't go over to the Great and Spacious building (Babylon) in efforts to try and give them the fruit.

Naturally we go among the peoples of the world everywhere offering them the gospel, but we don't adjust our standards to theirs.

The Savior did eat with publicans and sinners, but only those who were humble and teachable. He didn't spend endless time bible bashing with the hard hearted, nor did he push the complacent and rebellious into submission. He invited and ministered, but he did not join in their games.

Plan of Salvation Allegory in Holidays

Note: this is just a fun study of comparing and contrasting holidays in the order they occur, and relating that to the plan of salvation in the order of eternal events, or the choosing of a higher or lower kingdom.

In reality, anytime people come together with friends and family is a great time.

Note: we should emphasize religious and biblical holidays to create traditions of faith for the rising generation.

The Telestial Holiday, Halloween:

-FOOD: empty calories which give only immediate pleasure and later chronic illness.

-goofing around

-acting like kids

-HEROISM: pretending like you're a hero, usually a pretend one

-getting people to look at you

-actually a lot of satanic ritual abuse goes on; this is a very evil holiday

[Note: We don't celebrate Halloween in my family, we feel it is too dark and corrupt. The same day however is Reformation Day (the day Luther nailed the 95 thesis to the church door).]

The Terrestrial Holiday, Thanksgiving:

-FOOD: wholesome foods

-appreciating family / those who appreciate us

-HEROISM: giving reverence to / remembering heroes who have gone before (to make America, etc.)

-honoring America for its freedom

The Celestial Holiday, Christmas:

-FOOD: giving food to the poor

-HEROISM: worshiping Jesus Christ, the prototypical hero who can help you become a hero, and doing heroic acts

-pure joy

MINOR HOLIDAYS:

The Creation Holiday: New Year's Day

-we remember beginnings, especially the creation of earth & being raised as “young” spirits in pre-mortality

The Holiday of Promise: Easter

-we learn in premortality of Jesus Christ and Gods plan for us to have immortal bodies like himself

The Holiday of War: Memorial Day

-we fought in pre-mortality between Jehovah (Christ) and Lucifer

The Pre-Mortal Holiday: Independence Day

-becoming free, as in the election of Christ instead of Lucifer, and thus coming to earth to work out our salvation

The Mortal Holiday: Labor Day

-this life is the day for men to perform their labors, to prepare to meet God

Entertained Goons in Babylon: The Gospel of Consumerism & Its Absurd Advertising

Violence is on the television screen at the public places and the people cheer; this is the sign that the hearts have waxed cold. They do this for entertainment - they don't care about reality.

They will not lift a finger to protect their nation nor the morals of their nation. They have no morals except what they need to get gain. And all hell fights against the church of the lamb of God and those whom seek for such.

The science is biased in their favor and we are in Babylon the great, though it shall fall. Praise God! Hosanna, Lord save us!



-For more critical info about this, see the film “The True Cost: Who Pays the Price for Our Clothes?” about the sweat shops which suffer for us to have cheap nice clothes. And we just let it happen. We can boycott this by where we choose to spend our money! The film is on Netflix, and here is a link to my notes on it:
<https://richardsonstudies.wordpress.com/category/the-true-cost-who-pays-the-price-for-our-clothes/>

-Also mind you, in 4th Nephi, it gives the first reason for the falling apart of Zion as the love of costly apparel.

-on 2018 the beer vending company Bud Light had advertised that their beverage was “for the many, not for the few”. Wow! Sounds like the broad road to hell which Jesus spoke of!

-on 11/9/15 I saw a clothing brand called “No Boundaries”. It is notorious for being extremely tight fitting! This is open rebellion and sexual debauchery!

-One store is called “Vanity”. “Ah, they have the best jeans!” some say. No! You don’t shop at a store named vanity people!

-One makeup brand is called “Lavillin”! It’s like the name “Cruella Deville”! Look at it: la means the, then is the word “villain”. Why people?!

-in May of 2016 in the New York Times I was flipping through and saw a picture of a woman with extremely expensive clothing, gaudy and pride full, she was the center of the universe, her own deity. The caption said, “Believe in The Magic of Giving”. It was to sell a 400\$ coat from Calvin Klein. In the next page or so was a picture of a woman living in a small hut not even big enough for her to fully lay down in, with a tarp for a roof, and a couple of eating utensils stacked up around the door. The floor was dirt. She was in Myanmar. I wept at how backward and heartless our society is.

-A shopping mall in Utah county says, “The Center of it All!” What planet are we on?! We are in trouble folks! The center of it all used to be

the temple! Truly, we have made this place our temple! We believe not in the Lord our God, but in the works of our own hands! Think no longer that we are superior to those who worshipped the work of their hands in days of old!

-One shirt I've seen often lately says "Ball is everything!". Wow let's not have diversity, nor healthy recreation, let's have this consume every aspect of our lives and define us! When I hear "ball is life" (another popular shirt), I wonder, what is after life? Perhaps the shirt is a typo which should say "Baal is life".

-A radio advertisement I heard said "When I wake in the morning I think of sports and media, this consumes my life, I want a career in this."

-When you're in a shopping mall (God help you to not be in there when it falls), you see "Victoria's Secret" underwear products being advertised in much more than life size images right there in open sight. Is nothing sacred anymore? So much for the secret, Victoria. This is not normal folks.

-Do we question folks, that these things are an abomination and a sign of the times that we live in the last and most wicked time of this earth, and on the most wicked planet in the universe? This is the doctrine. This is part of the problem folks.

- "Darkness prevails at this time as it did at the time Jesus Christ was about to be crucified. The powers of darkness strove to obscure the glorious Son of righteousness, that began to dawn upon the world, and was soon to burst in great blessings upon the heads of the faithful" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp. 90-91.)

-one surf store in Provo is called "Called to Surf", a pun, obviously, on "Called to Serve" a mission. Surfing is fun and all, but I don't like the sound of this. Further, it sort of sounds like becoming a serf / peasant. Hopefully no one opts for the call to surf instead of the call to serve!

-one Utah county billboard said, 'diamonds were women's best friend until they invented Botox'. This speaks volumes of vanity!

- “Find the Urge to Splurge” said a bill board pointing to the Utah Fashion-place Mall! I don’t think anyone has trouble finding that urge!

- “OBEY WORLD AGENDA”! said one cap I saw. What does that mean?!

-“the bravery of tinkling ornaments, and cauls, and round tires like the moon; The chains and the bracelets, and the mufflers; The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings; The rings, and nose jewels; The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping-pins; The glasses, and the fine linen, and hoods, and the veils.” (Isaiah 3)

-“15 What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts.

16 ¶ Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon,

19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

21 The rings, and nose jewels,

22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

24 And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.

25 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.

26 And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.” (Isaiah 3:15-26)

Recreating the Holidays: Culture Shift: HOLINESS TO THE LORD

Christmas is a holy week like Hanukkah. No man can serve 2 masters: help the children understand it is Christ, not Santa, that is to be thanked for their gifts.

"Jesus Christ is the source of every blessing we receive" said President Henry B. Eyring. Teach the children that gifts are from people who love them like parents, siblings, and neighbors. Teach them that the Holy Ghost, whom is the messenger of Jesus Christ, is who inspired them to be kind and give gifts.

President Nelson recently received the revelation for the church that using the title of Mormons was inappropriate and offensive to God, in that it sidetracks from the real name of the church, which is the church of Jesus Christ. Would it not stand to reason that we are doing something similar with Christmas when we make Santa the focal point of benevolence & accountability? Surely the time in which we celebrate the birth of the Savior of the World should be one where he is the central character. There was no room for his birth back then, and there is apparently still no room to this day.

When children are contemplating weather they are on the 'naughty or nice list', teach them that it is Christ, not Santa, who holds that list. Christ truly holds them accountable, and truly does watch their every move. It is interesting how the secular world uses Santa to hold children accountable. They recognize that the key factor in behavior is accountability. Conveniently, they have selected a man who has set no real expectations to be their standard of accountability.

While Santa isn't the epitome of evil, he has, however well intending, gotten in the way of teaching children about Christ. If Santa gets in the way of Christ, we can say, like Christ said to well-intending Peter, 'get thee behind me Satan, for thou savorest not the things of God.' Santa is Satan when he undermines Christ. If 'Santa' does good to others, then he is of Christ, because whatsoever persuades men to do good is of Christ.

But the second he becomes bigger than Christ, he needs to step down. Perhaps Santa used to be a good message, a rewarder of good, curser of evil who knows the thoughts and intent of the heart, but now it appears to be wholly commercial and gluttonous.

Easter, the true time of the birth of Christ, must also be used to teach symbols of new life in Christ.

Halloween can be a time of light rather than darkness, a time of abiding joy rather than fear and fleeting pleasures. Wear white all week long. Keep the lights on all week long. If you are celebrating the dead, celebrate them in beauty, looking forward to the resurrection of the dead. Looking forward to the realms of light in which we will meet them again.

New Year's should be a time to contemplate the creation of the earth. In ancient times, the new year was always a time to reenact the creation of the earth through dramatic plays and ceremonies. Similarly, we can contemplate the beginning as a new era comes upon us. A time to start afresh doing things the way that God originally intended them to be.

At the end of the day, we may as well throw out the pagan holidays, and put in Judeo-Christian ones. Celebrate Passover and other biblical festivals. Ensure your celebrations are centered on the plan of salvation.

Celebrating Religious Holidays

Children love holidays. They define calendars by them. They hope and yearn for them. What if we used them as powerful teaching tools? Throw out useless (pagan) holiday symbols and practices, and work toward religious celebrations.

Should we celebrate Jewish holidays? Most of them are biblical, and they point to the Messiah, so yes! Further, remembering and respecting the Jews is something we are commanded to do in the Book of Mormon.

The Pennsylvania Jewish Community Center had this helpful list of Jewish holidays with brief descriptions:

Shabbat

The day of rest and weekly observance of God's completion of creation.

Rosh Hashanah

The Jewish New Year—a holiday observed with festive meals and a day spent in prayer or quiet meditation.

Yom Kippur

The Jewish Day of Atonement—the most solemn day of the Jewish year. A day devoted to self-examination, and the chance to begin the New Year with a clean slate.

Sukkot

A celebration of the fall harvest, this holiday also commemorates the time when the Hebrews dwelt in the Sinai wilderness on their way to the Promised Land.

Shemini Atzeret

Literally the “8th day of assembly,” this holiday marks the end of Sukkot with an annual prayer for rain.

Simchat Torah

The day marking the end and the beginning of the annual Torah reading cycle.

Hanukkah

A festival celebrating liberation from oppression, freedom of worship, and finding light in the darkest of times.

Tu B'Shevat

The Jewish “New Year of the Trees,” celebrated with observances that connect us to our environment and the natural world.

Purim

A day celebrating the saving of the Jews from a diabolical plot of destruction, as recounted in the Book of Esther.

Passover

A festival of freedom that marks the Hebrew exodus from Egypt long ago.

Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day)

The day Jews all over the world mourn the loss of six million Jewish lives lost during the Holocaust.

Yom HaZikaron (Israeli Memorial Day)

A day commemorating the soldiers who have fallen fighting for Israel's independence and defending its security.

Yom HaAtzmaut (Israeli Independence Day)

This holiday celebrates the independence of the Modern State of Israel.

Lag B'Omer

The holiday that marks the 33rd day of the 49-day “Omer” period between Passover and Shavuot.

Shavuot

The celebration of the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people, also known as the Festival of First Fruits.

Tisha B'Av

An important fast day commemorating the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem in 586 BCE and 70 CE.

Tu B'Av

A Jewish celebration of love.

(see <https://pjcc.org/jewish-life/jewish-holidays-explained/>)

Zion is Joyous: Good Times After Leaving Babylon: Artistic Creation, Dance, Sports, Outdoors, Learning, Visiting, Work/Service, Music, Treats, Dating, Animal Husbandry

Leaving Babylon involves withdrawing from things we used to enjoy which we have found are not the Lord's way. In this article I will briefly mention some of those things which we may want to leave behind. But after leaving them, then what? How do we find joy together as friends and family, without dabbling in fallen culture? Here are some ideas...

Sections:

ARTISTIC CREATION
DANCE
SPORTS
OUTDOORS
LEARNING
VISITING
WORK & SERVICE
MUSIC
TREATS
DATING
ANIMAL
HUSBANDRY



ARTISTIC CREATION:

Children (& adults) love to create.

- wood working
- painting, sculpture
- cooking
- sewing
- origami

- Legos, blocks, Knex, trains, ball-rollercoasters, wooden ships/planes...
- Elder Scott would paint.

DANCE:

- Ballet
- Irish
- Folk
- English country swing
- some forms of eastern & country swing
- (remember to leave behind costumes & methods that do not invite the spirit, or that provoke lust)
- Brigham Young loved to dance

SPORTS:

- wrestling. Joseph Smith loved to wrestle, and often asked even strangers if they wanted to wrestle him. This is a good winter indoor sport – throw down some mats in the living room
- sparring & target sports such as sword fencing, paintball/airsoft/nerf, HEMA (historical European martial arts), AMA (Asian martial arts), target shooting.
(But don't kill animals for sport, President Kimball says this is a sin if not needed for food.)
- (not so much watching sports. Prophets have rebuked us becoming lazy unskilled spectators via TV. Further, we don't want to feed into a culture of Sabbath breaking etc.)
- (I place strong cautions against skateboarding. Though fun, it is particularly saturated in evil rude rebellious culture. You must chose where to draw the line in cultural connections to various activities. When in doubt, do without. If you feel strongly called to this, go forward with a plan of how to mitigate the culture for yourself and your children.)

OUTDOORS:

- hike near your home. Elder McConkie said great men climb mountains.
- walks around town with family or friends. This is also the quintessential

traditional method of courting. It's free and allows for great conversation. -camping. This is hands down the largest reported family fun event when compared to all other family recreation events when youth rate their favorite family activities.

-(do not skip church and other Sabbath worship to have more time camping etc. Many prophets have discouraged this. Even traveling large distances on the Sabbath often leads to shopping, working, and taking worship lightly, sending a message to youth that fun is more important than God.)

LEARNING:

-Friends over for food & conversation about the signs of the times, etc. When Bruce McConkie and Joseph Fielding Smith got together, they didn't discuss politics or the weather, they basked in talking about the doctrines of the kingdom.

-car rides can be great times to teach

-You'd be surprised at how fun learning can be, even for kids. A deep gospel conversation can thrill them and keep them asking questions for hours.

-Hugh Nibley says we all have a full time job learning the history of our world.

-hands on sciences can be great fun

-create a reading culture. Fill your home with books. Let your children observe you reading jot only fluff books, but deep books. Like the Ben Carson family, let the wonder of reading lift your family to an entirely different way of life.

-Brigham Young spoke of how in the millennium, as there will be no free loaders and we will all share in the work, we will get all the days work done in only 2-3 hours, and can spend the rest of our time doing what we were really sent to this Earth to do, namely learning. Brigham also said 8 hours to sleep, 8 to work, 8 to play. By play we can easily reason he referred to, at least in large part, learning. He also spoke of how he would love to study chemistry.

-The Bruce McConkie family wasn't an entertainment-based family. Bruce didn't know anything about sports and didn't teach his children sports. Though they did hike (Bruce said great men climb mountains)

and sing etc., much of their leisure time was spent learning & preaching the gospel.

VISITING

- tell stories
- read aloud, particularly classics & other books which teach morals or skills.
- read silently, but still together
- healthy snacking
- tell about your day, the future, the gospel, etc.
- look at family pictures & family videos.
- (don't need a movie every time we settle in for free time. If that's your go-to recreation, you are living far beneath your privileges)
- (I strongly recommend against card games. Many prophets have spoken against these time filler trivial wasters of life.)
- (I do not recommend spending inordinate time and money on recreation. President Packer said no one owes children entertainment.)
- (I recommend children not having cell phones, or at least very limited use educational large tablets not connected to Wi-Fi or data. Not only spiritually dangerous, phones waste inordinate amounts of time)
- (I recommend no video games. There are simply many better ways to enjoy life, socialize, learn, problem solve, etc. VGs are overly stimulating and will thereby keep your child from turning to healthy recreation such as reading & instruments. It's like the rat who chooses the cocaine instead of the food constantly until it starves to death.)

WORK & SERVICE:

- JustServe.org and app to focus on the needs of others
- meeting neighbors
- helping neighbors; get tools for the little kids so they can feel involved
- gardening. It has been said that there is in dirt an enzyme that produces dopamine in the brain
- ministering assignments
- Vocational training can be very fun; fun experimenting/tinkering can be what inspires/leads to discovery of what one is interested in for a

vocation.

-in the McConkie home, when father came home from work and his children were just sitting around, the first thing he would say to them would be, "isn't there something you could be doing to help mother?"

-President Kimball said a life full of leisure and free time is unnatural and unhealthy.

MUSIC:

-in the spirit of Zion being independent, learn to make your own music. The confidence and deep abiding joy that come from learning piano (usually the foundation) and other instruments cannot be overstated. Learning instruments also helps youth orient themselves toward classical symphonic music.

-uplifting genres include classical, symphonic, folk, choral, Celtic, opera, etc.

-gone are the days when families would sit around the front room or the fireplace and sing songs together. Bring them back!

-Presidents of the Church have said in regard to music, there is so much good, don't bother with the bad. Easy access to beautiful music is one of the most powerful tools from the Lord in these last days. (And easy access to evil music is one of the most powerful tools of the Devil in these last days.)

-(I highly advise against pop, alternative, rock (even soft rock), & rap. Studies have been conducted wherein these have been shown to correlate with unchaste behavior.)

TREATS:

-Banana cashew vanilla extract ice cream

-berry smoothies

-popcorn with yeast, cinnamon, etc.

-apples with peanut butter, honey, etc.

-see Dr. Joel Fuhrman's book on how to feed kids right

-(partake not in the plagues of fast food, junk food, etc. It's tempting to justify using these to build relationships, but such is Babylon logic. Junk food is a gateway to other drugs, getting a person in the habit of

overstimulating dopamine & insulin.)

DATING:

(weekly for couples & mature singles over 16)

-Walks are the way it was don't for millennia. It works great. It's free, its conversation stimulating. It releases endorphins, which you then associate with the person you walk with.

-(avoid movies, they don't build relationships nearly as well as conversation & interactive activities.)

-picnic. Way cheaper than restaurants.

-(avoid any places where there will be bad influences or unsettling unholy music)

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY:

-President Monson said every boy needs a dog. (see "To The Rescue" biography)

-learning to care for and even train animals can be an excellent & fun way to teach behavioral psychology & relationship skills.

-animals teach us many things, and help in temporal preparedness.

-with caring for animals youth easily step into the world of biology, anatomy, & physiology, which can then lead them to microbiology, chemistry, etc.

-though we avoid eating meat as directed in the D&C, raising farm animals is fun, educational, and helps with preparedness.

-hunting for meat can be educational preparedness when the youth understand that we eat meat only sparingly in time of need.

Careers and making the world a better place: Happiness theory

Its true we must provide for our families, and that some trades are safer than others.

Perhaps as a side hobby and later something greater when skill becomes a reality, a person can do something that they enjoy.

Someone said "don't seek what the world needs. What the world needs is people who have come alive, so do what makes you come alive."

Many are the stories of people who sought money focused careers, quickly burnt out, then found real joy and provided with a smaller yet sufficient wage in something they greater enjoyed.

Perhaps a fella wants to make hats. He could find some real joy in becoming an excellent hat maker. He could enjoy seeing the people glad he sells them to.

What we must avoid of course is becoming a pessimist, always grumpy, outwardly doing all the right things, but being a wreck inside, a smiling face at work, and a downer at home.

A related thought is this: we must react to life's difficulties in healthy ways. Perhaps this is a key to God, that he reacts the curve the nature, to bend the will to the Father, to make something good out of a difficult situation.

Some take this too far and have a life of minimal thought, and maximum pleasure. This is surely not pleasing to God.

A man must, to be without flaw, have thought for the economy. He must, particularly if his vocation is ethereal, have supply laid up in store for a change in times which could require him to a life of more financially driven work.

It is a noble thing to seek learning, and this must be in the heart of the fabric of whatever we are doing, and not just limited to the skills of our chosen vocation.

Be Simple Concerning Evil

A scripture says be ignorant/simple when it comes to evil. I think this applies to movies which show horrendous evil abuse vulgarity and violence but say "its ok he is the bad guy, the good guy will crush him"... It's an excuse to indulge in and relate to the evil. We don't need to see so much detail of how evil people conduct their lives.

Find adrenaline rushes in ways God permits. "Touch not the unclean gift."

Nibley points out how both Nephites and Lamanites were wicked in much of the warring.

Isaiah says turn from violence. Surely this good guy vs bad guy violent genre of entertainment is not becoming of saints.

I hearken to the day when plays did killings behind the curtain when such was needed for the plot.

No Ones Owes Children Entertainment: Meditations on a Boyd K. Packer Statement

President Packer said no one owes children entertainment. I've long pondered on what was meant by this.

Alas the purpose of life is knowledge And saving souls

Isn't the movies

Isn't the games

The free time is not free, but is to learn, not fake but real learning.

The single thing that should be on our minds every day is to learn to read to think.

The Lord puts his stamp of approval on this theory when he said in the next life those who have more knowledge will be to so much greater advantage. The other thing he highlighted as a significant advantage is to save souls therefore we are to combine these 2 And use our knowledge to save souls.

The purpose of parenting should not be to make memories of fun silly things together though some of that is important look at the Bruce R McConkie family they were not a recreationally based family they spent their time learning and preaching. This is what makes the character of a person, not the fun.

Children should be an asset to the family. They should be expected to work along side the parents. Play, yes, but with intermittent work, even in evenings and weekends.

A parent has no obligation to provide the thrills of the neighbors, or elaborate incentives for the obedience of their children.

Limits with peers of your children are acceptable also. Never let a friend of your child do things in your home which you would not allow your child to do, such as use immodest clothing, have unrestricted access to phones and internet, be exempt from whatever work the family is doing that day or evening, etc. Along these lines, a parent should know the parents, home, and specific activities of what the child is doing when at another person's home, and should collaborate with the parent, not the child, about these play dates.

Sport Philosophy

(Note: This is sport philosophy, not sport psychology. It is about the morality of sports, not about how to motivate people to do well in sports.)

"You must excuse me, but when I'm with the boys I make all the fun I can." -Joseph Smith (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

Physical sports involve not only the strength of the body, but the strategy of the mind. They can be called physical chess, and are arguably one of the greatest ways to learn grow and recreate. Some have said that sports build character – I'm not sure about that, since many professional athletes are senseless immoral brutes. However it could well be said that sports REVEAL character. And for those who are seeking to build good character, I'm sure sports can help them do that. We don't give a clean stamp of approval on "sports" or "business" etc., as many of the skills needed for them are amoral, meaning they are needed for skill in either good or bad things. Courage, discipline, perseverance, teamwork, mental fortitude, problem solving – these are all great, but are traits that can describe either the well trained gentleman, or the well trained bank robber alike.



Many look upon sport team involvement as highlights to their school days (though others see them as more of plagues). Sports can be an environment to channel energy in positive ways. Be careful to not be too trapped in the ultra-competitive school and community sports, where parents overly harp on children for performance. If the element of fun is present, the student will excel naturally and with minimal coaching. High intensity coaching situations should be elected by the child, not forced. Naturally there is a time and place for hardcore coaching, hell weeks, running drills, technique drills, etc. to maintain health, but the sport is to be foremost a delight. If teams are too competitive to even let you play without selling your soul to be good enough, look to your siblings neighbors and others to have fantastic sporting experiences.

Which sports are better than others? Other than avoiding brain damage or other frequent and serious bodily damage, I don't suppose some sports are much better than others. The skater is an athlete just as much as the footballer. The tennis player and footbag player win a strong bill of health just like the soccer player (not Hercules perhaps, but most of us don't need to be Hercules).

As for peer pressure, it's found in any sport, football, skating, dancing (see my dancing materials in a book of their own), all have peer pressure. The dancer is tempted to dress less modestly than she needs to at both practice and while going through day to day life, and is tempted to judge her worth on her appearance. The skater is offered drugs and alcohol. The footballer is offered chewing tobacco alcohol and one-night stands. The wrestler and dancer are tempted to become anorexic to an unhealthy degree.

Those of any sport can be tempted to carry their passion to an extreme, which then gets in the way of religious and familial duties. The soccer mom can not have time for self or quiet time with the children because she runs around so much. The student can not have time to learn mathematics science reading literature drama music and other intellectual skills when the sport devours all attention. Parents should not feel pressure to shuttle everyone all the time. Some say boredom is the root of bad behavior, so they seek to overly fill their children's schedules. In reality, bad behavior isn't from boredom, it is from lack of discipline and a rebellious attitude. Overloading a child isn't the magic recipe for character development, as an unruly child will be unruly wherever they are. Too much leisure time, including sport time, will tend to corrupt anyone. Children should be expected to give significant help with home chores, and develop not only physical and social talents, but mental and spiritual ones too.

Flexibility and strength help athletes and intellectual students alike to avoid burn out as they'll enjoy more comfort throughout the day, having gained this level of control over their bodies. Bodies are central to any activity mental or otherwise, and therefore cannot be eliminated from any equation entirely. For most people, the happy way to exercise is through sports. A brilliant workout is one that you'll actually be excited to do, and therefore, do. Buying a soccer ball may be much more effective than buying a treadmill. Workout equipment will appeal to athletes, but sporting equipment can appeal to almost everyone, even the "uncoordinated".

Some claim that ‘sports build character’. This is true on some levels, but not entirely, or we would see without fail that the professional athletes were the towers of moral integrity in society! Someone pointed out that perhaps rather than sports building character, they reveal character. It has been said of Abraham that the reason he was commanded to do a hard thing was not for growth, but to learn how strong he was. Abraham needed to learn something about Abraham. Often sports can help young people to learn that when they apply the character traits they have learned (hard work, sharing, integrity, consistency/diligence, thoroughness, study, etc.), they can excel at things, and enjoy their lives. Can immoral people become good at sports? Yes, just as much as the traits to become a good bank robber also involve hard work, intelligence, team work, etc. So learning a sport or other trade doesn’t really build character (good character anyways), but it reveals character. Will Johnny stop to help the one who got hurt? Will he offer to teach a team mate who isn’t getting it? Will he practice at home when no one is looking? Will he refrain from cheating when no one would notice? Will he be truthful to his peers and leaders even when not doing so appears to promise short or long-term gains? Will he resist the invariable harlots that will flirt with him as he becomes an excellent athlete (and chose the virtuous woman instead)?

-the prophetic ‘Family Proclamation to the World’ (1995) teaches that wholesome recreation is one of the key elements to successful family life.

-Elder Neal A Maxwell played tennis even into his late years.

-President Thomas S. Monson understood that life should be joyful. He **taught old folks in rest homes about how a football game works, so they could understand the game on television and enjoy it.** He speaks about current ball games. He says fishing is good and spiritual. He says having animals and going to fairs is joyful. He says road shows and dance festivals are uplifting. He knows about what is going on in the local barber shop. Henry the 8th was his favorite Shakespeare play. Among his favorite theatrical works is the Phantom of the Opera. He enjoyed raising pigeons. (see book To The Rescue by Heidi Swinton)

-President Russel M Nelson skied even into his 90’s. He also spoke highly of the discipline of another man who regularly swam, not selfishly, but to keep his body strong so he could serve the Lord.

-President Monson was a regular swimmer.

-Joseph Smith told one man who had done much work for the building up of God's kingdom. He needed to rest a while and enjoy himself. The man responded, "I cannot". Joseph said, "then you will die." The man indeed later died a premature death, and Joseph spoke at his funeral. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

-When others chastised Joseph for playing sports, thinking that a prophet shouldn't do such things, Joseph taught them that if you don't unstring the bow from time to time, it loses its spring. This meant that to be effective he had to relax sometimes.

-Many saw Hyrum Smith as more prophet-like than Joseph, as Hyrum was less jovial and playful, but we know that these traits of Joseph helped him cope with his many trials, and uplift his fellows. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

-Joseph was hired as a farm hand not only because he was a hard worker, but because he could get the others to work too. (see Truman G Madsen Joseph Smith lectures)

In the Preach My Gospel manual we are taught to reserve the sabbath as a day free of sporting events: "When a community or nation grows careless in its Sabbath activities, its religious life decays and all aspects of life are negatively affected. The blessings associated with keeping the Sabbath day holy are lost. We should refrain from shopping on the Sabbath and participating in other commercial and sporting activities that now commonly desecrate the Sabbath. Latter-day Saints should set this holy day apart from activities of the world by entering into a spirit of worship, thanksgiving, service, and family-centered activities appropriate to the Sabbath. As Church members endeavor to make their Sabbath activities compatible with the intent and Spirit of the Lord, their lives will be filled with joy and peace." (Preach My Gospel: What Should I Study And Teach: The Commandments: Keep the Sabbath Day Holy; <https://www.lds.org/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service/lesson-4-the-commandments?lang=eng>)

A Nation of Non-Athletic Onlookers

Why isn't anyone participating in sports anymore? It's all about sitting around and watching a handful of professionals play.

Oh wait, what about how watching sports helps you lose weight? I'll be buying that when I see an army of skinny sport watchers.

Get up and play the game man! That's the whole point! Throw that TV in the trashcan! Go get a ball! Get in shape! Wearing that sport jersey doesn't make you tough man! Knowing those stats aint helping you man!

And what always comes with the watching? The processed snacks brother!

The professionalization of sport culture is Babylon. Sports are to have some fun, to mingle with others, to keep your body healthy. Now we have the opposite. Sure people get together at times for this stuff, but its usually some dude zombie out alone, or with a few other zombies next to him.

Why are we indulging these professional athletes who live on sport? This isn't Zion. People shouldn't be all play and no work. Each person should have something useful to contribute.

By the way, lets keep the sabbath day holy. Just a little commandment oops we forgot...Not like its one of Gods top 10 concerns or anything. We have an amazing opportunity in America where most of us get the day off Sunday. How are we using that opportunity? Sigh. It's a sign between us and God, and man, I think we are holding up the wrong sign. Hint: The sign isn't team logo!

Sampling of Activities in Moderation

Source from an unknown homeschool group.

This might be overly permissive depending on what is allowed with the media provisions.

HUNGRY BORED MENU	
<p style="text-align: center; font-style: italic;">appetizers</p> <p>[Quick and easy things for relief, a brain break, or transition]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance to an Upbeat Song • Action Songs • Balloon Volleyball • Stand and Stretch • Hang Upside Down • 10 Push-ups and/or Squats • Doodle • Deep Breathing • Mindfulness Toys • Brain Tricks • Pantomime • Riddles 	<p style="text-align: center; font-style: italic;">entrees</p> <p>[Engaging, fulfilling activities that you enjoy, give you a sense of wellbeing, and fill you up]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw/Paint • Create/Craft • Cook/Bake • Organize/Clean • Hike/Walk • Play an Instrument • Exercise <i>Kid Yoga</i> • Phone A Friend • Listen to an Audio Book • Read Alone • Play Dough • Sensory bin • Board Games • Puzzles • Put on a Play
<p style="text-align: center; font-style: italic;">desserts</p> <p>[Enjoy sparingly]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows • Movies • YouTube • Video Games 	<p style="text-align: center; font-style: italic;">sides</p> <p>[Add these to boring tasks to make them more exciting]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood Music • Exercise Ball • Light a Candle • Study Buddy • Clean Your Workspace • Set A Timer • Do it Outside • Plan a Reward
<p style="text-align: center; font-style: italic;">specials</p> <p>[Occasional things that take time/money]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movies/Concerts • Recreation Center • Play Places • Open Gym • Go Out for Dessert • Buy Something New 	<p style="text-align: center; font-style: italic;">bedtime snacks</p> <p>[Wind down for the night]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put on comfy clothes • Yoga/Stretch • Pretend Play • Listen to a Meditation • Tell Me A Story • Scriptures • Prayer

Making God's Work A Delight for Youth: Contagion Theory

Find ways to make useful things fun. Like scripture mastery games. Show children that you LOVE serving the Lord, that it is what you YEARN to do. That will be contagious. Show them the joy of service.

Exercise & Healthy Lifestyles – Teachings of the Prophets

“I would not want you to neglect your body. It deserves daily care. Physical conditioning through regular exercise requires self-mastery too. I marvel at Elder Joseph Anderson, now in his ninety-sixth year. For decades, the strength of his spirit over his body has induced him to swim regularly. But his motivation has never been to attain physical longevity. That has come only incidentally. His desire has been to serve God and His anointed. Elder Anderson has followed what I label as the Lord’s prescription for a long and useful life. Those faithful in “magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. They become ... the elect of God.” (D&C 84:33–34.) Elder Anderson’s exercise program agrees with the perspective of Paul, who said: “Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” (1 Tim. 4:8.) Handsome and fit, Elder Anderson personifies this scripture: “Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Cor. 6:20.) (Self Mastery, by Elder Russel M Nelson, General Conference Oct 1985) “Take responsibility for your own physical well-being. Your soul consists of your body and spirit (see D&C 88:15). Feeding the spirit while neglecting the body, which is a temple, usually leads to spiritual dissonance and lowered self-esteem. If you are out of shape, if you are uncomfortable in your own body and can do something about it, then do it!”

(Approaching The Throne of God with Confidence by Elder Jörg Klebingat October 2014 General Conference; <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/approaching-the-throne-of-god-with-confidence?lang=eng>) Elder Russell M. Nelson has taught that we should “regard our body as a temple of our very own” and that we should “control our diet and exercise for physical fitness” (“We Are Children of God,” Ensign, Nov. 1998, 87; Liahona, Jan. 1999, 103).”

President Boyd K. Packer has taught “that our spirit and our body are combined in such a way that our body becomes an instrument of our mind and the foundation of our character” (“The Instrument of Your Mind and the Foundation of Your Character” [Church Educational System fireside, Feb. 2, 2003], 2; speeches.byu.edu)

“please use good judgment in what and especially how much you eat, and regularly give your body the exercise it needs and deserves. If you are physically able, decide today to be the master of your own house and begin a regular, long-term exercise program, suited to your abilities, combined with a healthier diet. Spiritual confidence increases when your spirit, with the help of the Savior, is truly in charge of your natural man or woman.” (Approaching The Throne of

God with Confidence by Elder Jörg Klebingat October 2014 General Conference; <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/approaching-the-throne-of-god-with-confidence?lang=eng>)

“We will regard our body as a temple of our very own.²⁴ We will not let it be desecrated or defaced in any way.²⁵ We will control our diet and exercise for physical fitness.” (Russel M Nelson, “We are children of God”, 1998 General Conference <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1998/10/we-are-children-of-god?lang=eng>)

“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).

“Nutritious meals, regular exercise, and appropriate sleep are necessary for a strong body, just as consistent scripture study and prayer strengthen the mind and spirit.” (Thomas S. Monson, Standards of Strength

https://www.lds.org/youth/article/standards-of-strength?lang=eng&_r=1)

“I remember a blessing I received when I was serving in the military. It included counsel that’s good for every young person: “You have been given a body of such physical proportions and fitness as to enable your spirit to function through it. ... You should cherish this as a great heritage. Guard [it] and protect it. Take nothing into it that shall harm the organs thereof because it is sacred. It is the instrument of your mind and [the] foundation of your character.”” (Boyd K Packer, 1996 May Ensign The Word of Wisdom: The Principle and the Promise <https://www.lds.org/study/ensign/1996/05/the-word-of-wisdom-the-principle-and-the-promises?lang=eng>)

“And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order.” (Mosiah 4:27)

“The Lord sets a high standard for us in telling us to consider our bodies a temple. ... [He] has established some basic



standards for the governance of our physical bodies” and mental health so that we may become more self-reliant and better prepared to progress personally, strengthen the family, and serve in the Church and community (see L. Tom Perry, “The Tradition of a Balanced, Righteous Life,” Liahona, Aug. 2011, 32)

“Maintaining the best possible physical health has been a gospel ideal throughout the ages—from the strict dietary laws of ancient Israel, with the example of Daniel and his associates, to the Word of Wisdom in this dispensation and the counsel of today’s prophets and apostles. The physical body is a gift from God and should be properly cared for and respected. Mental health is also important and should not be overlooked, as it can affect us both physically and spiritually. We must do all we can to take care of both our bodies and our minds.”

(Topic: Health: Intro;

<https://www.lds.org/topics/health?lang=eng&fbclid=IwAR0NwsaZoh-iAshDxS-EUIGJkdguZnW61s9o7MilPqh8t7KJodTzxMhEnJ0>)

“Nutritious meals, regular exercise, and appropriate sleep are necessary for a strong body, just as consistent scripture study and prayer strengthen the mind and spirit” (Thomas S. Monson, “That We May Touch Heaven,” Ensign, Nov. 1990, 46)

“Rest and physical exercise are essential, and a walk in the fresh air can refresh the spirit. Wholesome recreation is part of our religion, and a change of pace is necessary, and even its anticipation can lift the spirit” (Ezra Taft Benson, “Do Not Despair,” Ensign, Nov. 1974, 66)

“The Lord has commanded members to take care of their minds and bodies. They should obey the Word of Wisdom, eat nutritious food, exercise regularly, control their weight, and get adequate sleep. They should shun substances or practices that abuse their bodies or minds and that could lead to addiction. They should practice good sanitation and hygiene and obtain adequate medical and dental care...” (Handbook 2: Administering the Church [2010], 6.1.1)

“Exercising physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual abilities is required to not only maintain but also improve these abilities. Without exercise, these abilities diminish. Furthermore, fitness in one area can strongly influence fitness in another. For example, improving physical fitness enhances mental, emotional, and even spiritual acuity.

Specific exercises are designed to improve strength, flexibility, balance, and aerobic capacity. But every exercise must be tailored to meet a person’s individual requirements, such as age. Where weight bearing is a problem, water exercises are helpful. Chair and desk exercises are useful for those who spend long hours in a sitting position. There are many exercises and activities like these that are inexpensive and can fit the budget of almost anyone.” (Provident Living: Exercise and Health: Physical Fitness

<https://providentliving.lds.org/self-reliance/health/exercise-and-fitness?lang=eng&fbclid=IwAR3-IcdkMEarfJta8s6jUeXkpR2DokGr5AqZnvs-ei0ufpJZhT9fKhdXHA>)

“The Lord has commanded you to take good care of your body. To do this, observe the Word of Wisdom, found in Doctrine and Covenants 89. Eat nutritious food, exercise regularly, and get enough sleep. When you do all these

things, 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. ...” (Elder L Tom Perry, October 2008 General Conference, “Let Him Do It With Simplicity” <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2008/10/let-him-do-it-with-simplicity?lang=eng>)

“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.” (For the Strength of Youth: Physical and Emotional Health

<https://www.lds.org/youth/for-the-strength-of-youth/physical-and-emotional-health?lang=eng>)

Here is an excellent article from the Ensign about running 20 miles a week to lose weight, since less than that doesn’t really work. He has alternatives to running for heavier people such as swimming. He also addresses the diet cycle. He also has strategies for building up your exercise amount. “Running away from it all” 1981 <https://www.lds.org/study/ensign/1981/02/running-away-from-it-all?lang=eng>

Here is an excellent Ensign article on the benefits of exercising with weights. 1932 “Why Train with Weights?” by Larry Tucker, director of health promotion, Brigham Young University

<https://www.lds.org/study/ensign/1993/02/random-sampler/why-train-with-weights?lang=eng>

Note: We can’t just think exercise will get us healthy and that we can eat whatever we want.

“You can’t out-run a bad diet!” -Dr. Michael Greger

Pre-Mature Content Exposure Harms Children

As we analyze a movie, we need to look at not only the deeper meanings, but the surface meanings which many viewers will see. A big reason we need to make sure the audiences are mature and can analyze the bigger picture is because isolated scenes can lead someone to get the wrong idea. Young children in particular are only capable of fragmented understandings, and need content which is less dramatic which they can comprehend.

For example: an immature audience can see a sword fighting scene and say “swords are the way to solve all of our problems.” The mature person can see the same scene and say “swords were the last resort to solve that problem.”

If a child sees one of its parents abusing the other, it is considered child abuse, as no child should be exposed to that. Could we not argue then, that it is child abuse to expose children to horrific movies where abuse takes place? Surely the tender spirits of our children need to be protected with utmost care, and only a mature young adult should be exposed to such things.

Each parent needs to measure the maturity of their child to see what will and will not be appropriate for that child to see. Maturity is often different than just age related. For example, some people are ready for marriage and other adult roles earlier than others. Some youth are more prepared to understand the complexities of life than others.

Media Standards Opposite of Gospel Standards: Gordon B Hinckley

“These are the people who, through the medium of entertainment, are educating us in the direction of their own standards, which in many cases are diametrically opposed to the standards of the gospel.” (President Gordon B. Hinckley, Be Not Deceived)

Standards to Judge Media by President Benson

[Avoid:]

Whatever weakens your reason

Whatever impairs the tenderness of your conscience

Whatever obscures your sense of God

Whatever takes off your relish for spiritual things

Whatever increases the authority of the body over the mind

(See Ezra Taft Benson, "In His Steps," Speeches of the Year, 1979

[Provo: Brigham Young

University Press, 1980], p. 61.)

Movie Philosophy

There are so many uplifting movies that we don't need to trifle with the bad. No more sitting at the enemies' table!

When screening movies we should be sensitive to more than just flagrant sexuality or violence. We should be sensitive to rude attitudes toward peers and parents. To subtle suggestions of rebellion, etc.

Wendy Nelson reports in her book "The Heavens are Open" that if characters in a movie argue, President Russel M Nelson walks out of the movie! Praise the Lord for the revelation of this mighty standard! Truly this man speaks with God!

There are great suggested movies at "**Zion Tube**", a Joseph Smith Foundation website. They have a genius method of categorizing movies: simply as **Good, Better, & Best**. Naturally, many commonly viewed movies of all ratings don't make it on to any of their lists.

Movies should teach, not just entertain. A movie without moral lessons should be thrown in the trash! We don't have time for that! Sister Nelson pleads with us to realize our divine destiny on earth, and reminds us that we don't have time to do things in ways other than the Lord's way! Further, President Nelson told a group of Mission Presidents in training that when their 3-year missions were over, they were to return home and prepare for the Millennium. Truly His coming is neigh! May we not be guilty of whittling away our precious time!

Beware Self-Righteousness, Missing the Mark

When considering standards in recreation or standards in any measure, we must take care on several levels. First is to be careful about how we view others. Second is how we view ourselves. Third is the judgement we pass on behavior generally as being good or bad. There certainly are absolutes, but there are also things which simply don't matter.

There are preferences, various styles, cultures, etc. within which the spirit of the Lord may be present. Scriptures teach that our righteousness is rags, and that we ought not seek to heap upon ourselves "points" in the celestial basketball, but rather to turn our hearts to God, and to be just and merciful with ourselves and our fellows.

Sometimes we measure ourselves and others as righteous by the trivial things we do and outward appearances, but the scriptures tell the one sure sign of righteousness: signs shall follow them that believe. May we have tolerance for perspectives and interests of others, and compassion toward our own tastes as well. In all of this there are principles which we seek to live by, and we leave the small day to day living to self-government. We step back and look at our lives to discern whether we are truly drawing nearer to God, whether things are right at home and elsewhere, and whether the standards we are setting for ourselves and others are righteous or arbitrary.

It is with great anxiety and care that I attempt to lay out some principles in this writing, and I ask that you be patient with me also when I sometimes surely am off the mark. I try to err on the side of caution in this writing, and trust you will follow the spirit to find ways to live happily within the generous bounds which the Lord has set.