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## Strengthening Testimonies by Bearing Them

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**OBJECTIVE**

Each young man will strengthen his testimony by sharing it often.

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**PREPARATION**

1. Prayerfully study Isaiah 43:10–12 and Doctrine and Covenants 62:3.
  2. Materials needed:
    - a. Copies of the scriptures (each young man should bring his own).
    - b. Pencils for marking scriptures.
  3. Prepare three wordstrips:
    - a. “Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world.”
    - b. “Joseph Smith is the Prophet of God through whom the gospel was restored.”
    - c. “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is ‘the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth’ (D&C 1:30).”
  4. Prepare to share an experience you have had with being strengthened and blessed by the testimony of another person. Or you may want to invite a ward member to share such an experience.
  5. Prepare a handout for each young man of Doctrine and Covenants 62:3.
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**SUGGESTED  
LESSON  
DEVELOPMENT**

Scriptures and  
discussion

**We Should Be Witnesses of God**

Have the young men read and mark Mosiah 18:8–9.

- What does it mean to “stand as witnesses of God”? (To make sure that our lives, as well as our words, testify of the existence of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.)
- When and where are we to be witnesses of God?
- What are some ways we can be witnesses of God?

Explain that we can be witnesses by the way we act and the way we treat others. We can also be powerful witnesses by bearing our testimonies to others. It is most appropriate to bear testimony at a time when the person we are speaking with is most receptive and willing to listen.

Ask a young man to read Isaiah 43:10–12.

- What does the Lord want his servants to do?
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Discussion and  
adviser presentation

**We Should Testify of Gospel Truths**

- What kinds of things should we include when we bear a testimony?

Explain that we should give careful thought to the words we say when we bear our testimonies to others. Our testimonies should be brief and heartfelt. We should testify of gospel truths. We may relate faith-promoting experiences. But we should avoid preaching; relating long narratives of experiences; and making routine, repetitious statements.

Wordstrips and  
discussion

Explain that Elder Bruce R. McConkie pointed out three great truths that should be part of a testimony (see *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], p. 786).

Give each of the following wordstrips to a young man:

- a. “Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world.”
- b. “Joseph Smith is the Prophet of God through whom the gospel was restored.”

- c. "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is 'the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth' (D&C 1:30)."

Have the wordstrips read aloud and displayed.

- Why is it important to have a strong testimony of these three truths?
- Why are these truths important to include when you bear your testimony?

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### **Our Testimonies Can Help Others**

Adviser or visitor presentation

Share an experience you have had with being strengthened and blessed by the testimony of another person. Or ask the assigned visitor to share such an experience.

- To whom can you bear your testimony?

Explain that our own families should be the first to hear our testimonies. We can also bear our testimonies to those we home teach, to member and nonmember friends, and to ward or branch members in testimony meetings.

Remind the young men of the following story from lesson 30. In this story, a mother wrote her son a letter sharing her testimony of the Savior's teachings. This testimony was a great blessing to her son in a time of trial.

Elder Frank Croft was a missionary in the southern United States in the early days of the Church. He taught the gospel in an area where some of the people became very angry at his teachings. A mob of armed men forcefully took him into the woods, where they told him to remove all of his clothing above the waist. They tied his arms and body to a tree and prepared to lash his back until the blood flowed.

Elder Croft had no alternative but to do what the mob asked, but as he was doing so, a letter fell from his pocket. It had been written by his mother, who lived in Utah. A short time before, Elder Croft had written to his parents telling them about the mob violence, and this letter from his mother was an answer to his concerns. The letter said:

" 'My beloved son, you must remember the words of the Savior when He said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" also "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Also remember the Savior upon the cross suffering from the sins of the world when He had uttered these immortal words, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Surely, my boy, they who are mistreating you Elders know not what they do or they would not do it. Sometime, somewhere, they will understand and then they will regret their action and they will honor you for the glorious work you are doing. So be patient, my son, love those who mistreat you and say all manner of evil against you and the Lord will bless you and magnify you in their eyes and your mission will be gloriously successful.' "

The leader of the mob picked up the letter and began to read it. His face and eyes were so hard and cruel that Elder Croft knew no sympathy would come from him. He closed his eyes and waited for the beating to begin, silently thinking of his home and his beloved mother. He opened his eyes a few moments later and found that the leader had seated himself on a nearby stump and was rereading the letter. His face had undergone a great change. "Much of the hardness and cruelty in his face were gone; his eyes were slightly dimmed by moisture. His whole personality appeared to have changed. He would read a line or two or a paragraph and then sit and ponder, and deep down in the Elder's conscience was the hope, yes, the conviction that the man's heart had been touched by the loveliness and beauty of his mother's letter."

The man finally arose and said, " 'Feller, you must have a wonderful mother. You see, I once had one, too.' Then, addressing the other members of the mob, he said, 'Men, after reading this Mormon's mother's letter, I just can't go ahead with the job. Maybe we had better let him go.' Elder Croft was released and went his way" (Arthur M. Richardson, *The Life and Ministry of John Morgan* [Nicholas G. Morgan Sr., 1965], pp. 267–68).

- Of what truths did this mother bear testimony to her son?
- How did her testimony bless her son and the men who were persecuting him?

Sharing personal experiences

Invite the young men to share experiences they have had with bearing testimony formally or informally to a family member or friend.

### **Our Testimonies Become Stronger As We Share Them**

Quotation

One Church leader learned that we strengthen our testimonies when we share them with others. He related this experience with a twelve-year-old boy:

“The power of a plain, unadorned testimony is always impressive to me. I recall a twelve-year-old boy standing in front of a large congregation to share his testimony. As he stood trembling in fear and emotion, his voice failed him. He stood speechless; our hearts went out to him. The creeping seconds dragged on, making the silence of the moment intense. . . . After great uneasiness . . . he raised his bowed head and softly said, ‘Brothers and sisters, my testimony is too small.’ He cleared his voice and sat down. His message had been given. I thought then, as I think now, what a timely observation. Whose testimony isn’t too small? Whose testimony doesn’t need to be added upon? After this one-sentence sermon, I acknowledged before the congregation that my testimony was too small also and I was going to give it a chance to grow by more frequent sharing. I had been taught by a plain, simple statement” (Marvin J. Ashton, in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, p. 99; or *Ensign*, May 1977, p. 67).

Discussion and quotation

- Why do you think that our testimonies are strengthened as we bear them to others?

Let the young men discuss; then read the following statement:

“When a person bears his testimony, he receives new strength and spiritual power. I believe this happens because finding the words to express our beliefs somehow makes them more real to us. Telling someone how much you appreciate your parents automatically intensifies those feelings. And thinking through something so you can say it brings the concept into focus. . . . When one makes his testimony public, he often gains significant insights about the gospel.

“ . . . Talking about our feelings lets us pay attention to them long enough to realize how important they are to us. Bearing testimony repeatedly helps that which we know and feel to surface and become a consistent part of us” (Margaret Hoopes, “Community and Communing,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1978, p. 50).

### **Conclusion**

Adviser presentation and testimony

Explain that it is very important for us to share our testimonies of truth because our testimonies grow from sharing them with others. Testimony bearing is for the benefit of those who bear their testimonies as well as for those who hear them.

Share your testimony with the young men.

Handout and challenge

Give each of the young men a card with the scripture reference Doctrine and Covenants 62:3. Have them locate the scripture and mark it. Challenge them to memorize it during the week.

Follow up on the memorization of this scripture during the next quorum meeting.

Suggested activity

As a follow-up activity, plan a testimony meeting where the young men can have an opportunity to share their testimonies with the quorum.