

**OBJECTIVE** Each young woman will understand the importance of serving in the Church and ways she can serve.

**PREPARATION**

1. Provide a pencil and paper for each young woman.
2. Assign a class member to tell about a personal experience she has had with serving in the Church (see the third section of the lesson).
3. Assign young women to present any stories, scriptures, or quotations you wish.

**SUGGESTED LESSON DEVELOPMENT**

**We Should Serve Willingly in the Church**

**Teacher presentation** Tell the young women about the blessings that have come into your life because you have had the opportunity to teach this class. Mention sacrifices you have had to make and the rewards you feel you have been given for your service. Help the young women to feel that service in the Church is an important part of your life.

**Chalkboard discussion** Write on the chalkboard: *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Then ask the following questions:

- Whose church do we belong to? (The Church of Jesus Christ.)
- Who planned the way that the Church should be organized? (Jesus Christ. He revealed this organization through his prophets.)

**Teacher presentation and discussion** Explain that the organization of our Church is different from that of most other churches. Our local leaders are not specially trained men who lead the Church as their full-time jobs. They are the people of the Church who give their time willingly and without pay.

Remind the young women that there are many people involved in the organization of just one branch or ward. Ask them to name as many different positions in their branch or ward as they can. Their list will probably include the branch president or bishop, his counselors, the clerks, auxiliary presidencies, secretaries, teachers in the auxiliaries, visiting teachers, home teachers, class presidencies, and so on.

- Why do you think the Lord has organized his Church so that so many people serve in it? Ask the young women to name reasons, and list these reasons on the chalkboard.

**Chalkboard discussion** The following may be included:

1. When many people serve, they are able to bless more of the people who need help.
  2. When people are asked to serve in many different positions, they develop talents they otherwise might never use.
  3. When people are asked to help others, they learn how to love and serve their fellowmen.
- What talents could a young woman develop if she were called to serve as the president of her Young Women class? Encourage the young women to name as many as they can.

**Story** Tell the following story:

“Tanya, a [Young Women] class president from Tasmania, caught the vision of her responsibility as a leader of youth today. Following a visit by a member of the Young Women General Presidency, she wrote:

“ ‘After the first night I got really inspired and filled with the Spirit. I can’t really remember when I have felt like it before. That night I went home and prayed to my Father in heaven and asked for strength and help so my inactive Laurels will want to come back. That night I felt a real peace come over my soul. Then when I heard you again, the same feeling came over me, and I realized how powerful and wonderful the Holy Ghost is. I immediately wrote to the girls. I love my girls in the Young Women organization because they share the same interests and goals that I hope to achieve. I realize that one day I will have to answer to the Lord, so I’m going to press on and work with my leaders. I’m not going to live on a borrowed testimony; I’m going to get my own through hard work’ ” (Ruth H. Funk, “Exceedingly Young,” *New Era*, June 1977, p. 48).

Discussion

- In what ways was Tanya blessing the lives of the young women in her class?
- How was Tanya’s calling helping her learn how to love and serve?

Explain that although service in the Church is one of the best ways to serve others and become like God, some people serve reluctantly or not at all.

- What are some reasons people do not want to serve in the Church? (They don’t think Church service is important; they feel they don’t have enough time, energy, or ability.)

Quotation

Read the following statement by Elder Franklin D. Richards about fulfilling Church callings:

“Before turning down a request to serve because you feel you are too busy, you might want to . . . *simplify* somewhat and make a new appraisal of what you really consider essential. Reconsider your priorities and remember your covenants with the Lord wherein you have covenanted to give of your time, talents, and means liberally to the upbuilding of the kingdom of God.

“As you simplify your life by putting first things first and eliminate less essential activities, you will probably find time to accept the Church assignment. . . .

“Also, sometimes we are asked to accept Church callings that we do not feel qualified to handle, and we are prone to say no because we are afraid. I have found that to a very large extent life is a series of assignments for which we don’t feel fully prepared, but as we accept and do our part, the Lord blesses us with wisdom beyond our natural selves, and in such cases we really reach beyond ourselves. Thus we grow by having to exceed our past selves” (“Q and A,” *New Era*, Mar. 1977, p. 11).

- What does Elder Richards say we should do if we feel we are too busy to serve? If we feel we are not qualified?

### We Can Serve by Helping Other Church Members

Chalkboard discussion

Explain that there are many ways we can serve in the Church besides filling a position. We can serve in these ways all of the time. Have the young women name some of these ways. Make a list similar to the following on the chalkboard:

Pay our tithing.

Pay fast offerings.

Work on welfare projects.

Serve the Church members with whom we associate.

Support missionaries with our money, letters, and prayers.

Do family history research.

When we have temple recommends, perform work for the dead in the temples.

Story

Tell the following story about three valiant eighteen-year-old young men who gave great service to their fellow Church members.

“In 1856 more than a thousand of our people . . . found themselves in serious trouble while crossing the plains to [the Salt Lake Valley]. Because of a series of unfortunate circumstances, they were late in getting started. They ran into snow and bitter cold in the highlands of Wyoming. Their situation was desperate, with deaths occurring every day.

“President [Brigham] Young learned of their condition as the October general conference was about to begin. He immediately called for teams, wagons, drivers, and supplies to leave to rescue the bereft Saints. . . .

“When they reached the Sweetwater River on November 3, chunks of ice were floating in the freezing water. After all these people had been through, and in their weakened condition, that river seemed impossible to cross. It looked like stepping into death itself to move into the freezing stream. Men who once had been strong sat on the frozen ground and wept, as did the women and children. Many simply could not face that ordeal.

“ . . . Three eighteen-year-old boys belonging to the relief party came to the rescue, and to the astonishment of all who saw, carried nearly every member of the illfated handcart company across the snowbound stream. The strain was so terrible, and the exposure so great, that in later years all the boys died from the effects of it. When President Brigham Young heard of this heroic act, he wept like a child, and later declared publicly, “that act alone will ensure C. Allen Huntington, George W. Grant, and David P. Kimball an everlasting salvation in the Celestial Kingdom of God, worlds without end.” ’ (Solomon F. Kimball, *Improvement Era*, Feb. 1914, p. 288.)

“Mark you, these boys were eighteen years of age at the time. . . . Great was their heroism, sacred the sacrifice they made of health and eventually of life itself to save the lives of those they helped” (Gordon B. Hinckley, in Conference Report, Oct. 1981, pp. 59–60; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, p. 42).

## Discussion

- What do you think motivated these young men to make such a great sacrifice?
- What can you learn from this story about serving those Church members with whom you associate? (See Mosiah 2:17; Matthew 25:34–40.)

### We Should Prepare Now to Serve in the Church

## Teacher presentation

Remind the young women of the many positions in their ward or branch that they mentioned at the beginning of the lesson. Explain that they may be called to serve in many of these positions in the years to come.

- What skills would a Sunday School teacher need to have? A Relief Society president? Let the young women respond.

Explain that the young women must be preparing now to fill the positions that the Lord has for them in his Church.

## Quotation

Read the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard:

“How do the names of bishops and stake presidents and General Authorities surface in the minds of those who have the responsibility of extending the call? . . . I shall tell you how I think it is. I believe in revelation—and so do you—and I believe that the Lord is getting acquainted with you right now. You missionaries that are preparing to go on your mission, do not let one day go by on your mission when you do not demonstrate to the Lord that you are reliable, that you are trustworthy, that you are dedicated, that you are committed, that you are on his side, for he is getting acquainted with the young men and the young women of this Church today. . . . Every day of your life he gets acquainted. Then, after he has watched you and after you have demonstrated your faithfulness by your service and by your ability to keep your priorities straight in your life, along comes a need for a high councilor, a Primary president, a Relief Society president, a bishop, or a stake president; and the Lord makes it known to the responsible priesthood leader that you are ready because you have lived up to the commitments and promises that you made before you were ever born” (“Speaking Today,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1979, p. 71).

- What can you do to show the Lord every day that you are trustworthy and dedicated to him? Let the young women discuss. (See also Joshua 24:15.)

## Activity

Distribute paper and pencils to the young women. As a brief class activity, ask each young woman to write down two or three positive qualities and abilities of the young woman sitting next to her that will allow her to serve well. Have the young women share their ideas and insights. Ask each young woman to give her notes to the class member about whom they were written.

## Report and discussion

Ask a member of the class who has a Church calling to tell how she was called by the bishop or branch president, how she felt when she was called, how she prepares for her calling, how she budgets her time, and what some of the problems and rewards of her service are. If none of the class members has had a Church calling, invite some other

young person who has served to share his or her experience, or relate some of your own experiences in Church service.

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Quotation

### **Conclusion**

Explain that young people may say they are too young to be of service to the Lord. A General President of the Young Women reassured us: "It is natural to be apprehensive when [a Church calling] comes to you. However, the calling of youth leaders has historically been the will of the Lord. He has not hesitated to call young leaders for his eternal purposes, to assist them in their preparation, and to send them forth to their new callings. . . . Youth leaders today are involved in the exciting and sacred work of saving souls. . . .

" . . . When the historical records of youth leaders of this dispensation are reviewed by those who will follow, it might well read: 'They were called of God; they were exceedingly young; they were directed by the Spirit; they carried each other's burdens; they were servants of the Lord' " (Ruth H. Funk, "Exceedingly Young," pp. 47-49).

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### **Lesson Applications**

1. Ask the young women to list the ways in which they are serving in the Church now by supporting Church programs and filling Church callings, large or small. Ask them to try to add one thing to this list.
2. Have the young women decide now that when they are called to fill a Church position they will do so.
3. As individuals or as a group, select various ward or branch workers to whom to write notes of appreciation for their time and effort in their Church callings.