



I Don't Want to Grow Up!

By Chakell Wardleigh Herbert
Church Magazines
(Based on a true story)

"Happy birthday to you!" everyone sang. Chakell blew out all the candles on her cake in one breath. She grinned as her family cheered. She was 10 years old today, and this birthday was going to be the best one ever!

"You're growing up so fast," Mom said.

"Now you're in the double digits!" said Dad in his booming voice.

"Pretty soon you'll be as old as I am," said Chantele, her older sister. Chakell's smile slipped a little. "Well, I'm not *that* old yet!" she said. "I'm only 10."

"But next year you'll be in Young Women, and then you'll be heading to middle school," Chantele said. "Then you'll be learning how to drive, and soon you'll be all grown up!"

Chakell's stomach suddenly felt funny. Her stomach hurt a lot lately, especially when she worried about the future.

She ignored her stomach and smiled. "Let's have some cake!"

Later that night, Chakell sat on her bed and flipped through one of her favorite books. But she wasn't focused on what she was reading. Her stomach still felt like it was being twisted.

Birthdays always made Chakell think about growing up. The older she got, the scarier the future seemed. Not knowing what was going to happen made her nervous!

Worried thoughts kept coming to Chakell's mind.

I'll never be a kid again!



The future seemed so scary.



*What if I'm not smart enough for middle school?
What if I don't have any friends?
My whole life will change!*

Hot tears ran down her cheeks. She wiped her eyes and sniffed.

Then she heard a soft knock on the door. "Are you crying?" Mom asked. She sat on Chakell's bed. "Didn't you have a good birthday?"

Chakell scooted over, and Mom gave her a hug. "My birthday was great," she said, leaning on Mom's shoulder. "But I don't want to grow up! I'm so scared."

Mom stroked her hair. "Growing up can be scary. But it can be fun too!"

Chakell wiped the tears from her eyes. "It doesn't sound very fun," she said. "It just sounds hard."

Mom nodded. "It can be hard

sometimes," she said. "But you can be brave! Did you know that your life is meant to be an adventure? Heavenly Father sent you here to have amazing experiences."

Chakell looked at the book she was holding. She loved reading about adventures. She hadn't thought of life as an adventure before.

"But how can I be brave when I don't know what will happen?"

"That's why we have faith," Mom smiled. "Faith is letting Heavenly Father lead us and knowing that He will help us be brave. He's helped me be brave lots of times when I've been afraid of new things. And He will help you too."

"Really?"

"Really," Mom said. "You can pray and ask for help anytime."

That made Chakell feel a bit better. "OK."

Before she went to bed, Chakell got on her knees and prayed. "Please help me to be brave," she whispered. "Help me to not be afraid of the future."

As she finished, Chakell felt a calm, peaceful feeling. The future might seem a little scary. But with Heavenly Father's help, it could also be an amazing adventure! ●

This story took place in the USA.

