

3-12-15 Morality

We would like to pull our children in and raise them in a bubble to protect them from seeing everything out there. We have to raise them to be stripling warriors and independently strong.

The world today is different than when I raised my kids. When your little ones become teenagers it will be even more different than now. The things that have made it really different are things like...women's lib. That completely changed the role of women. Some of it was good and some is detrimental. Another factor is electronics...the internet with all of its ramifications. I believe that the internet was 'discovered' through the power of the Holy Ghost so Family Search and genealogy could move forth. That the words of the prophets can get out faster. Satan uses anything with a righteous agenda for his purposes.

The greatest problem in the church right now is pornography. That leads to all kinds of problems. We need to understand what we are dealing with and learn how to fight it the Lord's way.

A commercial came on for Carl's Jr while I was watching a basketball game. I haven't seen such pornography in prime time TV. It made me sick. About 4 years ago I saw a Carl's Jr commercial...that one was bad. The problem with these kinds of things is they are becoming very common and 'normal' for our kids.

Our bodies are created so that if we ingest poison in our body you are miserable you throw up. The body has the ability to get rid of whatever it is. The brain doesn't get rid of any poison it sees. It records it all.

It may come back to you 5 years from now. You cannot erase it. Think about some of the things our children watch in movies, on TV, on videos...knowing that it will not be erased. Can we keep our children from ever seeing this kind of thing in this world? We try to make them as safe as we can, but they are going to be exposed. It usually happens between 8-9.

Class member: I lived in Rexburg and at 10 yrs old I would go down to a friend's house down the street. There was a rip in the carpet and pull out his older brother's dirty magazines. I have a good friend in our ward who would do a priesthood interview with his son. He used to ask 'Have you seen any pornography?' Now he asks his son, "What pornography have you seen this month?" Because he knows they are seeing things.

They will be exposed! There are 2 films they show at the school. There is one in 5th grade and one in 6th grade. You need to talk to your children before they see them. Will the teacher be you and the Holy Ghost or the world and Satan?

How do we teach morality and what do we teach?

[“Successful Living of Gospel Principles” by David B Haight October 1992](#)

I am indebted to Elder Dallin Oaks for an account, a modern-day parable which I refer to as the parable of the bushy-tailed squirrel, the tree, and the dog, which illustrates my concern:

As two men walked across an eastern university campus, they were attracted by a crowd of people surrounding a large maple tree. As they approached, they noticed that the crowd was being amused by the antics of a fox-tailed squirrel circling the tree, climbing it, and running back down again. A red Irish Setter dog crouched nearby, intently watching the squirrel. Each time the squirrel ran up the tree out of sight, the dog would slowly creep towards the tree. The squirrel paid little attention as the dog crept closer and closer, patiently biding its time. People watching this entertaining drama unfold knew what could happen, but they did nothing, until in a flash, the dog—catching the squirrel unaware—had it in the grip of his sharp teeth.

The people then rushed forward in horror, forcing the dog's mouth open to rescue the squirrel. It was too late. The squirrel was dead. Anyone could have warned the squirrel or held back the dog. But they had been momentarily amused and watched silently while evil slowly crept up on good. When they rushed to the defense, it was too late.

We see around us daily that which is portrayed in this parable. We sit idly by watching as an insidious stream of profanity, vulgarity, demeaning behavior, a mocking of righteous ideals and principles, invades our homes and lives through most types of media, teaching our children negative values and moral corruption. We then become upset when our children perform differently than we would wish, and social behavior continues to deteriorate.

I love this parable because I think it has a little bit to do with how we look at morality issues. We sit back and laugh a little bit. The reason is that we 'invite' this into our homes. You look at TV. Sitcoms are absolutely filthy. They teach us to be tolerant of immorality. Our kids would say, "I wouldn't do that.", but it teaches them to tolerate the

sin until they can't distinguish that it is a sin. You get so accepting of it that it's a personal choice not a sin.

Our high school youth are testing homosexuality to see what it's like. Why are they doing that? It's everywhere! Society has made it a choice, not a sin. Our youth are wanting to get an emotional rush. They get the rush from doing something that's a little bit wrong. Then you take some girls that don't have boyfriends so in order to be noticed I will go get a girlfriend. They are thinking skewed. We haven't taught them morality in a way they can internalize it yet.

Morality can be taught as a set of rules, but any one of the rules can be broken.

It has to be...

"True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior. The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior. Preoccupation with unworthy behavior can lead to unworthy behavior. That is why we stress so forcefully the study of the doctrines of the gospel." ([Little Children by Boyd K. Packer October 1986](#))

We can talk about all the wrong behavior and discuss all the wrong behavior, but what will put them on the right track faster. We need to teach them the doctrine.

"Preoccupation with unworthy behavior can lead to unworthy behavior." It creates curiosity which tempts them to go try it. All of their friends are preoccupied with it.

I believe that we are NOT teaching the doctrine. I'm going to teach you the doctrine and a list of do's and don'ts.

I think sometimes parents particularly mothers unknowingly don't stand firm for chastity. There has to be a real difference in the standing we take. There was a study that was done at BYU by Brent Top, Bruce Chadwick, _____ Evans. What were the factors that helped them be moral? Mother's play a prime role...setting standards, following through with consequences, being strong, setting the example....directly affect the sexual behavior of teenagers. Another factor is the religiosity in the family....FHE, church, family prayers, scriptures, gospel principles are in your home. The other thing is family unity. There is a good family relationship in their family unit. Those 3 things keep them going straight.

My son Cory taught this class in [March 2014](#). He shared this experience then...

"Do not attend, view, or participate in anything that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way!" [For Strength of Youth](#)

You adults are not doing it.

I was a seminary teacher when Breaking Dawn was coming out. I read that statement about viewing anything pornographic in any way in seminary. Then I pulled up the “Breaking Dawn” rating...

“Rated PG-13 for disturbing images, violence, sexuality/partial nudity and some thematic elements”

Does that sound like pornography is some way? There are other things you can do as a parent. When you read for more information it says this....

Sex and nudity— Bella and Edward have sex a few times. First time is in the ocean when they are skinny dipping. No nudity is seen although their naked bodies are viewed from the side.

They also have sex in bed a few times. Edward's chest is visible and Bella's breast is always seen with the occasional nipple seen.

Characters kiss throughout the film a lot.

A wedding is at the start. Bella wears a dress which reveals her bare back. She kisses Edward for a decent amount of time.

Dances where characters are swung around genitals and breasts nothing too serious

Bella removes her dressing gown to reveal her breast (no nipple seen) and her bare shoulders”

I'm imaging a Relief Society Mom taking her daughter to see this as a “bonding” activity. This is why 80% of my sermon is to you and not your children. We have to have a deeper testimony of what this is all about. This wave of sin influences how you feel. Does it make any sense to take my daughter to that?

IMDB.com (Internet Movie Data Base)—Go to family ratings.

Common Sense Media— <http://www.common sense media.org/>

These are tools. Use them! This is the problem though...each of us is on our own spiritual progression. You have to get yourself there and teach your kids. You won't be perfect.

What I want you to think about is ‘if that is the standard’ and the daughter and Mom are reading it then we are sending a double message to our youth. It is hard for our youth to find strength in that testimony.

HOMEWORK: Read and Study so you know what's in that pamphlet. ["For Strength of Youth"](#) You need to read it and then evaluate yourself against the standards.

If you have primary children in your home there is a precursor in your home. Faith in God (boys & girls)...on the back is My Gospel Standards. If you will study My Gospel Standards and study for the Strength of Youth. This is teaching doctrine in the family.

[My Gospel Standards](#) and/or For Strength of Youth....we need to incorporated it into our studies.

Age 2 is when you start teaching the doctrine and the rules on their level.

Doctrine of Morality....

The [Doctrine of the Family](#). That is the foundation or basis of teaching morality to our children. You look at the 3 pillars of the gospel...Creation, the Fall, the Atonement.

Creation:

To come down and get a body and have a family. That is what we will take to eternal exaltation.

The Fall:

Provided the way for families to start to begin, so there was more than Adam and Eve on the earth. It was a wonderful blessing. With the Fall came the opportunity to have a family.

The Atonement:

Provided a way to get back...through repentance, grace, and the enabling power to continue on, become Gods, and have eternal increase.

To have families is the whole purpose of this life. You will be called upon to defend the family more than any other generation on the earth. This world is trying to change the view of what a family is.

If you are teaching them the Lord's concept of a family and why he has families and why he created the earth to have families, and you can teach that doctrine into the heart and souls and you bear witness and testimony and help them see their role in that they will want to keep their bodies clean. That is the purpose of this life. That is what it's for.

["The Family-A Proclamation"](#)—Memorize it. Pay your kids \$10 if they will memorize it.

The doctrine of the family is the cornerstone for teaching morality and when they come to understand, believe, and live it, then you they have the foundation for morality and it's not a bunch of rules.

Class member...We have been studying the Book of Mormon...We just hit Alma 40 and the violence was really hard. We kind of got stuck. I'm trying to figure out how to cross that bridge with them.

At this age...little people you aren't going to make a big deal out of cutting off their heads and eating the flesh. Some things we read and some things we just skim by. Why are 'these' included. It shows the downfall. It is part of the pride cycle. This is Satan's battle against us. We have it because we are susceptible to falling. That's not what we focus on in the reading. Choose a different focus. They can gain strength in the gospel so they come to know it later. Do you see how wicked the people were and then go on. Go over it faster. When you get teenagers you say...do you see Iran or Gadianon Robbers in this? Do you see them beheading Christians for believing in Christ?

Class member: When the Proclamation was given there wasn't all the junk going on in high school.

You have to teach the doctrine from that foundation if you want it to get into the hearts of your children.

When you go into a bishop's interview and the bishop asks them if they are morally clean and your kids say yes...there are a lot of your kids who have no clue what the bishop is asking. They don't know what it means to be morally clean. They think anything short of intercourse is not immoral. We don't teach in specifics, but Satan does. How often do you think in that environment they are being hit on by Satan. Constantly!!! How often are you counterbalancing that hit. How often do we talk about morality with our children...once a year? Once in a lifetime? That is not enough! We have to bring it into FHE and conversation. With enthusiasm and excitement you are helping fortify the doctrine for them.

Ponder this one....

As a warning...something you may not have thought about. Why do you think boys get in trouble? (They are curious, bored, sight and touch keep a boy going) What about a girl? (Emotion, she wants to be loved and appreciated) If she is not getting those at home she will try to get them from someone else. Usually none of premarital sexual

relationship have anything to do with commitment or love. It's a momentarily self-gratification. Girls also have a desire to please. They tend to capitulate.

Now we have girls that are scary. We used to have to protect our girls from the boys, but now you have to protect the boys from the girls. We need to be teaching them appropriate behavior. Girls are often aggressors. It's scary what girls will do. Part of this is them becoming used to it.

Two teenagers asked their father if they could go to the theater to watch a movie that all their friends had seen. After reading some reviews about the movie on the internet, he denied their request.

"Aw dad, why not?" they complained. "It's rated PG-13, and we're both older than thirteen!"

Dad replied: "Because that movie contains nudity and portrays immorality, which is something that God hates, as being normal and acceptable behavior."

"But dad, those are just very small parts of the movie! That's what our friends who've seen it have told us. The movie is two hours long and those scenes are just a few minutes of the total film! It's based on a true story, and good triumphs over evil, and there are other redeeming themes like courage and self-sacrifice. Even the Christian movie review websites say that!"

"My answer is 'no,' and that is my final answer. You are welcome to stay home tonight, invite some of your friends over, and watch one of the good videos we have in our home collection. But you will not go and watch that film. End of discussion."

The two teenagers walked dejectedly into the family room and slumped down on the couch. As they sulked, they were surprised to hear the sounds of their father preparing something in the kitchen. They soon recognized the wonderful aroma of brownies baking in the oven, and one of the teenagers said to the other, "Dad must be feeling guilty, and now he's going to try to make it up to us with some fresh brownies. Maybe we can soften him with lots of praise when he brings them out to us and persuade him to let us go to that movie after all."

The teens were not disappointed. Soon their father appeared with a plate of warm brownies which he offered to his kids. They each took one. Then their father said,

"Before you eat, I want to tell you something: I love you both so much."

The teenagers smiled at each other with knowing glances. Dad was softening.

"That is why I've made these brownies with the very best ingredients. I've made them from scratch. Most of the ingredients are even organic. The best organic flour. The best free-range eggs. The best organic sugar. Premium vanilla and chocolate."

The brownies looked mouth-watering, and the teens began to become a little impatient with their dad's long speech.

"But I want to be perfectly honest with you. There is one ingredient I added that is not usually found in brownies. I got that ingredient from our own back yard. But you needn't worry, because I only added the tiniest bit of that ingredient to your brownies. The amount of the portion is practically insignificant. So go ahead, take a bite and let me know what you think."

"Dad, would you mind telling us what that mystery ingredient is before we eat?"

"Why? The portion I added was so small. Just a teaspoonful. You won't even taste it."

"Come on, dad, just tell us what that ingredient is."

"Don't worry! It is organic, just like the other ingredients."

"Dad!"

"Well, OK, if you insist. That secret ingredient is organic...dog poop."

Both teens instantly dropped their brownies back on the plate and began inspecting their fingers with horror.

"DAD! Why did you do that? You've tortured us by making us smell those brownies cooking for the last half hour, and now you tell us that you added dog poop! We can't eat these brownies!"

"Why not? The amount of dog poop is very small compared to the rest of the ingredients. It won't hurt you. It's been cooked right along with the other ingredients. You won't even taste it. It has the same consistency as the brownies. Go ahead and eat!"

"No, Dad...NEVER!"

"And that is the same reason I won't allow you to go watch that movie. You won't tolerate a little dog poop in your brownies, so why should you tolerate a little immorality in your movies? We pray that God will not lead us unto temptation, so how can we in good conscience entertain ourselves with something that will imprint a sinful image in our minds that will lead us into temptation long after we first see it?

Lasciviousness...interesting word. It means..."To wrongly celebrate the capacity to feel so that people lose their capacity to feel."

If you are teaching the doctrine...that emotional high you get with a member of the opposite sex is a sacred emotion. It is given as a gift from Heavenly Father so we would create families. They start coming when youth are youth so they will create families. They are to be kept within the bounds the Lord has set. Anything that stimulates those feelings outside the bounds of their proper use is wrong.

I have a grandson that really liked this girl. When I'm with her I just ache. He decided to quit talking to her for about a year because he didn't want to abuse sacred feelings. How wise of him.

You have 2 young people who are out on a date and they kiss. That is after they kiss once. They want to go out again and do that again. They start 'going together' and it progresses to other things. What are they doing? They are wrongly celebrating the capacity to feel. It is not the time, place, or season to celebrate that. They say...we didn't do anything bad.

A young woman says I can kiss to this point, but no more. She trains herself to get to this far and then I'm going to push you away and shut down emotionally and she does. She gets to college and she meets someone else and does the same thing. Now she is married legitimately in the temple to a righteous young man. They start their wedding experience. She has trained her emotions to shut down at a certain point. Can she fully enjoy a relationship with a husband? Over time, but not initially.

Those are sacred emotions you don't mess with. There are those who say I will repent before I go on my mission. The consequences are still there even if you repent. We want to help protect your children. I'm not saying your children shouldn't kiss. They need to guard those feelings carefully. They are to be used in one place. If you mess with them before there are consequences. Can you get over them?

The Atonement can wash it all clean, but there is a process to go through.

Preventive Measures for Morality

The best way to come to these decision is to have them make these decisions. Most of these decisions they come to themselves. If you are a careful teacher, you can get them to write down themselves.

Refrain from vulgar language

Profanity yes...vulgar is much more inclusive...anything to do with bodily function, crass, innuendos. There are lots of those words that are disrespectful. Little people will say those words because they hear them. They need to be given an alternative. No swearing.

Do not give or accept backrubs from the opposite sex or the same sex.

Hanging out can be disastrous. Keep your hands to yourself. Don't let them touch your body.

Don't lay next to the opposite sex or the same sex.

Laying across the floor watching a movie. It's your rule, your body, get up and move it. We don't teach these kinds of limits.

Never go into the bedroom of the opposite sex.

The rule in my house...you do not go into the bedroom of the opposite sex. Brothers and sisters don't go in each others rooms. What age do you start that. I brought all play things in the family room. You don't have to play in the bedroom. Little people are very prone to play doctors. I want them in where I am watching them all times. I love them. It has nothing to do with trust. I want to keep them safe.

Class member: Our YW do a 4th level hike. The leaders took them out and talked to them about this topic. They used the word...NERD (Never Enter Risky Dens).

Do not dance too close.

Most dances are...I hang on you and you hang on me for slow dances.

No full body hugs.

Girls to girls, girls to boys. Give them a one arm hug...if you feel like you have to hug. Just shake hands that's better.

Watch the cell phones.

Talking, texting too much is wrong. A cell phone is a privilege. Occasionally you need to get on it and check it. Most of it is just to keep them on their toes. Have them dock their phones.

Chat rooms.

Don't let them go there. Predators are there.

Dress modestly.

Sunday dress

No flip flops in church. Sunday dress should be Sunday dress. D&C 59:9...keep the Sabbath Day holy you will remain unspotted from the world.

Tatoos

Piercings

Pornography

Kissing

They see it from the time they are little. If they aren't getting a rush is it ok if they kiss that person goodnight. French kissing and oral sex they think are ok because they are fully dressed. They have different names for what those things are. Ask your kids what they are.

No steady dating

At 14 the church sets the standard to go to Stake Dances. We start saying ok you can get together. Miammaids and Teachers get together to watch a movie. As they hang out at 14 at someone's house do you think they don't pair up? They do. Is it a date? No they are just watching a movie. There is no difference between that at 14 and when you are a16. Don't let them do it at 14. The church sets the rule. Teach your children to date. Our kids don't date anymore. They go to 2-3 formal dances a year and that's it. Tracy requires her boys to date. Dating requires...planning, paid, and paired...it's the 3 "P's"

MORE RULES FROM SISTER TANNER....

Refrain from vulgar language

Never give or accept back rubs from the opposite sex

Do not lay next to anyone

Never go into the bedroom of the opposite sex
Do not dance too close
Limit excessive time on phones: text, e-mail, cell-phones
Dress modestly-- boys and girls
Sunday dress--no flip-flops, white shirts and ties, keep the Sabbath Holy
No full body hugs
No tattoos
No body piercing
Avoid pornography in all of its forms
Be wise with the internet--use filters
Kisses are a sacred gift-- no French kissing
No steady dating (Pres Hinckley Nov 1997) no pairing off until ready to get married
No marathon dates
Sleepovers
Have a curfew
No sex--oral sex--petting--making out
No masturbation
Be wise in movies, music, games--no violence or sex
Be wise with TV selections--tv teaches disrespect for role of men and women through humor, violence, sex, disrespect for adults
Don't compare to world--compare to Lord's standard
Go on planned dates--don't just hang out

Elder Larry Lawrence, Nov 2010 Ensign, "Courageous Parenting"

Five fundamental practices to fortify youth:

1. Family Prayer
2. Family scripture study
3. FHE
4. Family dinner together
5. Regular one-on-one interviews

HOMEWORK:

- Study the "[For Strength of Youth](#)"
- Study "[My Gospel Standards](#)"
- Read "[The Lord's Standard of Morality](#)" Tad Callister March 2014
- Read "[The Dating Academy](#)" Matthew Richardson August 2014

- Use this for your foundation. It's fun and it's meeting the needs of the youth. It is fun and exciting.
- [FHE lessons on Morality](http://www.overcomingpornography.org)—5 new lessons on Preventative—
www.overcomingpornography.org

No sleepovers! Boys camp and girls camp exceptions. Don't do it unless it's at Grandma's house. They are never worth it.

[“Courageous Parenting”](#) Larry Lawrence October 2010

May I express my personal warning about a practice that is common in many cultures. I am referring to sleepovers, or spending the night at the home of a friend. As a bishop I discovered that too many youth violated the Word of Wisdom or the law of chastity for the first time as part of a sleepover. Too often their first exposure to pornography and even their first encounter with the police occurred when they were spending the night away from home.

Peer pressure becomes more powerful when our children are away from our influence and when their defenses are weakened late at night. If you have ever felt uneasy about an overnight activity, don't be afraid to respond to that warning voice inside. Always be prayerful when it comes to protecting your precious children.

Satan is rampant, clever, & cunning. Think about how you dress, what you watch, what you do on your cell phones. In the Lord's kingdom there is no double standard. If it is wrong at 50 it's wrong at 12. If it invites the Spirit it's right. If it doesn't it is wrong no matter what.

Joseph Smith said sexually purity will be the greatest challenge in the later days.