

Follow Him

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Have you Primary girls ever wondered what your life is going to be like as you grow up? What do you dream of? Ten-year-old Amy told me, “I dream about what I will be like, and where I will go, and what I will do.” Eleven-year-old Kristine said, “I worry about bad things that happen at school. Some things scare me!”

What is in the future for you? Will there be adventure? Will there be danger? Will there be sorrow? Will there be love and families? Will there be disappointments? Will there be fun and laughter?

The answer to all of these dreams and questions is yes! Yes! Yes! Anything and everything is possible.

Let’s imagine that you are terribly hungry when you are ushered into a room full of banquet tables spread with many kinds of food. You are allowed to choose which foods to eat.

One table holds foods that taste good, but aren’t very nutritious. Another holds foods that are actually harmful to your body and could even cause you to get sick or die. Some tables hold just one kind of food—like all desserts. That sounds good to me. And yet another is filled with a rich variety of delicious foods that are well-balanced and nutritious. Which will you choose?

No matter what the future holds for you, just as the banquet tables are laden with food waiting to be savored, life is a fabulous feast of experiences just waiting for you to choose and explore. You are now hungering to know all about life, and there are many tables from which you may choose. Some choices *seem* good, but are harmful. Some choices are fun but don’t lead you anywhere. Some choices could destroy you. However, just as the feast on the banquet table with a variety of good food is best for our physical bodies, the best feast in *life* is at the table of the Lord.

What is on the Lord’s table? Love, good fun, uplifting music, peaceful prayer, scriptures, smiles, learning, happy talk, warm hugs, good friends, and service to others. This is where eternal joy can be found. That’s why in Primary you repeat the motto, I Will Follow God’s Plan for Me. Although you will have disappointing days, and discouragement and sorrow along with the good, if you follow God’s plan, you will be feasting at the table of the Lord where the spiritual satisfaction is far greater and lasts longer than the physical satisfaction of food.

My dear sisters, Satan wants you very much. He swore an oath before the world was that he would try *anything* to capture and enslave and ruin you. He wants you especially because you have the truth. You are the ones who can touch hearts, change lives, and lead others to our Heavenly Father. We women of the Church have significant and critical work to do for the Lord. That’s why Satan wants *you*. Having you on his side is the best victory of all for him because not only will he have cheated you out of your eternal blessings, but he will also cheat others whom you could have influenced through your good example.

The contents of Satan’s table sometimes appear inviting. They may seem fun and harmless. In fact, Satan can make us feel that terrible things are really all right to do.

Now, if he came to you looking ugly and scary and said, “Come with me,” you’d turn around and run as fast as

you could. But Satan knows you're too smart for that, so he has to trick you. One way he does that is by making bad things seem good. Listen to this: "Everybody does it." "No one will know." "Just this once won't hurt." "It's not really a bad thing to do."

You've heard some of those phrases before, haven't you? "But that wasn't Satan who said it," you answer. To that I reply, "It was Satan's message delivered to you, perhaps by someone who is, to one degree or another, in his power." Those phrases are warnings. When you hear them, *that* is when you should turn and run away from danger.

Sometimes we try to tell *ourselves* that wrong is right. We do this to try to feel better about doing wrong things. On a television show recently, a girl was caught breaking a serious family rule. She said, "I wasn't being disobedient. I was just learning independence." Well, no matter what she said or how she tried to justify what she had done, the truth was she had disobeyed a rule that was made to protect her. When she disobeyed, the protection was gone. That's important to remember, so I want to say it one more time. When she disobeyed, the protection was gone.

Satan *wants* us to lose our protection—that is, the help of the Holy Ghost—because that's when he can gain power over us. When we obey, we can have the protection of the Holy Ghost. "I, the Lord, am bound," he said, "when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D&C 82:10.)

Satan keeps at us all our lives. As we grow older, he adds phrases like these to the messages he delivers: "I'm not worth much." "I've done my part, now it's someone else's turn." "It's too late for me." "The Brethren just don't understand. I know better than they do." When these thoughts or feelings come into our minds and hearts, they, too, are warnings that let us know we are in danger—in danger of losing the Spirit, losing our testimonies, forfeiting eternal joy. These, too, are times to turn around and run to escape from the danger before us.

And where do we run? To our Heavenly Father.

Suppose you had a very important job that needed to be done, and there were several people you could ask to do the job for you. Which person would you choose? Wouldn't you choose the person who was best prepared to do the job?

That is what our Heavenly Father did. The very important work that had to be done was to save us from sin and spiritual death and to show us how we could return to him. Unlike Satan, who wants to destroy you, Heavenly Father wants you because he loves you. He has provided ways to protect you from Satan. And whom did He choose to show us the way? His Son Jesus Christ. "Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people." (Ether 3:14.)

That is our Heavenly Father's work. *Our* work is to live worthy of returning to him and help others do the same.

When Jesus was in the wilderness, Satan promised him power and fame if Jesus would worship him. Jesus, knowing Satan's promises are false, said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," meaning, "Go away. Don't bother me. I won't listen to you." (See Matt. 4:8–10.)

Satan can influence us only if we let him. Each time we resist evil, the Lord blesses us with more strength to resist. When I do something I shouldn't, I don't like the way I feel. But the first time I say in my mind or by what I do, "Get thee behind me, Satan," I feel a surge of strength and power to resist. It is the Holy Ghost helping me.

It's a wonderfully secure feeling. Resisting Satan is the appetizer at the banquet table of the Lord. It prepares us for more of the life-giving sustenance the Lord has for us.

While it is important to be aware of the desire Satan has to own us, it is not necessary for us to live in fear. In the Doctrine and Covenants we are taught, "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear." (D&C 38:30.) As we prepare ourselves to receive the blessings of the Lord and to be worthy to serve him, we are gathering strength—power from the Holy Ghost—preparing ourselves to overcome evil.

One part of preparing is repenting. If you have done something wrong, I hope you know it was wrong and will repent. Talk to your parents or your bishop. They love you, and they can help you know what to do to repent so you can be clean again and start over.

Little sisters, do not be afraid of Satan or afraid of the future. Instead, follow the example of Heavenly Father's Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Then you will be strong and be able to say with confidence, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

When I was a girl, on summer mornings the first sound I heard through my open window as I was waking was the song of a meadowlark. I liked the call of the killdeer, the chirp of the chickadee, and the screech of the magpie. But the song of the meadowlark was especially beautiful to me, and I trained my ear to hear it amid other sounds.

We can train our spiritual senses the same way so that we can recognize our Heavenly Father's will for us. We train our spiritual senses by doing good things. We are taught to "search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ." (Moro. 7:19.)

To "lay hold upon every good thing" means to look for good and do good. Then you will have good feelings. You can know which choices to make. Although you usually will not hear an answer as easily as I heard the song of a meadowlark, you will be able to feel that what you are doing is right.

President Benson spoke to all the children last general conference and told you how to be happy. He was telling you what our Heavenly Father wants you to know. Get a copy of his message and keep it right with your scriptures. Read it over and over. Do what the prophet says, and you will know God's plan for you and how you can follow his plan.

Follow the example of good women. Tonight you have seen women who are trying to follow God's plan. Sister Jepsen, who is conducting, and Sister Doxey and Sister Jack, who have spoken, are great examples—models you can follow. I testify of the truthfulness of their words. Sisters Joy Evans, Jayne Malan, and Ruth Wright, also counselors in the Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary, are spiritual women and great leaders. Members of the Primary, Young Women, and Relief Society general boards, whom you see on the stand, have made choices to unselfishly serve the Lord. These are women who have dreamed, worried, and grown as you are doing. They have done much good in small, private ways, as well as in their public church service.

And my dear friends Relief Society President Barbara Winder and Young Women President Ardeth Kapp are real heroines. When Sister Kapp was a young girl, like many of you, she struggled with her schoolwork. Later she graduated with honors and earned advanced degrees. And when Sister Winder was your age, like many of you,

she worried because her parents were not active in the Church. Now they've been sealed in the temple. Just like you and me, Sister Kapp and Sister Winder still have things they worry about and struggle with. They know that things don't always turn out the way we want, but that our Heavenly Father will always help us if we do our best and are obedient. Then we will have what is best for us. They have prepared themselves. They follow the Savior, and they follow the prophet, and by doing so, they have learned what God's plan is for them, and they are faithfully trying to follow that plan.

Like you, they were ordinary girls with the same dreams and fears you are experiencing. Now they are ordinary women living extraordinary lives, doing some of the critical, important work of the Lord, as you will do. Barbara and Ardeth, how I love you! You are worthy examples for all of us.

You girls can follow the example of these women. You also have many good women who are close to you. Watch the good things your mothers do. Your grandmothers, sisters, aunts, leaders, and teachers also have good qualities and can teach you many good things. They know how important it is for them to follow the Savior and to be good examples to you.

Above all, follow God's plan for *you*. Prepare and do not fear, for God knows you and loves you and will watch over you.

The final words of the song we are about to hear from this magnificent choir tell us *how* Heavenly Father wants us to follow his plan. The words are:

“What does He ask? Live like his Son.”

Just as food satisfies our physical hunger, we can partake with satisfaction and delight in all the Father has for us as we, living like his Son, feast at the table of the Lord. Of these things I testify, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.