

Yes, We Can and Will Win!

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We must hold ever more tightly to our testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then we will win the daily battles against evil.

Dear brethren, I am humbled by the privilege I have to speak to you, the bearers of the priesthood of God throughout the Church today.

President Thomas S. Monson once said:

“The world can at times be a frightening place in which to live. The moral fabric of society seems to be unraveling at an alarming speed. None—whether young or old or in-between—is exempt from exposure to those things which have the potential to drag us down and destroy us. ...

“... But we need not despair. ... We are waging a war with sin. ... It is a war we can and will win. Our Father in Heaven has given us the tools we need in order to do so.”¹

All of us, young and old, are faced daily with the war mentioned by President Monson. The enemy and his angels are trying to distract us. Their purpose is to encourage us to deviate from the covenants that we have made with the Lord, causing us to lose sight of our eternal inheritance. They know well our Heavenly Father’s plan for His children, for they were present with us in that great Council in Heaven when it was all presented. They try to take advantage of our weaknesses and frailties, deceiving us with “mists of darkness ... , which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost.”²

Despite the opposition we face, as President Monson has taught, this is a war that we can and will win. The Lord trusts in our capacity and determination to do so.

The scriptures contain countless examples of those who have won their wars even in the midst of very hostile situations. One of these examples is Captain Moroni in the Book of Mormon. This remarkable young man had the courage to defend the truth at a time when there were many dissensions and wars which put at risk the very survival of the entire Nephite nation. Although he was brilliant in exercising his responsibilities, Moroni remained humble. This and other attributes made him an extraordinary instrument in the hands of God at that time. The book of Alma explains that if all men had been like Moroni, “the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever; [and] the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men.”³ All of Moroni’s attributes stemmed from his great faith in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ⁴ and his firm determination to follow the voice of God and His prophets.⁵

Figuratively, all of us need to transform ourselves into modern Captain Moronis in order to win the wars against evil. I know a very faithful young deacon who transformed himself into a modern Captain Moroni. Inasmuch as he has

sought to follow the counsel of his parents and Church leaders, his faith and determination have been tested every day, even at his young age. He told me one day he was surprised by a very difficult and uncomfortable situation—his friends were accessing pornographic images on their cell phones. In that exact moment, this young man had to decide what was most important—his popularity or his righteousness. In the few seconds that followed, he was filled with courage and told his friends that what they were doing was not right. Moreover, he told them that they should stop what they were doing or they would become slaves to it. Most of his classmates ridiculed his counsel, saying that it was a part of life and that there was nothing wrong with it. However, there was one among them who listened to the counsel of that young man and decided to stop what he was doing.

This deacon's example had a positive influence on at least one of his classmates. Undoubtedly, he and his friend faced mockery and persecution because of that decision. On the other hand, they had followed the admonition of Alma to his people when he said, "Come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things."⁶

The pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth* contains the following counsel, approved by the First Presidency for the youth of the Church: "You are responsible for the choices you make. God is mindful of you and will help you make good choices, even if your family and friends use their agency in ways that are not right. Have the moral courage to stand firm in obeying God's will, even if you have to stand alone. As you do this, you set an example for others to follow."⁷

The war of good against evil will continue throughout our lives since the adversary's purpose is to make all people as miserable as he is. Satan and his angels will try to shroud our thoughts and assert control by tempting us to sin. If they can, they will corrupt all that is good. Nevertheless, it is essential to understand that they will have power over us only if we allow it.

The scriptures also contain several examples of those who gave that permission to the adversary and ended up becoming confused and even destroyed, like Nehor, Korihor, and Sherem. We need to be alert to this danger. We cannot allow ourselves to be confused by popular messages that are easily accepted by the world and that contradict the doctrine and true principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many of these worldly messages represent nothing more than an attempt of our society to justify sin. We need to remember that, at the end, all will stand before Christ to be judged of our works, whether they are good or whether they are evil.⁸ As we encounter these worldly messages, great courage and a solid knowledge of the plan of our Heavenly Father will be required to choose the right.

All of us can receive the strength to choose the right if we seek the Lord and place all our trust and faith in Him. But, as the scriptures teach, we need to have "a sincere heart" and "real intent." Then the Lord, in His infinite mercy, "will manifest the truth unto [us], by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost [we] may know the truth of all things."⁹

This knowledge acquired through the Holy Ghost is nothing more than our testimony, which propels our faith and determination to follow the teachings of the restored gospel in these latter days, regardless of the popular messages we hear from the world. Our testimony must be our shield to protect us against the fiery darts of the adversary in his attempts to attack us.¹⁰ It will guide us safely through the darkness and confusion that exist in the world today.¹¹

I learned this principle when I served as a young missionary. My companion and I were serving in a very small and faraway branch of the Church. We tried to speak with every person in the city. They received us very well, but they liked to debate the scriptures and asked us for concrete evidence regarding the truthfulness of what we were teaching.

I recall that each time my companion and I set out to try to prove something to people, the Spirit of God left us and we felt totally lost and confused. We felt that we should more strongly align our testimonies with the truths of the gospel we were teaching. From that time on, I remember that when we bore a testimony with all our hearts, a silent confirming power coming from the Holy Ghost filled the room, and there was no space for confusion or discussion. I learned that no evil forces exist that are capable of confusing, deceiving, or subverting the power of a sincere testimony of a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

As the Savior Himself taught, the adversary desires to sift us as wheat, causing us to lose our ability to influence the world for good.¹²

My dear brethren, because of the wave of confusion and doubt spreading throughout the world today, we must hold ever more tightly to our testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then will our ability to defend truth and justice greatly increase. We will win the daily battles against evil, and, rather than fall on the battlefields of life, we will rally others to the Master's standards.

I invite all to find safety in the teachings contained in the scriptures. Captain Moroni aligned his faith in God and his testimony of the truth with the knowledge and wisdom found in the scriptures. In this way, he trusted that he would receive the blessings of the Lord and would obtain many victories, which is what, in fact, happened.

I invite all to find safety in the wise words of our current prophets. President Thomas S. Monson said: "We who have been ordained to the priesthood of God can make a difference. When we maintain our personal purity and honor our priesthood, we become righteous examples for others to follow ... [and we] help to illuminate an increasingly dark world."¹³

I invite all to trust in the merits and in the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Through His atoning sacrifice, we can gain the courage to win all the wars of our time, even in the midst of our difficulties, challenges, and temptations. Let us trust in His love and power to save us. Christ Himself said:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."¹⁴

"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."¹⁵

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."¹⁶

I bear testimony of these truths in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Thomas S. Monson, "Looking Back and Moving Forward," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2008, 90.

2. 1 Nephi 12:17.

3. Alma 48:17.

4. See Alma 48:13.

5. See Alma 43:23–24; 48:16.

6. Alma 5:57.

7. *For the Strength of Youth* (booklet, 2011), 2.

8. See 3 Nephi 27:14.

9. Moroni 10:4–5.

10. See Ephesians 6:16; Doctrine and Covenants 27:17.

11. See Revelation 12:11.

12. See Luke 22:31–32.

13. Thomas S. Monson, “Guided Safely Home,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 68.

14. John 14:6.

15. John 8:12.

16. John 16:33.

