

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The First Quorum of the Seventy
47 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

July, 1989

Dear Varsity Scouts and Coach,

As a boy, I climbed Ben Lomond Peak north of Ogden, Utah, with my dad. I can still remember the thrill I felt as we achieved our goal and stood on the peak looking down over the Great Ogden Valley. It was a tough hike. There were times when I needed my dad's help. Sometimes I felt as if I couldn't make it, but we had a reachable goal in mind and, though tough and rugged, with my dad's encouragement, I learned that day not to give up. Setting goals is critical if we want to achieve success. We must have the goal firmly planted in our minds. In the Book of Mormon, Moroni refers to it as the "eye of faith." If we don't firmly set the goal and see it with our "mind's eye," we will not see it actually achieved with our natural eye. I know the Lord will give us the help we need as long as we don't give up.


To each young man who has been baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Heavenly Father has given a priceless gift, the Holy Ghost. Through this power, if we live worthily, we will be warned of danger when we are tempted to alter our goals or beliefs. I am reminded of an old Indian legend that goes like this:

Many years ago, Indian youths would go away in solitude to prepare for manhood. One such youth hiked into a beautiful valley. There he fasted, and on the third day, as he looked up at the surrounding mountains, he noticed one tall, rugged peak. I will test myself against that mountain, he thought. He put on his buffalo-hide shirt, threw his blanket over his shoulders, and set off to climb the peak.

When he reached the top, he stood on the rim of the world. He could see forever, and his heart swelled with pride. Then he heard a rustle at his feet, and looking down, he saw a snake. Before he could move, the snake spoke: "I am about to die. It is too cold for me up here and I am freezing. There is no food and I am starving. Put me under your shirt and take me down to the valley." "No," said the youth, "I know your kind. You are a rattlesnake. If I pick you up, you will bite me and I will die." "Not so," said the snake. "I will treat you differently. If you do this for me, you will be special. I will not harm you." The snake had beautiful markings and was very persuasive. Finally, the youth tucked it under his shirt and carried it down to the valley. There he laid it gently on the grass, when suddenly the snake coiled, rattled, and struck, biting him on the leg. "But you promised—" cried the youth. "You knew what I was when you picked me up," said the snake as it slithered away.

Now is the time to set goals for what you want to be and do. Develop an "eye of faith" for each goal and listen carefully to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. The Adversary can make evil appear tempting and good. If that happens to you, just remember, "You knew what I was when you picked me up." God bless you in your hike toward eternal life. You can do it!

Sincerely your brother,



Robert B. Harbertson
Young Men General Presidency