

Episode 2

Stories from General Young Women Meetings

THE HOLY GHOST

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: From the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, we welcome you to “Stories from the General Young Women Meetings”. This collection of stories is on the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the godhead, his purpose is to testify, comfort and provide guidance.

In his Epistle to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul said that “the fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.”

Each of the following stories were given during a General Young Women Meeting and illustrate some of the roles of the Holy Ghost. To start off this collection, in the 2008 General Young Women Meeting, Sister Susan W. Tanner provides an example of how the Holy Ghost testifies truth.

[END MUSIC]

(Susan W. Tanner, April 2008, General Young Women Meeting)

When our children were missionaries, they learned that when we stand as a witness of Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost will confirm that testimony. One of our daughters had a golden investigator named Jie-Lei. This young adult woman obeyed each new commandment she was taught, no matter how difficult. She was a student struggling to make ends meet financially, but she began paying her tithing when she learned about that law. Her part-time job required her to work on Sunday, but she had the courage to ask her employer if he could change her hours to another day so that she could attend sacrament meeting.

In spite of her diligence, Jie-Lei still did not have a firm testimony of the Book of Mormon. Our daughter and her companion knew that she needed a witness from the Spirit to confirm its truth, so they prepared a lesson for her about the Holy Ghost. As they worked on it, somehow it didn't feel quite right. When they prayed about it, they felt impressed to go a different direction, to give a lesson instead about Jesus Christ.

When the appointed meeting came, these missionaries began teaching Jie-Lei about Jesus Christ. Tears started streaming down her cheeks. She kept asking, "What is this I am feeling?" Then they bore witness to her that it was the Spirit. Exactly what they had wanted to have happen did happen. It was then that our daughter remembered that one of the great roles of the Holy Ghost is as a testifier of Christ. Jesus Himself said, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, . . . shall testify of me." Our daughter realized that

as she stood as a witness of Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost confirmed it. We too can stand as witnesses as "we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ" and look to Him as the source for "a remission of [our] sins."

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: **In the 2003 General Young Women Meeting, Sister Elaine S. Dalton gives another example of a young woman who felt the influence of the Holy Ghost.**

[END MUSIC]

(Elaine S. Dalton, April 2003 General Young Women Meeting)

Seminary helped Melissa envision the kind of young woman she wanted to become. She was not a member of our Church, but she enrolled in seminary with her friends. When she turned 18, she was taught by the missionaries. She knew the things they taught her were true! The spirit was so sweet at her baptism. It felt as if not only all her friends and family were present but also her future family. The bishop remarked that he could almost hear her future family saying, "Thanks, Mom!"

Like Melissa, you have made baptismal covenants. Keeping your covenants will enable you to be guided by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost will protect and strengthen you and tell you "all things [that] you should do" (2 Nephi 32:5). This gift sets you apart from the world.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: **In the same talk, Sister Dalton tells about another young woman who was guided in decisions that would affect her future.**

[END MUSIC]

(Elaine S. Dalton, 2003 General Young Women Meeting)

The Holy Ghost will also guide you as you make decisions regarding your future. Another young woman I know was dating a tall, handsome young man—the star of the school basketball team and senior class president. While discussing their future plans, she explained that she had made a decision a long time ago to marry a returned missionary in the temple. A mission was not part of his plans, and nothing more was said. The following Christmas, he gave her a small gift. As she opened it, she realized that it was a letter from a prophet of God calling her friend to serve a mission. Her righteous influence helped him make that important decision.

You too can influence the young men with whom you associate to "rise a little higher [and] be a little better" (Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Quest for Excellence," *Ensign*, Sept. 1999, 5; *Liahona*, Sept. 1999, 8). You can help young men prepare for and serve honorable missions. You can help them remain morally clean so they can bear their priesthood with honor. Your righteous influence in the life of a young man can have an eternal effect in not only his life but the lives of generations.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: **Sister Dalton goes on to explain how her daughter received guidance about her future husband.**

[END MUSIC]

(Elaine S. Dalton, April 2003 General Young Women Meeting)

When our daughter Emi was 15, she made a decision. One morning I noticed her Book of Mormon opened to Alma, chapter 48. She had marked the verses that describe Captain Moroni: “Moroni was a strong and a mighty man; he was a man of a perfect understanding. . . . Yea, and he was a man who was firm in the faith of Christ”.

In the margin she had written, “I want to marry a man like Moroni.” Seven years later, she did! Emi gained her vision for her future husband as she read the scriptures and listened to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. She also came to know and understand the Savior and His “great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8).

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: **In the 2002 General Young Women Meeting, Sister Sharon G. Larsen recalls a time when, as a teenager, she was reminded to always be worthy to receive guidance from the Holy Ghost.**

[END MUSIC]

(Sharon G. Larsen, April 2002 General Young Women Meeting)

It was Thursday night, Mom and Dad's regular night to work at the Cardston temple. I was in my teens, like you young women. My grandmother, who was living with us, was away, so I would be home alone. As they left, Dad hugged me and said, "Now, Sharon, be in good company."

I thought, "What is he thinking? Doesn't he know I'll be here by myself?" And then I realized—that is exactly what he was thinking.

Standing in holy places is all about being in good company, whether you are alone or with others. It's being where the Holy Ghost is our companion—alone or in a crowd. When we determine within ourselves that we will control our thoughts and our actions and be the best we can possibly be, the best of life will come to us.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: **In the 2001 General Young Women Meeting, Sister Margaret D. Nadauld illustrates how the Holy Ghost helped a young woman find good friends.**

[END MUSIC]

(Margaret D. Nadauld, April 2001 General Young Women Meeting)

The Holy Spirit has the power to guide. A 15-year-old girl felt that she needed to find new friends. Have you ever felt that way? She writes, "Now, I don't know if you have ever had to change friends, but it honestly was the hardest thing I have ever had to do." She decided to put her problem in the hands of the Lord, and she also counseled with her parents. She says that after several months "she wanted to just give up." One afternoon she was casually talking to her seminary teacher, and she confided her problem to him. Then he said, "I really don't know why I am asking you this, but do you happen to know these girls?" This girl answered with a yes. And then he said, "Have you ever thought about being friends with them?"

"I told him that there was no way that I could fit in with them. He then asked me if he could talk to one of the girls. I decided I would let him, if he promised not to embarrass me.

"Well, that next day I received a phone call from one of the girls. Now, you have to understand that this girl was on student council, and I hate to use the term, but she was 'extremely popular.' She asked if I would like to go to the basketball game with her that night. That night was one of the funnest, most peaceful nights of my life. The next day at school, she introduced me to two other girls. We all instantly became friends. This event has changed me."

She concludes by saying, "I don't know about you, but I would much rather have the Lord, who knows the outcome of everything, direct my life than me, who just sees things as they are at the time. He is right by our side, walking us through life, even when we feel so alone" (letter on file in the Young Women office).

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: In the 2006 General Young Women Meeting, President James E. Faust shares a story of two young women in the early days of the church. The Holy Ghost protected them from a mob.

[END MUSIC]

(President James E. Faust, April 2006, General Young Women Meeting)

The theme for this conference is so appropriate: "Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations." I see the light shining in your faces. That light comes from the Lord, and as you radiate that light, it will bless you as well as many others.

This same light led the way for 15-year-old Mary Elizabeth Rollins and her 13-year-old sister, Caroline, on a dark and chilling day in Independence, Missouri. It was 1833, and an angry mob roared through the streets of Independence, burning property and wreaking havoc. In their path was the home of Brother William W. Phelps, where the printing press was kept. He had been printing revelations received by the Prophet Joseph Smith. The mob demolished the printing press and threw the wreckage into the street. However, they stacked up the printed pages in the yard so they could burn them later.

Mary Elizabeth and Caroline had been hiding by the fence, frightened spectators to all this destruction. Even though she was terrified, Mary Elizabeth's eye was fixed on those precious pages. She and her sister ran out from their hiding place, gathered up the scriptures, and bolted. Some of the mob saw them and ordered them to stop. But the brave girls ran into a large cornfield, where they dropped breathlessly to the ground. They carefully laid the pages of revelations between the tall rows of corn and then covered the pages by lying on them. The relentless mobsters looked and looked for the girls, coming quite close at times, but never did find them. Eventually they gave up their search to see what further damage they could do to the town.

I believe the light of the Lord directed Mary Elizabeth and Caroline as to what to do and where to go for safety. Sisters, that light shines for you, and it will guide you as it did the Rollins girls. It will keep you safe even when danger lurks. As the Master promised, "I will also be your light . . . ; and I will prepare the way before you, if it so be that ye shall keep my commandments; . . . ye shall know that it is by me that ye are led."

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: **In the 2001 General Young Women Meeting, Sister Sharon G. Larsen shares a story from her youth when she learned the Holy Ghost will not allow you to do wrong and feel right.**

[END MUSIC]

(Sharon G. Larsen, April 2001 General Young Women Meeting)

I remember when I was about your age wishing the Spirit would tell me something different. I grew up in a small town in Canada. There were 10 people in my high school graduating class, so I graduated in the top 10 of my class! One evening my sister Shirley and I were going to the same party at a friend's house. Mom and Dad reminded us to come right home after the party. Shirley was a year younger than I and went with her group of friends, and I went with mine. After the party Shirley went directly home, a clear indication to Mom and Dad that the party was over. I was not as wise. With my group of friends we began driving around the exciting places in town—the grain elevators and the cemetery!

As time passed I got the strong feeling that I should be home. But how could I be the first one to say, "I have to go home"? So I didn't. I stayed with my friends, laughing and pretending I was having a good time. The feeling that I should go home grew stronger and stronger. Finally I laughingly said to my friends, "If you see a blue car ahead, it's just my dad looking for me." No sooner had I said those words than there indeed was a blue car and my dad standing in the middle of the road (there wasn't a lot of traffic), waving his arms for us to stop.

Dad came around to the car door, opened it, and said quietly, "Sharon, you'd better come home with me." I wanted to crawl under the floor mats of the car and never come out! How could my dad be so cruel and insensitive, and why didn't my sister wait outside the house so Mom and Dad wouldn't know when the party was over? I talked to my sister recently about this, and she said, "I did wait outside until I almost froze to death." At the

time I was sure it was everyone else's fault that I was so humiliated in front of my friends!

Through the lens of time and reality, I see more clearly what really happened. I was prompted and warned several times--not by a legion of angels or even one small angel, but a still, small voice. Actually, it was just a feeling I had. It was so subtle, so quiet that it could be easily brushed away and I could pretend it wasn't really there—and my friends were!

I had overstepped something that was expected of me. I had chosen to be popular with my friends instead of pleasing my parents and the Lord. But even when I deliberately chose not to obey, the Spirit was still there prompting me. You can't do wrong and feel right. Pretending the Spirit isn't prompting you when it is, is like putting the wrong answer down on a test when you know the right answer.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: In the 1999 General Young Women Meeting, Sister Sharon G. Larsen tells a personal experience about teaching a young friend the importance of choosing properly.

[END MUSIC]

(Sharon G. Larsen, April 1999 General Young Women Meeting)

A young friend who did not understand the importance of having the light, having the Spirit, was trying to explain to me why he thought it was important to see some of the vulgar and violent movies on the market today. He said, "If you don't see these things, you will be naive and uninformed and the world will take advantage of you."

I asked my young friend, "Would you rather expose yourself to what the world has to offer to be informed and then left on your own to make decisions, or would you choose to be guided by the Lord and live your life to be filled with so much light and truth and goodness that there is no room for darkness?" You can't be in the light and the dark at the same time.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: From the same General Young Women Meeting in 1999, Sister Margeret D. Nadauld shares a brief story about a young woman who obeyed the spiritual feelings she felt.

[END MUSIC]

(Margaret D. Nadauld, April 1999 General Young Women Meeting)

One young woman wrote to me about a road she was on. She said: "I was with a group of my friends watching a video. It was one I knew I shouldn't be sitting through. The Spirit prompted me to leave. I was able to listen and get up and leave. I felt the Spirit so strong.

I know it was because of the choice I made" (letter in possession of Young Women office). She followed the light to safety.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: We'll feel peace after making right decisions. That's why the Holy Ghost is referred to as the comforter. In the same address, Sister Nadauld shares a story about a young woman who knew the comforting power of the Holy Ghost.

[END MUSIC]

(Margaret D. Nadauld, April 1999 General Young Women Meeting)

The Lord's light helped Shelly Ann Scoffield face a frightening trial in her young life, but she faced it with great faith and love for Heavenly Father. One day Shelly began to feel sick. She saw a doctor, who determined that there was something seriously wrong. Shelly said: "I was scared. I had huge masses on my lungs, and the doctor began to say things like 'cancer' and 'chemotherapy' and 'radiation'." But Shelly didn't give in to her fears. True to her training in Personal Progress, she got busy and set a long list of goals to accomplish while she couldn't go to school because of her treatments. She busied herself with accomplishing good things. She was mindful of her blessings, including a father with the priesthood who had administered to her, a wonderful family, super friends, and great doctors. "Best of all," Shelly said, "I have a testimony of my Heavenly Father, that He loves me and will help me through this struggle."

Shelly recorded her thoughts for her young women friends, and I would like to share with you some of what she said:

"I want you girls to know that now is the time to grow close to your Heavenly Father. Work to show Him you can do all that you promised you would do. I am trying. I am learning more now than I have ever in my life known about the gospel. I know that Heavenly Father is with me. When I'm feeling pain and sorrow, He is too, and He just wants me and every one of you, when you're feeling those things, to get down on your knees and pray for His help, because He is so willing. He loves you so much. I pray that throughout your life, throughout your struggles, that you'll learn from them and stay close to Him and have faith. Gain a testimony and stay true to what is right."

Shelly Scoffield passed away November 3, 1998, strong in the faith.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: In John chapter 14, Christ tells his apostles "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever...I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

From a talk given in the General Young Women Meeting of 2001, Sister Margaret D. Nadauld shares a personal story from her youth illustrating the comforting influence of the Holy Ghost.

[END MUSIC]

(Margaret D. Nadauld, April 2001 General Young Women Meeting)

When I was just a young girl, I became seriously ill. Each day the illness became increasingly severe. Nothing the doctor recommended helped. At that time the dreaded disease of polio was raging in almost epidemic proportions in the land. It was taking the lives of many, and those who didn't die were often left crippled. Polio was everyone's worst fear in those days.

One night my illness became critical, and my father and grandfather administered to me using consecrated oil, and through the power of the holy Melchizedek Priesthood, which they held worthily, they called upon God for healing, help, guidance, and comfort. And then my parents took me to a doctor in another town who immediately sent us to Salt Lake City—two and one-half hours away—with the admonition to hurry. I overheard the doctor whisper that he was certain it was polio.

When we finally arrived at the hospital in Salt Lake, there were medical personnel waiting for us. They grabbed me from my parents' arms and whisked me away. Without a word of good-bye or explanation, we were separated. I was all alone, and I thought I was going to die.

Following the painful diagnostic procedures, including a spinal tap, they took me to a hospital isolation room, where I would stay all by myself with the hope that I would not infect anyone else, for indeed I did have polio.

I remember how very frightened I was. It was dark and I was so sick and so alone. But my parents had taught me to pray. I got on my knees, and I knelt beside the railing in the criblike bed and asked Heavenly Father to bless me. I was crying, I remember. Heavenly Father heard my prayer even though I was only a child. He did. Heavenly Father sent His comforting power, which enveloped me in quiet love. I felt the power of the Holy Ghost, and I was not alone.

[BEG MUSIC]

NARRATOR: **The Holy Ghost can guide and comfort in many ways if we prepare ourselves to hear. We hope each of us can use this blessing regularly in our lives.**

Thank you for listening to this episode of “Stories from the General Young Women Meetings” on the topic of the Holy Ghost.

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