


Student Support Program
THE CHURCH OF Jesus Christ

Solomon Says

You've got questions,
he's got answers



By Brother Solomon Wise

PSSST!!!! Subscribe to the Gospel Blog!!!
thechurchofjesuschrist.org/blog/

Hi. My name is Solomon Wise, and I write for the church blog. Did you know the church even had a blog? It does, and it's great. Especially *my* column. My job is to answer questions from young people like you. Kind of like Dear Abby. Young adults like yourselves visit a special URL and submit anonymous questions that I prayerfully answer as briefly as possible so you don't get bored. Here are a few of the questions I answered recently.

Solomon, What should I do about a friend from school who wants to know more about my faith and my church but has unknowingly disagreed with many of my beliefs in previous conversations? Should I tell him even though I know he'll disagree? Should I not tell him and avoid a potential

disagreement that could change our friendship? Thank you for your wisdom.

This is a great question, and it's good that you do not want to cause an unnecessary disagreement with a friend. If this person is requesting information about your faith, you need to be honest about what you believe, even if you think the person will disagree.

You shouldn't misrepresent this information to the person or give only part of the story or twist your words to make your friend think that you believe something you don't. Alma told the people they needed to be witnesses of God at *all times*, in *all things*, and in *all places* (Mosiah 18:9), and I'll add with *all people*.

All solid relationships are built on

honesty. If this person wants to know more about you, they need to know you for who you *really are*. If you misrepresent yourself, they don't really know you. The fact is, you aren't always going to see eye to eye with your friends. True friendships are able to withstand differences of opinion and even belief. True friendships still stand after difficult conversations and disagreements. You never know; your conversation may bring you both closer in the end.

Ask God to prepare you and pray that He gives you the words to say. If your friend is a Christian, focus on the common ground you share: you both believe Jesus died for your sins. If your friend tries to argue with you, answer with soft words. Like Ephesians 4:15 says, speak the truth, and speak it in love.

A Sister/friend of mine is in a bad relationship...what do you think I can say to encourage someone who had already gone "too far" with a guy and knows it's not right but is afraid to lose her boyfriend if she breaks up with him?

First of all, I feel for your friend. It appears she's invested a lot of herself into this relationship, probably physically and emotionally, and she fears losing that investment if the relationship breaks up. It can be a very big loss. But that doesn't mean she should hang on to an unhealthy lifestyle. As her friend, you can help her to see this clearly.

You care about your friend, and you want the best for her, and that means helping her to see the truth, even if it's painful. Be honest with her in a loving way (Eph. 4:15) about what you've observed in the relationship. "I've noticed he isn't very respectful of you..." or "I'm not saying this to hurt you, but I feel like I wouldn't be a good friend if I didn't tell you..."

It sounds like your friend is having sex outside of marriage, and if she is, she should stop (Acts 15:20, 29, 1 Cor 6:18). Living a lifestyle outside of God's plan always has consequences. Right now, she's probably handcuffed by guilt, which affects her relationship with the Lord, which is way more important than her relationship with this guy. Encourage her to talk to her boyfriend about not having sex anymore. If he supports her in her convictions, that could bring them closer as a couple and even draw them both nearer to God. If he does not support her, that's her signal to move on and trust that the Lord has something much better for her.

As her friend, you can encourage her to do this, but you can't force her. She's not going to respond to nagging or judgment, but it's possible she'll

respond to the genuine, loving concern of a good friend.

I'm in high school. All my friends like to hang out and do stupid things like drink or watch bad movies, and I don't want to stay home on Friday nights with my parents all the time. What do I do? How do I survive the peer pressure?

I feel for you, man! I want you to know that you're not alone. There are probably many others your age thinking the same thing. There are a few things you can do to get yourself through this time in your life.

First, do you have any friends who don't like to do "stupid things"? If not, and, like you said, "all" of your friends behave this way, take a hard look at your friendships. Do your friends really know you? Do they care that you're alone on Friday night?

Proverbs 27:17 says, "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Translation: Do your friends make you "sharper" or "duller"? Do they challenge you and the way you think? Is their conversation stimulating to you? Are you on the same page spiritually? Are you a better person because of your friends? If you answered yes, then you've got some "sharp" amigos. But if your friends don't really care about what you do, flake out on you, aren't there for you, and don't challenge you to be better, then that's more of a superficial relationship.

My advice is to ask The Lord to provide you with friends who you can really connect with, friends who don't want to do stupid stuff every weekend. Disclaimer: the new friends that The Lord gives you might not be the coolest kids on campus. Are you willing to make friends with people who aren't "in"?

Here are a few other suggestions: Plan your own non-drunken/X-rated event for your friends to do on the weekends. Or instead of hanging out with your friends, bring a tin of cookies to the elderly and homebound people in your branch on Friday night. Volunteer somewhere. These activities aren't glamorous, and they won't get you girls, but it's better than spending Friday night cuddled up with your Xbox.

My dear young people, if you've got something on your mind, please ask me. Things are confusing out there in the real world, and I want to support you by showing you what the Word of God has to say about stuff in your life. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Ask Solomon a Question

Obviously, Solomon is not a real person. It's a pseudonym for an elder in our church who has taken on the task of answering your tough questions. The brothers and sisters at the Gospel Blog realize that it's often easier to ask authentic questions when nobody knows who you are. If you want to ask an anonymous question, visit the URL below or snap the code.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TPLR8LP>

