



strengthening  
our home  
and family

## **Deseret Book®**

Family Home Evening Materials

Theme: Agency

Packet #100409

### **5 tips for successful Family Home Evenings**

- 1. Pray.** Pray about the needs of your family as you consider topics for home evenings, and pray as you prepare.
- 2. Prioritize.** Make Family Home Evening a priority; learn to say no to other activities.
- 3. Involvement.** Involve everyone in the family; help little children take part.
- 4. Commitment.** Be committed and be consistent. Set a designated time and stick to it. Holding Family Home Evening on a weekly basis takes dedication and planning on the part of all family members.
- 5. Relax** and enjoy it. The most important thing your children will remember is the spirit they feel in your family home evenings and activities. Be sure the atmosphere is one of love, understanding, and enjoyment.

# Agency

## Conference Talk:

For more information on this topic read “Gifts to Help Us Navigate Our Life,” by José A. Teixeira, *Ensign*, May 2009, 104–6.

## Thought:

One gift that will help us navigate our lives is the gift He has given to all, the ability and power to choose. . . . This gift is an extraordinary sign of trust in us and simultaneously a cherished personal responsibility to use wisely.

(José A. Teixeira, “Gifts to Help Us Navigate Our Life,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 104–6.)

## Song:

“God is Watching Over All,” *Children’s Songbook*, p. 229.

## Scripture:

Say unto this people: Choose ye this day, to serve the Lord God who made you.

(Moses 6:33)

## Object Lesson:

Invite a family member to participate in a demonstration. Hold out both of your hands, palms up, to show that they are empty. Ask the family member to choose which fruit he or she would like. When the person says there is no fruit to choose, place an actual piece of fruit in one hand and say, “Now choose which fruit you would like.” Ask your family if they think the family member really had a choice. Make sure they understand that to have a choice there must be at least two possibilities.

Have your family search 2 Nephi 2:27–29 and find what Lehi says our two great choices are. (You may want to mark them.) Ask:

- Who wants us to choose eternal life?
- Who wants us to choose eternal death?
- What do we learn about Lehi’s choice in verse 30?
- What does Lehi want his children to choose?

Testify to your family of your desires for each of them to choose righteousness.

(Dennis H. Leavitt and Richard O. Christensen, *Scripture Study for Latter-day Saint Families: The Book of Mormon*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], p. 50.)

## Story:

Think of the difference in attitude between these letters written by two little boys. The first boy wrote: “Dear God, I didn’t think orange went very good with purple until I saw the sunset you made on Tue. That was cool. Eugene.” The second little boy wrote, “Dear God, I just got left back [a grade in school]. Thanks a lot. Raymond.” (*Children’s Letters to God*, comp. Eric Marshall and Stuart Hample, enl. ed. [New York: Pocket Books, 1975], n.p.)

We might think that Eugene’s appreciation is just as natural as Raymond’s disappointment, but my point is this: both of them are natural reactions. Because of the wonderful gift of agency, we get to choose which attitude will be our attitude.

Here’s another example. When I was principal of Holly Hills Elementary School in Denver,

I took three of my sixth-graders to compete in the district spelling bee. I knew they would be happy and excited as we went—with some nervousness and worry mixed in—but I wondered what the mood in the car would be when we returned. Would they be disappointed and sad if they didn't win? Would they be discouraged and upset? At day's end my question was answered, and I was so delighted with their maturity. As I feared, not one of the three made it into the finals, but the comments I heard were "I'm so glad I tried out," "We should be happy we made it to this point," and "I'm going to really try again next year." They talked excitedly about being able to choose between pizza and hamburgers for lunch, cheering for the contestants when they spelled the word correctly, feeling terrible with those who didn't spell it right. They participated fully in the experience and had a day to remember. They gave me a day I've never forgotten, either. Because they had a [positive] attitude, they had a wonderful day.

(Chieko N. Okazaki, *Aloha!*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995].)

**Activity:**

Divide your family into two groups.

Each group needs to have a coin and a watch. Start out at your door and have each group follow the directions the coin gives them. At each turn, corner, or intersection flip the coin to see which way your group should go. Heads go right; tails go left.

Keep walking until an appointed time is reached. Make sure to synchronize each group's watch before you start out. When this time is up, each group races back to home, *choosing their own way back*.

The first group home wins.

Discuss how we have been given our agency, or the power to choose for ourselves. Sometimes we will make good choices and sometimes we will make bad choices. All our choices will have consequences. The choices we make each day will determine who we are and what our future will be. There will be times when it will feel as if our choices have been taken away, but even at these times we have the choice of how we will act and what our attitudes will be.

(Jeni Gochnour, *Family Home Evening Games*, [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999], p. 16.)

## Refreshment

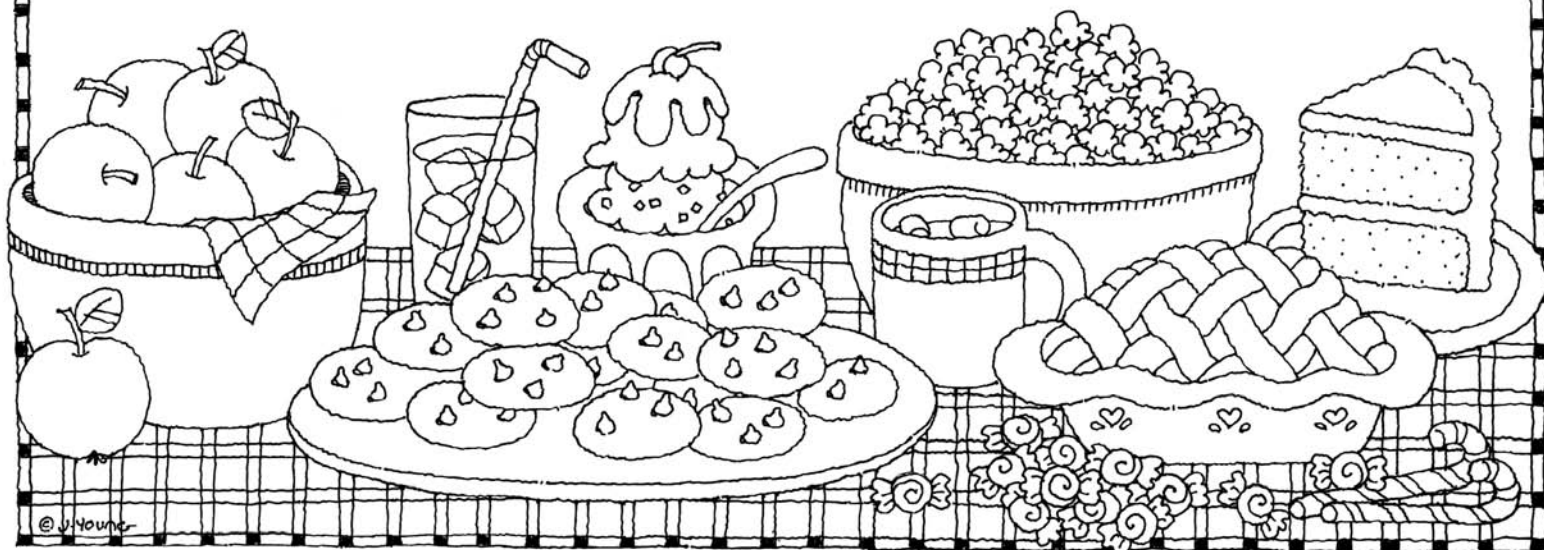
### Marble Brownies

- 1 c. shortening
- 2 c. sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 c. flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 c. chopped nuts
- 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 sq. baking chocolate, melted (for marble layer)

Grease and flour a 9x13-inch baking pan and preheat oven to 300° F. Cream the shortening in a large mixing bowl, gradually adding sugar. Beat in the eggs one at a time beating after each addition. Sift the flour, baking powder, and salt, then add to batter, mixing constantly. Stir in nuts and vanilla.

Divide dough into two equal parts. Pour one portion into baking pan. To remaining portion, blend in the melted chocolate; then pour over light layer in pan and, for marbled effect, swirl several times with spatula. Bake for 45 to 55 minutes.

(Elaine Cannon, compiler, *Five-Star Recipes from Well-Known Latter-day Saints*, [Salt Lake City: Eagle Gate, 2002], p. 243.)



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