



By President Thomas S. Monson

# Dare to Stand Alone

I served in the United States Navy near the end of World War II. Navy boot camp was not an easy experience for me or for anyone who endured it.

When Sunday rolled around after the first week, we received welcome news from the chief petty officer. Standing at attention on the drill ground in a brisk California breeze, we heard his command: “Today everybody goes to church—everybody, that is, except for

me. I am going to relax!” Then he shouted, “All of you Catholics, you meet in Camp Decatur—and don’t come back until three o’clock. Forward, march!” A rather large group moved out. Then he barked out his next command: “Those of you who are Jewish, you meet in Camp Henry—and don’t come back until three o’clock. Forward, march!” A smaller group marched out. Then he said, “The rest of you Protestants, you meet in the theaters at Camp Farragut—and don’t come back until three o’clock. Forward, march!”

Instantly there flashed through my mind the thought, “Monson, you are not a Catholic; you are not a Jew; you are not a Protestant. You are a Mormon, so you just stand here!” I felt completely alone.

Then the chief petty officer looked in my direction and asked, “And just what do you guys call yourselves?” I had not realized that anyone was standing beside me or behind me. Almost in unison, each of us replied, “Mormons!” Joy filled my heart as I turned around and saw a handful of other sailors.

The chief petty officer thought for a moment and finally said, “Well, you guys go find somewhere to meet. And don’t come back until three o’clock. Forward, march!”

As we marched away, I thought of the words of a rhyme I had learned in Primary years before:

*Dare to be a Mormon;  
Dare to stand alone.  
Dare to have a purpose firm;  
Dare to make it known.*

How grateful I am that I made the decision long ago to remain strong and true, always prepared and ready to defend my religion. ♦

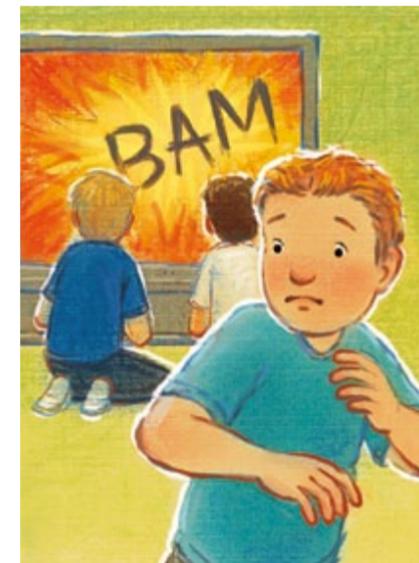
*Adapted from an October 2011 general conference address.*

Go to [lds.org/friend](http://lds.org/friend) to watch a video of President Monson’s experience.



## STANDING AS AN EXAMPLE

How is each of these children standing as an example of the gospel?



## COURAGE CROSSWORD

Try filling in this crossword without looking back at the story. If you need help, read the story again for some hints! Find the answers on page 48.

### Down

1. “Dare to be a \_\_\_\_\_.”
2. When President Monson was 18, he joined the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What President Monson felt when he saw the other LDS sailors.

### Across

3. The state where President Monson was trained.
5. The name of the camp where the second group of sailors met.

