

We as Young Women had an incredible opportunity to attend the Young Women general conference at the conference center in SLC this spring. Our spirits were fed as we heard testimony from great leaders in our church.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf shared his testimony through his message entitled "Your Happily Ever After" our theme tonight. We will be taking excerpts from his talk.

There exists a phrase as magical and full of promise as perhaps any in all the world. The phrase is 'once upon a time' it begins a story, promises something.

A story of adventure and romance. It may include tales of courage hope and everlasting love. In many stories nice overcomes mean and good overcomes evil. And then the enchanting words "and they lived happily ever after".

On the first page of your Personal Progress books, you will find these words:

"YOU ARE A DAUGHTER OF HEAVENLY FATHER, PREPARED TO COME TO THE EARTH AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME FOR A SACRED AND GLORIOUS PURPOSE."

These words are true, they are not made up. For a moment, think back to your favorite fairy tale. . . .

In that story the main character may be a King or a Super Hero; it may be a Princess, mermaid or a milkmaid, or a servant. One thing they do have in common: THEY MUST OVERCOME ADVERSITY!

We are going to share a variety of stories tonight and liken them to our values in Personal Progress. On each page are four - six words written under "Personal Progress value experiences" these key words help explain what is learned in that value.

FAITH - POCAHONTAS

This is a real historical story and also the folklore and legend that surround the Native American woman Pocahontas, and her encounter with Englishman John Smith.

We can imagine, as a Native American, Pocahontas grew up with many spiritual rituals and beliefs. One part of the folklore of this story is Grandmother Willow a speaking Willow Tree that acts as Pocahontas's guide. Grandmother Willow tells Pocahontas to listen to her heart.

In the story John is shot and must be cared for in England, before he leaves, Pocahontas goes to John and gives him a pouch of Grandmother Willow's bark, telling him it will help with the pain.

John asks Pocahontas to come back to England with him. She looks at her father who tells her that she must choose her path. Pocahontas then tearfully tells John that she belongs with her people.

This folklore could represent FAITH, the faith Pocahontas had in her guide as we have in the Holy Ghost. We also have the faith to be healed. Pocahontas respected her father and his opinion and her father had the faith in her to tell her to choose her path.

(Bear your testimony of what FAITH means to you)

DIVINE NATURE - BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

The story of Beauty and Beast is based on the fairy tale. This fairy tale depict Divine nature just with Belle's name (a French name equivalent to "Beauty") for being lovely and pure of heart.

In the story Belle's father, Maurice, is the towns joke, everyone is laughing at him. Belle sticks up for her father and shows no embarrassment.

When it comes time for Belle to associate with the beast in the castle, she is not afraid of him, even though he is gruff and hard on her, they eventually become friends. Belle does her best to have Divine Nature and looks past his ugliness and sees the good in him. She serves him, thus he serves her.

The tale ends with the Beast being stabbed and Belle whispering that she loves him, breaking the spell. The Beast comes back to life, and he and the servants become human again.

Belle loved and obeyed her father, she wanted a better home life, she was kind to others.

DIVINE NATURE is a part of you which is inherently divine. It defines you in an eternal way.

(Bear your testimony of what DIVINE NATURE means to you)

INDIVIDUAL WORTH - PINOCCHIO

This tale is a puppet show adventure. Pinocchio starting out his life as nothing more than a log, was carved into a puppet that looked just like a boy by the craftsman Geppetto. Pinocchio was brought to life by a blue fairy because of Geppetto's wish. The blue fairy tells him he can become a real boy if he proves himself "brave, truthful, and unselfish" or in other words, has Individual Worth. Thus begin the puppet's adventures to become a real boy, which involve many encounters with a host of unsavory characters. Thank goodness for Jiminy Cricket his assigned conscience.

After all of Pinocchio's ups and downs the story comes to an end and the Blue Fairy decides that Pinocchio has proven himself unselfish and thus fulfills her promise to turn him into a real boy, much to the delight of Geppetto and Jiminy.

INDIVIDUAL WORTH is a value in personal progress where we can list our hopes and dreams, make goals, and just like the other values go forth and achieve them.

(Bear your testimony of what INDIVIDUAL WORTH means to you)

KNOWLEDGE - THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

The Three Little Pigs is a fairy tale featuring talking animals. For your KNOWLEDGE the printed versions of this tale dates back to the 1840s, but the story itself is thought to be much older.

The characters Practical Pig, Fiddler Pig and Fifer Pig are three brothers who build their own houses with bricks, sticks and straw. The other character of course is the Big Bad Wolf!

Fifer and Fiddler build their houses with much ease and have fun all day. Practical, on the other hand, uses his KNOWLEDGE, and works all day long to build his strong brick house, but his two brothers poke fun at him.

Eventually the Wolf blows in Fifer's house, all but the roof, Fifer escapes to Fiddler's house. The Wolf disguised as an innocent sheep, blows down Fiddler's house. The two pigs manage to escape and hide at Practical's house. The Wolf then tries to blow down the strong brick house, but is unable. Finally, he attempts to enter the house through the chimney, but smart Practical Pig takes off the lid of a boiling pot filled with water under the chimney, and the Wolf falls right into it.

Practical Pig had knowledge of building and knowledge of what the wolf was capable of doing. He may have even had camping skills and he served his brothers.

KNOWLEDGE is an important principal and value in the gospel. We need to be prepared in all things and have the knowledge in many things. It makes us better, well rounded people.

(Bear our testimony of what KNOWLEDGE means to you)

CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY - PETER PAN (WENDY)

This story began as a novel and then a play. Wendy and her brothers are whisked into the night sky to the magical world called Neverland with the hero of their stories, Peter Pan. Wendy is about 13 years old and is beginning to "grow up", she stands in contrast to Peter Pan, a boy who refuses to grow up.

She soon shows passion for magical events and adventures. Wendy's ambition early in the story is to somehow avoid growing up. She is granted this opportunity by Peter Pan, who takes her and her brothers to Neverland, where they can remain young indefinitely on this enchanted island!

Even though Neverland is exciting and enticing to Wendy, she eventually makes a choice to go home....grow up.....be accountable.... and have a family of her own.

We make CHOICES and are held ACCOUNTABLE for what we do every day. Now is a time to learn skills that can help us make good choices through goal setting in Personal Progress.

(Bare your testimony of what CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY means to you)

GOOD WORKS - DUMBO (TIMOTHY Q. MOUSE)

An American tale of how a little tiny mouse named Timothy made a difference in Dumbo the elephant's life, by doing Good Works.

/wiki/Stork Dumbo was shunned by the other elephants for his extremely large ears and with no mother to care for him, he is now alone, except for a self-appointed mentor and protector, Timothy Q. Mouse, who becomes determined to make Dumbo happy again.

Timothy helps by taking him to visit his mother who was taken away for protecting Dumbo. He also boost's Dumbo's confidence by giving him a so called "magical feather." Later Timothy

reassures Dumbo he can do anything he puts his mind to. But most importantly, Timothy is a true friend to Dumbo..

We can do GOOD WORKS in many ways. Personal Progress teaches us to comfort others and help bear their burdens. Timothy, even though he is pretend, is a good example of helping Dumbo bear his burdens.

(Bare your testimony of what GOOD WORKS means to you)

INTEGRITY - CINDERELLA

The classic Folktale Cinderella can fit into many values in personal progress.

The Stepmother and her daughters forced the first daughter to complete all the housework. When the girl had done her WORK, she sat in the cinders, which caused her to be called "Cinderella". The poor girl bore it PATIENTLY. Cinderella assisted her step sisters in preparing for the grand ball and dreamed of going to the dance, the stepsisters taunted her by saying a maid could never attend a ball. She cried, but held NO SPITE.

With her fairy godmothers help Cinderella did go to the ball, she was home ON TIME.

She was THANKFUL to her Fairy God Mother.

When the prince came with the glass slipper, the step sisters taunted her. The slipper fit perfectly and the stepsisters asked for her forgiveness. Cinderella FORGAVE them for their cruelties.

The moral of the story is that beauty is a treasure, INTEGRITY and graciousness is priceless. Without Integrity nothing is possible; with it, one can do anything.

(Bare your testimony of what INTEGRITY means to you)

VIRTUE - STORY OF RUTH

This tale is a true story told from the scriptures about a VIRTUOUS woman named Ruth.

We will start the story with Ruth gleaning wheat from the fields in Bethlehem for food to sustain herself and her mother-in-law Naomi. She is able to do so, because Jewish law mandates that every person who owns a field must leave gleanings from the harvest - for collection by the poor.

Boaz is the owner of the field where Ruth is gleaning. Boaz notices Ruth, from among hundreds of people in the field. She stands out as the only one bending her knees to glean, in order to expose less of her legs, according to Jewish account he notices her modesty and her kindness to the other maidens as well as supporting her mother-in-law. Boaz invites Ruth to become his handmaiden.

Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, suggest that Ruth comfort Boaz. Ruth obeys Naomi, she shows respect and kindness to Boaz. Boaz fell in love with Ruth and chose to marry her, he was attracted to her because of her VIRTUE.

Ruth, who created for herself a life of dignity, can inspire us to be virtuous. If you read all of this scripture in the bible (The Book of Ruth, and it is a short story), her life had adversity. But her

eternal perspective was amazing ... for she and Boaz had a son, whom was the grandfather of the great King David who brought righteousness to Israel.

Her "HAPPILY EVER AFTER" gets even better because she was a great grandmother to Our Savior Jesus Christ!

(Bare your testimony of what VIRTUE means to you)

Leader:

Happily ever after is not something only found in fairy tales. You can have it. It is available for YOU. But you must follow Heavenly Fathers map.

Embrace the gospel of Jesus Crist.

Learn to love Your Heavenly Father with all your Heart, Might and Mind.

Fill your souls with virtue and love Bring out the best in yourself and others.

Elder Uchtdorf went onto say:

Heavenly Father has granted YOU this earthly life as a precious gift of "once upon a time," complete with your own TRUE STORY of ADVENTURE, TRIAL, and OPPORTUNITIES for GREATNESS, NOBILITY, COURAGE, and LOVE.

And most glorious of all, He offers you a gift beyond price and comprehension.

Heavenly Father offers to you the greatest gift of all ----- Eternal Life ---- and the opportunity and infinite blessing of your own

"HAPPILY EVER AFTER"