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Dear Bishop Rockwood,

That title (Bishop) and name (Rockwood) go so well together! It sounds so good that it is hard to call you Steve, even when I know our friendship would certainly permit it.

I think I would have a difficult time going to sleep tonight, having been in our bishopric meeting and then not taking a minute to share with you some feelings and thoughts...things that are too close to the heart to try to openly share with someone other than my bishop or closet friends.

I know all too well what you are feeling in your heart about some of the youth in our ward that have made some bad decisions in their lives. I have felt that same pain and sorrow. I can relate to your anger toward the adversary. I have dampened my pillow more than once for the youth that have made poor choices. The burden you, and only you as a bishop, carry is heavy.

But how very grateful I am that you have those feelings! I am overwhelmed with emotion by your great love and concern for the youth of our ward. What a wonderful blessing to have a bishop that has those deep and poignant feelings of love for Heavenly Father's choicest spirits. I can attest to the fact that the youth of our ward love you and care for you greatly. They sense that loving concern you have in your heart. I know parents are grateful for the impact you have made on the lives of their children. I will be eternally grateful for what you have done in the lives of my children. Thank you for being a worthy servant of the Lord.

Now, a couple of points, *business style*, that you need to know:

**1. "...not there when they needed me".** I disagree with this comment of yours. Bishop, you were there when they needed you. You have taught them in firesides. You have taught them in Sunday School. You counselled with them during interviews. You have heard confessions, patted them on the back, joked with them, camped with them, befriended them, came to their parties and activities, etc. Your good example has been like a lighthouse on a dark stormy night. You have been there!

**2. Asia or Arvada, it doesn't matter.** When a young person makes the decision to be immoral, or, decides to take that drink of alcohol, more than likely you wouldn't be there if you were in far away Asia or right here in Arvada. In the heat of passion, the LDS youth rarely stops everything and says to their carnal companion, "just a minute, I need to call my bishop and let him know

what I am doing". These young people have their free agency. They have made some bad decisions. You cannot be with them on their dates, or at school or at their parties. But, do they know what their bishop has taught them? Do they know what they are doing is wrong? The answers to these questions are "absolutely yes".

I do not think I have seen a bishop do more than you to reach out to the youth and especially attempt to speak with those that need more attention. That is not an easy thing to do when some kids seem to be so set on a destructive course. Yet, you are willing to "seek out the one".

So, there you have it. Since we are all part of an unpaid clergy, there is no charge for this advice. Anyway, I think sharing my thoughts and feelings with you is somewhere in my job description as "counselor".

In all seriousness, I have a deep love and admiration for you. This comes from your good example and great personality, but, I think more so from a knowledge I have of who you really are. I know your heart and it is good and right with the Lord. I have always found it so easy to develop an instantaneous rapport and spiritual bond with those that radiate charity in what they say and do. They are like the Savior and I love the Savior.

Now I can go to bed.

Sincerely,

Chris Stevenson