

Revelation in a Changing World

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Section I (Josline)

Following baptism, one is confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in a brief ordinance, during which there is conferred the gift of the Holy Ghost. Thereafter, all through life, men, women, even little children receive the right to inspired direction to guide them in their lives—personal revelation! (See [Alma 32:23](#).)

The Holy Ghost communicates with the spirit through the mind more than through the physical senses. This guidance comes as thoughts, as feelings, through impressions and promptings. It is not always easy to describe inspiration. The scriptures teach us that we may “feel” the words of spiritual communication more than hear them, and see with spiritual rather than with mortal eyes. [See [1 Ne. 17:45](#).]

The patterns of revelation are not dramatic. The voice of inspiration is a still voice, a small voice. There need be no trance, no sanctimonious declaration. It is quieter and simpler than that.

The Book of Mormon teaches that “angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost” ([2 Ne. 32:3](#)) and records that even though an angel spoke to some, they “were past *feeling*, that [they] could not *feel* his words” ([1 Ne. 17:45](#); italics added).

If you have experienced inspiration, you understand.

Our physical body is the instrument of our spirit. In that marvelous revelation, the Word of Wisdom, we are told how to keep our bodies free from impurities which might dull, even destroy, those delicate physical senses which have to do with spiritual communication.

The Word of Wisdom is a key to individual revelation. It was given as “a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints.” ([D&C 89:3](#).)

The promise is that those who obey will receive “great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures.” ([D&C 89:19](#).) If we abuse our body with habit-forming substances, or misuse prescription drugs, we draw curtains which close off the light of spiritual communication. Narcotic addiction serves the design of the prince of darkness, for it disrupts the channel to the holy spirit of truth. At present the adversary has an unfair advantage. Addiction has the capacity to disconnect the human will and nullify moral agency. It can rob one of the power to decide. Agency is too fundamental a doctrine to be left in such jeopardy.

It is my conviction, and my constant prayer, that there will come through research, through inspiration to scientists if need be, the power to conquer narcotic addiction through the same means which cause it.

I plead with all of you to earnestly pray that somewhere, somehow, the way will be discovered to erase addiction in the human body.

It is not just human suffering, even human life, which is at risk; it is all of the personal and social and political and spiritual freedoms for which humanity has struggled for ages. At risk is all that was purchased by the blood of martyrs. Moral agency itself is in jeopardy! If we all pray fervently, the Lord will surely help us. And with those prayers, teach your children to obey the Word of Wisdom. It is their armor and will protect them from habits which obstruct the channels of personal revelation.

Josline's Thoughts:

As members of the church we should know that all men have a conscience which we called the light of Christ. This light is what helps direct people to do good inside or outside the church. It also helps people to discover truth and eventually would lead them to become members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saint, if they heed its promptings. If they decide to join the Church, then they will have the opportunity to get baptized and be confirmed members of the church and be qualified to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

[Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\) Bruce R McConkie, The Rock of Salvation](#)

Gift of Holy Ghost

At their baptism, God's saints have the hands of legal administrators placed upon their heads, and they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, an endowment from on high. This endowment, this gift, is the right to the constant companionship of this member of the Godhead based on faithfulness.

Joseph Smith said: "No man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations. The Holy Ghost is a revelator" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 328).

Accordingly, those who are saints indeed, those who have been born again, those who are so living as to be in tune with the Spirit—they are they who receive revelation, personal revelation, revelation which is the mind and will of God to them as individuals. They know there are apostles and prophets directing the kingdom who receive revelation for the Church and the world. But they as individuals receive personal revelation in their own affairs.

And there are no restrictions placed upon them; there are no limitations as to what they may see and know and comprehend. No eternal truths will be withheld, if they obey the laws entitling them to receive such truths.

... "Yea, even the wonders of eternity shall they know, and things to come will I show them, even the things of many generations.

"And their wisdom shall be great, and their understanding reach to heaven; and before them the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall come to naught.

"For by my Spirit will I enlighten them, and by my power will I make known unto them the secrets of my will—yea, even those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into the heart of man" [D&C 76:5-10](#)

Witnesses of the truth

Now in this day in which we live we have been appointed to stand as witnesses of the truth. Our elders go forth proclaiming the message of the restoration to the world. They go out to teach and

to testify. When the Lord sends them forth, it is with this commission: ". . . ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God" [Isa. 43:12](#)

...As elders in Israel we are expected to be witnesses. We become witnesses because of personal revelation. When a man receives the surety in his heart that this work is true, when he gains a testimony by the power of the Holy Ghost, then he knows what the world does not know, and he can go forth and bear record of it to them.

Elder Packer quoted:

[Alma 32:23](#)

23 And now, he imparteth his word by angels unto men, yea, **“not** only men but women also. Now this is not all; little **^bchildren** do have words given unto them many times, which **^cconfound** the wise and the learned.

*Following the footnote of the word **not** of Alma 23:32 it brings us to*

Joel 2:28–29

28 ¶ And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

[Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\) JD 16 Erastus Snow, Ancient Prophecy, etc.](#)

Such a mighty revolution as is here indicated by the Prophet can never be effected upon the earth without the voice of God, without Prophets and Apostles, and the power of the Holy Ghost working mightily among the sons of men; and when that period arrives it will be the one referred to by the Prophet Joel, who says—“It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and then your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And upon my servants and handmaidens will I pour out my spirit in those days, saith God.” [Joel 2:28-29 Acts 2:17-18](#)

Joel predicts the coming of a time when the Lord's people will all become Prophets, even the servants and handmaids will receive the Spirit and they will prophesy. [Joel 2:28-29](#) Jeremiah speaks of a similar time, but he uses a little different language. He says—“I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, [Joel 2:28](#) and then no one shall say unto his neighbor, Know ye the Lord: for all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest, [Jer. 31:34](#) and they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.” [Isa. 52:8](#)

Are we to understand by these sayings of Scripture, that God will pour out the Holy Ghost upon the ungodly, the workers of iniquity—murderers, sorcerers, whoremongers, adulterers, false swearers, deceivers and liars? I do not so understand the Prophets, the Savior and his Apostles. I understand in the language of the Apostle, that the Holy Ghost dwelleth not in unholy Temples; [1 Cor. 3:16-17 Mosiah 2:37](#) and that if his Spirit is poured out upon the people so generally, it will be because their hearts are prepared to receive it, because their ears have been opened to the word of God, and faith has been begotten in them. They have listened to the call of the Almighty, and have received the message of salvation sent unto them.

Thus we learn, my friends, that the warning voice of God will go forth among the nations, and he will warn them by his servants; and by thunder, by lightning, by earthquake, by great hailstorms

and by devouring fire; by the voice of judgment and by the voice of mercy; by the voice of angels and by the voice of his servants the Prophets; [D&C 43:22-25](#) he will warn them by gathering out the righteous from among the wicked, and those who will not heed these warnings will be visited with sore judgments until the earth is swept as with the besom of destruction; [Isa. 14:23](#) and those who remain, in all the nations, tongues and kingdoms of the world, will heed the voice of warning and will accept the salvation sent unto them by the Lord through his servants. The law of the Lord will go forth to all such from Zion, and judges will go forth among them from Zion; and all who are willing will be taught the ways of the Lord, and they will be baptized for the remission of their sins and they will receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands of the servants of God. Great and glorious will be that day. The old men will dream dreams, the young men will see visions, and even the servants and handmaids will prophesy, [Joel 2:28-29](#) and out of the mouths of babes and sucklings [Ps. 8:2](#) will the Lord perfect his praise. [Matt. 21:16](#)

From this we can see that pouring out the spirit upon all flesh is after Zion is redeemed. But now, the spirit of God reveal truth usually through a still small voice, a feeling of peace that confirms that what we are being taught is true, or feelings that prompt us to actions, to do good, to be obedient to the Lord's commandments we received from reading scriptures, and from His chosen mouthpiece. We must strictly follow what Micah has termed "the pyramid of truth", if we receive revelations that divide, put us in opposition to revealed doctrines, or make us feel the need to defend or justify our position against established truth, we are under the influence of the adversary. The Spirit of God is a spirit of unity, not divisive, as Jesus said: "if you are not one you are not mine."

[Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\)](#) Harold B. Lee, To the Defenders of the Faith

"From the days of Hiram Page (Doc. and Cov., Sec. 28) [D&C 28:11](#) at different periods there have been manifestations from delusive spirits to members of the Church. Sometimes these have come to men and women who because of transgression became easy prey to the Arch-Deceiver. At other times people who pride themselves on their strict observance of the rules and ordinances and ceremonies of the Church are led astray by false spirits, who exercise an influence so imitative of that which proceeds from at Divine source that even these persons, who think they are 'the very elect,' find it difficult to discern the essential difference. Satan himself has transformed himself to be apparently 'an angel of light.'

"When visions, dreams, tongues, prophecy, impressions or any extraordinary gift or inspiration conveys something out of harmony with the accepted revelations of the Church or contrary to the decisions of its constituted authorities, Latter-day Saints may know that it is not of God, no matter how plausible it may appear. Also, they should understand that directions for the guidance of the Church will come, by revelation, through the head. All faithful members are entitled to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for themselves, their families, and for those over whom they are appointed and ordained to preside. **But anything at discord with that which comes from God through the head of the Church is not to be received as authoritative or reliable. In secular as well as spiritual affairs,** Saints may receive Divine guidance and revelation affecting themselves, but this **does not convey authority to direct others**, and is not to be accepted when contrary to Church covenants, doctrine or discipline, or to known facts, demonstrated truths, or good common sense. No person has the right to induce his fellow members of the Church to

engage in speculations or take stock in ventures of any kind on the specious claim of Divine revelation or vision or dream, **especially when it is in opposition to the voice of recognized authority, local or general.** The Lord's Church 'is a house of order.' **D&C 132:8** It is not governed by individual gifts or manifestations, but by the order and power of the Holy Priesthood as sustained by the voice and vote of the Church in its appointed conferences. "The history of the Church records many pretended revelations by impostors or zealots who believed in the manifestations they sought to lead other persons to accept, and in every instance, disappointment, sorrow and disaster have resulted therefrom. Financial loss and sometimes utter ruin have followed.

If our people want to be safely guided during these troublous times of deceit and false rumors, they must follow their leaders and seek for the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord in order to avoid falling prey to clever manipulators who, with cunning sophistry, seek to draw attention and gain a following to serve their own notions and sometimes sinister motives.

The following scriptures are footnotes from Alma 32:23 for the word confound

Doctrine and Covenants 133:58

58 To prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth, and for the Lord's errand in the day when the weak shall confound the wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two shall put their tens of thousands to flight.

Doctrine and Covenants 35:13

13 Wherefore, I call upon the weak things of the world, those who are unlearned and despised, to thresh the nations by the power of my Spirit;

The chosen of the Lord are humble and seek nothing for themselves but to do the will of their God, they understand that it's by the grace of God they obtain divine guidance. They don't look for favors from anyone. They lead people to serve God not to apostatize, they seek to unify not rejoice in discord. They don't take pleasure in contentions, or feel animosity against those who may disagree with them. They boast, give glory to, and rejoice in God not boasting on their own strength to obtain glory from the world

From Neil A. Maxwell, Joseph the Seer [Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\)](#) it says:

We have no hesitancy, however, in stipulating that Joseph was, by the standards of the world, "not learned." Isaiah foresaw it. (See [Isa. 29:11-12](#)) Joseph did not have the skilled, formal tutoring young Saul had at the feet of Gamaliel. (See [Acts 22:3](#))

Emma Smith reportedly said that Joseph, at the time of the translation of the Book of Mormon, could not compose a "well-worded letter let alone dictating a book like the Book of Mormon ... [which was] marvelous to me, a marvel and a wonder, as much as to anyone else." (Preston Nibley, *The Witnesses of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1968, p. 28.)

Through Joseph Smith's translation came these stunning, defining, and sobering words about what childlike and saintly submissiveness really means:

“A saint [is one who becomes] through the atonement of Christ the Lord ... a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.”

Was Joseph imperfect like other prophets? Of course! Surely, Joseph could identify with these words of an ancient prophet, which he translated:

“Condemn me not because of mine imperfection, neither my father, because of his imperfection, ... but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been.”

The ability given to those poor, humble, hated, rejected... servants is from God, through His grace, and it's also given to them for a greater purpose. We can say the same for all of us as members of the church. We can be missionaries to bring the words of the Lord using any available tools we can find, unifying our voices to confound the wise. The Spirit of God can be upon all God's children if we are obedient and willing to serve Him.

David A. Bednar, “In the strength of the Lord” [Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\)](#)

Can we sense the grace and strengthening power of Christ in the testimony of Ammon? “Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever” [Alma 26:12](#) Truly, brothers and sisters, in the strength of the Lord we can do and endure and overcome all things. ...I recalled the words of Enoch:

“And when Enoch had heard these words, he bowed himself to the earth, before the Lord, and spake before the Lord, saying: Why is it that I have found favor in thy sight, and am but a lad, and all the people hate me; for I am slow of speech; wherefore am I thy servant?

“And the Lord said unto Enoch: Go forth and do as I have commanded thee, and no man shall pierce thee. Open thy mouth, and it shall be filled, and I will give thee utterance, for all flesh is in my hands, and I will do as seemeth me good” [Moses 6:31–32](#)

[Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\)](#) Brigham Young JD 6 The United Administration, etc.

Learn to control yourselves; learn to be in the hands of God as clay in the hands of the potter; [Jer. 18:6](#) and if he will turn our enemies away, praised be his name. But if it should become a duty to take the sword, let us do it manfully and in the strength of Israel's God. Then “one will chase a thousand, and two will put ten thousand to flight.” [Deut. 32:30](#) The day will be in which a man will go out and say to an army of a hundred thousand men, “Do thus, and so, or we are upon you;” and they will hear the rumbling of chariots and the rushing of troops, as in the days of Elijah. [2 Kgs. 7:6-7](#)

Another footnote from the word confound

[Alma 37:6–7](#)

6 Now ye may suppose that this is foolishness in me; but behold I say unto you, that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass; and small means in many instances doth confound the wise.

7 And the Lord God doth work by means to bring about his great and eternal purposes; and by very small means the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls.

Scripture Citation Index (byu.edu) John Taylor, Instructions to Missionaries

I never yet found a man in any part of the world who could overturn one principle that has been communicated to us; they will attempt it, but error is a very singular weapon with which to combat truth; it never can vanquish it. When men go forth in the name of Israel's God there is no power on earth that can overturn the truths they advocate. Men may misrepresent and calumniate them, they may circulate false reports, for as a general thing men love lies better than truth, but when men go forth possessing the truths of the everlasting gospel which God has revealed, they have a treasure within them that the world knows nothing about; they have the light of revelation, the fire of the Holy Ghost, and the power of the priesthood within them—a power that they know very little about even themselves, which, like a wellspring of life, **John 4:14** is rising, bursting, bubbling, and spreading its exhilarating streams around. Why, says the Lord, with you I will confound the nations of the earth, with you I will overturn their kingdoms.

Who are these young men, these very weak instruments? They are men who hold the holy Priesthood of the Son of God after the order of Melchizedek. From whom did they receive it? They received it through the medium of the Holy Priesthood, which has been revealed to Joseph Smith and others in these last days. They say they are weak.

... These young men are just like the rest of us—they have received the spirit of life, light, and intelligence—the gift of the Holy Ghost—and they are the messengers of the Great Jehovah, whom He has selected, set apart, and ordained to go and proclaim His will to the nations of the earth. They go not in their own name or strength, but in the name, strength, and power of Israel's God. That is their position, and if they cleave to God and magnify their callings, adhere to the principles of truth, and shun temptation and corruption of every kind, the power of God will be with them, and God shall open their mouths, and enable them to confound the wisdom of the wise, and they will say things that will astonish themselves and those who listen to them.

Elder Packer also referred to the following scriptures

1 Ne. 17:45

45 Ye are ^aswift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord your God. Ye have seen an ^bangel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were ^cpast feeling, that ye could not feel his words; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder, which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder.

From another talk Elder Packer cited this same scripture from which he said the following

Elder Packer, Prayers and answers, Scripture Citation Index (byu.edu)

I have come to know that inspiration comes more as a feeling than as a sound.

...If someone “under the influence” can hardly listen to plain talk, how can they respond to spiritual promptings that touch their most delicate feelings?

As valuable as the Word of Wisdom is as a law of health, it may be much more valuable to you spiritually than it is physically.

Even if you keep the Word of Wisdom, there are some things that can happen to you physically, but those things don’t generally damage you spiritually.

When you become a father or a mother, don’t live so that your children go unled because of habits that leave you uninspired.

The Lord has a way of pouring pure intelligence into our minds to prompt us, to guide us, to teach us, to warn us. You can know the things you need to know *instantly!* Learn to receive inspiration.

(D&C 89:3.)

3 Given for a principle with ^apromise, adapted to the capacity of the ^bweak and the weakest of all ^csaints, who are or can be called saints.

Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–21

18 And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

19 And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

20 And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

21 And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them. Amen.

Scripture Citation Index (byu.edu) Addiction or freedom, Russell M Nelson

Agency, or the power to choose, was ours as spirit children of our Creator before the world was.

(See Alma 13:3 Moses 4:4) It is a gift from God, nearly as precious as life itself.

Often, however, agency is misunderstood. While we are free to choose, once we have made those choices, we are tied to the consequences of those choices.

We are free to take drugs or not. But once we choose to use a habit-forming drug, we are bound to the consequences of that choice. Addiction surrenders later freedom to choose. Through chemical means, one can literally become disconnected from his or her own will!

“The spirit and the body are the soul of man.” D&C 88:15 Both spirit and body have appetites. One of life’s great challenges is to develop dominance of spiritual appetites over those that are physical. Your willpower becomes strong when joined with the will of the Lord.

Addiction to any substance enslaves not only the physical body but the spirit as well. Therefore, repentance is best achieved while one still has a body to help attain spiritual supremacy: “This life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; ... this life is the day for men to perform their labors. ...

“Do not procrastinate the day of your repentance; ... if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed. ...

“That same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life ... will have power to possess your body in that eternal world.” Alma 34:32–34

To be carnally-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life eternal. (See [2 Ne. 9:39](#) see also [Rom. 8:6](#)) That blessing will come to those with the will to change.

“Thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation.” [D&C 89:4](#)

His Word of Wisdom includes sound nutritional guidance and simple instructions. We are not to drink alcoholic beverages. (See [D&C 89:5–7](#)) We are not to use tobacco. (See [D&C 89:8](#)) We are not to drink tea or coffee. (See [D&C 89:9](#)) And in this same spirit, we are not to use addicting drugs.¹

I would also add here the addiction of pornography that also affects ones family

Exercise the body and the spirit and choose to exercise faith in God.

1. Choose to Be Free. Break “bands of iniquity.” [Mosiah 23:12](#) see also [1 Ne. 13:5](#) Leave behind “an iron yoke, ... handcuffs, and chains, and shackles, and fetters of hell.” [D&C 123:8](#)

Choose to be free from feigned friends who first flatter yet later despise. (See [D&C 121:20](#)) Drug abuse may have started with them, but you pay the price.

“Remember, my brethren [and sisters], that whosoever perisheth, perisheth unto himself; and whosoever doeth iniquity, doeth it unto himself; for behold, ye are free; ye are permitted to act for yourselves; for behold, God hath given unto you a knowledge and he hath made you free.” [Hel. 14:30](#)

The Lord has revealed His sacred standard to guide people in a troubled world. You and I were born free to follow His divine guidance. We may choose for ourselves. Those choices may bring addiction or freedom. For freedom and joy, choose to “be faithful in Christ.” He will lift you up. [Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\)](#) Ezra T. Benson; *A Principles with a Promise*

Listen to the spiritual promise: “All saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience *to the commandments*, ... shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures.” [D&C 89:18–19](#) *italics added.*) Some have thought this promise was contingent on just keeping the provisions of the Word of Wisdom. But you will notice we must walk in obedience to *all* the commandments. Then we shall receive specific spiritual promises. This means we must obey the law of tithing, keep the Sabbath day holy, keep morally clean and chaste, and obey all other commandments.

When we do all this, the promise is: They “shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures.” [D&C 89:19](#)

Brothers and sisters and friends, learn this principle. The Lord will increase our knowledge, wisdom, and capacity to obey when we obey His fundamental laws. This is what the Prophet Joseph Smith meant when he said we could have “sudden strokes of ideas” which come into our minds as “pure intelligence.” (See *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938, p. 151.) This is revelation. We must learn to rely on the Holy Ghost so we can use it to guide our lives and the lives of those for whom we have responsibility.

[Scripture Citation Index \(byu.edu\)](#) Marion G. Romney: *Revelation*

"We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect . . . the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his maker, and is caught up to dwell with Him" (DHC 2:8.)

I pray that we can all live our lives in such a way that we're so in tune with the spirit, gain knowledge by feasting in the gospel of the Lord, so obedient to keep all the Commandments of God; that we are no longer attached to the things of this world abhor the sight of sins, love our fellow men enough to worry about their spiritual and temporal welfare, to share the Gospel with them so they too can feel the unmatched love of theirs and our heavenly Father, who so wanting to have all His children back to His presence. In the Name of Jesus Christ Amen!

Micah's Thoughts:

This first line in this first paragraph is a great one for understanding "Keys of the Kingdom"- "one having the right to inspired direction to guide THEM in THEIR lives = personal revelation"...

Doctrine and Covenants 121

34 Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

35 Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

36 ***That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven...***

39 We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, ***as they suppose***, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion.

40 Hence many are called, but few are chosen.

The rights to the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven... If we don't hold those rights of the priesthood this is as far as our revelation will ever go- personal revelation which will always inspire and direct people in their own lives. But once again, what is the warning? That as soon as people get authority ***as they suppose***, meaning what? They ***think*** there is some authority there or believe there ***should be*** some authority there, they immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. I will tell you right now, that the most wide spread form of this unrighteous dominion is/are those in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who believe they hold rights for revelation and inspiration that they do not- they then give "thou shalt dos and thou shalt knows" for people they have no right to give for. What's more, we now have members teaching this openly as some form of "proud progressivism", but what they are doing, knowing or not, is teaching "unrighteous dominion". Period.

2 Nephi 13

12 And my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they who lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths.

President Boyd K. Packer (“We Believe All That God Has Revealed,” Ensign, May 1974, 95.)
“Revelation continues in the Church: the prophet receiving it for the Church; the president for his stake, his mission, or his quorum; the bishop for his ward; the father for his family; the individual for himself.”

The overwhelming, **overwhelming** majority of revelation and inspiration one will receive during the course of their lives will be entirely to direct they themselves. Brothers and Sisters, to even have the desire to direct others and give them “thou shalt knows and dos” is the natural man, instead of focusing on revelation and inspiration we cannot receive, and for many **will never** receive, focus instead on what we are here to prove about ourselves.

Doctrine and Covenants 121

41 ... persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

42 By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

43 Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

44 That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.

45 Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

46 The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever.

Section II (David)

Things of the Spirit need not—indeed, should not—require our uninterrupted time and attention. Ordinary work-a-day things occupy most of our attention. And that is as it should be. We are mortal beings living in this physical world.

Spiritual things are like leavening. By measure they may be very small, but by influence they affect all that we do. Continuing revelation is fundamental to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And I assure you that revelation attends our prophet President and those ordained as Apostles, as prophets, seers, and revelators. But revelation is not limited to them. The Lord desires that “every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world.” ([D&C 1:20](#).)

All inspiration does not come from God. (See [D&C 46:7](#).) The evil one has the power to tap into those channels of revelation and send conflicting signals which can mislead and confuse us. There are promptings from evil sources which are so carefully counterfeited as to deceive even the very elect. (See [Matt. 24:24](#).)

Nevertheless, we can learn to discern these spirits. Even with every member having the right to revelation, the Church can be maintained as a house of order.

Revelation comes in an orderly way in the Church. We are entitled to personal revelation. However, unless we are set apart to some presiding office, we will not receive revelations concerning what others should do.

Revelation in the Church comes to those who have been properly called, sustained, ordained, or set apart. A bishop, for instance, will not receive any revelation concerning a neighboring ward, because that is out of his jurisdiction.

Occasionally someone will claim to have received authority to teach and bless without having been called and set apart. Less than a year after the Church was organized (February 1831), a revelation was received which the Prophet specified “embrac[ed] the law of the church.” It contains this verse:

“It shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and *it is known to the church that he has authority* and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church”. ([D&C 42:11](#); italics added.)

That is why the process of sustaining those called to office is so carefully protected in the Church—that all might know who has authority to teach and to bless.

An unusual spiritual experience should not be regarded as a personal call to direct others. It is my conviction that experiences of a special, sacred nature are individual and should be kept to oneself.

Few things disturb the channels of revelation quite so effectively as those people who are misled and think themselves to be chosen to instruct others when they are not chosen.

David’s Thoughts:

[We have to continue on the small and simple steps with continual revelations reminds me of the thoughts of Dallin H Oaks talk in his talk small and simple things:](#)

[“We are surrounded by media influences and cultural deterioration that will carry us downstream in our values if we are not continually resisting. To move upstream toward our eternal goal, we must constantly keep paddling. It helps if we are part of a team that is paddling together, like a rowing crew in action. To extend that example even further, the cultural currents are so strong that if we ever stop paddling, we will be carried downstream toward a destination we do not seek but which becomes inevitable if we do not constantly try to move forward. “ \(Small and Simple Things by President Dallin H Oaks\)](#)

[To continue to move forward with personal revelation we can't stop paddling and let the currents of the world affect us. We have to keep seeking to hear him.](#)

I find it interesting that he explains that the adversary can hijack the channels of revelation and send conflicting messages. Joseph Smith warned that we need to not be ignorant to the nature of the spirit:

“One great evil is, that men are ignorant of the nature of spirits; their power, laws, government, intelligence, etc., and imagine that when there is anything like power, revelation, or vision manifested, that it must be of God. Hence the Methodists, Presbyterians, and others frequently possess a spirit that will cause them to lie down, and during its operation, animation is frequently entirely suspended; they consider it to be the power” (TJSP page. 203).

We need to try the spirits as found in 1 John 4:1.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. “

Joseph Fielding Smith gave this advice about visions, dreams, angels and other messengers after his story of a member that received a message from supposedly one of the three Nephites:

“Now, I think it is wrong for any bishop or anyone else to invite these people who profess to have had a dream or a vision, or some kind of manifestation, into a meetinghouse, or even into the homes and gather the people in to listen to these presentations. In my judgment it is contrary to the teachings of the Church. When John said, 'Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits,' he did not mean that we should spend our time accepting or encouraging every wind of doctrine Eph. 4:14 but that we should prove every doctrine by the revelations of the Lord; by those principles of eternal truth which have been revealed for our guidance. We have certain standards which have been accepted and by which we are to be governed” (Joseph Fielding Smith, Of Dreams and Visions).

D&C 45 gives the procedure for the order on revelation for others:

1 O hearken, ye elders of my church, and give ear to the words which I shall speak unto you.

2 For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations from my hand.

3 And this ye shall know assuredly—that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.

4 But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.

5 And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments;

6 And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me.

7 For verily I say unto you, that he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before, to teach those revelations which you have received and shall receive through him whom I have appointed.

Mark E Peterson gave a warning to beware of false teachers and said the following:

“So, Latter-day Saints, beware of false teachers. When men come among you and begin to preach doctrines unto you which tend to destroy your confidence in the holy scriptures, when men come among you, as they are now coming, declaring to you that the appointment of George Albert Smith as President of this Church is not valid, because they say this Church should only have seven presidents and no more, when people come among you declaring that Christ is not divine, or when they come among you advocating the so-called practice of plural marriage, contrary to the teachings of this Church and contrary to the law of the land, when they come among you declaring that you can enter into domestic relations with another man or another woman without committing adultery, when you do not have a marriage bond which is recognized as legal by the law of this land, or when people come among you declaring that the Church is out of order, because we are at the present time not practising the United Order, or when a man comes among you declaring that the Church is off the track and that he is one mighty and strong sent to set the Church in order D&C 85:7 or when anyone comes and tells you that temple marriage is just a fad and that it has no relationship to your exaltation in the kingdom of God, or when someone comes to you, as one group is now doing, preaching that reincarnation is a Christian doctrine, or when men come to you declaring that predestination is one of the doctrines of the gospel, declaring that one group of the Saints is predestined to go to one degree of glory and another group of the Saints is predestined to go to another degree of glory, or when they come among you declaring that they have had dreams and visions about some get-rich-quick scheme by which they are going to save the Church financially in some period of distress, or when they come to you and declare that the method of administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper is to be changed, contrary to all the teachings of the scriptures, or when they come to you and say you can serve two masters Matt. 6:24 that you can serve the Church and also one of these wild-cat cults that are starting up, when you hear teachings of this kind you remember that such doctrines cause dissention among the people, that they cause disputes which lead to apostasy and that the Lord condemned disputes of that kind. When you have persons come to you teaching doctrines of this kind, remember also the words of the Savior when he said:

neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine ... for verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men 3 Ne. 11:28-29” (**Mark E. Petersen, “Be Ye Not Deceived”**)

Micah’s Thoughts:

This section was a “banger” of a quote that would go perfectly in “Keys of the Kingdom”, “Rights of Revelation”, “The Pyramid of Truth”, etc.

And, well, you ALL knew it was coming... If David uses it in his section I won’t reread it again, but this quote from President Joseph Fielding Smith ties in perfectly with this section... I would also say that it doesn’t matter how many times this quote gets read, it A) gets better every time and B) there are still those who clearly need to hear it and internalize the doctrine being taught:

Joseph Fielding Smith (Doctrines of Salvation, p.43)

“Our right to guidance from Holy Ghost. We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually. Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men.”

The second thing I want to clear up is that this section was dealing with “receiving revelation and inspiration to tell others what to think and do” i.e. the “thou shalt know and do”. Many will take this quote in D&C 42: 11 and twist it to mean that any member who takes it upon him or herself to preach the gospel and open their mouths, etc. while not being “formally set apart to do so”, is acting outside the bounds that God has set and you can immediately set them aside as working outside the church... This is strictly speaking “utter pish-posh”...

1959–A:122, David O. McKay, Closing Address

"Throw the responsibility upon every member of the Church that in the coming year of 1923 every member will be a missionary. Every member a missionary! You may bring your mother into the Church, or it may be your father; perhaps your fellow companion in the workshop. Somebody will hear the good message of the truth through you."

And that is the message today. *Every member*—a million and a half—*a missionary!* I think that is what the Lord had in mind when he gave that great revelation on Church government, as recorded in the 107th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. He describes the Melchizedek Priesthood and the men who stand at the head of that priesthood, and the Aaronic Priesthood and the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood, those who are active in the priesthood quorums—both the Melchizedek and the Aaronic. He then goes into detail about the duties of members and concludes:

"Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.

"He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy to stand. Even so. Amen" D&C 107:99-100

Doctrine and Covenants 88

81 Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.

82 Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads.

Mosiah 18

8 And it came to pass that he said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon (for thus were they called) and now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light;

9 Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—

10 Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?

Doctrine and Covenants 101

12 And in that day all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.

Preach My Gospel Chapter 1 shares the following quote:

President George Albert Smith (1945–1951)

“We will attain our exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom only on the condition that we share with our Father's other children the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” (Sharing the Gospel with Others, 190).

Matthew 10

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Ezekiel 3

18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

We need to understand the rights of revelation and keys of the kingdom and we always point people back towards that, but we should never use that as justification for inaction, or worse, silence. The Lord expects all those who have been warned to warn their neighbors, to teach and bear testimony of the things of God, for as Joseph Smith taught us in the Lectures on Faith, without human testimony there would be no further development in a person's faith.

Section III (Mason)

Others, fearing they also might go astray, then hold back and do not seek the source of divine revelation. Obedience to constituted priesthood authority will protect us from going astray.

There are those within the Church who are disturbed when changes are made with which they disagree or when changes they propose are not made. They point to these as evidence that the leaders are not inspired.

They write and speak to convince others that the doctrines and decisions of the Brethren are not given through inspiration.

Two things characterize them: they are always irritated by the word *obedience*, and always they question revelation. It has always been so. Helaman described those who “began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy and in the spirit of revelation; and the judgments of God did stare them in the face.” ([Hel. 4:23](#).) “They were left in their own strength” ([Hel. 4:13](#)), and “the Spirit of the Lord did no more preserve them; yea, it had withdrawn from them” ([Hel. 4:24](#)).

Changes in organization or procedures are a testimony that revelation is ongoing. While doctrines remain fixed, the methods or procedures do not.

For instance, when the editions of the scriptures were published, many corrections were made on the basis of original or printer's manuscripts, some of which had not previously been available. For instance, in Alma chapter 16, verse 5, the word *whether* had appeared. [[Alma 16:5](#)] The original manuscript for that verse does not exist. However, when we found the printer's copy, we saw that the Prophet Joseph Smith had changed the word to *whither*. *Whether* means “if”; *whither* means “where.” The next verse verifies *whither* to be correct.

Another example: in Alma chapter 32, verse 30, the words “sprouteth and beginneth to grow” occurred three times. [[Alma 32:30](#)] An obvious typesetting error left one of them out. In the 1981 edition, thirty-five words were restored. It now conforms to the original text.

There were many such changes. None altered the doctrine. Each change, however small in detail, was carefully and prayerfully considered and approved by the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in a meeting in the temple.

All such matters are determined that way. The Lord established that process when He gave revelations relating to temple ordinances.

In 1841 the Saints were commanded to build a temple in Nauvoo in which to perform baptisms for the dead, and they were given time to do it. They would be rejected if they failed. He said:

“I command you, all ye my saints, to build a house unto me; ...

“And if you do not these things at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church, with your dead, saith the Lord your God.” ([D&C 124:31–32](#).)

The Saints did not fail. However impossible it may have seemed to them, given the terrible opposition they faced, the Lord promised to guide them through His appointed servants:

“If my people will hearken unto my voice, *and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people*, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place.

“But if they will not hearken to my voice, *nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed*, they shall not be blest.” ([D&C 124:45–46](#); italics added.)

Mason’s Thoughts:

Elder Packers words – Black

Mason’s words and thoughts – Blue

Scriptures – Black & highlighted yellow

Quotes from Prophets & Apostles – Purple

Spiritual Protection through Obedience

I love the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. I love having the knowledge and a testimony that God still speaks and makes his will known to us. He is not silent, He is not uncaring, or unloving, He hasn’t shunned us away. He lives and loves us. Through the direction of his Prophets and Apostles we can take part of and witness the miracles brought about by the ongoing restoration taking place in our dispensation.

“The Restoration is a process, not an event, and will continue until the Lord comes again... The ongoing Restoration needs ongoing revelation.” (The Temple and Your Spiritual Foundation By President Russell M. Nelson, 2021)

“He [the Lord] will continue to feed us the bread of life as we need it from time to time, if we will but live in accordance with the teachings we have already received.”
(George Albert Smith (CR, p. 118, October 1912)

D&C 93:24

24 And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come

These truths are revealed to us because God loves us and wants us to understand His will and His order on how His gospel works. We are given the blueprints to build up our lives in truth, happiness, and peace and under the direction of the true order of the Priesthood which enacts the guidance of the Holy Ghost. To again quote President Nelson:

“The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have often asked the Lord if there are better ways to take the blessings of the temple to His faithful children. We seek guidance regularly on how to ensure worldwide accuracy and consistency of temple instruction, covenants, and ordinances despite differences in language and culture.

Under the Lord’s direction and in answer to our prayers, recent procedural adjustments have been made. *He* is the One who wants you to understand with great clarity exactly what you are making covenants to do. *He* is the One who wants you to experience fully *His* sacred ordinances. *He* wants you to comprehend your privileges, promises, and responsibilities. *He* wants you to have spiritual insights and awakenings you’ve never had before.” (The Temple and Your Spiritual Foundation By President Russell M. Nelson, 2021)

What sticks out to me in that quote is that “The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles...seek guidance regularly”. There is a proper order and process to seeking out revelation. It isn’t random or done in strange ways. God has an order to all things done in his name.

“The Lord never created this world at random; he has never done any of his work at random. The earth was created for certain purposes; and one of these purposes was its final redemption, and the establishment of his government and kingdom upon it in the latter days, to prepare it for the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose right it is to reign. (D&C 58:22) That set time has come, that dispensation is before us, we are living in the midst of it.”

(His Testimony- The Fulfilling of Prophecy—Advice to Mothers. Discourse by Elder Wilford Woodruff, delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, April 6, 1872. Reported By: David W. Evans.)

In thinking of the “Why” or the “Need” for latter day teachings from Prophets and Apostles I am reminded of these words from President Joseph Fielding Smith, who listened to a trusted friend, and member of the church that was concerned for the teachings being taught to the youth.

“I, too, am concerned over the faith of our young people, for that matter, of all the members of the Church in this day when there are so many prevailing notions, ideas, and philosophies. I have realized for a long time the need of spiritual protection, protection in the teachings that we give to our young people in our organizations, to save them from the false doctrines and teachings of the world.

About three days ago I received a letter from one of my very dearest friends, a brother who is a teacher and who has been a teacher for nearly a half century, one who sat in the councils of the Church in stakes of Zion and in whom I have a great deal of confidence. He expressed in his

letter his solicitation for our young people, and in fact, for all the members of the Church and the need of giving them proper protection and guidance in the teachings that are placed before them.

I copied from his letter one paragraph and asked him if I might use it. He said I might, and I am going to read it to you:

"There are in our community, and I suspect in other places, men who are instructing in our quorums and other organizations who teach false doctrine, and the craziest imaginations, and almost invariably they are brethren who are not in line. They have brilliant, trained minds, sometimes with pleasing, influential personalities, but lacking the spirit of truth that comes by obedience. **You cannot give what you do not possess.** In my humble opinion **only those who believe in, and can prove their teachings by their works, should be instructing in our quorums and other organizations.**"

That remark of his I fully endorse, and so I am expressing these thoughts particularly to our bishops, presidents of stakes, superintendents of Sunday Schools and Mutuals, and those who have charge of priesthood quorums, and the other organizations of the Church, to see to it that in the choosing of teachers they use wisdom and seek for the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord that these men spoken of here in this communication, brilliant, outstanding personalities, but without faith, are not called to teach in our Sunday Schools, our Mutual Improvement Associations, and in the priesthood quorums of the Church. **We want men who are trained in the principles of the gospel and who have faith and a testimony of the truth. We have them.**

Because a man has great schooling, is educated according to the ideas of the world, is not sufficient reason why he should be called to take charge of a class in any of the organizations or priesthood quorums within the Church. Now, if he has scholastic ability and training, and along with it has faith in the principles of the gospel and in the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Prophet Joseph Smith, all well and good. **But if he is filled with all kinds of philosophy and notions and cannot accept the doctrines in the standard works of the Church, we do not want him,** whether it is in our auxiliaries or the priesthood, or in our seminaries or institutes, that are given for the teaching of religious principles and to instill faith in the hearts of our young people.

"Remember," the Lord has said, "the worth of souls is great in the sight of God.

It makes no difference who the teacher is, if he teaches false doctrine, if he teaches that which has been condemned by the Lord, that is contrary to what is written in the revelations given to the Church, then he should not teach.

In the forty-second section of the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord declares that he who hath not the Spirit shall not teach. (D&C 42:14) I call upon you brethren in the stakes and in the wards to be alert to find men who have faith in their hearts and a love of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ and do not choose men simply because they have a personality or worldly wisdom. Find if they have in their hearts a love of divine truth. **If a man cannot accept the revelations in the Bible, in the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, which we have received as standards, if he has reservations in his mind in regard to the things that are there recorded, which have come to us by the word of the Lord, then he ought not be teaching in any organization, any class, anywhere in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.**

("...and if Ye Receive Not the Spirit Ye Shall Not Teach" President Joseph Fielding Smith, *Conference Report, October 1954*)

Those were some profoundly bold and straight to the point statements made by President Smith. We must remain humble in our studies, and always seek for the guidance of the spirit. We would be wise to be obedient to the learning process that the Savior himself has laid out for us as well as so many prophets and apostles. When one learns and teaches in a way that is contrary to the Lord, Elder Packer warns us of the resulting dangers some may face and un-Christ like characteristics they begin to acquire.

1. Some may become fearful, "...they also might go astray..."
2. They may "hold back and do not seek the source of divine revelation"
3. Become "disturbed when changes are made" within the Church.
4. "they disagree or when changes they propose are not made."
5. "They point to these as evidence that the leaders are not inspired."
6. "They write and speak to convince others that the doctrines and decisions of the Brethren are not given through inspiration."
7. "are always irritated by the word *obedience*"
8. "and always they question revelation"
9. "began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy and in the spirit of revelation"

He Then address the outcomes that the disobedient will eventually have to face.

1. "They were left in their own strength" ([Hel. 4:13](#)),
2. "the Spirit of the Lord did no more preserve them; yea, it had withdrawn from them" ([Hel. 4:24](#)).
3. "and the judgments of God did stare them in the face."

When men profess to know God, or know Christ, then only teach to build up for themselves they lead not only themselves, but many other good saints down slippery paths and onto unstable foundations. As the Apostle Peter taught "If this ... work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it. Acts 5:38-39". By understanding how revelation works, and the difference between policy and doctrine it enlightens one's mind to better understand gospel truths. We can see that when changes in church policies or procedures occur it is a way that the Lord shows us how His Church grows by continuous revelation, and why Prophet and apostles are needed now more than ever. If we rely on those who "disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy and revelation", or solely on men's works, it becomes all too easy to be led astray or give up on the Gospel of Jesus Christ entirely. We must cherish truth and the means to act upon it. We must take the teaching of it seriously, we are charged with teaching and bringing up righteous posterity and generations. If we lead younger generations astray with false teachings and weak foundations, then they will be left to their own strengths when trials come, and they will not be able to stand, let alone even put up a fight.

A Trowel in One Hand and A Musket in The Other

President James E. Faust shed some great insight as to the importance of keeping our testimonies on solid foundations, but it takes some work.

“...every person must have a spiritual confirmation by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is more powerful than all the senses combined. To those who say, “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief,” may I suggest that “you look forward with an eye of faith.” To those who do this, the Lord has promised, “I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you, and which shall dwell in your heart.”

Some reasons people give when the fire of their faith flickers and dies include human frailties and the imperfections of others; something in the history of the Church they cannot understand; changes in procedures resulting from growth and continuous revelation; indifference; or transgression.

For those whose faith has faded, the reasons may be real to them, but these reasons do not change the reality of what Joseph Smith restored. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “I never told you I was perfect; but there is no error in the revelations which I have taught.” **One cannot successfully attack true principles or doctrine because they are eternal.** The revelations that came through the Prophet Joseph Smith are still correct! It is a mistake to let distractions, slights, or offenses pull down our own house of faith.

We can have a certain testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and Redeemer of mankind, and that Joseph Smith was a prophet commissioned to restore the Church in our day and time without having a complete understanding of all gospel principles. **But when you pick up a stick you pick up both ends.** (*Thank you for this one Micah, and your Mission President.) And so, it is with the gospel. As members of the Church, **we need to accept all of it.** Even limited spiritual assurance of some of the aspects of the gospel is a blessing, and in time the other elements of which you are uncertain can come through faith and obedience.

The gap between what is popular and what is righteous is widening. As prophesied by Isaiah, many today “call evil good, and good evil.” (Isa.5:20) Revelations from the prophets of God are not like offerings at the cafeteria, some to be selected and others disregarded. We are greatly indebted to the Prophet Joseph Smith for the many great revelations which came through him. He was without peer in restoring spiritual knowledge.

To those who believe but wish their belief to be strengthened, I urge you to walk in faith and trust in God. Spiritual knowledge always requires an exercise of faith. We acquire a testimony of the principles of the gospel by obediently trying to live them. Said the Savior, “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.” (John 7:17) A testimony of the efficacy of prayer comes through humble and sincere prayer. A testimony of tithing comes by paying tithing. Do not let your private doubts separate you from the divine source of knowledge. Prayerfully go forward, humbly seeking eternal light, and your unbelief will be dispelled. I testify that if you continue in the purposeful process of searching for and accepting spiritual light, truth, and knowledge, it will surely come. By going forward in faith, you will find that your faith will increase. Like a good seed, if it is not cast out by your unbelief, it will swell within your breast. (Alma 32:28)

I believe that every person's individual testimony of Jesus as the Christ comes as a spiritual gift. No one can successfully dispute or challenge it because it is so personal a gift to the one to whom it has been given. It will be as an ever-recharging spiritual energizer to keep our spiritual light running to show us the way to eternal happiness. But I testify that it can be more—much, much more. By covenanting with “God to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things that he shall command us, all the remainder of our days,” our “hearts are changed through faith on [Christ's] name.” Thus we may be “born of him and ... become his sons and his daughters.” (Mosiah 5:5-7) (Lord, I Believe; Help Thou Mine Unbelief, President James E. Faust, 2003)

My new favourite spiritually motivating slogan is one that has been brought up by Ammon a couple of times now, “We must have a trowel in one hand to build and a musket in the other hand to defend.” It probably resonates with me so well because my name (Mason) literally means “one who is skilled to work with various stone or concrete tools (Like a trowel). A builder who works with stone, mortar, concrete, etc. One who can fix cracks in walls or foundations.” Now you don't have to be named Mason to be one. Any one can be a Mason. Principled in truth and righteous intent we truly can have a divine trowel in one hand designed to progress the building purposes of God, and a weapon of defence in the other to protect and fight against the adversary and all those who fall in line with him in. Empowering us to be able to build up our testimonies, build up the kingdom and other saints, and eventually build up Zion. We must be prepared to speak up and defend those things mentioned while building them at the same time. We would do well to follow Nehemiah's example from the Old Testament. It is not and will not be easy. The fiery darts will come in forms of mocking, hate, guile, slander, gnashing of teeth, and possibly physical and mental harm. But if we are faithful and focused on building up while sharpening our swords, or loading up our muskets we will be able to defend and protect ourselves and others. If we align ourselves with people who also have a mind to work and keep our focus forward and truly desire it such as Nehemiah did, we will not give up. When the opposition comes we will profess; **“I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. (Nehemiah 6:3)** It puts a fire in my heart and gives me that “Spiritual Momentum” to keep going, and never give up. To always look to the Prophet, and not Babylon's doubters and priest crafters, or lazy learners, and lax disciples. Let us have no intentions of ever cracking the foundations of our testimony which we have worked so hard to build. And let us always be on the ready to help build, defend, or repair the foundational cracks of others.

Man Needs the Laws of God

If we look back to the time of Adam and Eve, we learn the reasons why we need God's truths continually revealed to us. The first recorded commandment to Adam and Eve after the expulsion from Eden was “that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord” In (Moses 5:5-6) we read.

5 And he gave unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord.

6 And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me.

The law of the sacrifice was thus one of the first recorded ordinances revealed to man. Why was this ordinance given first? Because separated from God, the “natural man” would eventually turn his back to God. We learn of this in Mosiah 3:19

19 For the ^anatural ^bman is an ^cenemy to God, and has been from the ^dfall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he ^eyields to the enticings of the ^fHoly Spirit, and ^gputteth off the ^hnatural man and becometh a ⁱsaint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a ^jchild, ^ksubmissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.

We learn that Man’s life would center in earthly things, for it would appear that his wants, his needs, and even his existence were supplied by the earth. He would feel a need to know but one law: self-preservation. This is why God has to reveal His Laws unto us, so like Adam and Eve we can understand why we worship and how we can enact within our selves the first Law of Heaven which is to be Obedient.

What then can lead us to put away the natural man, what can we do to center ourselves not upon the things of this world, but upon Jesus Christ? With profound insight, President David O. McKay has supplied an answer:

“The divinity within him, I grant you, would be ever urging him to rise above himself. But his reverence for the Infinite could express itself only in a worship of the manifestations of Divine power—the *sun*, the *moon*, the *thunder*, the *lightning*, the cataract, the volcano, etc. ...
“The Lord [through his loving grace] revealed to man the Gospel, and one of the very first commandments given superseded in essence the *self-preservation* law. *It was the law of sacrifice*. The effect of this was that the best the earth produced, the best specimen in the flock or herd should not be used for self, but for God. It was God, not the earth, whom man was to worship” (“The Atonement,” *Instructor*, Mar. 1959, pp. 65–66).

In other words, man is to put his trust in God; from God he would draw sustenance. Offering his best to the Lord became the symbol of his total faith in Jehovah as the giver of both mortal and eternal life.

We are revealed the plain and simple truths so that we do not worship this earth, but we worship God and give our thanks to him for all that we have. We learn of His Laws, and the prophets educate and show how to be obedient to those Laws.

Just as the Lord counseled with Joseph Smith in bringing forth the Book of Mormon, and the restoration of the Gospel in this dispensation, God also revealed his secrets unto Adam and counseled him though now fallen that he may be forgiven and return one day back into the presence and fullness of Gods glory.

“Repeatedly the scriptures declare that the Lord gives His commandments to the children of men through living prophets. No committee, assembly, or any other authority has the right to dictate to Him doctrine that is contrary to His law. God’s eternal blessings are contingent upon our obedience and adherence to the word of the Lord that is revealed to us through His holy prophets.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “We Believe All That God Has Revealed,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 88.

To go a little more in depth as to why heeding to the Prophets words is crucial for our salvation let me share some words with you from President George Albert Smith.

“In the dealings of God with the children of men, in almost every age of which we have any account, we find that a certain weakness of the human heart has ever manifested itself—that is, its proneness to stray from the Lord. On almost every occasion when the children of Israel began to get prosperous and wealthy, they forgot their duty and strayed from the Lord...

...In reading the Book of Mormon this same trait of character is very noticeable in the history of the Nephites and Jaredites. When the Elders were stirred up to preach and prophesy to the people, or when, through the scourging of the Almighty, they were brought to repentance and to the knowledge of their fathers, it would be but an incredibly short time—a few years of peace and industry with their attendant blessings—before they would again go astray from God, follow new doctrines and forms of worship designed by men, and wickedness would soon again overspread the land. This was repeated time and again by the Nephites from the time they separated from the Lamanites until their final destruction. It is remarkable, however, in the history given in the Book of Mormon, that after the mission of the Savior to this continent, and the reception of the gospel by the whole of the Lamanites and Nephites, that for several generations they remained faithful to its precepts and principles, and walked before the Lord with such a degree of humility and thanksgiving that they were prospered and blessed in all things. This is the longest period of peace, and the most like a millennium that we have any account of in any of our records where time is given to us. It is true that Enoch and his followers were more faithful than this, for it is said that he walked with God three hundred and sixty-five years but, as we have no detailed account of the transactions in his cities, or of the regulations in Zion under his direction, we are not prepared to use the short account we have of him and his people by way of comparison.

All these lessons taught in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and by our own experience are to warn us of the danger of going astray, and to show us how prone we are to lust after the leeks and onions of Egypt, or to sacrifice principle to gain some temporary advantage or to answer some mercenary purpose; and they should be so firmly fixed upon our minds, and so applied in our lives, that nothing could induce us to do so, for however great the seeming advantage resulting from such a course, it would in the end prove a serious disadvantage, for in following it we sacrifice our integrity, violate our faith, weaken our confidence in God and our power with him, and lay ourselves liable to fall into snares from which it is impossible for us to extricate ourselves.

The fact is, in relation to this, that we are to seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and to use all our efforts to sustain His Kingdom and each other, and to sustain and uphold those who uphold the Kingdom of God, and when we neglect to do this, and suffer temporary interests to drag us to the right or to the left, we lay a foundation for darkness and destruction. However, many objections we may feel to abiding the counsels and instructions which are given to the Saints, we will find, under all circumstances, that they are invariably for the best, and that, when they have not been observed, the result was unfavorable. It seems to me that most of us can look back the last four or five years and see the course that has been pursued by some in their eagerness and determination to disobey counsel. By these lessons and examples in the school of experience we ought to make ourselves acquainted with the principles of progress, and profit by them. If we will do so God will strengthen our hands and enlighten our minds, and enable us to pull unitedly together; and, when we are united as a solid mass, all the powers of earth cannot prevail against us.

Our weakness consists in division among ourselves, in not living up to our calling, in not abiding by the counsels which the Lord inspires His servants to impart unto us, and not abiding by the covenants which we make when we lift up our hands to Heaven and vote to sustain our President, or Prophet, as a seer and revelator unto us. This failure on our part weakens both his hands and ours. (Proneness of Mankind to go Astray. Remarks by George Albert Smith, delivered in the Old Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, December 29, 1867. Reported By: David W. Evans.)

Revealed Truths of Yesterday and Today

As I have been able to study through what God has revealed in the Old Testament this year, it has helped to strengthen my testimony of the necessity of Prophets and the urgency of anchoring ourselves in the true revealed doctrine of Christ today. We learn how easy it is to fall out of Gods graces, but we also learn of Gods true power and his mercy. That he is a God of Order and a God that makes covenants with his chosen people and keeps true to the promises that He makes even to this very day.

By neglecting to consult the writings of the ancients, we miss the fact that in their trials and triumphs, individually and collectively, they had to undergo exactly the same trials that we do: the props of the plays, the technology, and the fashions, wear out and are constantly being replaced, but the issues and the plot always remain the same.
(Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion* Chapter 9)

As it was in the time of Moses the Children of Israel were more interested in complaining and pushing back against Moses and Gods revealed truths. So, what happened as a circumstance of their disobedience?

Bruce R. McConkie teaches us that “Through Moses the Lord attempted to set up the house of Israel as a kingdom of priests of the holy order, with each man and his family enjoying the full blessings of the patriarchal order and priesthood. But Israel rebelled, rejected the higher law and

the Lord took Moses and the fulness of the priesthood from them.” (Mormon Doctrine, Second Edition, Pg. 477)

They had been cut off from the fullness of the blessings of the Priesthood. The Covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still there, but not in its fullness. Revealed truths and doctrines were never altered, they were just revoked due to the open rebellion of Israel.

President Nelson recently gave us great council and warning when he said.

“The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (See Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7). Our safest insurance is to continue to be worthy of admission to His holy house. The greatest gift you could give to the Lord is to keep yourself unspotted from the world, worthy to attend His holy house. His gift to you will be the peace and security of knowing that you are worthy to meet Him, whenever that time comes.”

-President Nelson (The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior’s Second Coming, April 2020)

It is of high importance that we as Latter-Day Saints know how to seek out and understand why God reveals his truths to us, how it is revealed, and how we can understand what is being revealed. As the 9th article of Faith states there are still things “yet to be revealed” and if we aren’t paying attention when the Prophet speaks, we will miss out on all the blessings that our Heavenly Father has in store for us. We must be careful as we seek out the truth to retrieve and build our testimonies on true principles anchored in Jesus Christ and in his prophets. In our searching we have been provided with Holy Places such Temples to seek out further revelation and instruction from the Lord.

“The temple is a house of instruction—yes, even divine instruction—about God’s eternal plan for his children. In the temple one gains a superior perspective about his personal relationship with his Maker and with the Savior—yes, special knowledge about God and Jesus Christ, which is essential to the obtaining of life eternal. “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” John 17:3)

The temple is a house of revelation—yes, continuing revelation. Whether that revelation be to a prophet or a member who seeks after truth, all who come to the temple seeking are continually taught and edified.” (The House of the Lord, Elder Robert L. Simpson 1980 Semi-Annual General Conference)

Elder James E. Talmage wrote, “The canon of scripture is still open; many lines, many precepts, are yet to be added; revelation, surpassing in importance and glorious fulness any that has been recorded, is yet to be given to the Church and declared to the world” (*Articles of Faith*, 311).

We need to do all we can to remain worthy to have the direction and companionship of the Holy Ghost, so we are not ensnared or taken up by false truths, false spirits, or priestcraft’s. Many sites, and social media platforms are dedicated to misinformation, blasphemy, and Priestcraft. How many of Gods good saints have been led away from the revealed truths because they chose

to lean on one's false understandings, or incorrect precepts. Satan is a master at counterfeiting the truths of God and is skilled at fooling even the most elect of God's Saints.

Elder David B. Haight warned of such things, as he echoed truths taught by the Savior Himself.

“The Savior warned us of these times:

Matt. 24:24 ...there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

(The Power of Evil, Elder David B. Haight.)

Th Prophet Joseph Smith as well as Elder M. Russell Ballard instructs us to do the following when it come to seeking out truth and personal revelation while building our testimonies;

“I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or anyone, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore, you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them.

- Joseph Smith Jr (TPJS p.21-22)

“So, keep your eyes riveted on the leadership of the Church. While individuals may falter, the body of general Church leadership will remain steadfast and true. If someone tells you that they have received revelation that the First Presidency and the Twelve have not received, run away from them.”

-Elder M. Russell Ballard (When Shall These Things Be)

John 7:16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

“Contrary to the doubts of some, there really is such a thing as right and wrong. There really is absolute truth—eternal truth. One of the plagues of our day is that too few people know where to turn for truth.” (President Nelson - Opening Remarks, October 2021)

“Sometimes we as leaders of the Church are criticized for holding firm to the laws of God, defending the Savior's doctrine, and resisting the social pressures of our day. But our commission as ordained apostles is “to go into all the world to preach [His] gospel unto every creature.”

“That means we are commanded to teach truth...our commission as apostles is to teach nothing but truth. That commission does not give us the authority to modify divine law. Though we of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles cannot change the laws of God, we do have the charge “to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations.” Thus we can adjust policy when the Lord directs us to do so.”

(President Nelson <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/russell-m-nelson/love-laws-god/>)

Our Dispensation

To gain knowledge, enlightenment, and personal revelation is a blessing that can bring us great comfort and peace. It is truly a blessing to be able to check ourselves against the teachings, counselling's, and continual revelations from a Prophet of God. If they don't mesh, then we course correct. If they do line up, then we know we are staying on the covenant path. We know that we are maturing spiritually by being obedient to the Lord's will.

“The measure of a person's spiritual maturity is found in his or her loyalty to the Prophet Joseph Smith.”

(Elder Bruce R. McConkie (Joseph Fielding McConkie, The Bruce R. McConkie Story: Reflections of a Son (2003), 256. See also Bruce R. McConkie, “Joseph Smith: A Revealer of Christ”, BYU Devotional Address, 3 September 1978, 6.)

Our beloved President Nelson taught us back in his April 2020 Conference talk titled “Hear Him” that...

“We live in the day that “our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation.”¹ We have front-row seats to *witness live* what the prophet Nephi saw *only in vision*, that “the power of the Lamb of God” would descend “upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.”² *You*, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!

Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is *your* Savior, and God's prophet Joseph Smith is *your* prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when “nothing shall be withheld”³ from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration.”

As President Nelson mentions, this dispensation in which we are currently in is in a process of an “ongoing restoration”. It did not end with Joseph Smith's Martyrdom. It is ongoing, line upon line, precept upon precept. We unlimited access to the words of Prophets and Apostles to guide us and keep us on the covenant path.

I'll leave you with some teachings and questions from President Brigham Young that we can check ourselves against to know if we are truly on the covenant path. Are we with the Prophets, or against them? Are we truly following the will of the Lord? How spiritually mature are we? Are we willing to do whatever the Lord requires of us? Can we truly hold a trowel in one hand and a musket in the other? Are we ready to receive further revelation and enlightenment?

“While I am here with you, I want to talk to the Saints. I like to look at them; I like to instruct them, and to be instructed. We pray continually for the redemption of Zion for the Lord to hasten the time when we can return and establish the Center Stake of Zion, and build up the great

temple of the Lord upon which his glory will rest as a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. We pray that we may be sanctified, that we may be made pure in heart; and we pray that the Lord will teach us his will continually, and reveal unto us precisely his mind, so that we may have the mind of Christ, and know precisely what to do.

When will Zion be redeemed? When will the Savior make his appearance in the midst of his people? When will the veil be taken away, that we may behold the glory of God? Can any of you answer these questions? Yes, readily, when I tell you. The redemption of Zion is the first step preparatory to the two last-named events. Just as soon as the Latter-day Saints are ready and prepared to return to Independence, Jackson County, in the State of Missouri, North America, just so soon will the voice of the Lord be heard, “Arise now, Israel, and make your way to the Center Stake of Zion.” **Do you think there is any danger of our being ready before the Lord prepares the other end of the route? Do you believe that we, as Latter-day Saints, are preparing our own hearts, our own lives, to return to take possession of the Center Stake of Zion, as fast as the Lord is preparing to cleanse the land from those ungodly persons who dwell there?** You can read, reflect, and make your own calculations. If we are not very careful, the earth will be cleansed from wickedness before we are prepared to take possession of it. **We must be pure to be prepared to build up Zion.** To all appearance, the Lord is preparing that end of the route faster than we are preparing ourselves to go there.

His grace is here, his judgments are here, his wisdom and Spirit are here, and every qualification that Saints can require is here ready to be poured out upon the people, if they are prepared to receive them. **Are we prepared to receive those qualifications? Are we prepared to march back and take possession of the Center Stake of Zion, build up the great Temple of the Lord, and gather in the nations of the earth?**

Brothers and Sisters, I would ask you are we prepared to do this? Do we believe it? Can we listen and obey when a prophet of God speaks? Can we build and defend at the same time? I testify that these things mentioned by President Young can and will be done. But when and how depends on us. As I said at the beginning I love the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and I love the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. I love learning about the Redemption of Zion and all the steps that come with it. The more I study it and understand the more is revealed to me, all other teachings and doctrines become clearer. When your mind and ears become trained to the mentions of Zion and her redemption you begin to see and hear it all the time. In Hymns, in testimonies, conference addresses, in reading the scriptures. It all becomes clear, and it testifies of this great and marvelous work that is soon to take place in our dispensation. May we all be so blessed and prepared to play some role in it, no matter how large or how small is my prayer and my testimony. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Micah’s Thoughts:

There are so many golden quotes in this section I could spend all week expounding on it... “Obedience to constituted priesthood authority will protect us from going astray”... How did we as a church become so ignorant to this fact? There are many in the church who are disturbed

when urgings and changes come from the Prophets and Apostles, and many then point to these as “evidence” that the leaders are not inspired, and today the words used have only increased in temperature- now the leaders of the church are being low key attached to the anti-Christ and their counsel to the “mark of the beast”...

Two things still characterize these people, they are irate when the word “obedience” comes up, “no, no!” says one, “I am obedient to Christ and I keep my covenants I made with him!” Oh thou fool! Know thou not that one of the most important covenants we make with the Lord in **His Kingdom** is to obey the voice of his servants “as thou they were from His own mouth”? Know thou not that the Lord makes His will known to us through the keys? The second thing they do is screw up and question revelation and how it flows... I refer to this as a “million different strings attached directly to Christ” fallacy, which is not how revelation and inspiration flows in Christ’s Kingdom... Revelation and inspiration flows down from heaven through the keys, and everything received below must be consonant with that above or it is not from Christ.

When people enter this state they “stare the judgements of God directly in the face”, ironic and sad is that many of these people believe in a pre-tribulation rapture for them... But they will find that when you step outside the bounds of the keys and act outside that, “you are left to your own strength”, which is not a comforting thought... The Spirit of the Lord will cease to strive with such...

Is it a coincidence that President Nelson asked the people claiming to be the Lord’s people to act, and then warned them that “lazy learners and lax disciples will never be able to muster even a particle of faith”, and then finally, after seeing the reaction of the church, the reaction of those claiming to be followers of Christ, President Nelson quoted from the following scriptures:

Moroni 9

3 And now behold, my son, I fear lest the Lamanites shall destroy this people; for they do not repent, and Satan stirreth them up continually to anger one with another.

4 Behold, I am laboring with them continually; and when I speak the word of God with sharpness they tremble and anger against me; and when I use no sharpness they harden their hearts against it; **wherefore, I fear lest the Spirit of the Lord hath ceased striving with them.**

5 For so exceedingly do they anger that it seemeth me that they have no fear of death; and they have lost their love, one towards another; and they thirst after blood and revenge continually.

6 And now, my beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God.

What has taken place has been spelled out so clearly for us it is truly impossible for those with even a small taste of the Holy Ghost to not see where we are.

“If my people will hearken unto my voice, *and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people*, behold, verily I say unto you, **they shall not be moved out of their place.**

“But if they will not hearken to my voice, *nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed*, they shall not be blest.” ([D&C 124:45–46](#); italics added.)

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30 And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

31 And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

32 But my disciples *shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.*

33 And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; *yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.*

Section IV (Michael)

Later, speaking on the same subject of temple ordinances, the Lord affirmed again that He will reveal His will to His authorized servants:

“For him to whom these keys are given there is no difficulty in obtaining a knowledge of facts in relation to the salvation of the children of men.” ([D&C 128:11](#).)

That principle of revelation has been with the Church ever since. Those who hold the keys have obtained knowledge on what to do. When changes have come, they have come through that process. The Lord does as He said He would do:

“I, the Lord, command and revoke, as it seemeth me good.” ([D&C 56:4](#).)

“I command and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing.” ([D&C 58:32](#).)

He told the Saints that when enemies prevented them from keeping a commandment, he would no longer require them to do so. And he said:

“The iniquity and transgression of my holy laws and commandments I will visit upon the heads of those who hindered my work, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not.” ([D&C 124:50](#).)

The gospel plan was revealed line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. And it goes on: “We believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” ([A of F 1:9](#).)

There will be changes made in the future as in the past. Whether the Brethren make changes or resist them depends entirely upon the instructions they receive through the channels of revelation which were established in the beginning.

The doctrines will remain fixed, eternal; the organization, programs, and procedures will be altered as directed by Him whose church this is.

We who have been called to lead the Church are ordinary men and women with ordinary capacities struggling to administer a church which grows at such a pace as to astound even those who watch it closely. Some are disposed to find fault with us; surely that is easy for them to do. But they do not examine us more searchingly than we examine ourselves. A call to lead is not an exemption from the challenges of life. We seek for inspiration in the same way that you do, and we must obey the same laws which apply to every member of the Church.

We are sorry for our inadequacies, sorry we are not better than we are. We can feel, as you can see, the effect of the aging process as it imposes limitations upon His leaders before your very eyes.

But this we know. There are councils and counselors and quorums to counterbalance the foibles and frailties of man. The Lord organized His church to provide for mortal men to work as mortal men, and yet He assured that the spirit of revelation would guide in all that we do in His name.

And in the end, what is given comes because the Lord has spoken it, “whether by [His] own voice or by the voice of [His] servants, it is the same.” ([D&C 1:38](#).) We know His voice when He speaks.

Revelation continues with us today. The promptings of the Spirit, the dreams, and the visions and the visitations, and the ministering of angels all are with us now. And the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost “is a lamp unto [our] feet, and a light unto [our] path.” ([Ps. 119:105](#).) Of that I bear witness, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Michael’s Thoughts:

Elder Packer brings his message to a wonderful conclusion here in Section IV. It’s really a great capstone on a doctrinal sermon. Elder Packer affirms again and again the reality of the Lord’s revelation to His called servants.

The quoting of D&C 128:11 is significant. Those who have keys can get the “knowledge of facts” – revelation – as it pertains to the salvation of men. Unless you hold keys, validly bestowed upon you in the proper way, you cannot and do not receive revelation to guide the kingdom. He says: “That principle of revelation has been with the Church ever since. Those who hold the keys have obtained knowledge on what to do. When changes have come, they have come through that process.”

While Elder Packer doesn’t describe in specific detail “that process,” we can refer to other talks to get a great idea of what that process can entail. One such talk is Elder Quentin L. Cook’s April 2020 General Conference talk, [“The Blessing of Continuing Revelation to Prophets and Personal Revelation to Guide Our Lives.”](#) Another detailed talk was given by Elder Bruce R. McConkie in August 1978 at BYU entitled, [“All Are Alike Unto God”](#) where he details some of the things that happened when the revelation on priesthood was received. I would encourage all to read these two talks. They are quite good.

Elder Packer was often the subject of harsh criticism and abuse. This was because he was often a “hold the line” kind of General Authority. He resisted a lot of changes because he felt that it wasn’t the right time or that the changes were detrimental. Yet

here, you have Elder Packer laying out for us quite perfectly the nature of how change – authorized and appropriate change – comes to the Church: “Whether the Brethren make changes or resist them depends entirely upon the instructions they receive through the channels of revelation which were established in the beginning.”

And then a marvelous summary principle: “The doctrines will remain fixed, eternal; the organization, programs, and procedures will be altered as directed by Him whose church this is.” So much of what we’ve seen in the Church, particularly the last several years, fits this principle perfectly. The doctrines are eternal; procedures and processes can and will change.

Elder Packer then goes on to openly explain and underscore that General Authorities, even prophets, seers, and revelators, aren’t perfect people. Those who lead have “ordinary capacities.” I would probably say that they put their pants on the same way we do, one leg at a time. (Except when their pants are on, they receive divine revelations!)

“A call to lead is not an exemption from the challenges of life. We seek for inspiration in the same way that you do, and we must obey the same laws which apply to every member of the Church.”

The Brethren have to put up with stubbing their toes and stepping on Legos the same way that we do. They also obey the same spiritual laws that are prescribed to advance and progress, the laws that apply to you and me. They pray, they fast, they study the scriptures. They serve. They love. We are to do the same thing in order to gain the same spiritual fruits as it pertains to our stewardships. My stewardship is rather small, it is not worldwide like President Russell M. Nelson’s is. Nevertheless, I can obey the spiritual laws that have been laid down and received the promised blessings. The Brethren do the same thing, it’s just on a larger and grander scale, and the stakes are higher (no pun intended).

After sharing the reality that leaders are mortal men with frailties and deficiencies, he then says, “But this we know. There are councils and counselors and quorums to counterbalance the foibles and frailties of man. The Lord organized His church to provide for mortal men to work as mortal men, and yet He assured that the spirit of revelation would guide in all that we do in His name.”

I’ve been privileged to work in councils and as counselors and in quorums. I’ve seen this work in real time at the ward and stake level. I’ve seen it where a president of an organization is sick and a counselor steps up to lead out until the president is better. We’ve seen it where the President of the Church becomes extremely frail and the counselors in the First Presidency preside at General Conference and do all the administrative things that are necessary. Much more could be said on this topic. There was a time in Church history when both the president of the Church and his two counselors were ailing and they called a third counselor: Elder Gordon B. Hinckley. That call came to President Kimball via revelation.

Elder Packer gives his witness and testimony as to the reality of revelation. “We know His voice when He speaks.” His is an Apostolic witness of Jesus Christ.

He concludes on this bold but simple statement of witness: “Revelation continues with us today. **The promptings of the Spirit, the dreams, and the visions and the visitations, and the ministering of angels all are with us now.** And the still, small voice of the Holy

Ghost 'is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path' (Ps. 119:105). Of that I bear witness, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

Here he explicitly states that dreams, visions, visitations, and the ministering of angels all take place in the Church today, in addition to the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost. My witness is the same, I've had my own revelations that have made it clear to me that God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ are real, that the Church is the kingdom of God on the earth, that the Book of Mormon is truly Another Testament of Jesus Christ. And that prophets and apostles walk the earth today. Our current prophet has been bold in declaring the reality of revelation and in fact, has boldly invited all of us to "hear Him!" May you and I continue to seek to do so.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Micah's Thoughts:

I wanted to end tonight with some quotes and warnings taken from "Many Are Called; Few Aren't Swept" as well as The Macro Last-day Timeline that hopefully will make it crystal clear the time we are living in.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:16-18

16 Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them.

17 But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves.

18 And those who swear falsely against my servants, that *they might bring them into bondage and death*—

Doctrine and Covenants 109:29-32

29 We ask thee, Holy Father, to confound, and astonish, and to bring to shame and confusion, *all those who have spread lying reports abroad, over the world, against thy servant or servants*, if they will not repent, when the everlasting gospel shall be proclaimed in their ears;

30 And that all their works may be brought to naught, and be *swept away by the hail, and by the judgments which thou wilt send upon them in thine anger*, that there may be an end to lyings and slanders against thy people.

31 For thou knowest, O Lord, that *thy servants have been innocent* before thee in bearing record of thy name, for which they have suffered these things.

32 Therefore we *plead before thee for a full and complete deliverance from under this yoke*

Heber C. Kimball First Counselor in the First Presidency, May 1868, in Deseret News, 23 May 1931; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1930, p. 58-59

... the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night *until deliverance comes*.

Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.

TPJS Section Four 1839-42, p.156: Do Not Betray the Brethren

O ye Twelve! and all Saints! profit by this important Key--that in all your trials, troubles, temptations, afflictions, bonds, imprisonments and death, see to it, that you do not betray heaven; that you do not betray Jesus Christ; that you do not betray the brethren; that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man in this world or that which is to come. Yea, in all your kicking and flounderings, see to it that you do not this thing, lest innocent blood be found upon your skirts, and you go down to hell. All other sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, and proving a traitor to the brethren.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:19

19 Wo unto them; because they have offended my little ones *they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house*.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:21-23

21 They shall not have right to the priesthood, nor their posterity after them from generation to generation.

22 *It had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and they drowned in the depth of the sea.*

23 Wo unto all those that discomfort my people, and drive, and murder, and testify against them, saith the Lord of Hosts; a generation of vipers shall not escape the damnation of hell.

Matthew 18:5–10. A Warning Not to Offend Little Ones

Though Jesus was speaking to leaders of His day when He issued a stern warning not to offend little ones, the message recorded in Matthew 18:5–10 applies to all of us (see D&C 50:40–41 for a broader definition of “little children”). We must not cause anyone seeking greater understanding of the gospel plan to stumble in their faith, nor should we do anything to block their progress toward eternal life. Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught about this warning:

“Few crimes are as gross and wicked as that of teaching false doctrine and leading souls away from God and salvation. ... If eternal joy is the reward given those who teach the truth and bring souls to salvation, shall not those who teach false doctrines and lead souls to damnation receive as their reward eternal remorse? (D. & C. 18:10–16.)

“... *It is better to die and be denied the blessings of continued mortal existence than to live and lead souls from the truth, thereby gaining eternal damnation for oneself*” (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:420).

Doctrine and Covenants 121:24-25

24 Behold, *mine eyes see and know all their works*, and I have in reserve a *swift judgment* in the season thereof, for them all;

25 For there is a time appointed for every man, according as his works shall be.

2 Nephi 27:24-27

24 And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

25 Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—

26 Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, *for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid*.

27 *And wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord! And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?* And they also say: Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay. But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works. For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

2 Nephi 28:9-10

9 ...and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

10 And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.

Doctrine and Covenants 112:23-26

23 Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt *before my face*.

24 Behold, *vengeance cometh speedily* upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; *and as a whirlwind it shall come* upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.

25 And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;

26 *First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.*

Brothers and Sisters, my prayer, my warning, is to always follow the prophet of God, to understand the “rights of revelation”, to understand the “keys of the kingdom”... We must seek the Lord to establish his righteousness, and cease from every man walking in his own way, and after the image of his own god, for such shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall, (D&C 1) in the name of Jesus Christ, amen!