

STUDY GUIDE – RECEIVING PERSONAL REVELATION

Quotes & Insights – Compiled by Laura M. Brotherson, July 2022



KEY CONCEPTS

- *Be generally worthy (not perfect), actively seek personal revelation, wait upon the Lord and trust that He is guiding you.*
- *Create “quiet time” in your life where the Lord can speak to your heart and mind.*
- *Trust that the Lord is already giving personal revelation through the good ideas and efforts you are making.*
- *Be willing to take revelation in small pieces.*
- *Be willing to wait on the Lord’s timing.*
- *Keep a mindset of “I’m listening” throughout your day.*
- *Watch for a feeling of peace as an answer.*

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**If you are living right and it persuades you to do good that is the Spirit guiding you.** “In answer to the question ‘How do we recognize the promptings of the Spirit?’ President Gordon B. Hinckley read Moroni 7:13, 16–17 and then said: ‘That’s the test, when all is said and done. Does it persuade one to do good, to rise, to stand tall, to do the right thing, to be kind, to be generous? Then it is of the Spirit of God. ... If it invites to do good, it is of God. If it inviteth to do evil, it is of the devil. ... And if you are doing the right thing and if you are living the right way, you will know in your heart what the Spirit is saying to you. ... You recognize the promptings of the Spirit by the fruits of the Spirit—that which enlighteneth, that which buildeth up, that which is positive and affirmative and uplifting and leads us to better thoughts and better words and better deeds is of the Spirit of God.’”<sup>1</sup>

**Trust in the Lord and your best judgment when specific answers don’t come.** “[A person may have] a strong desire to be led by the Spirit of the Lord but ... unwisely extends that desire to the point of wanting to be led in all things. A desire to be led by the Lord is a strength, but it needs to be accompanied by an understanding that our Heavenly Father leaves many decisions for our personal choices. Personal decision making is one of the sources of the growth we are meant to experience in mortality. ... We should study things out in our minds, using the reasoning powers our Creator has placed within us. Then we should pray for guidance and act upon it if we receive it. If we do not receive guidance, we should act upon our best judgment.”<sup>2</sup>

**Do your best. Trust in the Lord and have confidence that He is with you.** “In many of the uncertainties and challenges we encounter in our lives, God requires us to do our best, to act and not be acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:26), and to trust in Him. We may not see angels, hear heavenly voices, or receive overwhelming spiritual impressions. We frequently may press forward hoping and praying—but without absolute assurance—that we are acting in accordance with God’s will. But as we honor our covenants and keep the commandments, as we strive ever more consistently to do good and to become better, we can walk with the confidence that God will guide our steps. And we can speak with the assurance that God will inspire our utterances. This is in part the meaning of the scripture that declares, ‘Then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God’ (D&C 121:45).”<sup>3</sup>

**When I don’t receive an answer, or I just get a little at a time.** “In my life I have learned that sometimes I do not receive an answer to a prayer because the Lord knows I am not ready. When He does answer, it is often ‘here a little and there a little’ [2 Nephi 28:30] because that is all that I can bear or all I am willing to do.”<sup>4</sup>

**Trust that the Lord is guiding you along even if you don’t feel a specific answer.** “What do you do when you have prepared carefully, have prayed fervently, waited a reasonable time for a response, and still do not feel an answer? You may want to express thanks when that occurs, for it is an evidence of His trust. When you are living worthily and your choice is consistent with the Savior’s teachings and you need to act, proceed with trust. ... When you are living righteously and are acting with trust, God will not let you proceed too far without a warning impression if you have made the wrong decision.”<sup>5</sup>

**Create a climate for revelation rather than trying to force it.** “You cannot force spiritual things. Such words as compel, coerce, constrain, pressure, demand, do not describe our privileges with the Spirit. You can no more force the Spirit to respond than you can force a bean to sprout, or an egg to hatch before its time. You can create a climate to foster growth, nourish, and protect; but you cannot force or compel: you must await the growth.”<sup>6</sup>

**It's a step-by-step process.** “Often when we pray for help with a significant matter, Heavenly Father will give us gentle promptings that require us to think, exercise faith, work, at times struggle, then act. It is a step-by-step process that enables us to discern inspired answers.”<sup>7</sup>

**Answers come in pieces requiring faith and personal growth.** “Seldom will you receive a complete response all at once. It will come a piece at a time, in packets, so that you will grow in capacity. As each piece is followed in faith, you will be led to other portions until you have the whole answer. That pattern requires you to exercise faith in our Father’s capacity to respond. While sometimes it’s very hard, it results in significant personal growth.”<sup>8</sup>

**Answers come in God’s time during quiet moments.** “He will always hear your prayers and will invariably answer them. However, His answers will seldom come while you are on your knees praying, even when you may plead for an immediate response. Rather, He will prompt you in quiet moments when the Spirit can most effectively touch your mind and heart. Hence, you should find periods of quiet time to recognize when you are being instructed and strengthened. His pattern causes you to grow.”<sup>9</sup>

**Answers come in a mild whisper.** “The voice of the Spirit is described in the scripture as being neither ‘loud’ nor ‘harsh.’ It is ‘not a voice of thunder, neither ... voice of a great tumultuous noise.’ But rather, ‘a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper,’ and it can ‘pierce even to the very soul’ and ‘cause [the heart] to burn.’ (3 Ne. 11:3; Hel. 5:30; Doctrine and Covenants 85:6–7.) The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all.”<sup>10</sup>

#### **Patterns of Light: 3 Ways We Receive His Light**<sup>11</sup>

1. **Light switch.** Darkness is expelled and light comes quickly. Messages may come quickly and rather dramatically. Less common form of revelation.
2. **Sunrise.** Light comes gradually “line upon line” in small increments over time according to our desire, worthiness, and preparation. Sometimes “not knowing” beforehand the things which [we] should do (1 Nephi 4:6). Darkness is replaced by light. More common form of revelation. “I did enlighten thy mind; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou hast been enlightened by the Spirit of truth” (D&C 6:14–15).
3. **Foggy day.** It’s not clear but you can see enough to take just a few steps into the darkness and the light continues to help you see just far enough ahead to press forward. Maybe most common form of revelation.

**Answers often come as a feeling of peace.** “Oliver Cowdery was taught another way in which positive answers come: ‘Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter?’ (D&C 6:23). The feeling of peace is the most common confirming witness that I personally experience. When I have been very concerned about an important matter, struggling to resolve it without success, I continued those efforts in faith. Later, an all-pervading peace has come, settling my concerns, as He has promised.”<sup>12</sup>

**We must actively seek and listen.** “Occasionally [the Spirit] will press just firmly enough for us to pay heed. But most of the time, if we do not heed the gentle feeling, the Spirit will withdraw and wait until we come seeking and listening and say in our manner and expression, like Samuel of ancient times, ‘Speak [Lord], for thy servant heareth.’ (1 Sam. 3:10).”<sup>13</sup>

**Practice making note of the promptings you receive.** “Some years ago I remember asking my father-in-law, a seasoned bishop, about a three-by-five-inch card he always carried in his shirt pocket. His reply was that at times he felt impressions or promptings. He then liked to pull out that card and write down those feelings, whenever they came. And then he tried to act upon them as quickly as possible. It is humbling to consider that the still, small voice is always there for us, teaching us what to do and where to go. The Lord tells us that when the promptings are heeded, often more are given. If we do not follow them, the promptings eventually diminish.”<sup>14</sup>

**Personal revelation must be accompanied by our own thought and study.** “I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right. But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me” (Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–9).

**Seeking answers isn’t like ordering groceries.** “The trouble with most of our prayers is that we give them as if we were picking up the telephone and ordering groceries—we place our order and hang up. We need to meditate, contemplate, think of what we are praying about and for and then speak to the Lord as one man speaketh to another.”<sup>15</sup>

**Receiving revelation shouldn’t be just for emergencies.** “If prayer is only a spasmodic cry at the time of crisis, then it is utterly selfish, and we come to think of God as a repairman or a service agency to help us only in our emergencies. We should remember the Most High day and night—always—not only at times when all other assistance has failed and we desperately need help.”<sup>16</sup>

**Divine inspiration will align with scriptures and living prophets.** “As you pray for inspiration, you should also confirm your feelings. For example, compare your decisions with the scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets.”<sup>17</sup>

**Revelation will be within your stewardship.** “If worthy, we are entitled to receive revelations for ourselves, parents for their children, and members of the Church in their callings. But the right of revelation for others does not extend beyond our own stewardship.”<sup>18</sup>

### How We Can Recognize the Spirit in Our Lives<sup>19</sup>

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| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 6:23</a> ; <a href="#">11:12–14</a> ; <a href="#">Romans 15:13</a> ; <a href="#">Galatians 5:22–23</a> | Gives feelings of love, joy, peace, patience, meekness, gentleness, faith, and hope. |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3</a>                                                                                              | Gives ideas in the mind, feelings in the heart.                                      |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 128:1</a>                                                                                              | Occupies the mind and presses on the feelings.                                       |
| <a href="#">Joseph Smith—History 1:11–12</a>                                                                                              | Helps scriptures have strong effect.                                                 |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 9:8–9</a>                                                                                              | Gives good feelings to teach if something is true.                                   |
| <a href="#">Alma 32:28</a> ; <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 6:14–15</a> ; <a href="#">1 Corinthians 2:9–11</a>                        | Enlightens the mind.                                                                 |
| <a href="#">Alma 19:6</a>                                                                                                                 | Replaces darkness with light.                                                        |
| <a href="#">Mosiah 5:2–5</a>                                                                                                              | Strengthens the desire to avoid evil and obey the commandments.                      |
| <a href="#">John 14:26</a>                                                                                                                | Teaches truth and brings it to remembrance.                                          |
| <a href="#">John 14:27</a>                                                                                                                | Gives feelings of peace and comfort.                                                 |
| <a href="#">John 16:13</a>                                                                                                                | Guides to truth and shows things to come.                                            |
| <a href="#">Moroni 10:5</a>                                                                                                               | Reveals truth.                                                                       |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 45:57</a>                                                                                              | Guides and protects from deception.                                                  |
| <a href="#">2 Nephi 31:18</a> ; <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 20:27</a> ; <a href="#">John 16:14</a>                                 | Glorifies and bears record of God the Father and Jesus Christ.                       |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 42:16</a> ; <a href="#">84:85</a> ; <a href="#">100:5–8</a> ; <a href="#">Luke 12:11–12</a>            | Guides the words of humble teachers.                                                 |

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| <a href="#">John 16:8</a>                                                                                                                                                  | Recognizes and corrects sin.                           |
| <a href="#">Moroni 10:8–17</a> ; <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 46:8–26</a> ; <a href="#">1 Corinthians 12</a>                                                         | Gives gifts of the Spirit.                             |
| <a href="#">Alma 10:17</a> ; <a href="#">12:3</a> ; <a href="#">18:16, 20, 32, 35</a> ; <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 63:41</a>                                       | Helps to perceive or discern the thoughts of others.   |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 46:30</a> ; <a href="#">50:29–30</a>                                                                                                    | Tells what to pray for.                                |
| <a href="#">2 Nephi 32:1–5</a> ; <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 28:15</a>                                                                                              | Tells what to do.                                      |
| <a href="#">1 Nephi 10:22</a> ; <a href="#">Alma 18:35</a>                                                                                                                 | Helps the righteous speak with power and authority.    |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 21:9</a> ; <a href="#">100:8</a> ; <a href="#">John 15:26</a>                                                                           | Testifies of the truth.                                |
| <a href="#">2 Nephi 31:17</a> ; <a href="#">Alma 13:12</a> ; <a href="#">3 Nephi 27:20</a>                                                                                 | Sanctifies and brings remission of sins.               |
| <a href="#">1 Nephi 2:16–17</a> ; <a href="#">2 Nephi 33:1</a> ; <a href="#">Alma 24:8</a>                                                                                 | Carries truth to the heart of the listener.            |
| <a href="#">1 Nephi 1:1–3</a> ; <a href="#">Exodus 31:3–5</a>                                                                                                              | Enhances skills and abilities.                         |
| <a href="#">1 Nephi 7:15</a> ; <a href="#">2 Nephi 28:1</a> ; <a href="#">32:7</a> ; <a href="#">Alma 14:11</a> ; <a href="#">Mormon 3:16</a> ; <a href="#">Ether 12:2</a> | Constrains (impels forward) or restrains (holds back). |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 50:13–22</a>                                                                                                                            | Edifies both teacher and students.                     |
| <a href="#">Doctrine and Covenants 88:3</a> ; <a href="#">John 14:26</a>                                                                                                   | Gives comfort.                                         |

## Other Resources

- [How Do I Receive Personal Revelation?](#)
- [How Do I Recognize and Understand the Spirit?](#) (Preach My Gospel)
- [Elder David A. Bednar: Living in Revelation](#) (All In Podcast)

<sup>1</sup> Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley, 260–61.

<sup>2</sup> President Dallin H. Oaks, “Our Strengths Can Become Our Downfall,” Ensign, Oct. 1994, 13–14.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2011/04/the-spirit-of-revelation?lang=eng>

<sup>4</sup> Robert D. Hales, “Waiting upon the Lord: Thy Will Be Done,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2011, 73.

<sup>5</sup> Richard G. Scott, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2007, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Boyd K. Packer, “The Candle of the Lord,” 53.

<sup>7</sup> Richard G. Scott, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2007, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Richard G. Scott, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2007, 10.

<sup>9</sup> Richard G. Scott, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2007, 10.

<sup>10</sup> President Boyd K. Packer, “The Candle of the Lord,” Ensign, Jan. 1983, 53.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2011/04/the-spirit-of-revelation?lang=eng>

<sup>12</sup> Richard G. Scott, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2007, 10.

<sup>13</sup> President Boyd K. Packer, “The Candle of the Lord,” Ensign, Jan. 1983, 53.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2002/04/being-teachable?lang=eng>

<sup>15</sup> Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Gordon B. Hinckley [2016], 114.

<sup>16</sup> Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter [2015], 80.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service/how-do-i-recognize-and-understand-the-spirit.title7?lang=eng#title7#title7>

<sup>18</sup> President James E. Faust, “Communion With The Holy Spirit,” Ensign, Mar. 2002, 4.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service/how-do-i-recognize-and-understand-the-spirit.title7?lang=eng#title7#title7>