**ohn Whitmer**

Permit me, to say a few things, respecting the proceedings of some of those who were disciples…

Some had visions and could not tell what they saw. Some would fancy to themselves that they had the sword of Laban, and would wield it as expert as a light dragoon, some would act like an Indian in the act of scalping, some would slide or scoot on the floor, with the rapidity of a serpent, which [represented] sailing in the boat to the Lamanites, preaching the gospel. And many other vain and foolish maneuvers, that are unmeaning, and unprofitable to mention. Thus the devil blinded the eyes of some good and honest disciples. I write these things to show how ignorant and undiscerning children are and how easy mankind is led astray notwithstanding the things of God that are written, concerning his kingdom.

These things grieved the servants of the Lord, and some conversed together on this subject, and others came in and we were at Joseph Smith Jr. the Seers, and made it a matter of consultation, for many would not turn from their folly, unless God would give a revelation, therefore, the Lord spoke to Joseph saying: (See D&C 50.) (*The Book of John Whitmer,* typescript, [Provo: BYU Archives and Manuscripts], chap. 6)

**Parley P. Pratt**

After [preaching to the Shakers] I paid a visit to the churches round about Kirtland.

As I went forth among the different branches, some very strange spiritual operations were manifested, which were disgusting, rather than edifying. Some persons would seem to swoon away, and make unseemly gestures, and be drawn or disfigured in their countenances. Others would fall into ecstacies, and be drawn into contortions, cramp, fits, etc. Others would seem to have visions and revelations, which were not edifying, and which were not congenial to the doctrine and spirit of the gospel. In short, a false and lying spirit seemed to be creeping into the Church.

All these things were new and strange to me, and had originated in the Church during our absence, and previous to the arrival of President Joseph Smith from New York.

Feeling our weakness and inexperience, and lest we should err in judgment concerning these spiritual phenomena, myself, John Murdock, and several other Elders, went to Joseph Smith, and asked him to inquire of the Lord concerning these spirits or manifestations.

After we had joined in prayer in his translating room, he dictated in our presence the following revelation: [D&C 50] Each sentence was uttered slowly and very distinctly, and with a pause between each, sufficiently long for it to be recorded, by an ordinary writer, in long hand.

This was the manner in which all his written revelations were dictated and written. There was never any hesitation, reviewing, or reading back, in order to keep the run of the subject; neither did any of these communications undergo revisions, interlinings, or corrections. As he dictated them so they stood, so far as I have witnessed; and I was present to witness the dictation of several communications of several pages each. (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt,* edited by his son, Parley P. Pratt [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 47-48.)

**DC 50:2 there are many spirits which are false spirits, which have gone forth in the earth**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

These false spirits make themselves manifest in various ways and in all communities. Some of the most startling and prevalent forms of false manifestations are in the false gifts of tongues, and in religious meetings particularly among some sects, where the worshippers fall in fits, shout, sing and pray in disorderly fashion, sometimes frothing at the mouth and their bodies partaking of unnatural contortions. This influence of the devil entered into the Church in an early day and had to be rebuked by the Prophet for such unseemly conduct was prevalent in that day among many religious groups and some of the Saints were deceived in thinking this disorderly conduct was a manifestation of the Spirit of the Lord. lt was to correct this evil and to warn the Saints against all false spirits, whether of men or of devils, that this revelation (Sec. 50) was given. (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949], 1: 183.)

**Boyd K. Packer**

Now, young people, pay attention! Before I say another word about personal revelation, I must tell you so that you cannot possibly misunderstand: “There are many spirits which are false spirits.” There can be counterfeit revelations, promptings from the devil, temptations! As long as you live, in one way or another the adversary will try to lead you astray.

“For after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.”

The **Prophet Joseph Smith** said that “nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit when they think they have the Spirit of God.”

The seventh chapter of Moroni in the Book of Mormon tells you how to test spiritual promptings. Read it carefully—over and over.

By trial, and some error, you will learn to heed these promptings.

If ever you receive a prompting to do something that makes you feel uneasy, something you know in your mind to be wrong and contrary to the principles of righteousness, do not respond to it! (“Personal Revelation: The Gift, the Test, and the Promise,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 61)

**DC 50:3 Satan hath sought to deceive you, that he might overthrow you**

**Dallin H. Oaks**

Satan gives revelations to deceive the children of men… our protection is in following the order of the Church on who should receive revelation for what subject. In this, both men and women have equal responsibility to follow the duly ordained leaders of the church who have the obligation to lead and, on occasion, to correct.

Early in the second year of the Church, the Lord revealed that “there are many spirits which are false spirits, which have gone forth in the earth, deceiving the world.” (D&C 50:2.) The revelation on spiritual gifts tells the elders who were going forth on missions to be righteous and prayerful “that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils.” (D&C 46:7.)

Other revelations give instructions that help priesthood leaders discern the spirits and avoid being deceived. Thus, in section 52 of the Doctrine and Covenants we read that “he that speaketh, whose spirit is contrite, whose language is meek and edifieth, the same is of God if he obey mine ordinances.” (D&C 52:16.) In contrast, “he that is overcome and bringeth not forth fruits, even according to this pattern, is not of me.” (D&C 52:18.)… As the Lord said: “That which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness.” (D&C 50:23; see also D&C 50:30–35; T*eachings*, pp. 203–4.) (“Spiritual Gifts,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 72)

**DC 50:7 there are hypocrites among you**

“The Greek word *hypocrites,* usually translated ‘hypocrite,’ actually means ‘actor’ or ‘role-player.’ A hypocrite in the classical sense is someone who pretends to beliefs and standards that he or she does not really hold or try to live. One may generally encounter more than one type of true hypocrisy in the Church; some of these are malicious and some are not. At least two types of hypocrisy constitute a real hazard to the endurance of faithful Saints: the oxymormons and the role-players.

“*Type 1: Oxymormons.*Most people know what an oxymoron is. It is a term whose component parts deny or contradict each other, like ‘jumbo shrimp,’ ‘criminal innocence,’ or ‘true lies.’ Oxymormons are Church members whose theology does this same thing. Often their true feelings and their stated feelings are not the same, so they end up maintaining mutually contradictory propositions… we have in the Church some who would become a ‘new’ kind of Latter-day Saint by denying the definitive tenets of the faith: that Jesus is the Christ, that the Church is true, that Joseph Smith is a prophet, that the Book of Mormon is a true account. These are the oxymormons, and they don't want to leave the Church. They want to *change* it…

“*Type 2: Role-players.* The other type of hypocrisy we encounter from time to time in the Church is the more passive variety I call ‘role-playing.’ Most role-players are not malicious; they just want to stay in the Church even though they don't believe in it. But even these casual hypocrites do more damage than they know. For example, several years ago, I bore strong witness to one of my classes that living the gospel could make anyone's home a little bit of heaven on earth. After class one student waited until all the others had gone and then asked me quietly, ‘Are you lying to us, or are you telling the truth? Can a family really be that way, or is it all just a fairy tale? I need to know.’ I asked her why she would ask such a question, and she responded, ‘My family are all very active in the Church; we are the `ideal LDS family.` All my life I have watched my parents create and maintain that appearance of faithfulness. Mom is the `indispensable woman` in our ward, and Dad serves on the high council—but it is all a lie; it's just a role they play until they get home. My brother and I call it `playing church.` We look like an `ideal LDS family` on the outside, but on the inside there is nothing. We do not have family prayer or family home evening. My parents neither love nor respect each other, and our home is not heaven. I can't wait to leave and get away from all the contention and hypocrisy. For years I have believed that all LDS families were like mine and that `living the gospel` meant to everyone else what it means to me—just `playing church.` I have just assumed that everybody else was playing the same role and creating the same illusion and telling the same lie—and now you are telling me that for some people it's *not* an illusion and *not* a lie?’ At that point she began to weep. ‘I would give anything to have a family like the one you describe, but can it really be like that, or are you just feeding us the same old stuff?’ I took her hands in mine and looked her straight in the eye: ‘I testify to you, on my honor, that I speak the truth. The gospel is true, and its blessings are real to those who will live it. It's not just a comforting fairy tale; it is true.’

“This young woman had been greatly wounded by role-playing parents, and her ability to believe the promises of the gospel had been impaired as a result. Unfortunately, there are many role-players in the Church, and they usually wound those around them in this same way, though they probably have no intention of doing so…

“If you have been injured or disillusioned by exposure to role-players in the Church, know that the vast majority of members are not such. Endurance requires that we maintain our conviction of the truth even if some others think of the Church as an inside joke. Do not let your testimony or your endurance be diminished by those about whom the Lord has said: ‘Wo unto them that are deceivers and hypocrites, for, thus saith the Lord, I will bring them to judgment. Behold, verily I say unto you, there are hypocrites among you, who have deceived some, which has given the adversary power; but behold such shall be reclaimed; but the hypocrites shall be detected and shall be cut off, either in life or in death’ (D&C 50:6-8).” (Stephen E. Robinson, *Following Christ: The Parable of the Divers and More Good News* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1995], 120-124.)

**Gerald N. Lund**

No one likes to think that they are actually part of that group defined by the Lord as “the wicked.” But the Lord makes it clear that some of those so defined are found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (*The Coming of the Lord*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971], 70.)

**Joseph Smith**

I love that man better who swears a stream as long as my arm yet deals justice to his neighbors and mercifully deals his substance to the poor, than the long, smooth-faced hypocrite. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* 303.)

**DC 50:8 the hypocrites shall be detected and shall be cut off**

Some hypocrites will be detected in this life, others in the next. Yet, none of them will endure the Second Coming. The church must first be cleansed of their leavening influence before the Millenial peace can prevail.

   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.

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

   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. (DC 112:24-26)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

I look forward to that cleansing; its need within the Church is becoming increasingly apparent. (*God, Family, Country: Our Three Great Loyalties*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], 254.)

**DC 50:9 Wherefore let every man beware lest he do that which is not in truth and righteousness**

**Joseph B. Wirthlin**

If we practice guile in small matters, we soon can find ourselves entangled in an ever-increasing, unending spiral, because each lie or other deception often requires a larger one to cover the first. Moreover, the practice of guile often leads to hypocrisy, which is the false pretense of virtue or righteousness and pretending to be something that we are not. If we know what is right and profess to live by that knowledge but, in fact, do not, we are hypocrites. The Savior denounced hypocrites in unmistakable language. He declared:

   Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of … all uncleanness.

   Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity (Matt. 23:27–28).

To the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord revealed: “Wo unto them that are deceivers and hypocrites, for, thus saith the Lord, I will bring them to judgment. …

“[They] shall be detected and shall be cut off, … and wo unto them who are cut off from my church, for the same are overcome of the world” (D&C 50:6, 8).

What are the Latter-day Saints to do? The answer is plain. The Saints are to be absolutely without guile in every aspect of their lives: in their homes and families, Church callings, all business dealings, and, especially, the private and personal parts of their lives into which only they and the Lord see.

I suggest that we look into our hearts and see whether our motives and actions are pure and above reproach and to see whether we are free of deceit and fraud. (“Without Guile,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 82)

**DC 50:11 Let us reason even as a man reasoneth one with another**

**Neal A. Maxwell**

“Clearly the Lord uses questions for His teaching purposes: “Let us reason. . . with one another. . . that you may understand. . . wherefore, I the Lord ask you. . . this question” (D&C 50:11-13). Of many of His inquiries he might well say to us too, “Answer this question yourselves” (D&C 50:16). His questions are always deep in their implications; for instance, “Unto what were ye ordained?” He desires that we “answer” such questions so that we work through all the implications. Think of it: Our Lord, who has created many worlds besides this one, having the patience and the love required to engage in such tutorials with seemingly insignificant individuals on this obscure planet at the edge of an ordinary sized galaxy!

“Some of the special exchanges pile questions upon questions, all to the end that the Lord can more fully teach responsive persons. It is a mark not only of the Lord's love and patience but also of His long-suffering toward the learners. These tutorials show the Savior as the Master Teacher. He is always anxious to share more with us, as soon as we are ready.” (*Men and Women of Christ*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991], 111.)

**DC 50:13-14 unto what were ye ordained?  To preach my gospel by the Spirit**

**Bruce R. McConkie**

[The Lord asks:] “What is your commission? What have I empowered you to do? What authorization have you received from me?”

Answer: “To preach my gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter which was sent forth to teach the truth” (D&C 50:14).

That is: “Your commission, your authorization, the thing you have been ordained to do is to teach my gospel, not any private views, not the philosophies of the world, but my everlasting gospel, and to do it by the power of my Spirit, all in harmony with the commandment.” (*Teaching, No Greater Call*, 9)

**Loren C. Dunn**

Teaching the gospel by the Spirit, then, is the first responsibility of every Church teacher. The world, teaching according to the precepts of men, simply exchanges interesting information or additional facts. But when one teaches by the Spirit, it is a different experience—he speaks to the souls of those who listen. The speaker and the listener are edified and enlightened. There is an inner feeling of joy and of wanting to live better.

There are a number of ways a Church teacher can prepare. Among these are to enroll in the teacher training course and to follow the suggestions and helps found in each of the Church manuals. Yet, a teacher’s most important preparation is spiritual, and this must be done on an individual basis.

We are told, “If ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach.” (D&C 42:14.) This can be applied in two ways. First, in order to answer a call to teach the gospel, we must be baptized and have conferred upon us the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is the source of truth. Second, we must live and act and pray so that gift of the Spirit can come alive in our lives which, in turn, will edify or uplift us and those whom we have been called to teach. In confirmation of this, the Lord, in answer to the question, “Unto what were ye ordained?” answered, “To preach my gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter which was sent forth to teach the truth.” (D&C 50:13–14.)

This seems to be the scriptural commission for all teaching in the Church. (“Teaching by the Power of the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1984, 8-10)

**DC 50:15 then ye received spirits which ye could not understand, and received them to be of God**

**Joseph Smith**

Who can drag into daylight and develop the hidden mysteries of the false spirits that so frequently are made manifest among the Latter-day Saints? We answer that no man can do this without the Priesthood, and having a knowledge of the laws by which spirits are governed;… no man knows the things of God, but by the Spirit of God…

A man must have the discerning of spirits before he can drag into daylight this hellish influence and unfold it unto the world in all its soul-destroying, diabolical, and horrid colors; for nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit when they think they have the Spirit of God. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 205.)

**DC 50:17-18 doth he preach it by the spirit of truth or some other way**

**Jeffrey R. Holland**

Do we teach the gospel “by the Spirit of truth?” He has inquired. Or do we teach it “some other way? And if it be by some other way,” He warns, “it is not of God.”  In language echoing other commandments, He has said, “If ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach.”

No eternal learning can take place without that quickening of the Spirit from heaven. So, parents, teachers, and leaders, we must face our tasks the way Moses faced the promised land. Knowing he could not succeed any other way, Moses said to Jehovah, “If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.”

That is what our members really want when they gather in a meeting or come into a classroom anyway. Most people don’t come to church looking merely for a few new gospel facts or to see old friends, though all of that is important. They come seeking a spiritual experience. They want peace. They want their faith fortified and their hope renewed. They want, in short, to be nourished by the good word of God, to be strengthened by the powers of heaven. Those of us who are called upon to speak or teach or lead have an obligation to help provide that, as best we possibly can. We can only do that if we ourselves are striving to know God, if we ourselves are continually seeking the light of His Only Begotten Son. Then, if our hearts are right, if we are as clean as we can be, if we have prayed and wept and prepared and worried until we don’t know what more we can do, God can say to us as He did to Alma and the sons of Mosiah: “Lift up thy head and rejoice. … I will give unto you success.” (“A Teacher Come from God,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 26)

**Spencer W. Kimball**

The Savior charged us with feeding his sheep. (See John 21:15–17.) I fear at times that all too often many of our members come to church, sit through a class or meeting, and then return home having been largely uninformed. It is especially unfortunate if this happens at a time when they may be entering a period of stress, temptation, or personal or family crisis. We all need to be touched and nurtured by the Spirit, and effective teaching is one of the most important ways this can happen. (“Rendering Service to Others,” *Ensign*, May 1981, 45)

**DC 50:18 if it be by some other way it is not of God**

“Many topics are interesting, important, and even relevant to life and yet not nourishing to the soul. It is not our commission to teach such topics. Instead, we are to edify others and teach them principles that pertain to the kingdom of God and the salvation of mankind.

“Teaching that stimulates the intellect without speaking to the spirit cannot nourish. Nor can anything that raises doubts about the truth of the restored gospel or the need to commit ourselves to it with all our heart, might, mind, and strength.

“**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** counseled: ‘Teach the doctrines of salvation; supply spiritual food; bear testimony of our Lord’s divine Sonship—anything short of such a course is unworthy of a true minister who has been called by revelation. Only when the Church is fed the bread of life are its members kept in paths of righteousness’ (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966-73], 2:178).” (*Teaching, No Greater Call*, p. 5)

**Dallin H. Oaks**

Of course, we may ignore these directions and seek to teach the gospel to our children or to investigators by the world’s way of study and reason, independent of the witness and teaching of the Spirit. But the results are not the same. If we deviate from the Lord’s way, we relinquish the Lord’s promises. (“Nourishing the Spirit,”*Ensign*, Dec. 1998, 9)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

If you teach the word of truth—now note, you’re saying what is true, every thing you say is accurate and right—by some other way than the Spirit, it is not of God. Now what is the other way to teach than by the Spirit? Well, obviously, it is by the power of the intellect.

Suppose I came here tonight and delivered a great message on teaching, and I did it by the power of the intellect without any of the Spirit of God attending. Suppose that every word that I said was true, no error whatever, but it was an intellectual presentation. This revelation says: “If it be by some other way it is not of God” (D&C 50:18).

That is, God did not present the message through me because I used the power of the intellect instead of the power of the Spirit. Intellectual things—reason and logic—can do some good, and they can prepare the way, and they can get the mind ready to receive the Spirit under certain circumstances. But conversion comes and the truth sinks into the hearts of people only when it is taught by the power of the Spirit. (Dallin H. Oaks, “Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 8)

**DC 50:19 he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the Spirit of truth?**

**Lynn A. Mickelsen**

How can we know the truth? The early members of the Church brought with them many customs, traditions, and practices from their earlier beliefs. Not all of these practices conformed to the will of the Lord. In a revelation given in May 1831, He explained to the elders of the Church how to discern and decide which of these practices were appropriate. He referred to both sides of the issue of teaching and receiving. Not only must we teach by the Spirit, we must receive by the Spirit.

   And again, he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

   If it be some other way it is not of God. (D&C 50:19–20.)

If we do not receive the truth by His spirit, it is not His word. In a latter-day revelation the Lord speaks very strongly about those who get on the wrong side of the question:

   Verily, verily, I say unto you, that Satan has great hold upon their hearts; he stirreth them up to iniquity against that which is good; …

   And they love darkness rather than light, … therefore they will not ask of me. (D&C 10:20–21.) (“What Is Truth?” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 27)

**DC 50:21 he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The Spirit of God speaking to the spirit of man has power to impart truth with greater effect and understanding than the truth can be imparted by personal contact even with heavenly beings. Through the Holy Ghost the truth is woven into the very fibre and sinews of the body so that it cannot be forgotten. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:47-48)

**DC 50:22 he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another**

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

As we keep the Lord’s commandment to introduce others to the gospel, I testify that the Spirit of the Lord helps overcome the differences between him who is teaching and him who is being taught. The Lord made the process clear when he said, “Wherefore, he that preacheth [by the Spirit] and he that receiveth [by the Spirit],understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together.” (D&C 50:22.)

I am satisfied that the most effective means each of us has in our calling to share the gospel is the Spirit of the Lord. We have all seen it in others. As we do the Lord’s work, we have also sensed it in ourselves. On such occasions, superficial differences between us and those we teach seem to fall like scales from our eyes. (See 2 Ne. 30:6.) A warmth of kinship and understanding emerges which is marvelous to behold. We literally understand one another, and we literally are edified and rejoice together. (“We Have a Work to Do,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1988, 6)

**DC 50:22 both are edified and rejoice together**

**Loren C. Dunn**

To teach by the Spirit is not just a matter of telling inspirational stories or relaying experiences that appeal to the emotions. It is much more than this. In fact, some might confuse an emotional appeal with the gentle working of the Holy Spirit, but they are not necessarily the same. The quiet, peaceful confirmation that comes into one’s heart as he is being taught by a faithful teacher may not be emotional at all in terms of what the world might call an emotional experience. But it will edify or spiritually uplift the teacher and the student. Both will rejoice as they learn and relearn spiritual truths. “Behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart,” and “you shall feel that it is right.” (D&C 8:2; D&C 9:8.) (“Teaching by the Power of the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1984, 11)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

When speaker and hearer, or writer and reader, are spiritually conjoined, a special revelatory reciprocity occurs: “Therefore, why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth? Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together.” (D&C 50:21-22.) **John Taylor** elaborated: “There is no man living, and there never was a man living, who was capable of teaching the things of God only as he was taught, instructed and directed by the spirit of revelation proceeding from the Almighty. And then there are no people competent to receive true intelligence and to form a correct judgment in relation to the sacred principles of eternal life, unless they are under the influence of the same spirit, and hence speakers and hearers are all in the hands of the Almighty.”

The Spirit not only informs but it also *convinces!*The Spirit, for example, can convince the serious inquirer sufficiently to have him “experiment upon” the gospel. Then the prized, personal verification will come. The person comes to know for himself that these things are true (see Alma 5:46).

**Brigham Young** said, autobiographically, of the Spirit's convincing power:

Anything besides that influence will fail to convince any person of the truth of the Gospel of salvation. . . . But when I saw a man without eloquence, or talents for public speaking, who could only say, “Iknow, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of the Lord," the Holy Ghost proceeding from that individual illuminated my understanding, and light, glory, and immortality were before me. I was encircled by them, filled with them, and I knew for myself that the testimony of the man was true. . . . My own judgment, natural endowments, and education bowed to this simple, but mighty testimony. There sits the man who baptized me, (brother Eleazer Miller). It filled my system with light, and my soul with joy. The world, with all its wisdom and power, and with all the glory and gilded show of its kings or potentates, sinks into perfect insignificance, compared with the simple, unadorned testimony of the servant of God.

Whether transmitting or receiving, under the influence of the Spirit we hasten the precious process in which an individual is “quickened in the inner man” (Moses 6:65; see also Ephesians 3:16; Psalm 119:40). This involves high, spiritual drama. (*That Ye May Believe*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992], 40-41.)

**DC 50:23 that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness**

**Joseph Smith**

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 of God, and a glorious manifestation from God—a manifestation of what? Is there any intelligence communicated? Are the curtains of heaven withdrawn, or the purposes of God developed? Have they seen and conversed with an angel—or have the glories of futurity burst upon their view? No! but their body has been inanimate, the operation of their spirit suspended, and all the intelligence that can be obtained from them when they arise, is a shout of “glory,” or “hallelujah,” or some incoherent expression; but they have had “the power.”

The Shaker will whirl around on his heel, impelled by a supernatural agency or spirit, and think that he is governed by the Spirit of God; and the Jumper will jump and enter into all kinds of extravagances. A Primitive Methodist will shout under the influence of that spirit, until he will rend the heavens with his cries; while the Quakers (or Friends) moved as they think, by the Spirit of God, will sit still and say nothing. Is God the author of all this? If not of all of it, which does He recognize? Surely, such a heterogeneous mass of confusion never can enter into the kingdom of heaven. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 204.)

**DC 50:24 he that receiveth light…receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day**

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

We of this Church have been given a marvelous promise by the Lord. Said He: “That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (D&C 50:24).

What a remarkable statement that is. It is one of my favorite verses of scripture. It speaks of growth, of development, of the march that leads toward godhood. It goes hand in hand with these great declarations: “The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth” (D&C 93:36); “If a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come” (D&C 130:19); and, “Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection” (D&C 130:18).

What a profound challenge is found in these marvelous statements. We must go on growing. We must continually learn. It is a divinely given mandate that we go on adding to our knowledge. (“A Conversation with Single Adults,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 62)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

For me, in those few words there is encompassed the marvelous concept of the eternal plan of God in behalf of His sons and daughters whom He loves. That statement speaks of learning. It speaks of the now and the forever. It speaks of growth and development. It is positive and affirmative and wonderful.

Long ago I memorized those words of scripture. To me they are wonderfully challenging and filled with magnificent promise made by Him who is our Father and our God. (“True to the Faith,” *Ensign*, June 1996, 8)

**DC 50:26 the greatest…is the least and the servant of all**

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

I have a confession to make, my brothers and sisters. It is simply this: I love you. I love the people of this Church. I love all who are faithful. I love all who follow the ways of the Lord. It is a humbling thing to preside over the Church. I can never forget the words of Jesus: he that would be first among you, let him be the servant of all (see Mark 9:35; D&C 50:26).

Thank you for your prayers, your trust, your confidence. (“Latter-day Saints in Very Deed,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 85)

**DC 50:27 he is possessor of all things; for all things are subject unto him**

**Delbert L. Stapley**

Our Omnipotent God is possessor of all things: the universe with its heights and depths and all his works of creation; all truth, knowledge, power, wisdom, and every quality of goodness, love, and charity. Christ inherited these gifts and attributes from his Father and if, as the scriptures teach, we are joint-heirs with Christ, we are then potentially eligible to share with him the full joy and glory of these creations, powers, gifts, and blessings.

Complete obedience and faithfulness obtain full fellowship in the household of faith and, more importantly, merit joint-heirship with Christ our Lord in all that the Father has committed unto him…

In the important doctrinal discourse known as the “King Follett Sermon” the Prophet Joseph Smith, referring to those who “shall be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ,” described joint-heirship as inheriting the same power, the same glory, and the same exaltation, until an individual ascends to the station of Godhood and rises to the throne of eternal power, sharing the rewards with all the faithful who have preceded him. A joint-heir legally inherits and shares all equities and gifts in equal interest with all other heirs. Nothing is excluded nor adjusted in value between the participating joint-heirs. (*Conference Report, April 1961*, Afternoon Meeting 66.)

**DC 50:28 no man is possessor of all things except he be purified and cleansed from all sin**

**Spencer W. Kimball**

Youare heirs to great fortunes, for eternal life is the greatest gift.

What will you do with it? You are entitled to a kingdom or a queendom. you are princesses and princes. Do you prize your inheritance? Will you abdicate and relinquish your heavenly rights to all that is your due? Doyou but realize what the Lord has in store for you? Do you know what you could discard in a moment of carelessness and heedlessness? The Lord told his servants: . . . Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. (1 Cor 2:9)

The king's highway-the royal road to eternal joys and exaltation-is a hard road, full of full of sacrifices and restrictions and hard work. The way is narrow but it is straight, well-marked, and strongly-beamed. But if you get off course, the dot and dash tapping gets dimmer and fainter till it fades out entirely.

The permanent kingdom is yours, not for the asking, but for the earning. (February 15, 1966, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, 1966 17.)

**DC 50:29 ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done**

This promise is so remarkable that it is not really believed by many members. Do we really understand that we can pray for and receive whatever we want? The scriptures repeat this glorious promise in many locations. One of these is 3 Ne. 18:20, wherein the Lord promises, “whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you.”

How do we get what we want? By first becoming purified and cleansed from all sin. Once thus cleansed, we will no longer pray for that which we “ought not” (D&C 8:10). We will not “ask amiss” (James 4:3). Therefore, there will be no reason for the Lord to reject our requests. Secondly, the passage in 3 Nephi reminds us also to pray with faith. Coupling faith with purification from sin, we become as the great men of old of whom the Lord said, “All things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will” (Hel. 10:5).

**DC 50:30 it shall be given you what you shall ask**

“It may seem strange that in certain prayers one might simply repeat what he is given to say by the Holy Spirit unless one realizes that true prayer is worship. Its essence is a feeling of the heart. The measure of a prayer is the intensity and the depth of that feeling.” (Chauncey C. Riddle, “Prayer,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1975, 16–17)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

Our prayers will be better if they are in fact inspired prayers. (*Men and Women of Christ*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991], 98.)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

Perfect prayers are spoken by the power of revelation. (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 384.)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

When our prayers are inspired, we actually learn from our very petitions, just as President Marion G. Romney has observed that when he speaks under inspiration, he learns from what he says.

To be able to tap divine perspective, with regard to the content of our petitions, thus becomes exceedingly important…There are ever so many ways in which we must come to be guided even in the content of our prayers. It is not enough to kneel, important as that is, or to have faith, as essential as that is. We must come to bend our will to the will of God, so that in our prayers we really commune with him and ask for those things which are right. (*Prayer*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 46.)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

It isn't simply a case of having the pass key of faith to unlock the treasures of heaven from which we can then extract whatever blessing we choose; we need the Spirit operating in our lives to shape our very desires and hence our very requests, *but*on the basis of what is really good for us. (*That My Family Should Partake* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], 83.)

**DC 50:30-34 he that receiveth of God, let him account it of God**

We have learned from section 50 that those individuals who are ordained of God and placed in positions of authority will have power over false spirits (v. 26, 30). They have the spirit of discernment to identify false spirits among the saints; they have power to stop manifestations of false spirits; they have power to cast out evil spirits; they have power over Satan such that “the spirits [are] subject unto [them]” (v. 30).

Hopefully today, we understand that the exercise of priesthood power is not for personal aggrandizement. In 1831, who would have had enough priesthood experience to know how to behave? The brethren needed the reminder that if they cast out devils, healed the sick, or rebuked a false spirit, they were to give the glory to God. They were to proclaim the truth with a loud voice but not be overdramatic with railing accusation, boasting, or self-serving displays of joy. As the Lord told his apostles in a previous dispensation, “I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.  Notwithstanding in thisrejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:19-20)

**DC 50:37 Let my servant Joseph Wakefield…and Parley P. Pratt go forth among the churches and strengthen them**

**Parley P. Pratt**

In obedience to the foregoing, Joseph Wakefield and myself visited the several branches of the Church, rebuking the wrong spirits which had crept in among them, setting in order things that were wanting; ordaining Elders and other officers; baptizing such as believed and repented of their sins; administering the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, in the name of Jesus Christ; laying hands on little children and blessing them; praying for the sick, and comforting the afflicted, etc. On some occasions we assembled fifty or sixty little children in one circle, in the midst of the assembly of the saints, and laid our hands upon them all, and prayed for them, and blessed them in the name of Jesus. (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt,* edited by his son, Parley P. Pratt [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 51.)

**DC 50:40 ye are little children and ye cannot bear all things now**

**Neal A. Maxwell**

The Lord… tutors us as little children, balancing our capacities to receive and our abilities to bear. (*We Talk of Christ, We Rejoice in Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1984], 94.)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

When in situations of stress we wonder if there is any more in us to give, we can be comforted to know that God, who knows our capacity perfectly, placed us here to succeed. No one was foreordained to fail or to be wicked.

When we feel overwhelmed, let us recall the assurance given through Joseph that God, who knows we “cannot bear all things now,” will not overprogram us; he will not press upon us more than we can bear (see D&C 50:40). (*But for a Small Moment*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986], 102.)

**DC 50:41 Fear not little children, for you are mine**

**Howard W. Hunter**

In light of such wonderful counsel (D&C 50:41; 98:1), I think it is incumbent upon us to rejoice a little more and despair a little less, to give thanks for what we have and for the magnitude of God’s blessings to us, and to talk a little less about what we may not have or what anxiety may accompany difficult times in this or any generation.

For Latter-day Saints this is a time of great hope and excitement—one of the greatest eras in the Restoration and therefore one of the greatest eras in any dispensation, inasmuch as ours is the greatest of all dispensations. We need to have faith and hope, two of the great fundamental virtues of any discipleship of Christ. We must continue to exercise confidence in God, inasmuch as that is the first principle in our code of belief. We must believe that God has all power, that he loves us, and that his work will not be stopped or frustrated in our individual lives or in the world generally. He will bless us as a people because he always has blessed us as a people. He will bless us as individuals because he always has blessed us as individuals. (“An Anchor to the Souls of Men,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1993, 72)

**DC 50:42 none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost**

The supernal and poorly understood truth is that the Son has been given stewardship over the elect. The Father has given him the assignment to save and exalt these souls. “These souls were doubtless ‘given’ to Christ in those councils of heaven in which they personally participated before the physical earth was organized. (Abr. 3:22.) All was done without compulsion on the Father's part; his children acted as free agents in the matter.” (Robert L. Millet, ed., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 6: Acts to Revelation* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 109.)  More remarkably, the Savior has declared that *none* of them shall be lost, “but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled” (John 17:12).

Because this doctrine supercedes the concept of foreordination, we quickly become uncomfortable with its implications. Yet, we can’t deny the written word—the Lord has unequivocally taught this truth.

   And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (John 6:39)

   But behold, ye have both heard my voice, and seen me; and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me. (3 Ne. 15:24)

   My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

   And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

   My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand. (John 10:27-29)

   As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he (the Son) should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

   …While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripturemight be fulfilled. (John 17:2,12)

**Joseph L. Wirthlin**

Can you anticipate any blessing more desirable than to become the very elect of God? To become the very elect of God anticipates that when we return to him and live with him through the eternities yet to come, it will be in the Celestial kingdom, and that is the objective for which all of us are striving here in mortality. (*Conference Report, October 1952*, General Priesthood Meeting 83.)

**DC 50:44 He that buildeth upon this rock shall never fall**

**L. Tom Perry**

To build a foundation strong enough to support a family in our troubled world today requires the best effort of each of us—father, mother, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, aunts, uncles, cousins, and so on. Each must contribute energy and effort in driving piles right down to the bedrock of the gospel until the foundation is strong enough to endure through the eternities. The Lord has promised us in the Doctrine and Covenants that “he that buildeth upon this rock shall never fall.” (D&C 50:44.)

Build traditions in your families that will bring you together, for they can demonstrate your devotion, love, and support for one another. For each of the members of your family, these events would include blessings of children, baptisms, other priesthood ordinances, graduations, missionary farewells, homecomings, and, of course, marriages. If distance, missions, or ill health prevent personal reunions, write one of those special letters that will be treasured in family histories. Sharing these occasions as a family will help us build a foundation established upon a rock. (“Born of Goodly Parents,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 23)