
The Power of Light and Truth

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For us to prosper in these times, spiritual light must burn within us.



As a young boy I discovered amazing power in a small flashlight. Turning it on at night, I saw a large lighted spot wherever I pointed it. My excitement increased when shining the flashlight inside a dusty barn. A cone of light was projected through the air. But the most interesting discovery came when I pressed the flashlight firmly against the palm of my hand. My entire hand glowed in the dark. The light was actually within me! To observe the physical properties of light can be exciting, but discovering the properties of spiritual light and truth is even more awe inspiring and essential.

We live in marvelous times, yet also an hour when peace has been taken from the earth.¹ For us to prosper in these times, spiritual light must burn within us. How do we obtain this spiritual light and ensure that the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ fill our souls? I would like to suggest three ways: (1) learn true doctrine, (2) gain pure testimony, and (3) live the gospel courageously.

First, learn true doctrine. Alma discovered that “the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had . . . more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God.”² President Henry B. Eyring stated: “The word of God is the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ and by His prophets. Alma knew that words of doctrine had great power. They can open the minds of people to see spiritual things not visible to the natural eye. And they can open the heart to feelings of the love of God and a love for truth.”³

In 1832 the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith a true and powerful doctrine about spiritual light, the Light of Christ:



“Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—

“The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne.”⁴

President Boyd K. Packer reinforced this truth in saying: “The Light of Christ is also described in the scriptures as ‘the Spirit of Jesus Christ.’ . . . The Spirit of Christ can enlighten the inventor, the scientist, the painter, the sculptor, the composer, the performer, the architect, the author to produce great, even inspired things for the blessing and good of all mankind.”⁵

Recent scientific thinking on the fundamental properties of light is

indeed stunning. Today scientists even describe light as a “carrier”⁶ or “messenger”⁷ or “mediator.”⁸ How profound are the doctrines of the Lord!

Second, gain pure testimony. This testimony is the confirmation by the Holy Ghost that God is our Father and Jesus is the Christ.⁹ The light and truth we see in all things urge us to obtain knowledge by study and by faith, which precedes the confirmation by the Spirit.¹⁰ We can learn much of God’s handiwork and goodness by our physical senses. But an even deeper testimony is revealed as we spiritually seek the truth “with real intent.”¹¹ President Spencer W. Kimball said: “The treasures of both secular and spiritual knowledge are hidden ones—but hidden from those who do not properly search and strive to find

them. . . . Spiritual knowledge is not available merely for the asking; even prayers are not enough. It takes persistence and dedication of one’s life.”¹²

Our testimonies are strengthened as we reverently observe the great universe God has created for us. The Lord declared to Enoch, “All things are created and made to bear record of me.”¹³ Alma bore a similar testimony to Korihor, the anti-Christ: “All things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator.”¹⁴

The wrestle that Enos had before the Lord demonstrates the power of his father’s testimony. Enos said, “The words which I had often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart.”¹⁵ Elder M. Russell Ballard said: “Clear declaration of truth makes a difference in people’s lives. That is what changes hearts.”¹⁶

My wife and I attended a sacrament meeting near Recife, Brazil. A young boy, possibly 9 or 10 years of age, wearing his new blue suit on a very hot day, went to the pulpit and in a very relaxed way looked at the congregation. He said, “Our family has been studying about moral agency.” He then read: “Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh. . . . And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil.”¹⁷ The boy then said, “Some of my older friends are choosing to smoke and use drugs, but we all will have to accept the consequences of our actions.” He finished with his testimony, saying, “I can see that this is true.” This testimony from one so young was powerful and touched our hearts deeply.

Third, we must live courageously in accordance with the light and

testimony that we have received. We are promised, “He that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.”¹⁸ It takes real effort and sacrifice to live the gospel courageously. For some years temple worship for the Saints who live near Manaus, Brazil, has meant traveling two days in a crowded riverboat on the Amazon River, followed by two days’ travel in buses through the hot tropics to the Recife temple. Arriving worn out and tired, they would shower, dress appropriately, and immediately begin their temple worship. After several days of service to the Lord, they would make the long, difficult journey home. The words “but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”¹⁹ were beautifully reflected by their sacrificing actions.

To be at peace in these wonderful yet challenging times, we must learn true doctrine, gain pure testimony, and live the truths of the gospel courageously. As we live in harmony with the light and truth taught by Jesus Christ and by His prophets, we will see more clearly our eternal destiny. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. See D&C 1:35.
2. Alma 31:5.
3. “The Power of Teaching Doctrine,” *Liabona*, July 1999, 85; *Ensign*, May 1999, 73.
4. D&C 88:12–13.
5. “The Light of Christ,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Apr. 2005, 8, 10.
6. See 2 Nephi 33:1; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (1954–56), 1:54.
7. See D&C 45:9.
8. See 2 Nephi 2:27–28.
9. See M. Russell Ballard, “Pure Testimony,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 40–41.
10. See D&C 9:7–8.
11. Moroni 10:4.
12. *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 389–90.
13. Moses 6:63.
14. Alma 30:44.
15. Enos 1:3.
16. *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 41.
17. 2 Nephi 2:27.
18. D&C 50:24.
19. Joshua 24:15.