

# Helping Others Recognize the Whisperings of the Spirit

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*We can help others become more familiar with the promptings of the Spirit when we share our testimony of the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives.*



At the end of the day, a pair of missionaries starts toward home when one suddenly turns to the other and says, “I feel we need to stop at this one last place.” A home teacher is prompted to call one of the families he visited just a few days before. A young woman plans on attending a school friend’s party yet feels impressed to stay home this time.

How did the missionaries know to knock on the door of someone who had been praying for them? or the home teacher to call a family that was in desperate need? or the young woman to stay away from a situation where her values could be compromised? In each of these situations they were guided by the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Similar experiences happen repeatedly to members throughout the world on a regular basis, and there are those who desire to feel the Spirit guiding them daily in their lives. While each person can learn to recognize the whisperings of the Spirit, that learning process can be facilitated as others help us understand about the Holy Ghost, share their personal testimonies, and provide an environment where the Spirit can be felt.

## Understanding the Doctrine

The importance of helping others understand is described in the Doctrine and Covenants. Parents “in

Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized” are told to help their children “understand the doctrine.”<sup>1</sup>

Whether we are in a classroom, a missionary discussion, or a family home evening, teaching the doctrine regarding the Holy Ghost can help others understand this important gift. We learn that while “the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil,”<sup>2</sup> the right to the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost comes as members are given that gift by the laying on of hands by those who have the proper authority.<sup>3</sup>

This companionship can continue to be ours if we are worthy. We are told that “the Spirit of the Lord doth not dwell in unholy temples”<sup>4</sup> and that as we “let virtue garnish [our] thoughts unceasingly; then . . . the Holy Ghost shall be [our] constant companion.”<sup>5</sup>

The scriptures and the prophets teach what this constant companionship feels like. The Lord tells us, “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.”<sup>6</sup> Enos stated, “While I was . . . struggling in the spirit, behold, the voice of the Lord came into my mind.”<sup>7</sup> Joseph Smith said, “When you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas.”<sup>8</sup> President Henry B. Eyring described the influence of the Holy Ghost as “peace, hope, and joy.” He added, “Almost always I have also felt a sensation of light.”<sup>9</sup>

My favorite description, though, comes from an eight-year-old boy who had just received the Holy Ghost. He said, “It felt like sunshine.”

## Share Personal Testimony

However, it is not always easy to discern these “sunshine” moments at first. The Book of Mormon tells us of some faithful Lamanites who “were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.”<sup>10</sup>

We can help others become more



familiar with the promptings of the Spirit when we share our testimony of the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives. Remember that some experiences are too sacred to relate. However, by sharing testimony of the Spirit in our lives, those who are unfamiliar with these promptings are more likely to recognize when they have similar feelings.

I was the first member of my family to join the Church. As an eight-year-old, I waited to feel somehow different because of my baptism. To be honest, the only thing I felt when I was brought out of the water was . . . well, dripping wet. I thought something more profound would happen when I was confirmed. However, after receiving the Holy Ghost, again I felt happy but certainly no different than I had just a few minutes before.

It wasn't until the following day at fast and testimony meeting that I experienced what I now recognize as the influence of the Holy Ghost. A brother stood to bear his testimony and tell about the blessings of his membership in the Church. I felt a flood of warmth sweep over me. Even as an eight-year-old, I recognized that this was something different. I felt a peace descend on me, and I had the distinct feeling that Heavenly Father was pleased with me.

### **Provide an Environment Where the Spirit Can Be Felt**

There are places where it is easier to feel the Spirit. Testimony meetings and general conference are some of those places. Certainly temples are another. The challenge for each of us is in providing an environment where the Spirit can be felt daily in our homes and weekly at church.

One reason we are encouraged to pray and read the scriptures every single day is that both of these activities invite the Spirit into our homes and into the lives of our family members.

Because the Spirit is often described as a still, small voice,<sup>11</sup> it is also important to have a time of quiet in our lives as well. The Lord has counseled us to “be still, and know that I am God.”<sup>12</sup> If we provide a still and quiet time each day when we are not bombarded by television, computer, video games, or personal electronic devices, we allow that still, small voice an opportunity to provide personal revelation and to whisper sweet guidance, reassurance, and comfort to us.

Similarly, we can provide an environment at church that allows the Spirit to give divine confirmation to what is being taught. Teachers and leaders do more than teach lessons or conduct meetings. They facilitate

the whisperings of the Spirit to each member. Elder Richard G. Scott has said, “If you accomplish nothing else in your relationship with your students than to help them recognize and follow the promptings of the Spirit, you will bless their lives immeasurably and eternally.”<sup>13</sup>

A Sunbeam teacher wrapped each of her class members one by one in a blanket to teach them how the Spirit feels like the comfort and security of that covering. A visiting mother also heard the lesson.

Many months later the mother thanked the teacher. She told how she had been less active when she accompanied her young daughter to Primary. Several weeks after the lesson, the mother suffered a miscarriage. She was overcome with grief when suddenly she felt a great warmth and peace. It felt like someone had covered her with a warm blanket. She recognized the reassurance of the Spirit and knew that Heavenly Father was aware of her and that He loved her.

When we come to understand the whisperings of the Spirit, we will be able to hear Him teach us “the peaceable things of the kingdom”<sup>14</sup> and “all things what [we] should do.”<sup>15</sup> We will recognize answers to our prayers and know how to live the gospel more fully each day. We will be guided and

protected. And we can cultivate this gift in our lives as we follow those spiritual promptings. Most importantly, we will feel Him witness to us of the Father and of the Son.<sup>16</sup>

As a young woman attending youth conference, I felt the Spirit bear witness to me of the truthfulness of the restored gospel. In preparation for a testimony meeting, we sang “The Spirit of God.” Now, I had sung that hymn many times before in sacrament meetings. But on this occasion, from nearly the opening note, I felt the Spirit. By the time we sang, “The latter-day glory begins to come forth,”<sup>17</sup> I knew that these were more than nice lyrics; they were beautiful truths.

The Holy Ghost has confirmed to me that God the Father lives. He loves each of us. He knows us individually and personally. He hears the pleadings of our hearts, and He answers those sincere prayers.

Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer. He came to earth in the meridian of time to atone for our sins. And He will come again. These and all other aspects of the gospel that make up my testimony are firm in my heart because of the influence of the Holy Ghost. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

#### NOTES

1. D&C 68:25.
2. Moroni 7:16.
3. See *True to the Faith* (2004), 83.
4. Helaman 4:24.
5. D&C 121:45–46.
6. D&C 8:2.
7. Enos 1:10.
8. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 3:381.
9. Henry B. Eyring, “Gifts of the Spirit for Hard Times,” *Ensign*, June 2007, 18.
10. 3 Nephi 9:20.
11. See 1 Kings 19:12; 1 Nephi 17:45; D&C 85:6.
12. Psalm 46:10; see also D&C 101:16.
13. Richard G. Scott, “Helping Others to Be Spiritually Led” (address to religious educators, Aug. 11, 1998), 3; in *Teaching, No Greater Call* (1999), 48.
14. D&C 36:2.
15. See 2 Nephi 32:1–5.
16. See 2 Nephi 31:18.
17. “The Spirit of God,” *Hymns*, no. 2.