

YOUR FRIENDS'

QUESTIONS

ANSWERING



Questions about the gospel can be intimidating, but you can find the answers.

When people ask you questions about the gospel, you may find yourself thinking something like:

- “I know what I believe, but are my thoughts enough for the answer?”
- “My friends aren’t going to like the answer, because it doesn’t fit with their way of life. I don’t want to offend them, but I want to share the gospel truths.”
- “I know the basic answer, but what if they ask me for more details? I won’t know how to respond.”

These types of thoughts are natural, but they shouldn’t keep you from answering people’s questions. After all, if your friends or coworkers have questions about the Church and its teachings, then it’s best that they receive answers from Church members instead of others.

So, how can you make your answers to your friends’ questions more meaningful? The following example gives some ideas of how Julie may respond to her friend Zach.

*Julie,
my preacher talked
about the Trinity last Sunday.
He said that God, Jesus Christ, and
the Holy Spirit are one. But when you’ve
talked about God before,
you seemed to believe differently.
Can you explain it
to me?*

“While others talk to you, avoid the tendency to think about what you are going to say. Make sure you are really concentrating on the person speaking rather than planning your response.”

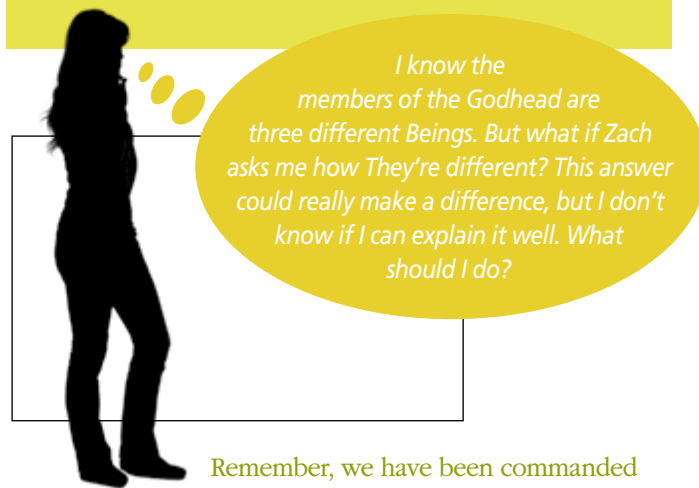
Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service (2004), 184.



KEY ITEMS

Sharing the gospel can actually be simple if you remember the main things you should do:

1. Figure out which gospel doctrine best answers your friends’ questions.
2. Explain the doctrine simply and clearly so the Holy Ghost can testify it is true.
3. Bear your testimony of the doctrine.



I know the members of the Godhead are three different Beings. But what if Zach asks me how They’re different? This answer could really make a difference, but I don’t know if I can explain it well. What should I do?

Remember, we have been commanded to pray always. When someone asks you a question about the gospel, invite the Spirit into the discussion by offering a silent prayer for help. (See 2 Nephi 32:9 and D&C 19:37–38.)

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 100:5–8

“I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men;

“For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say.

“But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things.

“And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say.”

THE BEST PREPARATION

The best preparation for answering gospel questions in the future is to study the gospel now. As you study, keep track of the main principles you learn about gospel topics, including topics people may ask you about. Jot down scripture verses or helpful conference talks you read about the subjects so you can easily find them in the future when you want to use them to answer questions.

You can sometimes even study by topic rather than sequentially. Pick a topic and study it. Then once you feel like you have a good understanding of it, move to a different topic.

As you study, write down things that come to mind. *Preach My Gospel* suggests keeping a study journal so you can better understand and remember what you're learning. Elder Richard G. Scott has taught, "Knowledge carefully recorded is knowledge available in a time of need" ("Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge," *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 86).

Well, Zach, They are three different Beings. We refer to Them as the Godhead, and They each have different roles. We know God the Father is literally the Father of our spirits—a loving Father—and we are His children. . . . But there's more to it than that. I don't have time to explain it all before the bell rings, but if you'd like, we can talk about it at lunch tomorrow.

Sure. I'd like to know what you believe.

Where should I begin? I want to follow the Spirit as I find my answers. I'll start with a prayer to ask Heavenly Father for help.



When possible, answer questions and bear testimony on the spot. Listen to the guidance of the Spirit, and use the opportunities you are given to share the gospel. Then if you think there's more to say but you don't know how, you can study a gospel topic in greater depth and ask parents, Church leaders, and friends for help.

"Sometimes the best answers that young people can give to the questions of life are found there upon their knees calling upon our Heavenly Father. If they will remember that the Lord is mindful of them and will answer their prayers, they will be able to meet every challenge that comes to them."

President Thomas S. Monson, "16th President Fields Questions from Media," *Church News*, Feb. 9, 2008, 15.



TIPS

FOR FINDING ANSWERS AT LDS.ORG

LDS.org is filled with resources to help you find answers to gospel questions. Here are some tips to get the most from your time online.

- A. Use the **Search** function to find helpful information throughout **LDS.org**. After you've searched a topic, you can narrow the search to just quotes from general conference, stories from Church magazines, and more.
- B. To search only in the scriptures or in conference talks, go to their direct URLs—**scriptures.lds.org** and **conference.lds.org**—and use the search field in the middle of the page (*not* the **Search** box at the top).
- C. Multimedia resources are available for many gospel subjects. Find them at **LDS.org > Menu > Study > Search by Topic**.
- D. The book *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* has been designed to provide the essentials about gospel topics. Read it at **LDS.org > Menu > Study > Manuals > Aaronic Priesthood or Young Women > True to the Faith**.
- E. Find a collection of resources for

all of the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, including links with videos, articles, questions and answers, and more. Visit **youth.lds.org > For the Strength of Youth**.

I guess I should start with what I know:

- I remember my Young Women teacher talked about the roles of the Godhead. She said . . .
- The First Vision shows that the Father and Son are separate Beings.
- Dad shared a quote from Joseph Smith about this once. I should ask him about it.



When you begin looking for answers to questions, think first about what you already know. Write it down. And then list questions you still have or questions your friends may ask so you can focus your study.

I remember some conference talks lately about each member of the Godhead.

I'll have to look them up. . . . I wonder what else I'll find at LDS.org. . . . Hey, this talk looks helpful, too! And True to the Faith even has a section on the Godhead.



Did you know that the scriptures teach about the power of multiple “witnesses” when bearing testimony? (See Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1; D&C 6:28; 128:3.) You can use quotes from Church leaders to be an additional witness to the testimony you bear as you answer questions from friends.

I should see what the scriptures say about it. I'm sure the Topical Guide lists some verses about the roles of the Godhead. And there may be scripture mastery verses too.



“I see you sometimes reading a few verses, stopping to ponder them, carefully reading the verses again, and as you think about what they mean, praying for understanding, asking questions in your mind, waiting for

spiritual impressions, and writing down the impressions and insights that come so you can remember and learn more.”



Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “When Thou Art Converted,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 11.



OTHER IDEAS

If you need extra support as you search for answers to talk about gospel principles, consider these ideas:

- Talk to a parent, Church leader, or seminary teacher about the gospel principle. They may have ideas you hadn't thought about.
- If other Church members attend your school or work, ask your friends if it's OK to have them join you to share their insights as well.
- Look for a *Mormon Messages for Youth* video about the topic, and send the link to your friends while you're studying the topic. You can find them in the "Videos" section of youth.lds.org.
- Receive a blessing from your father or priesthood leader to give you extra help if you need it.
- Fast for direction and strength as you study and then share the gospel.

This article reminds me of the time I first knew Heavenly Father was aware of me as His child. I really felt the Spirit testify that God is my Father. I could share those feelings with Zach.



Wow—I've learned a lot. I'm so grateful for the help from the Spirit. I'll pray again before talking to Zach.



"Relating personal experiences can have a powerful influence. . . . When you tell about what you have experienced yourself, you act as a living witness of gospel truths. If you speak truthfully and with pure intent, the Spirit will confirm the truth of your message in the hearts of those you teach."

Teaching, No Greater Call (1999), 185.

Remember to "pray always" (see D&C 90:24) and follow promptings of the Spirit both as you study and as you talk about the gospel with friends. Pray for help with what to say from the things you've studied and if there's anything else you should read or do before talking with your friends. Heavenly Father knows you and your friends, and He has given you the Holy Ghost to help you know what to say. **NE**

Hey, Zach! I've thought a lot about your question from yesterday. I'd love to talk about it a little more if you'd like to.

Yeah, sure. That would be great.



Well, in our Church, we believe . . .

"Remember, brothers and sisters, we're not marketing a product. We're not selling anything. . . . We are members of the restored Church of Jesus Christ, empowered and sent forth by the Lord



Himself to find [and] nourish . . . those who are seeking to know the truth."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Essential Role of Member Missionary Work," *Ensign*, May 2003, 38.

WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH ABOUT HOW TO FIND ANSWERS?

- Search with all your heart (Jeremiah 19:13).
- Ask, seek, and knock (Matthew 7:7–8).
- Repentance, faith, good works, and continual prayer invite revelation (Alma 26:22).
- Study it out in your mind, and then pray for confirmation (D&C 9:7–9).
- Be humble, and let God lead you (D&C 112:10).

