



What If My  
Testimony  
**DOESN'T**  
**COME** When  
I Expect?





Whether you're asking for a testimony of something as big as Heavenly Father's love or as seemingly small as His ability to help you make good friends, don't give up.

By Hadley Griggs

Have you ever noticed that some people pray and get their testimonies right away, but others seem to wait for days, months, even years for a personal confirmation? Are you waiting for your testimony right now?

Believe it or not, as Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has explained, *immediate* revelation is actually “more rare than common.”<sup>1</sup> More often than not, revelation doesn't come quickly, like when you turn on a light. It comes gradually, like “night turn[ing] into morning”—a step-by-step process until the sun finally dawns.<sup>2</sup> So if you're working at gaining your testimony and it still hasn't come, don't worry, you're in good company!

Even some of our prophets have developed their testimonies slowly instead of all at once. President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918), as a boy, would pray all the time asking to see a miracle so that he could have a testimony. “But,” he explains, “the Lord withheld marvels from me, and showed me the truth, *line upon line* . . . until He made me to know the truth from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. . . . By the whisperings of the still small voice of the spirit of the living God, He gave to me the testimony I possess.”<sup>3</sup>

It's perfectly normal for a testimony to come slowly—even when people around you seem to be receiving immediate answers. If you're still waiting for your testimony, it doesn't mean you're less worthy or less important. It just means it takes a little more time for you. For example, in the October 2016 general conference, Elder LeGrand Curtis Jr. of the Seventy explained: “Some people have . . . a powerful experience with the Book of Mormon the first time they open it, but for others the witness of the truthfulness comes more gradually as they read and pray about it.”<sup>4</sup> Gaining a testimony is a personal and individual process, so it's OK if yours is being built slowly. It's totally normal!

Sometimes, a personal testimony can come so gradually that we don't even realize it's happening. It's kind of

like the way we “grow taller in physical stature; we hardly know it happens because it comes by growth.”<sup>5</sup> We grow daily, inch by inch, until one day we look at the pencil mark on the wall and realize we're towering above our old selves. A testimony often works the same way! We can look at how we used to be, and we often notice how far we've come. (For an example of someone whose testimony came without her realizing it, look at [page 17](#).)

If your testimony isn't growing in the time frame you want, the most important thing is this: don't give up. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles tells us: “I don't pretend to know why faith to believe comes easier for some than for others. I'm just so grateful to know that the answers are always there, and if we seek them—really seek with real intent and with full purpose of a prayerful heart—we will eventually find the answers to our questions as we continue on the gospel path.”<sup>6</sup>

Don't get discouraged. Heavenly Father loves you, and Jesus atoned for you and knows exactly what you're going through. There is a plan. Whatever the stage of your testimony, remember that the Lord requires just that we do our best. If you're doing your best, your testimony *will* come. Elder Bednar has said: “Just keep pressing forward obediently and with faith in the Savior. As you do so, you 'cannot go amiss' (D&C 80:3).”<sup>7</sup>



#### WE CAN RECEIVE THAT KNOWLEDGE

“One of the greatest things about our Heavenly Father's plan for His children is that each of us can know the truth of that plan for ourselves. That revealed knowledge does not come from books, from scientific proof, or from intellectual pondering. . . . We can receive that knowledge directly from our Heavenly Father through the witness of the Holy Ghost.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Apr. 2008 general conference.

## BUT WHAT EXACTLY *IS* A TESTIMONY?

A testimony is a personal witness from the Holy Ghost. It starts with believing in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and it grows “line upon line” (2 Nephi 28:30) to include every aspect of the gospel, such as knowing that families are forever, that the Book of Mormon is true, or that the prophet receives revelation from the Lord.

Sometimes we can feel like we’re not building our testimonies because we’re not quite sure what that “personal witness” feels like. We’ve always heard that the Spirit speaks to us with a “still, small voice,” but what exactly does that mean? Well, the Holy Ghost can speak to us in a variety of ways. Sometimes it’s as powerful as a prompting that “seems to occupy [your] mind, and press itself upon [your] feelings” (D&C 128:1). Other times it’s a burning feeling in your heart. And even other times it’s a simple feeling of peace and calm, and “you shall feel that it is right” (D&C 9:8). Just remember that “as you continue to seek and follow the Lord’s will in your life, you will come to recognize how the Holy Ghost influences you *personally*.”<sup>8</sup>

There are lots of ways to allow the Spirit to speak to you and help you gain a testimony. Some of the most common are through prayer, reading the scriptures, and taking the sacrament every week. But don’t stop there—you can also gain a testimony by studying conference talks, through music, service, and more. You can even gain a testimony through *bearing it*. **NE**

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

### NOTES

1. David A. Bednar, Apr. 2011 general conference.
2. David A. Bednar, Apr. 2011 general conference.
3. Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, Apr. 1900, 40–41; emphasis added.
4. LeGrand Curtis Jr., Oct. 2016 general conference.
5. Boyd K. Packer, “The Quest for Spiritual Knowledge,” *New Era*, Jan. 2007, 4.
6. M. Russell Ballard, Oct. 2016 general conference.
7. David A. Bednar, Apr. 2011 general conference.
8. *True to the Faith* (2004), 144; emphasis added.

