

Teaching by the Spirit

<http://mikebaird.net/Church/GospelTopics/TeachingByTheSpirit.pdf>

Discuss Principles and their application with regards to "Teaching by the Spirit"	1
What are we to do?	1
What are we to teach?	2
Not to teach if you don't have the Spirit.....	2
How are we to teach?.....	2
How do we listen?	3
How do you know you are teaching by the Spirit?	4
Preparing the message to be taught	4
Impromptu vs prayerfully planned messages	4
Treasure up words of life	4
Study it out in the mind	4
Prayer	5
Presenting the message by the Power of the Spirit	5
Priestcraft	6
References	6

Discussion of Principles and their application with regards to "Teaching by the Spirit"

- We say that we should "Teach by the Spirit"
- But what does that really mean?
 - We just show up and rely on the Spirit to fill our minds?
 - Do we study, study, study, show up and rely on the Spirit to call to our minds what we should teach?
 - Just how do we prepare to teach by the Spirit?
- How do we know that we are teaching by the Spirit?
- How are we to present things to be teaching by the Spirit?

What are we to do?

- D&C 43:15
"Again I say, hearken ye elders of my church, whom I have appointed: Ye are not sent forth to be taught, but to teach the children of men..."
 - We are sent forth to teach
 - How does this relate to a MPL?
 - D&C 107:89
Again, the duty of the president over the office of elders is to preside

over ninety-six elders, and to sit in council with them, and *to teach them according to the covenants.*

What are we to teach?

- D&C 43:15
 - "... the things which I have put into your hands by the power of my Spirit;
 - What does that mean?
 - D&C 42:12-13
 - 12)And again, the elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the ***principles of my gospel***, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel.
 - 13)And they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, ***as they shall be directed by the Spirit.***
 - Principles of the Gospel
 - Note that "my opinion" is left out of this verse
 - What is given to us by the prophets (conference talks etc.)
 - Lessons given to us by leaders
 - As you are directed by the Spirit
- D&C 84:85
 - Treasure up words of life
 - D&C 11:21-22
 - Study Scriptures
 - Alma 17:2
 - Given to us by the Spirit
 - As we study the words and treasure up the words of the scriptures
 - Things will be brought to our remembrance

Not to teach if you don't have the Spirit

- D&C 42:14
 - "If you receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach"
 - Warning may be read to mean a person who attempts to teach without the Spirit will be ineffective and unsuccessful

How are we to teach?

- D&C 50:14
 - By the Spirit

- Joseph Smith:
“all are to preach the Gospel, by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost; and no man can preach the Gospel without the Holy Ghost.” (*History of the Church*, 2:477.)
- D&C 50:17-18
 - If not by the Spirit it is not of God – even if truth is taught!
 - **Bruce R McConkie:**
Now, here is some very strong language. If you can italicize words in your mind as it were, when they are read, do it with the words.
"Verily I say unto you, he that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth by the Comforter [that is our commission], in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth some other way? And if it be by some other way it is not of God (D&C 50:17-18.)
Even truth, if uninspired, is "not of God." Now let me pick up the last verse again and give you the antecedent of the pronoun. It says, "If it be by some other way it is not of God" (D&C 50:18).
What is the antecedent of it? It is *the word of truth*. That is to say if you teach the word of truth - now note, you are saying what is true, everything 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. (Sermons & writings of Bruce R McConkie, Pg 332-333)

How do we listen?

- 2 Nephi 33:2
 - Must have a soft heart to receive confirmation of receiving truth
- Moroni 10:5
 - Confirmation comes from Holy Ghost
- D&C 50:19-20
 - Must hear by the Spirit or not of God

How do you know you are teaching by the Spirit?

- D&C 50:21-22
 - Both are edified
 - What does that mean?
 - **Harold B. Lee:**
"When we understand more than we know with our minds, when we understand with our hearts, then we know that the Spirit of the Lord is working upon us." (Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places*, pg 92)
 - **Harold B. Lee:**
"It's more important what you feel than what you know. You know you're beginning to be converted when your heart tells you things your mind doesn't now." "Remember Gene, It is more important what you feel than what you know" (Harold B. Lee as quoted in *Teaching by the Spirit*, Gene R Cook, Pg 59, 61)

Preparing the message to be taught

Impromptu vs prayerfully planned messages

- Neal A Maxwell:
When we speak about teaching by the Spirit it is not about a mystical process which removes responsibility from the missionary or teacher for prayerful and pondering preparation. Teaching by the Spirit is not the lazy equivalent of going on "automatic pilot." We still need a carefully worked out "flight plan." (Neal Maxwell *That Ye May Believe*, pp. 40-41., Also in Neal A Maxwell quote book, pg 338)

Treasure up words of life

- D&C 84:85
- Alma 17:2

Study it out in the mind

- D&C 9:7
- Elder Maxwell:
Studying out something in one's own mind is, in itself, an invitation to the Spirit in our preparations as well as in our presentations. We must not err, like Oliver Cowdery, by taking no thought except to ask God for His Spirit ([D&C 9:7](#)). The Lord is especially willing to take the lead of an already informed mind in which things have been "studied out." Additionally, if we already care about those to be taught, the Lord can inspire us with any customized counsel or emphasis which may be needed. (Neal Maxwell *That Ye May Believe*, pp. 40-41., Also in Neal A Maxwell quote book, pg 338)

- Insights typically come piecemeal
 - Require studying out
 - D&C 98:12
"Give unto the faithful line upon line..."
 - D&C 42:61
"If thou shalt ask thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation..."

Prayer

- Seek confirmation
 - D&C 9:8
- D&C 42:14
- Moroni 10:4

Presenting the message by the Power of the Spirit

- Improvise as moved upon by the Spirit
 - May mean departing from prepared
 - D&C 100:6
 - D&C 68:3
- Pray for utterance
 - D&C 14:8
- Avoid pedantry (Make an excessive or inappropriate display of learning, or correcting of other in small errors or too much attention to details)
 - D&C 38:24
 - D&C 121:36-37
- Testify
 - D&C 80:4
 - D&C 63:64
 - Be sensitive to constraining influence of the Spirit
- Let the Spirit do the convincing
 - Moroni 10:5
 - D&C 50:14
 - "We preach, Spirit teaches"
 - D&C 100:7-8
 - 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. "(Loren C. Dunn, "Teaching by the Power of the Spirit," *Ensign*, Sept. 1984, 8)

- Don't exclude Spirit by relying solely upon own learning
 - 2 Nephi 28:4
 - 1 Cor 2:1-4, 11-14
 - 2 Nephi 28:31
 - D&C 59:21
 - To help prevent the problem
 - D&C 46:31-32

Priestcraft

- See "Priestcraft" by Mike Baird
<http://mikebaird.net/Church/GospelTopics/Priestcraft.pdf>
- 2 Nephi 26:29
"priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion"
- Dallin H Oaks:
"A Faithful gospel teacher will never obscure students' view of the Master by standing in the way or by casting a shadow of self-promotion or self-interest "(Dallin H Oaks, "Life's lessons learned, Personal Reflections" Chapter: Testimony of Jesus Christ, pg 159)

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