

# DOCTRINE & COVENANTS & CHURCH HISTORY GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

\* GREEN MOUNTAIN 1<sup>ST</sup> WARD \* LAKEWOOD, COLORADO \* 02/08/09 \* PAGE 1 \*

## Lesson 6: “I Will Tell You in Your Mind and in Your Heart, by the Holy Ghost”, Doctrine and Covenants 6, 8, 9, 11

### Introduction

When a radio is not turned on we hear nothing being broadcast. A radio turned on, but not tuned to a station, broadcasts nothing but static noise. We must tune the radio to a station before we can hear a broadcast clearly.

Listening to the Holy Ghost can be compared to finding a radio station. Making the effort to seek the Holy Ghost’s guidance is like turning on the radio. Doing what is necessary to receive the whisperings of the Holy Ghost is comparable to tuning the radio to a station or repairing the radio if necessary.

This lesson is intended to help us learn how to recognize personal revelation from the Holy Ghost.



### Understanding how the Holy Ghost communicates with us

Revelation can come in many ways. Some of these include appearances by the Lord or His messengers, voices from the Lord or His messengers, visions, and dreams.

Usually, however, revelation comes as the Holy Ghost communicates thoughts to our minds and feelings in our hearts. The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead. He is a revelator who teaches, comforts, warns, strengthens, and guides us.

The Holy Ghost communicates with us in a variety of ways.

**He uses a still, small voice to communicate to our minds and hearts.**

**Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3; 85:6** (See also 1 Kings 19:12; 1 Nephi 17:45; Helaman 5:30).

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks** taught: “*Visions do happen. Voices are heard from beyond the veil. I know this. But these experiences are exceptional. ... Most of the revelation that comes to leaders and members of the Church comes by the still, small voice or by a feeling rather than by a vision or a voice that speaks specific words we can hear. I testify to the reality of that kind of revelation, which I have come to know as a familiar, even daily, experience to guide me in the work of the Lord*” (“Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 14).

**Elder Boyd K. Packer** taught: “*These delicate, refined spiritual communications are not seen with our eyes nor heard with our ears. And even though it is described as a voice, it is a voice that one feels more than one hears*” (*That All May Be Edified* [1982], 335).

Consider why it is important to understand this principle of how the Holy Ghost communicates. What are the dangers of expecting divine communication to come in more dramatic or spectacular ways?

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks** cautioned: “*Some [people] have looked exclusively for the great manifestations that are recorded in the scriptures and have failed to recognize the still, small voice that is given to them. ... We need to know that the Lord rarely speaks loudly. His messages almost always come in a whisper. ...*”

“*Not understanding these principles of revelation, some people postpone acknowledging their testimony until they have experienced a miraculous event. They fail to realize that with most people ... gaining a testimony is not an event but a process*” (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 11–12, 14).

### Lesson Highlights

- Understanding how the Holy Ghost communicates with us
- Cautions about personal revelation
- When revelation is not received or recognized

**A study of this lesson will help us learn to recognize personal revelation through the Holy Ghost and encourage us to seek this blessing in our lives.**

### Next Lesson

Lesson 7:  
“The First Principles and Ordinances of the Gospel”,  
See Study Guide

### He enlightens our minds.

**Doctrine and Covenants 6:15; 11:13–14.**

The Spirit can enlighten our minds with new ideas or insights, flashes of inspiration, and strong feelings or impressions (see, for example, D&C 128:1). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that revelation may come as “*sudden strokes of ideas*” that flow into our minds as “*pure intelligence*” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 151).

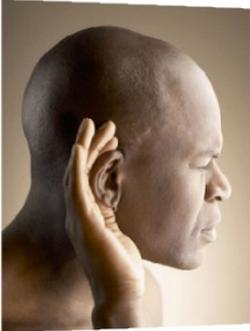
### He brings peace to our minds.

**Doctrine and Covenants 6:22–23.**

Oliver Cowdery stayed in the home of Joseph Smith’s parents for a time before meeting the Prophet. During this time, Oliver had prayed and received a peaceful assurance that Joseph’s calling and work were divine. Oliver then traveled to Harmony, Pennsylvania, and began his labors as scribe for Joseph in the translation of the Book of Mormon. Soon thereafter, Oliver desired a “*further witness*” of the assurance he had received earlier (D&C 6:22).

The Lord revealed to Oliver Cowdery that when the Spirit spoke peace to his mind it provided a “*further witness*” of the Prophet’s divine mission. Recall when the Spirit has spoken peace to your mind.

Consider how you can become more trusting of the peace that the Spirit speaks to your mind.



### Cautions about personal revelation

**We should pray that the Lord’s will be done—and be willing to submit our will to His.**

**Doctrine and Covenants 109:44** (See also Matthew 6:10).

Consider why it is important to submit our will to God’s will when we seek personal revelation.

### He may cause a burning in the bosom.

**Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–8** (See also Luke 24:32).

Although the context of D&C 9 has to do with Oliver Cowdery’s attempt to translate the Book of Mormon, the principles also apply to personal revelation. A burning in the bosom is only one way the Holy Ghost can communicate with us.

The Spirit may communicate differently to each of us. **Boyd K. Packer** explained: “*This burning in the bosom is not purely a physical sensation. It is more like a warm light shining within your being*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 60).

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks** said: “*I have met persons who told me they have never had a witness from the Holy Ghost because they have never felt their bosom ‘burn within’ them. What does a ‘burning in the bosom’ mean? Does it need to be a feeling of caloric heat, like the burning produced by combustion? If that is the meaning, I have never had a burning in the bosom. Surely, the word ‘burning’ in this scripture signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity*” (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 13).

**He often reveals things “line upon line, precept upon precept” rather than all at once.**

**Doctrine and Covenants 98:12.**

We usually receive revelation in accordance with our preparation to receive it. As we become more prepared, more is revealed to us.

**Elder Richard G. Scott** taught: “*When we seek inspiration to help make decisions, the Lord gives gentle promptings. These require us to think, to exercise faith, to work, to struggle at times, and to act. Seldom does the whole answer to a decisively important matter or complex problem come all at once. More often, it comes a piece at a time, without the end in sight*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 40; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 32).

We recognize when God answers “no” when we have negative feelings, confusion, feelings of unrest and uneasiness, or a “stupor of thought” [D&C 9:9].

How should we respond when a sincere prayer about something we desire very much is not answered the way we want? How can such experiences help us?

**Elder Boyd K. Packer** counseled:

“*Sometimes you may struggle with a problem and not get an answer. What could be wrong? It may be that you are not doing anything wrong. It may be that you have not done the right things long enough. Remember, you cannot force spiritual things. Sometimes we are confused simply because we won’t take no for an answer. ...*”

“*Put difficult questions in the back of your minds and go about your lives. Ponder and pray quietly and persistently about them.*”

“*The answer may not come as a lightning bolt. It may come as a little inspiration here and a little there, ‘line upon line, precept upon precept’ (D&C 98:12).*”

“*Some answers will come from reading the scriptures, some from hearing speakers. And, occasionally, when it is important, some will come by very direct and powerful inspiration. The promptings will be clear and unmistakable*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 29–30; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 21).



**We should remember that revelation will come in the Lord's own time and way.**

**Doctrine and Covenants 88:68.**

We do not always receive revelation at the time or in the way we expect. If we try to force revelation to come when and how we want it, we may be deceived.

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks** taught: *"The Lord will speak to us through the Spirit in his own time and in his own way. Many people do not understand this principle. They believe that when they are ready and when it suits their convenience, they can call upon the Lord and he will immediately respond, even in the precise way they have prescribed. Revelation does not come that way. ..."*

*"The principle stated in [D&C 88:68] applies to every communication from our Heavenly Father: 'It shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.' We cannot force spiritual things" (Ensign, Mar. 1997, 10–11).*

**We receive revelation according to our stewardship and responsibilities.**

**Doctrine and Covenants 28:2, 6–7; 43:2–4.**

The **Prophet Joseph Smith** taught, *"It is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 21).*

Shortly before his call as an Apostle, **Dallin H. Oaks** explained: *"Our Heavenly Father's house is a house of order. ... Only the President of the Church receives revelation to guide the entire Church. ... The person who receives revelation for the ward is the bishop. ... Individuals can*

**When revelation is not received or recognized**

When personal revelation does not come when we desire:

- Be patient and continue to wait faithfully on the Lord (D&C 98:2). He will answer in His time. Exercising patience helps us grow spiritually and develop attributes of godliness.
- Increase our efforts to be in tune spiritually so we can receive and recognize the whisperings of the Spirit.
- Increase our efforts to study and pray, recognizing that we may not have done this as long, as faithfully, or as honestly as we should.
- Be more faithful in obeying the commandments (Isaiah 59:2).
- Set the matter aside for a while. Flashes

*receive revelation to guide their own lives. But when one person purports to receive revelation for another person outside his or her own area of responsibility—such as a Church member who claims to have revelation to guide the entire Church or a person who claims to have a revelation to guide another person over whom he or she has no presiding authority according to the order of the Church—you can be sure that such revelations are not from the Lord" ("Revelation," New Era, Sept. 1982, 45–46)*

**We should discern whether the revelation has come from God.**

It is important for us to discern whether a revelation is truly from God. Sometimes what we think is a revelation may be a projection of our own desires. And sometimes false revelations may come from Satan.

How can we discern whether a revelation has come from God? Revelations from God will be in accordance with scripture and the counsel of the living prophets. They will be edifying. They will not lead us to do something that is contrary to the principles of righteousness.

**The First Presidency** said: *"When ... inspiration conveys something out of harmony with the accepted revelations of the Church or contrary to the decisions of its constituted authorities, Latter-day Saints may know that it is not of God, no matter how plausible it may appear. ... Anything at discord with that which comes from God through the head of the Church is not to be received as authoritative or reliable" (in James R. Clark, comp., Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 vols. [1965–75], 4:285).*

- of inspiration often come when we least expect them, while our minds are no longer consumed by the matter.
- Recognize that we may be seeking counsel on matters that we should determine for ourselves, using our best judgment based on study and reason. In these cases the Lord may leave us to decide on our own (for examples, see D&C 58:25–28; 60:5; 61:22; 62:5). The Lord often allows us to make our own decisions in righteousness.
- Evaluate whether we may have received an answer already but have not accepted it because it was not what we hoped for or expected. If we insist on what we want, we may close off the Spirit's communication with us.

**Gospel Doctrine Notebook**

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- How do you experience the Holy Spirit in your life?
- How have you learned to be more trusting of the peace that the Spirit speaks to your mind?
- What have you done when personal revelation did not come when you desired it?

