Gospel Doctrine Lesson 6: "I Will Tell You in Your Mind and in Your Heart, by the Holy Ghost"

(Doctrine and Covenants 6, 8, 9, 11)

LESSON GOAL: To help us learn to recognize personal revelation through the Holy Ghost and to encourage us to seek this blessing in our lives.

<u>The Holy Ghost:</u> The third member of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost is manifested to men on the earth both as the power of the Holy Ghost and as the gift of the Holy Ghost. The gift can come only after proper and authorized baptism, and is conferred by the laying on of hands. The gift of the Holy Ghost is the right to have, <u>whenever one is</u> <u>worthy</u>, the companionship of the Holy Ghost. It acts as a cleansing agent to purify a person and sanctify him from all sin. When a person speaks by the power of the Holy Ghost that same power carries a conviction of the truth into the heart of the hearer. (*Bible Dictionary*, 704).

1. Understanding how the Holy Ghost communicates with us

Revelation may come in a variety of ways:

- Appearances by the Lord: the First Vision, the Kirtland Temple.
- Appearances by the Lord's messengers: Moroni visits Joseph Smith, John the Baptist to Joseph and Oliver.
- Voices from the Lord or his messengers: as received by Noah.
- Visions: Joseph F. Smith's vision of the dead.
- Dream: Lehi's dream.
- Most revelation comes as the Holy Ghost communicates thoughts to our minds and feelings in our hearts.

<u>President John Taylor wrote</u>: "Joseph Smith, upwards of forty years ago, said to me: 'Brother Taylor, you have received the Holy Ghost. Now follow the influence of that Spirit, and it will lead you into all truth, until by and by, it will become in you a principle of revelation.' Then he told me never to arise in the morning without bowing before the Lord, and dedicating myself to him during that day." (*John Taylor, The Gospel Kingdom*, ed. G. Homer Durham (1943), 43–44.)

<u>Richard G. Scott</u>: "I am convinced that <u>there is no simple formula or technique</u> that would immediately allow you to master the ability to be guided by the voice of the Spirit. Our Father expects you to learn how to obtain that divine help by exercising faith in Him and His Holy Son, Jesus Christ. Were you to receive inspired guidance just for the asking, you would become weak and ever more dependent on Them. They know that essential personal growth will come as you struggle to learn how to be led by the Spirit" (Conference Report, October 2009).

The Saints were in Winter Quarters and preparing for the migration to the West. Joseph Smith had been dead for over two and one half years. <u>President Young</u> had a vision, a dream, in which he visited with the Prophet Joseph Smith. "Joseph stepped toward me, and looking very earnestly, yet pleasantly said, 'Tell the people to be humble and faithful, and be sure to keep the **spirit of the Lord** and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the **small still voice**; it will teach you what to do and where to go; it will yield the fruits of the kingdom. Tell the brethren to keep their hearts open to conviction, so that when the **Holy Ghost** comes to them, **their hearts will be ready to receive it**. They can tell **the Spirit of the Lord** from all other spirits; **it will whisper peace and joy to their souls**; it will take malice, hatred, strife and all evil from their hearts; and **their whole desire will be to do good**" (*Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1846–1847*, comp. Elden J. Watson (1971), 529–30).

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

It is not uncommon for the Spirit to speak directly to the mind and the heart together. The Lord told Oliver Cowdery this. When the Holy Ghost speaks, our minds may be struck with insight and clarity akin to sudden light. At the same time, our hearts may burn or we may feel flooded with joy or deep gratitude or love.

<u>D&C 8:2-3</u>: Yea, behold, 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. Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation; behold, this is the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.

<u>D&C 85:6</u>: Yea, thus saith **the still small voice**, which **whispereth** through and **pierceth** all things, and often times it **maketh my bones to quake** while it maketh manifest. . .

Dallin H. Oaks: "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).

Boyd K. Packer: "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* 335).

Dallin H. Oaks 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**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... We need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know that **the Lord rarely speaks loudly.** His messages almost always come in a **whisper**. ... How the need to know the need t

Boyd K. Packer "The voice of the Spirit is a still, small voice, a voice that is felt rather than heard. It is a spiritual voice that comes *into the mind as a thought* into your heart . . ." (*Ensign*, May 2000, 9).

Boyd K. Packer: "The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all" ("His Peace," *Ensign*, May 1997, 31)

B. He enlightens our minds.

<u>D&C 6:15</u>: Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and **I did enlighten thy mind**; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that **thou hast been enlightened by the Spirit of truth**;

When the Holy Ghost speaks, our minds may be struck with insight and clarity akin to sudden light. At the same time, our hearts may burn or we may feel flooded with joy or deep gratitude or love. Whatever particular feelings occur, they occur simultaneously in the mind and in the heart.

<u>D&C 11:13-14:</u> Verily, verily, I say unto you, I will impart unto you of **my Spirit**, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy; And then shall ye know, or by this shall you know, all things whatsoever you desire of me, which are pertaining unto things of righteousness, in faith believing in me that you shall receive.

D&C 11:12: And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, put your trust in that **<u>Spirit which leadeth to do good</u>**—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit.

- Hyrum Smith learned in this verse that the Spirit leads us "to do justly," acting in conformity with what is morally upright, correct, or good.
- **He** further learned that the Spirit leads us "**to walk humbly**." A proud walk or demeanor, by which people draw attention to themselves through arrogant speech or conduct, is the antithesis of the way in which the Spirit leads.
- Hyrum Smith also learned in this one verse that the Spirit leads us "to judge righteously." Though we must curb the tendency to judge others, judgment is inevitable.

<u>Jay E. Jensen</u>: "We know by this that **promptings to do good can be manifestations of the Spirit**. Have you ever learned of someone in need, perhaps a close friend, and felt strongly impressed to help? Have you ever talked with someone and been led to say the right thing? Have you ever suddenly felt a need to fix something in the house or to weed the garden? This is how the Spirit can work—he leads us to do good" (*Ensign*, April 1989, 20).

Dallin H. Oaks: "... Each of us should **pray that the Lord will unfold the scriptures to our understanding**. (D&C 32:4.) God has promised that if we ask him, we will "receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that [we may] know the mysteries and peaceable things—**that which bringeth joy**, that which bringeth life eternal." (D&C 42:61). (*The Lord's Way* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 34).

The Spirit can enlighten our minds with new ideas, insights, flashes of inspiration, and strong feelings or impressions.

<u>The Prophet Joseph Smith</u>: "The Spirit of Revelation is in connection with these blessings. A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing unto you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.) those things that were presented into your minds by the Spirit of God [D&C 85:6; Enos 10], will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus" (HC, 3:381).

C. He brings peace to our minds.

Oliver Cowdery began his labors as scribe in the translation of the Book of Mormon, April 7, 1829. He had already received a divine manifestation of the truth of the Prophet's testimony respecting the plates on which was engraved the Book of Mormon record.

<u>D&C 6:20:</u> Behold, thou art Oliver, and I have spoken unto thee because of thy desires; therefore, treasure up these words in thy heart. Be faithful and diligent in keeping the commandments of God, and I will encircle thee in the arms of my love.

<u>D&C 6:22-23</u>: Verily, verily, I say unto you, **if you desire a further witness**, cast your mind upon the night **that you cried unto me in your heart**, that you might know concerning the truth of these things. **Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God?**

<u>D&C 136:32-33</u>: Let him that is ignorant learn wisdom by humbling himself and calling upon the Lord his God, that his eyes may be opened that he may see, and his ears opened that he may hear; For my Spirit is sent forth into the world to enlighten the humble and contrite, and to the condemnation of the ungodly.

Richard G. Scott defines the voice of revelation as **internal**, **not external**: "I would explain that an impression to the *mind* is very specific. **Detailed words** can be heard or felt and written as though the instruction were being dictated. A communication to the *heart* is a more **general impression**. The Lord often begins by giving impressions. Where there is recognition of their importance and they are obeyed, one gains more capacity to receive more detailed instruction to the *mind*. An impression to the **heart**, if followed, **is fortified by a more specific instruction to the mind**... We often leave the most precious personal direction of the Spirit unheard **because we do not record and respond to the first promptings that come** to us when the Lord chooses to direct us or when impressions come in response to urgent prayer" ("Helping Others to Be Spiritually Led," General Authority Address, *The Twenty-Second Annual Church Educational System Religious Educators Symposium*, Brigham Young University, 11 August 1998, 4,11).

D. He may cause a burning in the bosom.

Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–9 was given to Joseph Smith for Oliver Cowdery in response to the process of translating sacred records. There the burning of the bosom was appropriate. The principle can apply to personal revelation, but more precisely it related to the translation of the Book of Mormon.

D&C 9:7-9: Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me. But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is **right I will cause that your bosom shall burn** within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right. But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me.

<u>Boyd K. Packer</u>: "This burning in the bosom is not purely a physical sensation. It is more like a warm light shining within your being" (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1994, 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 60).

<u>Dallin H. Oaks</u>: "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? <u>If that is the meaning, I have never had a burning in the bosom.</u> Surely, the word 'burning' in this scripture signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity" (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 13).

E. He often reveals things "line upon line, precept upon precept" rather than all at once.

<u>D&C 98:11-12</u>: And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God. For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.

<u>Richard G. Scott</u>: "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" (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1989, 40; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 32).

2. Cautions about personal revelation

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

<u>D&C 109: 44</u>: But thy word must be fulfilled. Help thy servants to say, with thy grace assisting them: Thy will be done, O Lord, and not ours.

<u>Matthew 6:10:</u> Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.

"Prayer is the act by which the will of the Father and the will of the child are brought into correspondence with each other. The object of prayer is **not to change the will of God**, but **to secure** for ourselves and for others **blessings that God is already willing to grant, but that are made conditional on our asking for them**" (*Bible Dictionary*, 752-753).

<u>Neal A. Maxwell</u>: "So very much of pure prayer seems to be the **process of discovering**, **rather than requesting**, the will of our Father in heaven and **the aligning ourselves therewith**" (*All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, 93).

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

<u>D&C 88: 68</u>: Therefore, sanctify yourselves **that your minds become single to God**, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and **it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.**

<u>Dallin H. Oaks</u>: "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: "Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will" applies to every communication from our Heavenly Father. We cannot force spiritual things" (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 10–11).

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

D&C 28:6-7: And <u>thou shalt not command him</u> who is at thy head, and at the head of the church; For I have given him the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed, until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead.

<u>**D&C 43:2-4**</u>: For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations from my hand. And this ye shall know assuredly—that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me. But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.

<u>Dallin H. Oaks</u>: "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 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).

<u>Joseph Smith</u>: "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*, 21).

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

At no time will Satan lead someone to do good. Hyrum Smith was told:

<u>D&C 11:12</u>: And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, **put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good**—yea, to **do justly**, to **walk humbly**, to **judge righteously**; and **this is my Spirit**.

<u>D&C 11:13-14</u>: Verily, verily, I say unto you, I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy; And then shall ye know, or by this shall you know, all things whatsoever you desire of me, which are pertaining unto things of righteousness, in faith believing in me that you shall receive.

<u>D&C 50:23-24</u>: And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness. That which is of God is light; and he that **receiveth light**, and **continueth** in God, **receiveth more light**; and that **light groweth brighter** and brighter until the perfect day.

Sometimes what we think is a revelation may be a projection of our own desires or false revelations coming from Satan.

<u>The First Presidency</u>: "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).

WE CAN KNOW IF A REVELATION COMES FROM GOD IF:

- It leads one to do good.
- Enlightens the mind.
- Fills the soul with joy.
- It edifies.
- It fills one with light, not darkness.

3. When revelation is not received or recognized

Although the Spirit may be the most important aspect of our latter-day work, many of us do not know how it functions; too often we are worked upon by the Spirit and do not even know it.

<u>3 Nephi 9:20</u>: And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto **me a broken heart and a contrite spirit**. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.

If personal revelation does not come when we desire:

a. Be patient and continue to wait faithfully on the Lord

<u>D&C 98:2</u>: Waiting patiently on the Lord, for your prayers have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and are recorded with this seal and testament—the Lord hath sworn and decreed that they shall be granted.

- b. Increase our efforts to be in tune spiritually so we can receive and recognize the whisperings of the Spirit.
- **c. 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.
- d. Be more faithful in obeying the commandments--<u>Isaiah 59:2</u>: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.
- e. Set the matter aside for a while. Flashes of inspiration often come when we least expect them, while our minds are no longer consumed by the matter.
- f. Recognize that we may be seeking counsel on matters that we should determine for ourselves, using our best judgment based on study and reason.
- g. 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.

Two conditions must exist when seeking revelation:

1. WHAT WE ASK FOR MUST BE RIGHT

- "And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right. . ." (3 Nephi 18:20)
- "And now, if God. . .doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask *that is right* . . ." (Mosiah 4:21)
- "My God will give me, *if I ask not amiss* . . . (2 Nephi 4:35)
- "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given you, that is expedient for you." (D&C 84:64)

2. WE MUST BE RIGHT

- "For the Lord hath heard thy prayers and hath *judged of thy righteousness*." (Mosiah 3:4)
- "If God . .doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask that is right, in faith, believing that ye shall receive (Mosiah 4:21)
- "Ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith . . . (Moroni 4:10)
- "... thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will." (Helaman 10:5)
- "But let him *ask in faith, nothing wavering* . . . (James 1:6)

<u>Elder Boyd K. Packer</u>: "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.' 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" (*Conference Report*, Oct.1979, 29–30; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 21).

<u>Richard G. Scott</u>: "It is vitally important to recognize that **the Lord also responds a third way to prayer by** *withholding an answer* when the prayer is offered. Why would He do that? He is our perfect Father. He loves us beyond our capacity to understand. He knows what is best for us. He sees the end from the beginning. He wants us to act to gain needed experience: When He answers yes, it is to give us confidence. When He answers *no*, it is to prevent error. When He *withholds an answer*, it is to have us grow through faith in Him, obedience to His commandments, and a willingness to act on truth. We are expected to assume accountability by acting on a decision that is consistent with His teachings without prior confirmation. We are not to sit passively waiting or to murmur because the Lord has not spoken. We are to act. ("Learning to Recognize Answers to Prayer," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 31)

A STRONG RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURES AND RECEIVING REVELATION:

<u>Bruce R. McConkie</u>: "I sometimes think that one of the best-kept secrets of the kingdom is that **the scriptures open the door to the receipt of revelation.** However talented men may be in administrative matters; however eloquent they may be in expressing their views; however learned they may be in the worldly things, **they will be denied the sweet whisperings of the Spirit that might have been theirs unless they pay the price of studying, pondering, and praying about the scriptures**" (*Ensign*, May 1986, 81).

<u>Carlos E. Asay</u>: "I fear many of us rush about from day to day taking for granted the Holy Scriptures. We scramble to honor appointments with physicians, lawyers, and businessmen. Yet we think nothing of postponing interviews with Deity, postponing scripture study. How much better it would be if we planned and held sacred fifteen or twenty minutes a day for reading the scriptures. Such interviews with Deity would help us recognize his voice and enable us to receive guidance in all our affairs. We must look to God through the scriptures" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 53)

Richard G. Scott: "Now I share an experience that taught me a way to gain spiritual guidance.

In a Sunday School class, in that environment, strong impressions began to flow to me. <u>I wrote them down</u>. The message included specific counsel on how to become more effective as an instrument in the hands of the Lord. I received such an outpouring of impressions that were so personal that I felt it was not appropriate to record them in the midst of a Sunday School class. I sought a more private location, where <u>I continued to write</u> the feelings that flooded into my mind and heart as faithfully as possible.

After each powerful impression was <u>recorded</u>, I pondered the feelings I had received to determine **if I had accurately expressed them** <u>in writing</u>. As a result, I made a few minor changes to what had been written. **Then I studied** their meaning and application in my own life.

Subsequently I prayed, reviewing with the Lord what I thought I had been taught by the Spirit. When a feeling of peace came, I thanked Him for the guidance given. I was then impressed to ask, "Was there yet more to be given?" I received further impressions, and <u>the process of writing down the impressions</u>, pondering, and praying for confirmation was repeated. Again I was prompted to ask, "Is there more I should know?" And there was. When that last, most sacred experience was concluded, I had received some of the most precious, specific, personal direction one could hope to obtain in this life. Had I not responded to the first impressions and <u>recorded them</u>, I would not have received the last, most precious guidance.

I believe that you can leave the most precious, personal direction of the Spirit <u>unheard because you do not respond</u> to, <u>record</u>, and apply the first promptings that come to you" (*"To Acquire Spiritual Guidance," CR*, October 2009).

<u>Jay E. Jensen:</u> "We need not assume that the Holy Ghost works upon us only in dramatic or spectacular ways. The Lord has given to the members of his church the privilege of having the Holy Ghost as a companion. With that great gift, we realize that, as long as we are worthy, the Spirit will work with us in numerous ways. We would do well to recognize how often the Spirit inspires us and work to cultivate that special companionship" ("Have I Received an Answer from the Spirit?" *Ensign*, April 1989).

<u>Neal A. Maxwell</u>: Actually, everything depends—Initially and finally—on our desires. These shape our thought patterns. **Our desires thus precede our deeds and lie at the very cores of our souls**, tilting us toward or away from God. **God can educate our desires**. Others seek to manipulate our desires. But it is we who form the desires, the "thoughts and intents of [our] hearts" (Mosiah 5:13). The end rule is "according to [our] desires ... shall it be done unto [us]" (D&C 11:17), "for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts" (D&C 137:9). **One's individual will thus remains uniquely his. God will not override it nor overwhelm it**. Hence we'd better want the consequences of what we want! ("Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 23).

<u>M. Russell Ballard:</u> "Just think of the spiritual strength we could gain in our lives and how much more effective we would be as teachers, missionaries, and friends <u>if we studied the scriptures regularly</u>. I am sure we, like Hyrum, will be able to endure our greatest trials <u>if we search the word of God as he did</u>. ("Hyrum Smith, " *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 7).