

## DEVELOPING A TESTIMONY OF GOSPEL TRUTHS

**from *MORMON DOCTRINE* by Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

**TESTIMONY:** A testimony of the gospel is the sure knowledge, received by revelation from the Holy Ghost, of the divinity of the great latter-day work. If the sole source of one's knowledge comes from reason or logic, or persuasive argument, it is not a testimony of the gospel. It is the promptings of the Spirit rather than reason alone that is the true foundation upon which the testimony rests.

**Three great truths must be included in every valid testimony:**

- 1) That Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world
- 2) That Joseph Smith is the Prophet of God through whom the gospel was restored in this dispensation, and
- 3) That the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is "the only true and living church on the face of the earth."

Any accountable person can gain a testimony of the gospel by obedience to that law upon which the receipt of such knowledge is predicated. This is the formula:

- He must **desire** to know the truth of the gospel, of the Book of Mormon, or of whatever is involved.
- He must **study** and learn the basic facts relative to the matter involved.
- He must **practice** the principles and truths learned, conforming his life to them.
- He must **pray** to the Father in the name of Christ *in faith*, and the truth will then be made manifest by revelation by the power of the Holy Ghost.

**WITH THE RECEIPT OF A TESTIMONY COMES THE OBLIGATION TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE WORLD OF THE DIVINITY OF THE LORD'S WORK.** Men are not saved by virtue of a testimony alone, but a testimony is the beginning of real spiritual progress. With it comes a greater obligation to serve God, keep his commandments, and walk with the light that has been received.

**from "A Pure Testimony" by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin, November 2000 *ENSIGN***

For Latter—day Saints, a testimony is "the assurance of the reality, truth, and goodness of God, of the teachings and atonement of Jesus Christ, and of the divine calling of latter-day prophets. . .It is knowledge **buttressed by divine personal confirmation by the Holy Ghost.**"

All who seek to know the truth may, through revelations of the Spirit, know for themselves.

How does one acquire a personal testimony?

- Study the words of Moroni: "Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things. . . ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men . . . Ponder it in your hearts. And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true, and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost (Mor.10:3-4).
- Be sincere. Study, Ponder, Pray sincerely, having faith.

A testimony of the truth of the gospel does not come the same way to all people.

- Some receive it in a unique, life-changing experience.
- Others gain a testimony slowly, almost imperceptibly until, one day, they simply know.

The more we study the scriptures and pray, the more likely we can enthusiastically share our testimonies of the gospel with others.

- Church members with a testimony are under covenant "to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places."
- President Boyd K. Packer said: "A testimony is found in the bearing of it. Somewhere in your quest for spiritual knowledge, there is that 'leap of faith.' It is the moment when you have gone to the edge of the light and step into the darkness to discover that the way is lighted ahead for just a footstep or two."