

“I Had Seen a Vision”

Lesson 3: Joseph Smith—History 1:1-26; *Our Heritage*, pgs. 1-4

Consequences of the Great Apostasy included: (D&C 1:15-16; Joseph Smith—History 1:8-9, 19, 21)

- No priesthood authority remained on the earth
- No apostles and no prophets on the earth
- Knowledge of the true nature of God was lost
- The doctrines of the gospel were corrupted
- Sacred ordinances such as baptism were altered
- The original Church divided into competing, discordant, and apostate groups

Truths revealed in the First Vision:

- God the Father and Jesus Christ live
- The Father and Son are real, separate beings with glorified bodies of flesh and bones
- We are created in the image of God
- Satan and his power are real, but God's power is infinitely greater
- God hears and answers prayers. He cares for us.
- No church on earth had the fullness of Christ's gospel
- Revelation has not ceased

THE FIRST VISION USHERED IN THE RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL by Ted L. Gibbons

There seem to have been five steps taken by the boy prophet Joseph Smith in preparation for the first vision. I have remembered them with this little sentence which helps me both remember and apply the lessons.

If you want to uncover the truth, you will need a SPADE.

S=STUDY

Notice how the following words from Joseph's account of the first vision (Joseph Smith—History 1) indicate his efforts to learn the truth by study."

- * "I attended their several meetings" (1:8)
- * "I was unable to come to any certain conclusion" (1:8)
- * "I was one day reading the epistle of James" (1:11)
- * "I reflected on it again and again" (1:12)
- * "At length I came to the conclusion" (1:13)

P=PONDER

- * "My mind was called up to serious reflection" (1:8)
- * "I often said to myself: What is to be done" (1:10)
- * "Who of all these parties are right?" (1:10)
- * It was impossible for [me] . . . to come to any certain conclusion" (1:8)

A=ALONE

- * "I retired to the woods" (1:14)
- * "Having looked around me and finding myself alone" (1:15)
- * The instruction to seek the Lord in a place free from distractions has been given often. See Alma 34:26,27; Matt.14:23; Matt.6:6; Al.33:7.

D=DESIRES

- * I knelt down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God" (1:15)
- * In the area of desire, see 3 N.19:24; 1 N.2:16; Enos 1:12; Ether 3:2

E=EXERTION

- * " But exerting all my powers to call upon God" (1:16)
- * "Just at this moment of greatest alarm" (1:16)

FOUR KEYS TO EFFECTIVE PRAYER

by Kevin Hinckley

One of the lessons of the First Vision is that it provides a pattern for our own effective prayers.

STEP 1: KNOW YOUR NEEDS (HUMILITY)

We think we know what we want and need, but our own desires need to be educated until we come to be taught what it is that we really need.

STEP 2: KNOW YOUR REDEEMER (TRUST)

Do you believe He only wants your happiness and that He has the ability and desire to answer your prayers?

STEP 3: KNOW HIS TENDER MERCIES TOWARD YOU (GRATITUDE)

Do you know from past experience what great things "He hath done for your fathers" and for you?

To express that gratitude tenderizes the heart and sharpens the ears.

STEP 4: KNOW HIS VOICE (LISTEN)

Listen without preconceived ideas or agendas; just believe that what He will tell you will be a greater blessing than what you could imagine.