

Knowing The Truth of ALL Things

One of the most beautiful patterns in the Book of Mormon, which we quote all the time, is in Moroni 10:3-5. We think of it as a promise to know if the Book of Mormon is true, and it is, but it is also a pattern with a promise. When we understand the pattern a bit better we can, and should, use it for every question in our lives. As we do this about everything, we will get good at it and be able to receive answers consistently. It will become a tool like muscle testing, except we will have greater confidence in it because it will also be a connection to God on a moments notice.

Let's take a look at this pattern for just a minute to see if we can discover God's promises to us regarding getting revelation. Each of the numbers shows us one of the steps of the pattern.

*"Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall (1)**read these things**, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would (2)**remember how merciful the Lord hath been** unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and **ponder it in your hearts**(2b). And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would (3) **ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ**, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a (4) **sincere heart**, with (5)**real intent**, having (6) **faith in Christ**, (7) **he will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost**. And by the power of the (8) **Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things**."*

Prayer Pattern

1. Receive the Word of God
2. Gratitude (remember and ponder)
3. Ask in Christ's name
4. Sincere heart
5. Real intent
6. Faith in Christ
7. Manifest the truth unto you

8/1. Know truth of all things (Repeat the pattern again and again)

This is the model for getting answers to ALL our questions. We understand this pattern, to a degree, on a logical basis, but we sometimes we struggle to DO this pattern. Somehow the application of the pattern escapes us, and we strive to receive answers to prayer when God promised us that we can know all truth all the time.

1. Step ONE is about being given something: “*when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them*”. We must recognize God has given us everything we have, in His wisdom, and there are always choices regarding all things. Every opportunity to choose is a gift from God, so this first step is continually before us. Firstly, everything we have is a gift, and secondly, our agency to chose is a gift. We receive nothing from our own merit, it all comes because of God’s love.

This step could be about receiving His word (like the Book of Mormon), or an opportunity to do something (like marrying someone, or taking a new job), or a question about new information (an idea someone presents to us, or a thought about whether something is true or not). Or even about what to eat and drink. We receive something and have a choice to make, (believe or not believe, go or not go, learn or not learn, which item to eat or not eat). Having options is the first step to getting answers from God.

If our question is about understanding a truth, we may have heard the word of God, and wondered how and if it applies to us. “*Faith cometh by hearing...the word of God.*”(¹*Romans 10:17*) Also, when receiving God’s word in scriptures, seeing that He answers others, we start to hope He will also answer us. Now a seed of hope/faith is planted within our hearts, and we begin to desire more from God for ourselves.

All questions and opportunities are blessings. When we have questions, it is an opportunity to have our faith renewed by asking and getting answers from God. It’s also an opportunity to grow in our understanding of God’s ways and to get clean of our perceptions and ideas that are not in sync with Him. Questions

¹ Romans 10:17

can push us to be humble and ask for understanding beyond our own ability to see or know. To have a question is a gift indeed! Questions confirm the truth that God has given us an abundance in life and He wants to give us what we desire.

2. Step TWO is to “*remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.*” As we said in Step ONE, God gives us everything we have: questions, choices, problems, opportunities, and obstacles. In these we have the freedom to choose, learn, understand and grow toward God or away from Him. Growth away from God may seem wrong, but in the end, even this is meant to educate us that He is good, and anything without Him is not what we want.

Gratitude is crucial when we start asking questions, but it's not because God wants us to give Him kudos. He is not that kind of a Man. He asks us to be grateful because it is good for *us*. Gratitude puts us into the state of preparedness to receive more. When we are grateful before we ask for extra blessings, we start to recognize how merciful and loving God is. When we are honest and grateful, we begin to see His hand in our lives, which creates more faith, which makes getting answers faster and easier. If we don't think we've had many experiences being blessed, we are told to look back in history, going back to Adam and others to see His mercy and grace from the beginning of time. Surely we can find something to be grateful for; this gratitude provides us power to ask in confidence that He has, and will continue to answer us.

Gratitude creates an immediate shift in us that takes us from needy to blessed. It reminds us of how good God is and helps us find the faith to turn to Him. Gratitude could be called the “GREAT RETURN,” shifting us immediately, as we land facing Him. We can turn from a place of hurt, resentment, fear, pride, shame or any other negative emotion and face directly into God's love and grace. God's love is what we are always seeking in our quest for at-one-ment.

The root of gratitude, gratification and grace are all similar. When we are grateful and feel gratified by God, we feel delight, enchantment, and pleasure because of God's grace, blessings, and mercy. Even if we don't acknowledge

God specifically, when in gratitude we are thanking and starting an engine that will eventually again bring back to us what God gave us to start with. Others will come to us in gratitude as we are grateful for the blessings we receive. It is God's reciprocity pattern. Even HE participates in this pattern as He thanks us for what we do for Him. He has NO need or obligation to thank anyone, as He has given us all that we have, but when we are obedient, He blesses us again.² If we think that He is only blessing us because He "owes us" then we do not know our God. He is more generous, kind, gracious and grateful than we can even begin to understand.

3. The third step is to ***"ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ"***. Here we are told not to wait until we are perfect, have it figured out, understand the matter entirely, or have pondered it a ton. Moroni tells us to ask before we have done anything except pondered His graciousness. There is a beautiful paradox here. We are going to start with asking, but we may not get an answer right away because there are other things required. Asking may even seem like a contradiction to the admonishment by God to Oliver Cowdery, who ***"took no thought save it was to ask me"***,³ but it is not. Oliver asked, without doing anything else. He did not do the first steps or go on to the next four steps. He stopped after asking, just as we often do. We are to have gratitude and ask, AND DO the next four steps as well. There is a lot more to asking, than just demanding an answer.

The admonition to Oliver is similar, except Moroni instructs us to ask first, stopping to notice the questions, doubts, fears, and concerns that come up after we have asked. We're to start by opening the channel of communication and then pondering and studying it out in our mind — with God in the conversation! Remember we must to pray always,⁴ so this takes both the admonition to pray always, and to ponder and study it out, all into account. Sometimes we cannot see all of the perplexity we have with an issue until we have asked the question. In fact, the fears, misgivings, doubts, and uneasiness may not show up until after we ask our question. Therefore, Moroni tells us to go ahead and ask, and then takes us into the pondering and thoughtfulness of

² Mosiah 2:19-25

³ D&C 9:7

the questions we ask. It can be done the other way around like Oliver is told to do, but just because God tells Oliver to ponder, and not just to ask, does not preclude that we can ask before or after we have studied it out in our mind. We can do both as long as we know we are going to be doing some pondering, contemplating and studying eventually.

4. The next thing required away to get answers is to “*ask with a sincere heart.*” Sincerity is part of the pondering process and a qualification. Sincerely asking for God to teach us and instruct us may seem like a no-brainer, but it’s not. We must remove our own ideas and desires from our hearts, ponder what we have received and be grateful, being clean and sincere enough to hear what God is saying. We cannot expect God to conform to our idea, if we don’t want HIS answer, why ask? We think the answer we seek, **should** and **will** look a certain way. And when it doesn’t, do we decided we don’t want to hear what the Lord says? Are we afraid that if we’re willing to accept anything, we’ll get hurt, so we choose not to trust God? This step to have a sincere heart about what God might be saying and be open to His will is paramount to getting answers to our petitions. We cannot ask just to check it off our list of things to do and then say, “well, I asked, so I am justified in doing it my way now” We must sincerely want God’s answer.

In other words, we should not ask God a question we do not desire Him to answer. God is under no obligation to answer any of our questions if we do not sincerely want Him to answer. He will not force us to hear Him, obey Him, or believe Him. He will not force us to do anything. He waits until we sincerely want His help. Sometimes that takes us getting so sick of our own ideas, designs, and plans that we become sincere and ask in despair. Paradoxically, that is when He can answer our questions, but not before. **We** stop Him from answering because **we** do not sincerely want His answers. Sometimes we just want to say we’ve asked, blaming God when we don’t get answers. Or may be we think He should validate our choice, without intending to follow Him and do what He says is best, which maybe the hardest thing. God knows our hearts, letting us live with our double nature until we’re willing to be sincere and have a desire to know the truth.

⁴ D&C 75:11, D&C 93:49, Ephesians 6:18, D&C 31:12, 3 Nephi 18:15, Luke 21:36

At times, we can still get answers, even if we are not sincere. God's kind, generous nature kick in and allow us, in the beginning, to receive answers before we've done the work to get them. It is a benevolent God who knows we are not always ready to give up our fears. At times, He allows us to receive answers before we are clean about them, but this will not last forever. God gives this grace so we can begin to have the experience of receiving answers and then start to trust Him. We must trust that He wants what is best for us and will answer our prayers. Eventually, we are expected to become clean and sincere before the will answers come. We do this with Repent and Replace (R&R). We repent of our fears, doubts, and ideas before we can expect answers. We will be required to be clean first. God does this for many reasons. If we have our own ideas about something, they will usually stop us from receiving His will and His answers. Our will supersedes hearing God's instructions, answers, and directions. Fear is a lack of faith, and the two cannot be in the same person at the same time,⁵ so we will be expected to rid ourselves of fear and replace it with faith, to get the answers we need and want.

A sincere heart addresses our emotions and desires. To get clean and have a sincere heart we must repent of our desires to control the answer. God is telling us to stop marinating in emotion and get clean — out of emotion. We are not to desire our way, be afraid of God's way, or be excited about the answers before us. We must sincerely want to know God's will. We must FIRST be at peace with any answer God sees fit to give, or we are not sincere about getting His advice, wisdom, and knowledge.

To achieve a sincere heart, we must first be aware of what we feel. Are we afraid or desiring of any answer? If any emotions, but the courage to accept God's will exist, we must get rid of them before we can proceed to the next step. If we are not willing to get a sincere and clean heart, we do not want answers from God.

To do this we say something like:

A. "Father, please forgive me for being afraid of getting an answer to my question, for doubting that You want what is best for me, and feeling afraid that you want something different than what I want. Please forgive me for believing

⁵ D&C 63:16, Hebrews 11:27

it will be too hard to do what you want me to do, that your will isn't the best thing, or that You just want me to do what is hardest to do. Please forgive me for thinking and feeling that if the answer looks like _(fill in the blank of how you think the answer should look)_ that I will not like it, or I will feel _(fill in the blank about what you think you will feel if given a certain answer)_ about it and then I won't do as you asked. Etc, (this is just a prayer in your own words acknowledging your fears, doubts, hopes, and misgivings).

B. Father, please apply the atoning blood of Jesus Christ to my fears and doubts.

C. I choose to trust and have faith that whatever You tell me to do and whatever Your Spirit teaches me, is true. I Choose to believe you. I choose to have confidence that You know more than I do regarding this and to follow Your instructions even if they seem too hard. I choose to feel safe and confident in Your direction and guidance, I choose to feel and love the answers You give me." Etc.

Ideally, we do this prayer in our own words. It's just a prayer where we give (repent of) to God our doubts, fears, and lack of faith then chose to believe, hope, trust, and love that God will answer and protect us. We want to know that His voice is truer than our own and that we are choosing to feel and hear Him. We also must give Him our previous judgments about the thing we are praying. If we believe that something can't be true, because we can't see how it fits with another truth, then we have judged it and are stopping God from teaching us more. We give that judgment to God, and allow Him to teach us more truth, and how the new knowledge fits, or does not fit. Unless we relinquish our perceptions and ideas, His truths will not be able to come in and enlighten our minds.

Every Kingdom has a law given to it. If we increase into a higher kingdom, we may be given new laws that look a bit different from the lower kingdom. If we judge that something is not possible because we cannot understand the higher law, then we will not be able to enter the greater Kingdom either.*⁶

The words we say should be as directly connected to our experiences as we can make them. We must be as precise about our fears, misgivings, ideas,

⁶ D&C 88:31-45

concerns, and lack of faith as we can be. Remember we must admit that we cannot keep the law entirely on our own. Without Christ, we will fail. Once we can see where our weaknesses lie, we can be given the gift to see and do the law better. Change, or repentance, is about acknowledging that we are not perfect, and then allowing God to make us perfect. We must be humble and repentant before we can receive the power to be complete. God cannot perfect us if we already act like we're perfect, which means we are not willing to acknowledge our flaws. If He did, we would continue to think we did it on our own, when it is all about knowing God and His power and love, not being in our ego.

The word "sincere" means to be free of deceit, hypocrisy, or falseness. We must be genuine and real, earnest and pure in our heart to find what is real from God. He requires us to willingly look into our hearts and see what is there. If we go to God with our own feelings, ideas, and beliefs and don't really want His truth or direction, we are not able to be open enough to receive His instructions. If He gives us answers we won't follow, it will damn us. He will not hurt us by telling us to do something He knows we're not willing to do or believe. He respects our agency too much to give us answers we don't want.

5. Next Moroni tells us that we must have "*real intent.*" Real intent may seem like the same thing as a sincere heart, but it is not. Intent as a noun refers to "the state of one's **mind** at the time one carries out an action⁷". As an adjective it means "firmly fixed; concentrated, having the **mind and will** focused on a specific action."⁸ Both the definitions as a noun and an adjective help us understand the meaning of intent. In this instance, our intent (mind and will) would be focused on receiving the will of God and following Him. We need to be clean of our ideas and motives. In the previous step God addressed our heart, and asked us to be sure that it is pure and sincere, now the Lord wants us to clean up our mind. We know from reading D&C 8:2-3 that these two things, when combined, give us the spirit of revelation. "*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*

⁷ <https://dictionary.search.yahoo.com/ intent>

⁸ *ibid.*

spirit of revelation; behold, this is the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.”

The state of our mind is crucial when we start to seek for understanding from the Lord. Our mind, and the intent we hold there, must be firmly fixed and focused on receiving God’s and being grateful for it instead of just proving our own ideas. Our intent must be REAL. What does it mean to be real? It must be “True and actual; not imaginary, alleged, **or ideal**. Genuine and authentic; not artificial or spurious. Being no less than what is stated; Free of pretense, falsehood, or affectation.*⁹” If we think we can lie to God, having the intent to do our own thing, and believe our own ideas, over what God is about to tell us, He will NOT answer us. He will not lead and guide us if we do not intend to follow Him; if we do not REALLY mean to follow Him. If we have doubts and fears, this is the time to state them honestly with the Lord. He will not reject us. In fact, He cannot come in and perform miracles in our hearts if we do not state what our hearts and minds are really doing. *“For behold, God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good; for if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with real intent it profiteth him nothing. For behold, it is not counted unto him for righteousness. For behold, if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God. And likewise also is it counted evil unto a man, if he shall pray and not with real intent of heart; yea, and it profiteth him nothing, for God receiveth none such.”¹⁰* (Moroni 7:6-9) Moroni is very clear about our intent. If our intention is not “real,” clean, or pure, we cannot expect an answer, for God has not received the prayer to begin with. This may sound harsh, but it causes us to have power if we hold the responsibility to have pure, clean intentions when we pray. If we do not, we are only praying to ourselves — trying to secure our own ideas and plans, which is void of faith in God.

In the bible a man came asking Jesus to heal his son, yet he knew his faith was weak. In order to gain more faith the man honestly stated his weakness:

⁹ <https://dictionary.search.yahoo.com/real>

¹⁰ Moroni 7:6-9

“Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.”*¹¹ Paradoxically we must state our unbelief through repentance and choose to believe. Through R&R the Savior can begin to mend our doubts.

The Repent & Replace pattern takes us out of doubt and into the grace of God’s love and forgiveness and puts faith back into us through agency. Our intentions focus on the mind, thoughts, and beliefs more than the heart or feelings. It is one thing to think something and quite a different thing to feel it. Thoughts lead to feelings — which are energy in motion and become enmeshed, and convoluted to seem like the same thing. If we do not know where emotion starts and thought ends that is ok, we just look at both. What we think and feel both stop us from getting answers to prayer. We have control over both. Our thoughts, dwelt on long enough become feelings. Feelings also start after we have experiences that validate our thinking and feeling something.

Additionally, our unbelief must also be repented of. Many believe they can’t hear what God is saying. This needs to be repented of. Sometimes we believe we know best, or judge we are not good enough. That only prophets and leaders can get answers. Any one of these beliefs, or feelings constitute the opposite of real intent. They are false or alleged intent. If we do not truly want to know God’s answer, or we have decided that the answer has to be one way for us to be happy, loved, accepted, right or whatever, our intent is not to obey or receive God’s instruction, it is to do as we desire, hear our own will, and not trust God’s will first. If we are asking but afraid that we won’t get an answer, we’re not being honest about what we feel. We are expecting God to prove something to us, and while He does prove lots of things, He does not try and convince us using miracles if we have not chosen to believe Him. He will not force us to believe Him. We can choose unbelief and doubt, instead of focusing on the evidence that He does answer our prayers. He will not make us receive His voice. Just because we are afraid of getting an answer does not mean we are bad, or wrong or evil,

Answers are not emotion. They are something completely different. It takes us getting clean and out of emotion to be able to see this. When we can feel

¹¹ Mark 9:24

clearly, we can hear God clearly and answers come easily. If we don't trust that God is going to tell us the best answer, we cannot expect to hear His answer. Would you answer your child if you knew they would not listen to you and wouldn't follow your advice? You may for a while, but if someone continually disregard your advice and did their own thing, we stop telling them what we think. We know they won't listen anyway, why waste the energy? Our responsibility is to believe and trust God and let our fears go. That is our part of the covenant of receiving answers. His part is to answer — Always. He never lies or doesn't do His part.

The equation of heart and mind are SO important. I cannot stress them enough. They are everything! If we pray about marrying someone but don't want to hear the answer; (say for example we don't want to hear God tell us that it's not a good idea, do we think God is going to force us to hear that? If He tells us and we do not follow Him then we are held accountable. He would rather us learn from our mistakes that we do not know what is best and start to come to Him in sincerity of heart and mind.

If we ask God to tell us if we should take a certain job but we're afraid He is going to say either yes or no, (or fear both answers) will He tell us? Not likely. Or maybe He does tell us, but because of fear we won't be able to hear Him; our emotion gets in the way. We wonder why He didn't answer, but He doesn't yell. His voice is still and small and when we are full of fear, doubt, excitement or desire we can't hear the little voice, we only hear our own big voice.

If we try and say affirmations, but never get rid of the thought/fear we keep having, we don't have the clarity to hear GOD's will instead of ours. It is like putting icing on a poop cake. It may be pretty, but does anyone want to eat it? It's still made from poop. Putting nice words over crap doesn't make the crap edible.

We must be 'one' or single minded in our intentions, being honest and real. Fully acknowledging our weaknesses and giving them to Father through the atonement and then picking up the next part of the pattern — faith and truth.

God's promise to answer our prayers when our heart and mind are clean is spoke of in D&C 8:1 to Oliver Cowdery. "*Oliver Cowdery, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that assuredly as the Lord liveth, who is your God and your Redeemer,*

even so surely shall you receive a knowledge of whatsoever things you shall (2)ask in faith, (3)with an honest heart, (4)believing that you shall receive” These steps correlate with the steps of Moroni 10: 3-5. He tells Oliver to (2) ask (3) with an honest heart, which is also a sincere heart, then He goes on to address the mind when he directed Oliver to (4) **believe** he would receive a knowledge of the things he asked. This is the next step in Moroni 10:4 also. God goes on to tell Oliver, *“behold, I will tell you in your 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.”* The mind and the heart must be united.

If we aren't getting answers it is because our mind is going one way and our heart another; they are in two different places at once. We cannot be divided in ourselves if we want to get answers from God, we must be ONE — whole. When we are clean of our own motives, ideas and fears we are prepared to receive. When we have a great deal of emotion attached to all the possible outcomes we are emotionally compromised and cannot feel the spirit of God.

6. *“having **faith in Christ**”* - Getting answers to prayer requires us to have faith in Christ. This seems like a no-brainer. If we didn't have faith we wouldn't be praying, so this must be referring to something else. This is a sequential pattern. The pieces build upon each other, it is to be applied in this order: we are to (1) believe and (2)have gratitude, (3)ask, sincerely desire an answer being clean of (4)heart and (5)mind, and then bring our faith **back into** the equation. So far we have worked through our fears, our control issues, and given God our will completely, so now we are to state what we choose to believe instead of the old dubious emotions and intents. We are to now state what we choose to believe. Speaking in faith that what we want most is to be answered by God, and not from our own will or desire. In other words, what we choose to believe. This belief is a choice so we must choose what we are going to believe and speak it. “I choose to feel, think and believe...”

There is no dubious intent here. When we choose something we do not say that we are perfect in it or that we know it to be true, we just state that we are

choosing to believe it and our mind and the Spirit make way for us to start believing.

The mind seeks to find evidence for what we already believe. Most of us have had the experience of not receiving an answer, or when the heavens seemed sealed to us. In those experiences are the proof the mind needs to stop us from being vulnerable again and seeking to prove we are right: “God doesn’t answer MY prayers.” R&R to get out of this pattern should be done as well. We can choose to believe Christ will manifest the truth unto us, or we can choose to go on believing He won’t. This is choosing to believe that we are important enough, loved enough and good enough to be told by God the answer to our prayer. If we do not have this belief then we must go back and repent of not believing Christ. We must believe what He has said “ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened, seek and ye shall find.” If we do not believe He will answer would we believe it if He did? We must find a way to be ‘one’ of heart and mind so there is nothing that is conflicting inside of us to throw doubt into what we desire — an answer from God.

We must become single minded, meaning that our whole self is on the same page and we do not have hopes and dreams and desires for something that is contrary to the will of God. We do not want to be seen of men more than we want to be heard and loved of God. We are to search out God instead of the acclaim of man or the things of the world.

God told the saints in 1831 that they had the same problem then too. *“Behold and lo, mine eyes are upon you, and the heavens and the earth are in mine hands, and the riches of eternity are mine to give. Ye endeavored to believe that ye should receive the blessing which was offered unto you; but behold, verily I say unto you **there were fears in your hearts, and verily this is the reason that ye did not receive.**”*¹² Fear will always stop us from gaining answers, blessings and power. The energy of these emotions is too low to be able to conduct the love of God. It only conducts the energy of Satan.

God tells us to *“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. **Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.**”*¹³

¹² D&C 67:2-3

¹³ James 4:8

(James 4:8) Our mind and heart have to become one. They cannot be in two different places and still get the Lord to draw nigh unto us. When we do this the Lord will be with us, or more accurately put, we will be able to recognize, hear and feel the Lords voice when He speaks to us.

Even Christ had to do this and He was a God before He came to Earth, but on this plane He was a mortal man who looked to God the Father for His direction. We must do the same and progress even as He did, grace to grace and grace for grace.¹⁴

(7)The final step promises us that if we DO the first six steps that “[God] ***will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost.*** When we have an opportunity to choose, have expressed grateful, asked our question, gotten clean in our heart and mind, and then stated in faith what we choose to believe, He will give us the answer. GOD promises that “*he will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost*”.

This is an interesting way of stating a promise because it says that He will ‘manifest the truth’ unto us. Manifest means “*to make clear or evident to the eye or the understanding; show plainly*”^{*15} The origin of the word tells us that it means to spread, to show plainly, to discover, disclose, betray. Or to display by actions, clearly revealed, palpable, plainly apprehensible, apparent, proved by direct evidence.^{*16} In none of these words are we told exactly what something being manifest looks like, just that it is plain.

It can mean anything from something revealed to the mind, or the eye, the touch, a feeling, an idea, words spoken by another person or something we hear from the voice of the Lord directly, a sudden stroke of understanding or a confidence in a certain course of action. We need to understand the workings of the Lord in order to understand what His manifestations look or feel like. He did not say I will tell you, or I will show you, or you will hear it. But it is promised that it will be a manifestation of by the power of the Holy Ghost. This is another place where we can get gummed up in the process of knowing God

¹⁴ D&C 93:4-14

¹⁵ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/manifest>

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and understanding Him. God did not tell us how He will manifest the truth, just that He would do it. It is up to us to come to Him, and then get clear enough and clean enough that we can recognize His voice. I have come to understand that He speaks to us in MANY different ways and that I can expect Him to change it up from time to time so that I can learn more and more ways to hear and feel Him.

Most of us want to receive answers from God in a certain way, and if they do not come in the way we think they should, we doubt the answer is from God or we discount it. Others so not know what to expect and find it hard to hear any answer. Their lack of experience and understanding on how the Spirit works creates disbelief and fear. It seems the most 'valued' answer seems to be sight; seeing something or having someone appear to us. This is what many desire when they ask a question, but for which they do not expect or even hope can happen. Joseph Smiths experience teaches us that each of us can have these experiences and receive answers this way. But most do not have the faith for it, and we must grow up into that experience. We must be able to walk before we can run, for if we run first we are more likely to fall. God wants us to feel and understand Him before we can see Him. Without knowing what God's Spirit feels like, we cannot know if it is Him if He appears to us. He wants us to know Him, but we must first know Who He is and have a feeling of that.

The Holy Ghost can be manifest in many different ways and we must come to know the ways it works with us, always allowing it to move and progress into the deeper experiences. This is a learned process. Even Samuel in the Old Testament did not know who was speaking to him when the Lord called to him three times. He kept going to Eli, the priest, thinking that he was calling him. Eli had to tell him it was the Lord. The answers that we get from the Lord are not always so obvious to us. We must learn to recognize these answers. This takes practice. We must ask a lot of questions, listen to a lot of voices, heed them and learn from the ensuing experiences. Eve had walked and talked with God in the garden, but still did not know the difference between Satan and God when Satan came and spoke with her. No one will learn these things without making mistakes. We have not had the experiences of Adam and Eve and knowing God so closely before we are thrown into this world of sin. We

will ALL make mistakes and fall in our understanding from time to time. That is not a problem. The fear of making mistakes is the problem, for it stops us from trying and learning and practicing hearing the voice of the Lord. If we want to be able to call upon God when we really need an answer, then we must call upon Him when there is time and space to do it wrong. It does not matter what the prayer is about, it only matters that you are practicing hearing the voice of God.

Some of the ways God and the Holy Ghost work are through hearing or feeling words or ideas. Another way is through dreams and visions with your eyes closed. Some will see with their eyes open, having personages or images appear before them. Another way is to receive answers through the scriptures. One of my personal favorites is the burning of the bosom, which testifies of truth to the recipient. This can be experienced in either a literal warmth in the heart or in a feeling of warmth like sunshine or light that penetrates the heart. Another way is through the feeling of peace. Peace is the greatest witness of truth that we are given because it cannot be duplicated or falsified by Satan. I must mention here that peace is not an absence of feelings. It is a very tangible, real and distinct feeling that is beautiful, sweet and unmistakable. When you feel peace you KNOW that you have felt it. It is similar to the feelings of love, belonging, hope, faith, confidence and joy all mixed into one emotion. Peace is something that people often talk about but think it means something that it doesn't. Many understand peace to be an absence of other feelings, an absence of anxiety of fear, hurt, distress or conflict, but this is not peace. Peace from God feels almost euphoric in nature. It has a sensation that is not duplicatable by anything else. It runs deep inside of us and produces a feeling of love. If I had to define it with another word besides peace, I would call it love, the love of God inside of the body, creating ease and a restful state that runs from head to toe. It can start out small and then grow into great peace. It can also remain small but still feel of peace. Once you have felt peace it becomes easier to identify it in small doses. The more pure the vessel the more pure the peace that we can receive. One of the reasons we want to be sure that we have pure intent and a sincere heart is so we can feel the purity and confidence of the answer we will receive. If we are full of doubt, fear and anxiety, we cannot receive the love and peace of God as easily. God may give it

from time to time as a gift of grace, but in order to be able to call upon God and consistently receive peace as an answer to prayer, we must be clean of our own desires and intentions.

Pure knowledge is another way of receiving the Holy Ghost. This is one that Joseph Smith taught about *“The Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding,^{*17} and storing the intellect with present knowledge,^{*18} of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham^{*19} than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon^{*20} one of the literal seed of Abraham^{*21}, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul^{*22} and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood,^{*23} and make him actually of the seed of Abraham.^{*24} That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence.^{*25}”*

The effect of pure knowledge or intelligence happens when the Holy Ghost is present and brings the person a confidence and understanding beyond their own reasoning. Understanding of a principle, situation or any needed truth happens when the Holy Ghost descends upon a person. There is an added power behind what we already understand. It feels easy and comforting, and understanding with in a new light which is shed on the subject.

I have come to appreciate all the different ways that the Holy Ghost works and have found that God will try and get us to see and experience as many as we are willing to believe we can have. I use to think that the only way I

¹⁷ [Eph. 1:18](#); [Alma 32:28,34](#); [D&C 76:12](#); [D&C 88:11](#); [JS-H 1:74](#)

¹⁸ [John 16:13](#)

¹⁹ [D&C 107:40](#); [Abr. 2:11](#)

²⁰ [Acts 10:44](#); [3 Ne. 19:13](#); [Moro. 2:3](#); [Moses 5:9](#)

²¹ [Abr. 2:11](#)

²² [Jer. 32:41](#); [2 Ne. 25:29](#)

²³ [Isa. 4:4](#); [Heb. 9:22](#)

²⁴ [John 8:33,37](#); [Gal. 3:29](#); [D&C 84:34](#); [D&C 103:17](#); [Abr. 1:4](#); [Abr. 2:10](#)

²⁵ STPJS 150–151

could get answers was through the scriptures and that was my medium, but after a few years of relying heavily on that avenue, the Lord would not let me get answers that way anymore. He wanted me to have more experiences than just one. If you find that you are struggling to get answers in the way that you have always felt them, look and see if God is not trying to get you to hear Him in another way. He will try and help us experience other ways to feel the spirit and learn from the Holy Ghost as we come to know Him. The two that I put the most credence in are peace and pure knowledge. Everything except peace can be duplicated. I do not always get peace on every question I ask, but if it is nothing major then I will often move forward with the lesser answers and allow my experience to help me understand the rest. If it is a big deal then I will wait for peace to come regarding the answer. There have been times when I did not get peace and I thought I shouldn't but I moved ahead anyway and sometimes it was good and sometimes it was not. But when I have received peace I have never doubted the answer I received. It cannot be taken from me even when other things crowd in and try and convince me that what I have learned is not true. It does not mean that there isn't more to be learned or understood, but just that I can have confidence that somewhere there is something that makes the answers I got with peace fit into the big picture perfectly.

Learning how the Holy Ghost speaks is foremost in receiving answers to prayer. If we are clean of our own intentions and motives, when the Lord speaks, we can hear Him more easily. Without being clean we are easily deceived by Satan with emotion, or just solely from our own emotion clouding our heart and mind. Satan draws us into fear or excitement and then leads us easily into whatever deception he wants to plant. Anything but a fullness of truth will do for him.

(8) Finally, after we do this promise over and over again, a new promise starts to happen. It is cumulative in nature: *“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye **may know the truth of all things.**”*

The word “may” is an archaic way²⁶ of saying we will have the ability or power to do something. This is a promise of power to consistently receive answers to prayer through this same process. It shows us that this scripture is

²⁶ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/May>

not just talking about knowing that the Book of Mormon is true, but that it will bring this same fruit when we use it with any question or inquiry.

The promise is that there is nothing this process won't work with. It is the process by which we can come unto God and make ourselves clean enough to hear His words in everything. It takes time and practice, and is easier to do when the question, choice or outcome is not one that we have a lot of emotion on. It is a process that can help us see where we are tripping up and where we need to be more honest, accountable and accepting of God's will. He will not force us to hear Him, or do as He knows is best for us, He lovingly waits for us to choose Him. When we learn to go to Him in the little things, we will have more confidence in the big things, and the process will become what we automatically apply when the stakes are high. If we are not willing to do it when the issue is a small and insignificant one, then we likely will not have the ability to hear God in the big questions.

This is basically the R&R (Repent and Replace) pattern in-regards-to getting answers to prayer. Without doing this pattern we are not promised to know the truth of all things. We are at the whim of our own emotions, passions and logic. We are more susceptible to deception and inclined to act in our own judgment instead of seeking, and doing, the will of God.

The pattern Moroni has given us is sure and even comes with its own promise. It will help us be able to hear the Lord in all situations, and all circumstances, but we must do all of the steps not just the ones we think are important. Once we learn the process, and apply it often, we will quickly go into a clean state of reception, and be able to receive revelation faster, and we will have more confidence in what we receive. If we are not already without emotion, or our own will in the matter, all the steps are necessary to trigger the promise. The law is given and the promise is clearly stated. The law is basically: have faith, ask, get clean — in both heart and head (in other words, have a broken heart and contrite spirit), state our faith in Christ and then we can expect an answer from God.

Most of us ask, but then we stop, thinking that we have done what is necessary to get the answers we want, also not knowing there is more that is required. We usually do this out of ignorance, and then we are confused and

alienated when the desired answers do not come. We must follow the pattern if we want answers from the Lord. If we are ok with getting answers from some another source, or from our own judgment, then we don't need to worry about being clean of our own intentions and motives.

The paradox here is that there are times when we will get enough energy behind something that we will be able to get an answer without doing the pattern. Or because of the grace of God and His desire for us to know that we can get answers to prayer He will answer us without doing the steps. He will grant us sufficient grace at times to have the faith necessary to ask Him and then receive it almost effortlessly. This means God will give us many 'freebees' but they are to help us see what is possible, and give us the confidence to ask in all things, not to be exempt from the law or the pattern. We are to get clean enough, that we do not need to rely on the sheer grace of God, but can have confidence because we have done what was asked and know that the answers are promised to us. This is the gift of faith that comes when we have obeyed the law, and nothing can withhold it when we have lived the law. *"There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated— And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated."* (D&C 130:20-21)

At other times we will receive answers because we have fasted, or plead for a long time, or wept and shown great contrition. This often works because WE are being changed in the process, not God or His will. If we get uncomfortable enough to give up our own will through the pain of not getting an answer, then that is what God is waiting for; our 'sincere heart and real intent' or put another way 'a broken heart and contrite spirit'. Once we have arrived at this place then we are ready for the answer, no matter what it is. Sometimes we never get there so we never get the answers. Or sometimes our desire for what we want is so great, that we hear what we want and feel good about it, because it is what we wanted and that is enough, even if it is not from God. Or we may assume that because we asked and didn't get an answer, that God said yes. This confusion causes some to blame God when things go wrong, but they have not looked at their own motives, desires and intentions and

cleaned them up first, so that they could hear the word of the Lord in those things.

Ironically, we don't have to wait until we are exhausted so that we finally give up our own will, and can hear the Lord's voice. Tears often accompany this, but we can do it an easier way, which is through repentance and replacing our own will with God's will. This puts us into humility much faster and with a greater degree of confidence. I'm not saying that we shouldn't or don't need to fast to get an answer to prayer. Sacrifice is an important part of contrition, and sometimes there is no other way for us to receive the power to give up our own will, and along with having pure intent and a sincere heart, these cause us to be in a state of readiness, which makes us open and able to hear the voice of the Lord. That is why fasting is so effective. Put repentance, obedience, and sacrifice together and you will find it magnificently easier to hear the voice of the Lord.

This does not guarantee that we will automatically know how to feel or recognize the Spirit when it speaks to us. This is also very important piece that we need to practice, and learn, but it is secondary to being clean. If we cannot tell the difference between our own fears, desires, judgment, and the Spirit's voice, then we will not be able to hear the voice of the Lord even if it is present all the time speaking to us. This is the first part in the pattern of knowing how to hear and receive revelation; get clean of your own will and judgment, and into a place of humility and meekness. Be Grateful, ask in Christ's name, have a sincere heart, clean up your intentions and emotions, use your faith in Christ by stating that you choose to believe Him and obey what He says, and the Spirit will manifest the truth unto you and you can know truth of all things. It is the pattern of receiving and knowing God. It is a microcosm of perfection. If you are clean enough to get answers to prayer, and then you obey the Lord, you will find yourself hearing Him daily, hourly, and moment by moment.