of France to fish. If he drifted beyond the horizon or was blown off course by a storm, he could look to the heavens and get his bearings and find his way home.

Light from heaven can keep the fisherman from drifting off course. The Spirit of the Holy Ghost will keep you from wandering into forbidden paths.

**Fundamental Truths**

Now, we end where we began, and much of what we do is based on these fundamental truths:

- Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church.
- He has built His Church upon the foundation of apostles and prophets. He Himself is the Chief Cornerstone.
- He has conferred priesthood authority on those who lead the Church in this latter-day dispensation.
- Each man and woman and child confirmed in the Church receives the Holy Ghost, like an individual sextant, to get a bearing and to keep him or her on course.

I bear testimony to you, brethren of the priesthood, that the gospel of the priesthood, that the gospel which the Lord had in mind when He established this Church will be fulfilled. I pray His blessings upon you in your wards and branches and in the farthest places across the world. I pray His blessings upon you, as leaders of the priesthood and as fathers and grandfathers of families. I pray the blessings of the Lord to be with your children and their children, that the purposes that the Lord had in mind when He established this Church will be fulfilled. I extend that blessing and bear that testimony in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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**ELDER NEAL A. MAXWELL**

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**REVELATION**

Thank you, President Packer, for the symbol of the sextant. It’s a delicate, wonderful instrument, and it leads so naturally into a discussion on revelation. After all, brethren, without revelation we can’t govern the Lord’s Church. This instrument wouldn’t work without light. And one of the great blessings we have through revelation is to know that Jesus is the Light of the World. Furthermore, we are to see everything else by His light.

In fact, the very founding of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints involved the reading of an inspired scripture; you all know about it—James 1:5. Joseph Smith was moved by that scripture and went to a grove and uttered a heartfelt prayer. And then came the remarkable revelation in the spring of 1820.

The inviting words in James led to that marvelous moment, remarkable and unique, where young Joseph Smith saw both the Father and the Son and was instructed by them. The long-awaited dispensation of the fulness of times had begun!

In the very beginning, after Eden, revelation was needed by Adam: “And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam which beareth record of the Father and the Son” (Moses 5:9). This is still a major mission of the Holy Ghost, namely, to witness of the Father and the Son and to glorify Christ (see 2 Nephi 31:18; John 16:14).

**Personal Revelation**

Brethren, our duty as Church leaders is likewise to receive personal revelation from the Holy Ghost confirming that “Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world” (D&C 46:13). If we and Church members are built upon the Rock of Our Redeemer, the promise is that amid life’s storms we will not be “dragged down” (see Helaman 5:12).

So vital is the help of the Holy Ghost that even angels “speak by the power of the Holy Ghost” (2 Nephi 32:5; 2 Nephi 33:1). Hence King Benjamin’s great sermon, which we are all thrilled by, came through an angel, by the power of the Holy Ghost (see Mosiah 3:2).

This witness about our Savior is vital for us not only personally, but as fathers and shepherds of our various Church flocks. For among those Church flocks are some who do not so know, but to whom “it is given to believe on [your] words, that they
also might have eternal life if they continue faithful" (D&C 46:14). We need to know for their sakes too.

Even so, brethren, a few of you may still feel that revelation consists only of supernal events like the First Vision, or that revelation is out of your reach, or that it is something so extraordinary that a seemingly ordinary person is not entitled thereto. But you are entitled! Hence the few suggestions to follow concerning revelation. It's usually a quiet, inward, but real and powerful process.

Only with revelation can we do the Lord's work according to His will in His way and according to His timing.

More than any other way, the Holy Ghost can reveal to us how to connect the doctrines with our personal discipleship and also how to help members of the Church to do likewise. So when we "liken" these scriptures to ourselves, the Holy Ghost is necessary to help that to happen. He can see, for instance, our sins of omission, and by the workings of conscience, we are moved to repent of these sins as well. If we will do so, it will bring us even greater joy in this life than we have ever known.

**Given in Mind and Heart**

Most revelation comes in the following manner: "I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost" (D&C 8:2; italics added). Now as you and I "liken" that scripture to ourselves, remember that both intellect and feeling are involved.

When Enos was "struggling in the spirit, behold, the voice of the Lord came into [his] mind again" (Enos 1:10; italics added). This voice, brethren, need not pass through the eardrums. Instead, the words go directly to our minds—and they are audible and distinct.

Sometimes revelations come by means of feelings. We are given needed direction by feelings, but feelings without explanations. So whether by words or by feelings, there comes to us an accompanying and reassuring sense of peace! This confirming peace is such a reassuring blessing, to know that it is all right and that the Lord has directed us.

Elder Eyring is going to describe the gift of discernment in connection with interviewing. This gift is a form of revelation that guides you stake presidents and bishops in your interviews. However, brethren, do not be surprised if sometimes you know more than you can tell. You will know more than you can explain.

The gift of the Holy Ghost brings many other gifts. But, as Brigham Young observed, "we live far beneath our privileges" (Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 32). Brethren, to the degree that we cease living "far beneath our privileges" and rise to our revelatory privileges, we can lift the Church as never before!

The Holy Ghost is perfect at causing two-way communication. Pretty rare in the human family is to have genuine two-way communication. But the scriptures tell us "when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men" (2 Nephi 33:1), and "he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth" (D&C 50:21). That is two-way communication, and it occurs during inspired teaching in a classroom, while speaking in sacrament meeting, or during conversations one with another.

At times, brethren, you will speak words beyond your own capacity. As President Marion G. Romney said a number of times, "I always know when I am speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost because I always learn something from what I've said" (quoted in Boyd K. Packer, Teach Ye Diligently [1975], 304).

As we get experience with revelation, it builds on itself, just as the Prophet Joseph Smith taught when he said, "A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 151).

**Serious Mental Effort**

Enos's struggling reminds us of Oliver Cowdery's struggling to be able to translate. Oliver learned that it requires serious mental effort on our part. We have to take real thought, and then we have to continue as we commenced (see D&C 9:5–11). Brethren, revelation is not a matter of pushing buttons, but of pushing ourselves, often aided by fasting, scripture study, and personal pondering.

Most of all, revelation requires us to have a sufficient degree of personal righteousness, so that on occasion revelation may come to the righteous, unsolicited.

Now, brethren, in this scattered but wonderful congregation that girdles this globe, please remember, you live as close to heaven as any other location, and, mercifully, the Holy Ghost cannot be stopped at national borders, and revelation requires no visa!

As President Packer noted, we live in such varied conditions around the globe. Yet the Holy Ghost knows all those circumstances; He knows all of us. He can reach us in our various niches!

Never mind if the world doesn't understand or even mocks this sacred process. Paul said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14; italics added). I was once privileged to be with Elder Harold B. Lee late on a Satur-
day night. He was selecting a new patriarch for a stake. As I sat with him in a nearly deserted stake center, I watched him interview a man and his wife and then issue the call. The man began to sob and the wife urged her husband by saying, “Tell him; tell President Lee.” And the husband, when he could regain his composure, said, “Brother Lee, the Lord told me two weeks ago this would happen.” Elder Lee turned to me and said, “You see, Neal, why we must operate by the spirit of revelation.” Hence, whatever our several callings, revelation is essential to help us discern the way. For instance, inspired and discerning patriarchs are guided by the Holy Ghost to bless members with personalized, not routine blessings.

Again, brethren, please remember that we sometimes receive directions without explanations. For instance, a bishop may feel a person is not quite ready yet to go to the temple. Or a bishop may feel he ought to talk to a particular husband and wife without, at first, knowing quite why.

Revelation can also help you administratively, to emphasize certain weightier matters in order to bless the flock, especially in some situations. Elder Perry will teach us about matching available time and resources, which are sometimes scarce, in order to build the Church better.

Sometimes, when we are taking thought and studying things out in our minds, revelation serves a unique purpose in that it connects incomplete insights. Then the whole matter becomes clear and things are “fitly framed” together (see Ephesians 2:21).

Sometimes the Holy Ghost will bring needed things to our remembrance, and other times He will put thoughts into our hearts “in the very hour, yea, in the very moment” (D&C 100:6). Brethren, we can so prepare to have things brought to our remembrance by “treasuring up” beforehand precious things in our individual storehouses of memories (see D&C 11:26; 84:85).

Proper Channels

Remember, however, revelation always follows proper channels. Thus, Bishop “A” does not receive revelation for Bishop “B.” Nor do lay members receive revelation for the whole Church, which is the role of the President and the prophet of the Church.

Sometimes the Spirit brings us much needed personal peace, especially in a world filled with “commotion,” in which there are “wars and rumors of wars” (D&C 45:26). More than we realize, brethren, for example, it is the comforting from the Comforter which helps us to avoid growing weary and fainting in our minds (see Hebrews 12:3). We have got quite a few Church members who have fainted in their minds and need to be revived.

Sometimes directional revelation is given for the whole Church by the Lord’s prophet. This occurred when President Lorenzo Snow was moved upon to stress the need for Church members to pay a full tithing. Likewise, President Gordon B. Hinckley was clearly inspired to direct the surge in the building of many temples, so that more faithful members worldwide can receive their temple blessings. It was what the Lord wanted done, but it was also done according to the Lord’s timing.

Sometimes doctrinal revelation is given to the President of the Church for the whole Church, and the scriptures end up begetting more scriptures. The Prophet Joseph, for instance, was spiritually stirred while he was reading a scripture from John 5:29. He then received instructive revelation, now known as Doctrine and Covenants, section 76. Or, when President Joseph F. Smith had been reading and pondering verses in 1 Peter, he received what is now known as section 138 concerning the work in the spirit world.

Personal Discipleship

We too can “ liken” the scriptures unto ourselves “for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23), and thereby inspire our own families, serve better in our callings, and progress more in our personal discipleship. Moving forward in our personal discipleship is no small thing, brethren. We are to exemplify as well as to expound and to exhort.

Please teach others about revelation, brethren. It is imperative that more and more of our members and leaders enjoy this great privilege. The scriptures assure us that God’s words can come, “not only [to] men but women also. Now this is not all; little children do have words given unto them many times, which confound the wise and the learned” (Alma 32:23).

To select but one example from personal experience: several years ago in the midst of leukemia, I was doing some pensive pondering and these 13 instructive and reassuring words came into my mind: “I have given you leukemia that you might teach my people with authenticity.” I surely testify that this process is real, whether it concerns our duties and callings or our personal discipleship. Each of us needs precious perspective about the great realities of eternity. Once again, amid the challenges of everyday life and even the worries of the moment, it is the same revealing Holy Spirit which tells of “things as they really are, and of things as they really will be” (Jacob 4:13). Such glimpses of eternity can help us to travel the next 100 yards, which may be very difficult.

Brethren, we love you! We have confidence in your ability to seek and receive revelation! Remember, our families—about whom Elder Ballard will speak—as well as our Church
flocks, deserve shepherds who know that Jesus is the Christ and who know how to receive revelation.

I testify that the Church is governed by revelation and, further, that each member has the right to revelation in his or her callings and in personal discipleship as well. Very importantly, brethren, this is a time which was prophesied when the nations of the earth would be in distress, with perplexity (see Luke 21:25). Therefore, it is essential that Church members receive spiritual confirmation that the directions, the prophetic directions, being given by Church leaders truly are to guide us in these latter days.

In the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen.

ELDER L. TOM PERRY
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

BASIC UNIT PROGRAM

Thank you, Elder Maxwell, for reminding us how important revelation is to our spiritual growth and the growth of the Church. It is a great privilege to receive counsel from the Lord Himself that will help us answer our questions and solve our problems.

I would like to talk to you about the opportunities many of you are facing in establishing the Church and building the Church in areas where there are few members.

Different Needs and Challenges

I know firsthand the challenges you face in building a branch. I grew up in a very small Latter-day Saint community in northern Utah. Our whole community activity centered around the Church. The community was nearly 100 percent Latter-day Saint. I had deep involvement in what was going on, for my father served as my bishop of our ward for the first 18 years of my life. During that period, I watched the way he administered the Church. I watched how he involved us to be certain we understood how the gospel affects our lives and those who embrace its divine teachings.

It was a fully developed ward organization. There was little conflict with the Sunday meeting schedule. We spent Sunday morning in priesthood meeting, followed by Sunday School. Then we came back in the evening and enjoyed sacrament meeting. There was very little in the community to distract us from attending. Tuesday evening was always Mutual. Even our schoolteachers recognized that and lightened up on the homework load, allowing us to participate in our Mutual activities. There was abundant leadership to give direction to the Primary, Young Men, Young Women, Relief Society, Sunday School, priesthood, and all the other organizations. I felt very comfortable and secure in this community.

When I reached the age of 19, it was time for me to leave the comforts of home and journey into the mission field. I had received a call to serve in the Northern States Mission. I was assigned to go to Columbus, Ohio. I had served in Columbus for only a month when my companion and I