

COME TO KNOW

Personal Testimony

No. 1.

ARLINGTON TEXAS STAKE

October 2017

Joseph Smith Came to Know

When Joseph Smith was 14 years old, he lived in Palmyra, New York, during a time of religious excitement. He was confused about which church to join and visiting the churches only added to his confusion. After reading and pondering James 1:5 in the Bible, he received a powerful witness that he needed to take his question to God. He retired to a quiet grove of trees close to his farm and offered a prayer verbally for the first time in his life. His simple prayer and great faith were rewarded by a visitation from God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

Joseph's prayer was answered. We aren't so different from him. We all seek clarity to our questions in life. He wanted to know which church was true. ***He came to know and so can you.*** President Uchtdorf, a living apostle, shared the following pattern for receiving a personal testimony.

- 1) **Desire to believe**
- 2) **Search the scriptures**
- 3) **Do the will of God; keep the commandments**
- 4) **Ponder, fast, pray**

*"The Power of a Personal Testimony," October 2006
General Conference*



SACRED GROVE —In these woods near his home, the Prophet Joseph Smith received the First Vision.

As you read the Joseph Smith pamphlet entitled “The Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” look for examples of how he followed President Uchtdorf’s four- step pattern. Also keep in mind the following words from living apostles:



LOG HOUSE OF JOSEPH SMITH SR. — This is a replica of the home where the Smith family once lived.

Opposition Before Great Spiritual Moments

— Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

“There is a lesson in the Prophet Joseph Smith’s account of the First Vision...It is the plain and very sobering truth that before great moments, certainly before great spiritual moments, there can come adversity, opposition, and darkness. Life has some of those moments for us, and occasionally they come just as we are approaching an important decision or a significant step in our life...I acknowledge the reality of opposition and adversity, but I bear witness of the God of Glory, of the redeeming Son of God, of light and hope and a bright future. I promise you that God lives and loves you, each one of you, and that he has set bounds and limits to the opposing powers of darkness.”

“Cast Not Away Therefore Your Confidence,” BYU Devotional March 1999

Go Often to the Word of God — Elder Henry B. Eyring

“[Joseph Smith] began, as we must, with faith in a loving God who can and wants to communicate with us and help us. That faith was rooted in impressions which came to him as he pondered the words of God’s servants in the scriptures. We can and must go often and carefully to the word of God.

“Prayer,” October 2001 General Conference

Pray with the Intent to Obey — Elder Henry B. Eyring

“The Father and His Beloved Son appeared to [Joseph] in answer to his prayer. And he was told how to act, as he had desired. He obeyed like a child. He was told to join none of the churches. He did as he was told. And because of his faithfulness, in the days and months and years ahead his prayers were answered with a flood of light and truth. The fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the keys of the kingdom of God were restored to the earth.”

“He prayed with the intent not only to listen but to obey. He did not ask only to know the truth. He was committed to act upon whatever God would communicate to him. His written account makes clear that he prayed with real intent, determined to comply with whatever answer he received.”

“Prayer,” October 2001 General Conference

Joseph and the Book of Mormon

One of the fruits of Joseph's obedience was the opportunity to translate the Book of Mormon. At age 17, Joseph sought the Lord in prayer to be forgiven of his sins and to know of his standing before God. His faith was rewarded by a visitation from an angel from on high. This angel, known as Moroni, was the last in a line of record keepers who lived anciently on the American continent. Moroni told Joseph of the calamities that mankind would face in our day, and as a result, the Lord had prepared the Book of Mormon to powerfully yet simply share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Joseph was promised that if he remained faithful, he would translate the sacred record and be an instrument to restore the living church on the earth.

Moroni told Joseph that his name would be had for good and evil among all nations. This must have seemed overwhelming to a young man of 17, yet Joseph remained faithful and came to fulfill Moroni's prophecy.



THE ANGEL MORONI AND THE ANCIENT RECORD

How has your life been affected because of the truths restored through the prophet Joseph Smith? Each of us has a part to play in Heavenly Father's plan. We must follow the pattern of seeking out truth, obeying what we receive, and remaining faithful.



HILL CUMORAH AND MANCHESTER-PALMYRA AREA — Moroni directed Joseph to find the gold plates buried in this hill (center right).

Moroni's Promise

Moroni ends the record with another prophecy for each of us: *“Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would 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. 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. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”

(Moroni 10:3-5) ***How is Moroni's invitation to obey as real to us as his instructions were to Joseph?*** Blessings, peace, and knowledge will flow into our lives by following Moroni's instructions just as they did for the Prophet Joseph.

CTK - COME TO KNOW

Personal Testimony

CTK with Youth Challenges

- Complete online registration by Nov. 19th
- Start saving funds to pay for your trip.

Do at least one of the following:

- Read Joseph Smith History in the Pearl of Great Price or the Joseph Smith Pamphlet.
- Memorize scripture Mastery JSH 1:15-20.
- Start a Spiritual Journey Journal now.

CTK through Personal Progress

Value: Faith

(for use in the "Personalized Value Experiences" section)

Study the "Faith" section in the Bible Dictionary or in *True to the Faith*. Read Joseph Smith History 1:10-17 and Moroni 10:3-5. After your study, commit yourself to pray to know the truthfulness of the story of the First Vision. Consider how your life has been affected because of the truths restored through the prophet, Joseph Smith. Record your thoughts and feelings in your journal.

CTK through Duty to God

Deacons: Study the "Pray and Study the Scriptures" *Learn* activity (p. 14). Add to your list of words and phrases your thoughts on the following question: What specific blessings came to Joseph Smith as he studied the scriptures and acted upon what he read in James 1:5-6?

Teachers: Visit the first bullet point of the "Pray and Study the Scriptures" *Learn* activity (p. 38). Add Joseph Smith – History 1:14-15 to the list of scriptures to read. Identify principles employed by Joseph Smith that could also make your prayers more meaningful.

Priests: Visit the *Learn* activity of the "Pray and Study the Scriptures" section, specifically question #2 (p. 62). Read Joseph Smith – History 1:11-12, noting Joseph's reaction to a verse that became meaningful to him. With that in mind, answer question #2. Be sure to write down your thoughts in a notebook or study journal.

*Consider completing all three suggestions regardless of your quorum.

CTK as a Family

- Hold a Family Home Evening focusing on the First Vision.
- After teaching how Joseph Smith received the Gold Plates, have children make their own engraved record (or picture) using tin foil and a dull pencil. Tip: Wrap the tin foil around a piece of cardboard.
- As a family commit to read the "Come to Know" newsletter each month.

CTK as Leaders

Importance of Fun and Meaningful Activities

Incorporate the Joseph Smith story, the First Vision, and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon into your:

- BYC discussions & Plans
- Mutual activities
- Sunday lessons

Lorenzo Snow relates that on one occasion while Joseph was playing a game of ball with several youth, his brother Hyrum came by and chastised him, believing such behavior was inappropriate for the Lord's anointed. The Prophet then explained to the Patriarch the reason for his involvement with the youngsters. "Brother Hyrum, my mingling with the youth in a harmless sport does not injure me in any way, but on the other hand it makes them happy and draws their hearts nearer to mine; and who knows there may be some among them who may sometime lay down their lives for me!"

Sept/October Book of Mormon Reading Chart

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	26-Sep 1 Ne 1	27 1 Ne 2	28 1 Ne 3	29 1 Ne 4	30 1 Ne 5	1-Oct 1 Ne 6
2 1 Ne 7	3 1 Ne 8	4 1 Ne 9	5 1 Ne 10	6 1 Ne 11	7 1 Ne 12	8 1 Ne 13
9 1 Ne 14	10 1 Ne 15	11 1 Ne 16	12 1 Ne 17	13 1 Ne 18	14 1 Ne 19	15 1 Ne 20
16 1 Ne 21	17 1 Ne 22	18 2 Ne 1	19 2 Ne 2	20 2 Ne 3	21 2 Ne 4	22 2 Ne 5
23 2 Ne 6	24 2 Ne 7	25 2 Ne 8	26 2 Ne 9	27 2 Ne 10	28 2 Ne 11	29 2 Ne 12
30 2 Ne 13	31 2 Ne 14					

299 days until Nauvoo



