

## Some Thoughts On Topics

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### Scripture Study:

It is important to study the scriptures and to learn from those things we study. These books have been written by prophets, they contain the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As we study the scriptures we can become so close to our Savior and we will have the Holy Ghost testify to us of the truthfulness of them.

Now when I say study, I don't mean to casually glance at them from time to time. Everyday we should devote at least ten minutes of our time to reading the word of the prophets which are the words of Christ. Was it not Nephi who said to "feast upon the words of Christ?" Let's quickly turn to 2nd Nephi 32:3.

3 - Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.

It says that as we feast upon the words of Christ, they "will tell you all things what ye should do." That's a very interesting point. Does that mean that the scriptures can help answer questions we have in our day? In the

fourth chapter of 2nd Nephi, we find the following:

15 - And upon these I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children.

Did you catch that last line? He writes them for the learning and the profit of his children. So the scriptures were written for people to profit, that is grow from.

2nd Nephi 25:26 gives a deeper meaning of this:

26 - And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.

It says that the scriptures prophesy of Christ so we can know that it was he who died for our sins. Back in chapter four, Nephi talks about pondering on the scriptures.

Think about that word for a moment, what does it mean to ponder? To me, pondering is to read between the lines, to look into a deeper meaning of the scriptures. When we invite people to read the Book of Mormon, we invite them to do

three things. Read it, ponder it, and pray about it. We invite them to compare the truths in the Book of Mormon with those found in the Bible. When you study your scriptures, don't just nibble on them. Actually feast upon the words of Christ, they were written for us and our day. Remember this statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks:

“The idea that scripture reading can lead to inspiration and revelation opens the door to the truth that a scripture is not limited to what it meant when it was written but may also include what the scripture means to the reader today. Even more, scripture reading may also lead to current revelation on whatever else the Lord wishes to communicate to the reader at that time. We do not overstate the point when we say that the scriptures can be a Urim and Thummim to assist each of us to receive personal revelation.”

### Personal and Family Prayer:

Prayer is how we communication with our Heavenly Father. I like to think of it as a telephone line that never dies. When we pray to our Father in Heaven, we do four specific steps. There is a primary hymn that tells us of these steps. (Page 14, Children's Song Book). It says that we thank him. Brothers and Sisters, when we thank God for things, on what level are we thanking him?

Do we simply say thank you for this, or that? Or are we on a deeper level of thanking. Do we actually feel that gratitude in our hearts, do we have those deep feelings of love, joy, and peace as we are praying and thanking our loving Heavenly Father who hears and answers our prayers. When we give thanks we need to have a deeper sense of gratitude, our words are inadequate. Yes we do use them to communicate but we need to also feel how grateful we are.

Ask yourselves in your mind, are we having family prayer? Family prayer is such an important aspect of the day. For one thing it teaches children how to pray. By parents setting the example and holding family prayer later on in life as their children grow up and move away and start families of their own. They will continue that practice. When a family kneels in prayer, there is a certain feeling of love and peace, the family grows closer together and they have a stronger bond.

Personal prayer is important as well. When we have personal prayer we can specifically ask God to help us in our individual lives. There are eight steps to personal fervent prayer that I learned and would like to share with you:

1. Be alone
2. Kneel upright in the center of the room
3. Think about what you need to talk to your Heavenly Father about
4. Think of the Savior

5. Being prayer, pray out loud (whisper)
6. Ask for the Spirit to be with you... wait (could take a while)
  1. feel peaceful
  2. feel strength
  3. feel like answers are to come
7. Talk to Heavenly Father
  1. Be specific
8. Close prayer and listen
  1. Wait for answers
    1. Yes
    2. No: Avoid bad things
    3. No: Didn't take time or no need for answer yet

We are given a strong promise, shouldn't we believe the scriptures?

James 1:5

5 - If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Family Home Evening:

Often known as the only fight that starts and ends with prayer.

I like how that says if you are by yourself to gather the Spirit around you. With God, always there we are never alone.

Matthew 18:20

20 - For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

I have heard Bishop Singler repeat over and over that the two or three don't have to actually be people for the Spirit of God to be encircled about us. It could be us and any prophet we are reading from. It could be us and Nephi as we are reading the words he wrote. Never think you are alone, God is there, He will always be there for you. All we have to do is ask.

When we hold family home evening, it's a time for the Spirit to be around us and for our families to grow closer together. I remember many things from family home evening when I was younger. Back when I lived in California. After we had the opening prayer and hymn, my dad would open up family business.

This was where each of us had the floor and could tell the family of things going on in our lives. It was really neat because you knew the family was listening to what you had to say.

Of course early on, the only thing I could come up with was that the dog had died, and you can only keep that going for so many months before it gets old. But later on as things actually happened, I had important things to share with my Family and I knew that I had their listening ear.

Meetings and Duties:

We live in the days where Satan is out in force. He wants to stop us from going to our church meetings. Don't let him! These meetings help us withstand another week out there in the world. We meet here to partake of the sacrament so that we can renew our covenants with God.

That is the main purpose of church. After that is done, we go into the different classes to fellowship one with another and to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to one another.

Those teaching are taught to us through the Spirit. Section 50 of the Doctrine and Covenants speaks of teaching by the Spirit.

D&C 13-22:

13 - Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question—unto what were ye ordained?

14 - To preach my gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter which was sent forth to teach the truth.

15 - And then received ye spirits which ye could not understand, and received them to be of God; and in this are ye justified?

16 - Behold ye shall answer this question yourselves; nevertheless, I will be merciful unto you; he that is weak among you hereafter shall be made strong.

17 - Verily I say unto you, he that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth by the Comforter, in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

18 - And if it be by some other way it is not of God.

19 - And again, he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

20 - If it be some other way it is not of God.

21 - Therefore, why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth?

22 - Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together.

I like that last part, when we teach and we receive the Gospel by the Spirit, three things occur:

1. We understand
2. We are edified
3. We rejoice

Things of the spirit must be understood by the power of the spirit. (1 For 2:11)

It is very important to do our duties in the church and to recognize that we are needed to help bring forth the work of God upon the earth. Sometimes people feel they are not ready or prepared to do the callings they are given. Thomas S. Monson spoke the truth when he said the following:

“If any brother or sister feels unprepared—even incapable—of responding to a call to service, to sacrifice, to bless the lives of others, remember this truth ‘Whom God calls, God qualifies.’”