

Come Follow Me Podcast
Elo Viz production
Week 6
2 Nephi 1-2

I was introduced to a video this week that I have watched over and over again. If I were to guess I would say at least 10 times. It is pretty long but I have learned so much from it. I'm not sure when it was filmed, but it is of Elder Bednar, and he is having a discussion with a group of seminary and institute teachers. It is over an hour long and it is pretty hard to get to on your phone, but I was able to find a link on my desktop that I will leave at the bottom of the transcript that you can find on our website, CFMpodcast.org. I will also give you a flow chart of how to get the app and where to find it on the app. I hope you will take the time to listen to it. I want to share some of the things that I learned from this discussion, and I would love to hear from each of you about what you were able to pull out of it as well. In this short time that we have these are just some of the highlights that really stuck out to me.

Starting off, Elder Bednar said this, "We often make it hard on ourselves to receive personal revelation. The covenant promise is that as we honor our covenants we may always have the holy Ghost to be our constant companion. But we talk about it and we treat it as if hearing the voice of the Lord through His Holy spirit is a rare event. And that just strikes me as a little curious."

He then goes on to explain that in the church we have formulas and checklists that we think that if we follow them we are going to be able to summon the voice of the Spirit into our hearts. I have fallen into this trap. In fact a few weeks ago we had this very conversation when we talked about 1 Nephi 11 and I pointed out that this was the key to unlocking the door of heaven. And I myself even said: Do these things and you will receive an answer to your prayers. Well, according to Elder Bednar, that is not correct. That is not how the gospel works and that is not how personal revelation works.

This is what he said, "We should not be trying to recognize the Holy Spirit when it comes, we should be recognizing what happens that causes it to leave. It ought to be with us all of the time." He said that if a person is doing his or her best, not being perfect, but if you and I are doing our best, and we are not committing serious transgression, then we can count on the Holy Ghost guiding us." Instead of getting ready, instead of gearing up, we can take comfort in the fact that we are living in the revelation, all day, every day. We truly do have His Spirit to be us always.

We start from a disadvantage when we think that we need to gear up or get ready to recognize it when it is already with us and has been with us the whole time. This process is not formulaic, do these three things and you will get this. But instead, we need to understand that there are principles that need to be lived and taught. Principles instead of formulas. Because one thing or sets of things may work for me, but that same process may not work for you. He warns to be

careful not to make this linear. Sometimes it is the what and sometimes it is the when and sometimes it is both.

He uses the example of Oliver Cowdery in section 6 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Which says: “**14** Verily, verily, I say unto thee, blessed art thou for what thou hast done; for thou hast **inquired** of me, and behold, as often as thou hast inquired thou hast received instruction of my Spirit. If it had not been so, thou wouldst not have come to the place where thou art at this time.

15 Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and I did enlighten thy **mind**; (Then this last sentence is so important, Oliver was receiving revelation and he didn't even know it.) and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou hast been **enlightened** by the **Spirit of truth**,” (D&C 6:14-15)

This revelation came to Oliver through the Prophet Joseph Smith because Oliver didn't know that he was being given revelation. He didn't recognize those thoughts or feelings as revelation and so God had to tell Joseph to tell Oliver what had been happening and what he had been feeling. And we do that exact same thing. I think we will be shocked when we get to the other side and realize how much God had communicated with us and we had no idea. We think that these are our own thoughts and in reality that is the Spirit of God enlightening our minds and we don't think that that thought might not have come from us. And that is what Elder Bednar means that we are in revelation, living in revelation and not stopping to get it.

Also another point he makes is that, at least in the western world we tend to believe that the Holy Ghost is big and dramatic and sudden. When what it actually is, is still, and small and incremental over time. And that you don't have to recognize that you are receiving revelation in the moment that you are receiving revelation. And when he said that I realized that I have had some of those same thoughts. That if I am a good person and I kneel down at night and say a prayer and ask God for something, that in return from my efforts I will be entitled to an answer to my prayers from God. A clear and concise answer of what it is to do, and when it is I am to do it. Someone made a comment in the video and he said “I usually do not receive an answer to my prayers in the moment I am praying, it usually comes later as I am pondering.”

But then when we think we receive an answer and we go and do, and if it doesn't work out, we start to rethink if that was actually a revelation or if maybe that might have just been our own thoughts. To illustrate this he uses the example of Nephi going to get the plate. He points out that Nephi is writing this and telling us about it after the fact. After he had gone through all of this. And he has to reflect back on his experience and tell us that he literally had no idea what he was doing as he went forth. And it is important to realize that the first two times that they tried it didn't work out and it could have been viewed as them failing, but the truth is that it was supposed to happen that way. That was all part of the plan. Just as it is with us. We receive a direction and it doesn't work out, great. What is it that we are to learn from that, and what then is the new direction that we need to go. Because in the end, it does all seem to turn out exactly as God intended it. And it is usually not big and dramatic and sudden, that is not to say that it

can't be, but I love it when he said "some saint believe that they don't measure up because they don't have these big, dramatic experiences like what we read about in the Ensign/Liahona or what is talked about in fast and testimony meeting. He said: That is not normal.... You are normal." If you are honoring your covenants and pressing forward, then you are doing just fine and you are normal.

Listen to this quote from Joseph F Smith:

"Show me latter day saints who have to feed upon miracle signs and visions in order to keep them steadfast in the church and I will show you members who are not in good standing before God, and who are walking in slippery paths. It is not by marvelous manifestations unto us that we shall be established in the truth, but it is by humility and faithful obedience to commandments and laws of God."

If that doesn't build your confidence to hear a prophet of God, the president of the church, talk about simple and ordinary things then I don't know what will.

Here is another quote from Joseph F Smith.

"As I boy I would frequently ask the Lord to show me some marvelous thing in order that I might receive a testimony, but the Lord withheld marvels from me, and showed me the truth line upon line, until He made me to know the truth from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and until doubt and fear had been absolutely purged from me. He did not have to send an angel from the heavens to do this. Nor did he have to speak with the trump of an arc angel, by the whisperings of the still small voice of the spirit of the living God, He gave unto me the testimony that I possess."

What faith building words from a Prophet who is confirming to us that we do not have to have signs and wonders in order to know that God is with us, that His Spirit is guiding us. But if we look around and see all that He has done, where He has led us, and what He has in store for us we can see that all those small and simple things in our lives were and are the marvelous wonders and miracles of God, doing His work in our lives every day.

It doesn't matter where you are in your life, on the path. Any one of us can do what Joseph F. Smith did and received what he did: "And by this principle and power He will give to all the children of men, a knowledge of the truth that will stay with them. And will make them to know the truth as God knows it, and to do the will of the Father as Christ does it, and no amount of marvelous manifestations will ever accomplish this.

"We have a lot of people in the church that want to see a light on the road to Damascus and then they will believe... really? Was Saul in any condition to hear the still small voice? He had to have a spiritual slap upside the head in order to get him to realize the truth.

If I could just see an angel the way Alma the younger did... is that really what you want? I don't think Alma was in any condition to receive the still small voice. And what Joseph F. Smith is saying, is that: it was not the angel and it was not the light that did the conversion, but it was the still small voice. Alma the younger didn't talk about the angel in public, he did with his children,

but never in a public setting. What he did talk about was his fasting and prayers that led him to know the truth from the living God who loves all of His children.

Another principle that stood out to me was a question that Elder Bednar asked several times. Any time there was a break in the conversation he would ask: What are you hearing that has not been said? He then told an answer he received from a 18 year old new missionary after asking this question. This youngman said: "If I hear it in your voice or in the voice of another missionary it is for everyone. But, If I feel it in my heart or have a thought in my mind, then that is meant just for me."

We receive more revelation than we think we do. We just need to begin to recognize it, write it down, and then act on the promptings. Then as we do they will begin to be more clear and more discernible to our minds and hearts.

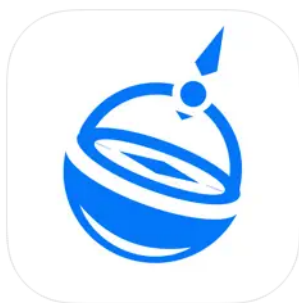
Remember that faith is a principle of action and of power. As we act in accordance with the teachings of Christ then we are blessed with His power. What all of us want is the power so we can act. It doesn't work that way. So our instinct should not be asking God to do something for us, but instead to ask God what we can do in order to activate our faith as an action and as we go forth and act, He will guide and direct our paths and to teach us in order to fulfill His will.

I testify that as we seek to know the truth that we will be enlightened. That as we strive to be good, decent people that are following God's will, and keeping his commandments that we will be wonderfully blessed to live in the revelation. That we may always have His Spirit to be with us. Of this great truth I testify, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

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Once downloaded, at the bottom right corner of the app you will see a link called “Explore” it will look like this:



Then find the box titled: “I will go and do”

This will lead you to do a flow chart. To the right you will find a list of video links. The top one will be “led by the Spirit”. Follow that one down to the video titled “Revelations and the Holy Ghost”.