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“Seek Learning by Study and by Faith”

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My dear brothers and sisters of BYU-Pathway, it is positively delightful to have the opportunity to address you today. I am so very proud of you, each of you, for your commitment to increasing your learning. Your education will open the doors of opportunity, enhance your confidence, and increase your self-reliance. We know that “the glory of God is intelligence.”¹ Your education makes you more like our Heavenly Father. And whatever we learn in this life goes with us to the next.² The reward is that we get to keep everything we learn!

And what are we to learn? In section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants, we read that we are to teach diligently and be instructed in the doctrine of the kingdom and the law of the gospel — what I would call “spiritual learning.” But the Lord also revealed that we are to learn “of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms — That ye may be prepared in all things...”³

In short, we should get all the education and training we possibly can so that we can be prepared. Prepared to serve in the world and the Church. Prepared to be wise counselors and companions to our spouses. Prepared to be effective teachers to our children and those young people over whom we have influence. The more we learn, the greater influence we can assert for good.

You are likely familiar with the adage that giving a man a fish feeds him for one day. Teaching the man to fish, on the other hand, feeds him for a lifetime. I like to say giving a girl a fish feeds her for a day. Teaching a girl to fish feeds generations! [PowerPoint] This is my son Connor and his daughter (my granddaughter), Goldie. Connor is teaching her to fish and, in the process, teaching her respect for God’s creations, a love of the outdoors, about the fish itself — what it eats, when it can be caught, where it can be caught — every needful thing so that Goldie can be prepared. And isn’t that just exactly what you want for yourself? Your efforts and real sacrifice to learn will be rewarded with an understanding of how to fish and will bless you and generations to come.

My dear friends, the Lord has told us, “[S]eek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and also by faith.”⁴

What does that mean to seek learning by study?

When we seek learning by study, we put our minds to work. We read or listen to the required material, we think about it, we practice, we problem solve, we memorize and complete assignments, and through our diligence we learn. It’s rational and logical. It’s generally line upon line. Learning by study is vitally important. And we have been commanded to seek learning by study.

So, we understand what it means to seek learning by study, but what does it mean to seek learning by faith?

Elder Mathias Held, a General Authority Seventy, explained, “We can receive light and understanding not only through the logical reasoning of our minds but also through the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Ghost.”⁵ To seek learning by study generally puts our minds to work. To seek learning by faith puts both our hearts *and* minds to work. It is in our hearts and minds that we will feel the manifestations of the Holy Ghost. And we know that the Holy Ghost testifies of truth: “[B]y the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”⁶

Brothers and sisters, fellow learners, don't you want to know the truth of all things? I do! As we seek learning by study, we engage our minds and retain facts. But please don't stop there. Invite the Holy Ghost to help you learn and retain those facts. It is the Holy Ghost which will "bring all things to your remembrance."⁷ Seeking learning by faith is the process by which we engage the Holy Ghost in our learning so that we aren't just learning facts, we are understanding truth! It makes beautiful sense then that we have been commanded to seek learning by study and by faith. Our willing hearts and minds invite the Holy Ghost to testify to us of truth and bring all things to our remembrance, including the facts and concepts we have studied.

2 Nephi, chapter 33, verse 1 reads, "[W]hen 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."⁸ Teaching from this scripture, Elder David A. Bednar has counseled: "Please notice how the power of the Spirit carries the message *unto* but not necessarily *into* the heart. A teacher can explain, demonstrate, persuade, and testify, and do so with great spiritual power and effectiveness. Ultimately, however, the content of a message and the witness of the Holy Ghost penetrate into the heart only if a receiver allows them to enter. Learning by faith opens the pathway *into* the heart."⁹

My friends, you have wonderful instructors, and they are teaching you to fish. They present engaging lectures, presentations, and experiments. They teach you facts, but the way to learn truth is to exercise faith and seek to learn, not just with your head through study, but also with a willing heart through faith. When your heart and mind are aligned and open, it is the Holy Ghost that will testify to you of truth and enhance your learning.

Remember, "he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full."¹⁰ Your effective study should always begin with prayer. Ask for an open mind and an open heart. Invite the Spirit to your studies. Be worthy of the Spirit's companionship. I promise that the Holy Ghost is the most committed and devoted of any study companion. The Spirit is always on time and is never distracted. Dear friends, I am not just referring to your gospel study. Make use of the blessing of the Holy Ghost in your life by inviting the Spirit to attend *all* of your studies. Your study, whatever you are studying, will be most effective when you are taught by the Holy Ghost.

I am reminded of what President Russell M. Nelson has taught: "[I]n coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost."¹¹ May you always live worthy of the Spirit, inviting the Holy Ghost to fill your open minds and hearts with truth, is my prayer for each of you. I love you!

I testify that the Holy Ghost comforts, guides, warns, and testifies of truth. I know, because the Holy Ghost has born witness to me, that our Heavenly Father and our Savior Jesus Christ love you. They want you to succeed. They want you to be happy. They want you to return to them. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

¹ [Doctrine and Covenants 93:36](#)

² See [Doctrine and Covenants 130:18–19](#)

³ [Doctrine and Covenants 88:77–80](#)

⁴ [Doctrine and Covenants 109:7](#); see also [Doctrine and Covenants 88:118](#)

⁵ Mathias Held, "[Seeking Knowledge by the Spirit](#)," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2019

⁶ [Moroni 10:5](#)

⁷ [John 14:26](#)

⁸ [2 Nephi 33:1](#), italics added

⁹ David A. Bednar, "[Seek Learning by Faith](#)," *Ensign*, Sept. 2007

¹⁰ [Alma 12:10](#)

¹¹ Russell M. Nelson, "[Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives](#)," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018