

## “I Will Tell You in Your Mind and in Your Heart, by the Holy Ghost”

Manual Goal: To help class members learn to recognize personal revelation through the [Holy Ghost](#) and to encourage them to seek this blessing in their lives.

EGD Goal: To help class members recognize personal revelation through the Holy Ghost by differentiating inspiration from their own thoughts and biases, as well as understand the balance of personal and institutional revelation.

### Outline

1. How revelation works
2. What is truth?
  - a. What we assume to be true
  - b. What we want to be true
  - c. What we fear to be true
  - d. What we sense to be true
  - e. What we conclude to be true
3. How do we distinguish between ourselves and divine influence? (Take into account assume, want, and fear as much as possible; refine our abilities with sensing and concluding)
4. Discussion of new resources
5. Personal vs. Institutional revelation

Framing: When we feel inspired, when God communicates with us, we receive that revelation through our brains and bodies.

This is an obvious point when we think about it... how else do we learn or experience anything? But too often we assume that if we feel inspired, that inspiration for sure comes from God. And most troubling perhaps, when we feel God tells us what we want to hear, we are the least likely to question those messages (especially if God is on our side when we are trying to prove someone else wrong!). Turns out, our minds and bodies are quite limited vessels!

Things we **assume are true** (socialization. Probably the trickiest to notice): Impacted by innumerable factors: what it means to be male, female, a child, adult, a partner, a parent, and employee, a race, etc. What we think of others

Things we **want to be true** (Biases; we are wired to put ourselves in the best light possible, we crave feeling right over learning whether we are right. Confirmation bias, fundamental attribution error). What it means to be male, female, a child, adult, a partner, a parent, and employee, a race, etc. What we think of others, all these issues are impacted by our biases and prejudices. Hope also falls under here, which can be founded or unfounded, helpful or foolish.

Things we **fear are true** (Prejudices and Dread, self-fulfilling prophecies etc):

\*(Things we **sense are true** (Intuition): Daniel Kahneman, Thinking Fast and Slow, popularized by Malcom Gladwell in Blink. We can trust our \*trained\* intuition. Our knee jerk intuition is too impacted by the factors I just mentioned.

\*Things we **conclude are true** (Deduction): This is where critical thinking and the scientific method come in. Things like observations and statistics. Troublingly, these findings often surprise us! Especially findings about how we work as humans (Dan Ariely, Jonathan Haidt)

I think that god works through the last two, and the first three hinder God's ability to do so.

Image Source: [Henry Tanner, The Annunciation, 1898](#)

## Lesson 6 : “I Will Tell You in Your Mind and in Your Heart, by the Holy Ghost”

- [“Oliver Cowdery’s Gift”](#): This article gives context for the revelations now found in Doctrine and Covenants 6–9.
- [“All Things Must Be Done in Order”](#): This article discusses the revelations now contained in Doctrine and Covenants 28 and 43.

Message that only Joseph could receive revelation from God in a binding way, and by extension, that Church leaders are the one to receive binding revelation.

We discussed “individual vs. individual” revelation question (how to distinguish divine guidance from our own thoughts); the “individual vs. authority” question is similarly complex. We do need structure, organization, even hierarchy. I believe others can receive inspiration in our behalf, and that a key part of becoming like our Heavenly Parents involves learning to care for others. Leaders in the Church have stewardship over members in their area of stewardship. That said, personal revelation is also a sacred right. What happens when individual and institutional revelation contradict each other?

My favorite summary remains Elder Oaks' statement "As a General Authority, I have the responsibility to preach general principles. When I do, I don't try to define all the exceptions. There are exceptions to some rules. ... But don't ask me to give an opinion on your exception. I only teach the general rules. Whether an exception applies to you is your responsibility. You must work that out individually between you and the Lord."

The Prophet [Joseph Smith](#) taught this same thing in another way. When he was asked how he governed such a diverse group of Saints, he said, "I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves." <sup>4</sup> In what I have just said, I am simply teaching correct principles and inviting each one of you to act upon these principles by governing yourself."

<https://www.lds.org/ensign/2006/06/dating-versus-hanging-out?lang=eng>

(unfortunately, he said pretty much the opposite message in Conference)

[https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2010/10/two-lines-of-communication?lang=eng&\\_r=1](https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2010/10/two-lines-of-communication?lang=eng&_r=1)

I believe that \*if\* both individual and leader are humble and open, God's will/the truth will most often win out. The problem is that leaders have added obstacles to being humble... just "being the one in charge" makes us less open to being corrected, and the added LDS culture of respecting authority and those in charge supporting each other rather than seeking to discern what is right or best. But again, both individually and relationally, I believe that if we are humble and sensitive to the spirit, us seeking what is right both individually and together will lead to us making the best choices.