

Recognizing and Receiving Revelation

1. “There are only certain ones who are going to hear when that knock comes or His voice is raised. He then declared, ‘My sheep hear my voice’ . . . (John 10:27). The pure in heart are the only ones who are qualified to see and to hear and listen and know his voice when He speaks” (Teachings of Harold B. Lee, p. 414).
2. “Would you like a formula to tell you how to get a personal revelation? It might be written in many ways. My formula is simply this:
 1. Search the scriptures.
 2. Keep the commandments.
 3. Ask in faith
 Any person who will do this will get his heart so in tune with the infinite that there will come into his being, from the ‘still small voice,’ the eternal realities of religion” (Bruce R. McConkie, BYU Speeches, Oct. 11, 1966, p. 8).
3. “Petitioning in prayer has taught me, again and again, that the vault of heaven with all its blessings is to be opened only by a combination lock. One tumbler falls when there is faith, a second when there is personal righteousness; the third and final tumbler falls only when what is sought is, in God's judgement—not ours—right for us. Sometimes we pound on the vault door for something we want very much and wonder why the door does not open. We would be very spoiled children if that vault door opened any more easily than it does. I can tell, looking back, that God truly loves me by inventorying the petitions He has refused to grant me. Our rejected petitions tell us much about ourselves but also much about our flawless Father” (Elder Neal A. Maxwell, New Era, Apr. 1978, p. 6).
4. “I have had problems which it seemed to me that I could not solve. I have suffered in facing those problems until it seemed that I could not go forward without a solution to them. Through faith, and on many occasions fasting for a day each week over long periods of time, I have had answers to those problems revealed to my mind in finished sentences. I have heard the voice of God and I know His words” (Marion G. Romney, Improvement Era, Jan. 1957, p. 46).
5. “A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation . . .” (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, June 1889, 3:381).
6. “Answers to prayer come most often by a still voice and are discerned by our deepest, inner-most feelings” (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, Nov. 1977, p. 32).
7. “I have come to know that inspiration comes more as a feeling than as a sound” (Elder Boyd K. Packer, Ensign, Nov. 1979, p. 20).
8. “I can identify eight different purposes served by communication from God: (1) to testify; (2) to prophesy; (3) to comfort; (4) to uplift; (5) to inform; (6) to restrain; (7) to confirm; and (8) to impel” (Dallin H. Oaks, BYU Speeches, Sept. 29. 1981, p. 2).
9. “I made a rule for myself a number of years ago with reference to this subject. When someone relates a spiritual experience to me, personally or in a small, intimate group, I make it a rigid rule not to talk about it thereafter. I assume that it was told to me in a moment of trust and confidence, and therefore I never talk about it. If, however, on some future occasion I hear that individual talk about it in public in a large gathering, or where a number of people are present, then I know that it has been stated publicly and I can feel free under the right circumstances to relate it. But I know many, many sacred and important things that have been related to me by others that I will not discuss unless I am privileged to do so under the rule stated above. I know that others of the Brethren have the same feeling” (Boyd K. Packer, Teach Ye Diligently, pp. 277-279).

10. “But is prayer only one-way communication? No! One of the reasons ‘prayer is the soul's sincere desire’ (Hymns, no. 220) is because prayer is such a privilege—not only to speak to our Father in Heaven, but also to receive love and inspiration from him. At the end of our prayers, we need to do some intense listening—even for several minutes. We have prayed for counsel and help. Now we must ‘be still, and know that [he is] God’ (Ps. 46:10)” (President Spencer W. Kimball, Ensign, Oct. 1981, p. 5).
11. “I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them; but if any person have a vision or a visitation from a heavenly messenger, it must be for his own benefit and instruction; for the fundamental principles, government, and doctrine of the Church are vested in the keys of the kingdom” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 21).
12. The burning bushes, the smoking mountains . . . the Cumorahs, and the Kirtlands were realities but they were the exceptions. The great volume of revelation came to Moses and to Joseph and come to today's prophet in the less spectacular way--that of deep impressions but without spectacle or glamour or dramatic events. Always expecting the spectacular, many will miss entirely the constant flow of revealed communication” (President Spencer W. Kimball, Church News, Jan. 5, 1974, p. 2).
13. “I have learned that the best time to wrestle with major problems is early in the morning. Our minds are then fresh and alert. The blackboards of our minds have been erased by a good night's sleep. The accumulated distractions of the day are not in our way. Our bodies have been rested also. That is the time to think something through carefully and to receive personal revelation.
“I heard President Harold B. Lee begin many a statement about matters involving revelation with an expression something like this: "In the early hours of the morning, while I was pondering upon that subject . . ." He made it a practice to work in the fresh, alert hours of the early morning on the problems that required revelation. The Lord knew something when He directed in the Doctrine and Covenants. ‘. . . cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated’ (D&C 88:124) . . .
“I've learned the power of the dictum, ‘Early to bed, early to rise.’ When I'm under pressure, you won't find me burning the midnight oil. I'd much rather be in bed early and getting up in the wee hours of the morning, when I can be close to Him who guides this work” (Boyd K. Packer, Teach Ye Diligently, pp. 204-205).
14. “At other times people who pride themselves on their strict observance of the rules and ordinances and ceremonies of the Church are led astray by false spirits, who exercise an influence so imitative of that which proceeds from a Divine source that even these persons, who think they are "the very elect," find it difficult to discern the essential difference. . . . When visions, dreams, tongues, prophecy, impressions or any extraordinary gift or inspiration conveys something out of harmony with the accepted revelations of the Church or contrary to the decisions of its constituted authorities, Latter-day Saints may know that it is not of God, no matter how plausible it may appear” (Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, Charles W. Penrose, Messages of the First Presidency, vol. 4, p. 285).
15. “I believe if one wants revelations enough to crave them beyond the rightness of it, that eventually he will get his revelations—but they may not come from God. I am sure that there can be many spectacular things performed, because the devil is very responsive. He is listening and he is eager to do it. And so he gives strange experiences. I think some actually do get unusual experiences and revelations” (Spencer W. Kimball, The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, p. 458).
16. “We should study things out in our minds, using the reasoning powers our Creator has placed within us. Then we should pray for guidance and act upon it if we receive it. If we do not receive guidance, we should act upon our best judgement. Persons who persist in seeking revelatory guidance on subjects on which the Lord has not chosen to direct us may concoct an answer out of their own fantasy or bias, or they may even receive an answer through the medium of false revelation” (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Ensign, Oct. 1994, p. 14).