

The Words of Christ and the Holy Ghost Will Lead Us to the Truth

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Knowing this incredible plan will help us know we are children of God and we can become like Him. Empty

God is our Father in Heaven. We are His spirit children, and we are created after His image. Therefore, each of us, as a child of God, has a divine potential to become like Him. Empty

We lived with Him as spirits before we came to this earth. Heavenly Father, as our spirit parent, loves us, wants the best for us, and prepared a plan for us to receive His greatest blessings, which are immortality and eternal life. According to the plan, we, as spirit children, would be given agency to choose His plan. By coming to the earth, we would leave God's presence, forget our premortal life, receive bodies of flesh and bones, gain our own experience, and develop faith. With our bodies of flesh and bones, as natural men we would succumb to temptation, become unclean and distant from God, and not be able to return to His holy presence. Because of Heavenly Father's infinite love for us, He sent His Firstborn Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. Through His sacrifice, the Atonement, Jesus Christ made it possible for us to be redeemed from our sins and be resurrected and receive eternal life.

I am extremely grateful for these glorious truths—what we call the Father's plan of salvation, His plan of mercy, or His great plan of happiness. Learning these important truths has helped me know my true identity and the great blessings of exaltation and eternal life God has prepared for us. The prophet Nephi taught us the way: "Wherefore, ... feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do." He added, "If ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy

Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do.” Today I would like to share how the words of Christ and the Holy Ghost helped me find these important peace-giving truths in my teenage years.

The Words of Christ Will Tell You All Things What You Should Do

Just like Nephi stated in the opening verse of the book of 1 Nephi, I was also “born of goodly parents.” I grew up in Nagano, Japan, in a home where honesty, diligence, and humility were strongly encouraged and conformity to the old customs was strictly followed. My father was a very religious man. I watched him praying in front of the Shinto and Buddhist altars every morning and every night. Even though I had no idea whom he was praying to and what he was praying for, I believed some sort of unseen power or God would be “mighty to save” or help us if we prayed sincerely.

Like other teenagers, I experienced many hardships. I struggled, thinking that life was unfair and had lots of ups and downs. I felt lost, not having a sense of direction in my life. Life seemed so fleeting because it would end when I died. Life without knowing the plan of salvation was confusing.

Not long after I started to learn English in junior high school, all the students in our school received a copy of the New Testament. Though we had barely begun our study of English, our teacher told us we should study English by reading it. I opened it and reviewed its contents. The words in the New Testament were extremely difficult for me. The words in Japanese were equally difficult. However, I was drawn to a list of statements and questions of the soul that had been included just before the biblical text in this Gideon Bible—questions about feeling lonely, lacking confidence, being confused, facing life’s trials, and so on. Each item on the list was followed by a reference to verses and pages in the New Testament. I was especially drawn to the statement “When you are weary.” The reference led me to open Matthew 11:28–30, in which Jesus said to His disciples:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall

find rest unto your souls.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

This was the first time I remember reading the words of Jesus Christ. Though I did not understand all the words He said, His words comforted me, lifted my soul, and gave me hope. The more I read His words, the more I felt like I should try the virtue of His words. I had never felt like I felt that day. I felt I was loved. I felt that Jesus Christ was someone I knew.

As I continued studying, I felt as though He were speaking directly to me when He said, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

His words filled my heart, even though I could not describe my feelings well at that time. Although Jesus Christ lived many centuries ago in a land unfamiliar to me, I thought I could trust His words with all my heart. I hoped someday in the future I might learn more about Jesus Christ.

The Holy Ghost Will Show You All Things What You Should Do

That someday came only a few years later. I met very dedicated, young, full-time missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And I soon met a small group of kind and joyful Latter-day Saints striving to follow Jesus Christ. Despite it taking me a while to fully trust them, I came to see in the restored gospel what I yearned for when I studied the New Testament—the words of Jesus Christ and the hope and peace that come from them.

A particularly sacred experience was when the missionaries taught me to pray. I learned that we should address God by name. When we pray, we should speak from our hearts, express our gratitude, and share our hopes and desires. Once we have said all that we want to say, we end our prayer by saying, “In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.” We do this because Jesus commanded us to pray in His name. Praying to Heavenly Father helped me know who He is and my relationship with Him—that I was His beloved spirit son. I learned that because Heavenly Father knows and loves me, He would speak to me personally, uniquely, and in ways I would understand through the Holy Ghost.

There was a time when I really could not recognize the Holy Ghost. I misunderstood, thinking that all I had to do was follow the steps of prayer and something dramatic would happen.

One day, during a lesson with the missionaries, I stepped out of the lesson to take a break. I was still confused about what I should do with my life if the restored gospel of Jesus Christ really was true.

As I was about to return to the room where the missionaries were waiting, I heard the voice of one of the missionaries. I heard my name. Instead of opening the door, I listened to the voice on the other side of the door. I was stunned. They were simply praying to Heavenly Father. The one saying the prayer was pleading to God that He would hear my prayer. Though his Japanese was not fluent, hearing his sincere prayer softened my heart. I wondered why they cared about me so much. Then I realized that their prayer in my behalf was a reflection of Heavenly Father and the Savior's love for me. That love gave me hope, and afterward I did ask God in faith and with real intent. When I did, I felt a joyful and peaceful feeling that I was indeed a child of God and that I had a divine potential and destiny. The plan of salvation sank deep into my heart.

President Russell M. Nelson has said, "The way you think about who you ... are affects ... every decision you will ever make." It is so true for me. The decision to follow the Savior Jesus Christ by being baptized and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost blessed my life more than I ever imagined. As we enter into the baptismal covenant with God, we promise that we are willing to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, keep the commandments of God, and serve Him for the remainder of our lives. Our Heavenly Father, in turn, promises us that we can always have His Spirit to be with us—the continued guidance from the Holy Ghost.

I invite you to have faith in the message Nephi taught us—that the words of Christ and the Holy Ghost will direct you to "all things what [you] should do." Everything! This is an incredible gift from God.

Brothers and sisters, I am grateful for our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. Because He loves us, He prepared the way to return to His presence through His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Knowing this incredible plan will help us know we are children of God and we can become like Him. I am grateful for this important truth. I bear you my witness that the words of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost will lead us to receive eternal life. I know these things are true. In the

sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.