
OBJECTIVE Each young man will understand that the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit who testifies of the Father and the Son and leads us to them.

PREPARATION

1. Prayerfully study Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:22; 1 Nephi 11:27; 2 Nephi 32:4–5; Moroni 10:5; and Doctrine and Covenants 88:3–4; 130:22.
2. Materials needed:
 - a. Copies of the scriptures (each young man should bring his own).
 - b. A pencil and a piece of paper for each young man.
 - c. Pencils for marking scriptures.
3. If it is available in your area, show “Following the Spirit,” on *Family Home Evening Video Supplement* (53276).

**SUGGESTED
LESSON
DEVELOPMENT**

The Holy Ghost Is a Personage of Spirit

Questions and discussion

Give each young man a pencil and a piece of paper, and ask the young men to answer the following true-false questions (the answers are given in parentheses):

1. The Holy Ghost is a divine influence or power that fills the immensity of space. (False.)
2. The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead. (True.)
3. The Holy Ghost is “the Holy Spirit of Promise.” (True.)
4. The Holy Ghost may take the form of a dove. (False.)

Tell the young men that this lesson will help explain the answers to these questions.

Quotations, scriptures, and discussion

Ask the young men to read Doctrine and Covenants 130:22.

Explain that the Holy Ghost is an actual person. He is a personage of spirit and is separate and distinct from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Read and discuss the following scriptures and quotations.

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith taught the following:

“I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods” (*History of the Church*, 6:474).

- What do we learn from this quotation about the Holy Ghost?
- Why wouldn’t the Holy Ghost have a body of flesh and bones? (So that he may dwell in us; see D&C 130:22.)

Have a young man read Mark 1:9–11 (or Luke 3:22 or 1 Nephi 11:27).

- What could be confusing about these verses? (Some people could mistakenly conclude that the Holy Ghost can take the body, shape, or form of a dove.)

Point out that the Prophet Joseph Smith explained that the Holy Ghost is a personage having the form of a man and that the dove is merely an outward symbol or sign of the Holy Ghost. The Prophet Joseph said that the Holy Ghost descended upon Christ at the time of his baptism “in the form of a dove, or rather in the *sign* of the dove, in witness of that administration.” He explained:

“The sign of the dove was instituted before the creation of the world, a witness for the Holy Ghost, and the devil cannot come in the sign of a dove. The Holy Ghost is a personage, and is in the form of a personage. It does not confine itself to the *form* of the dove, but in the *sign* of the dove. The Holy Ghost cannot be transformed into a dove; but the sign of a dove was given to John to signify the truth of the deed, as the dove is an emblem or token of truth and innocence” (*History of the Church*, 5:260–61).

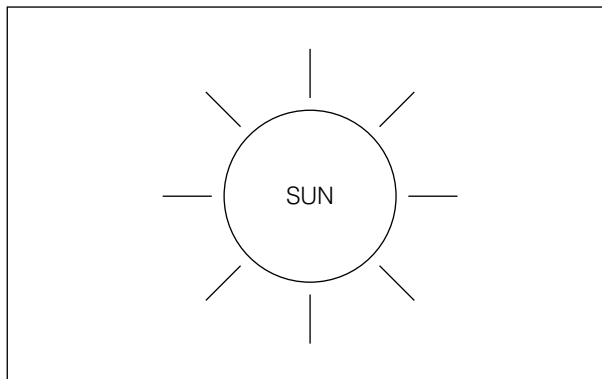
The Power or Influence of the Holy Ghost

Adviser presentation Explain that in the scriptures, the prophets often use the words *Holy Ghost*, *Holy Spirit*, *Spirit*, *Spirit of Truth*, *Spirit of the Lord*, and *Holy Spirit of Promise* interchangeably. Sometimes these phrases are used to refer to the person of the Holy Ghost; other times they are used to refer to his power or influence. Only a careful reading of the passage in which the phrase is used will indicate which meaning is intended.

Quotation, scripture, and adviser presentation President Joseph F. Smith distinguished between the person and the influence of the Holy Ghost:
“The Holy Ghost as a personage of Spirit can no more be omnipresent in person than can the Father or the Son, but by his intelligence, his knowledge, his power and influence, over and through the laws of nature, he is and can be omnipresent throughout all the works of God” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939], p. 61).

Point out that the person of the Holy Ghost can be in only one place at a time, but his power and influence can be omnipresent—present everywhere at the same time.

Have a young man read Doctrine and Covenants 88:3–4. Then draw the following on the chalkboard:



Explain that the difference between the Holy Ghost and the power and influence of the Holy Ghost can be illustrated by an analogy to the sun and the light that radiates from it. We know that the sun itself can be in only one place at a time. But the heat, light, and energy that radiate from it can enlighten and fill the entire solar system at once. Similarly, the Holy Ghost as a personage can be in only one place at one time, but his influence and power can and do fill the immensity of space.

The Effect of the Holy Ghost upon Mortal Men

Scriptures and discussion Read 2 Nephi 32:4–5 and Moroni 10:5.

- What do we learn from these scriptures about the role of the Holy Ghost? (If we seek the companionship of the Holy Ghost, he will teach us the truth of all things and show us all things that we should do to gain eternal life.)

Quotations Point out that it is important to learn to recognize the presence of the Holy Ghost in our lives. The Prophet Joseph Smith explained:

“This first Comforter or Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938], p. 149).

Elder Parley P. Pratt also described the effects of the Holy Ghost:

“[His influence] quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands and purifies all the natural passions and affections; and adapts them, by the gift of wisdom, to their lawful use. It inspires, develops, cultivates and matures all the fine-toned sympathies, joys, tastes, kindred feelings and affections of our nature. It inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation and social feeling. It invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens, and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being” (*Key to the Science of Theology*, 9th ed. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965], p. 101).

Adviser presentation

Explain that we should seek to receive the influence of the Holy Ghost as described by Elder Pratt. Many times the Holy Ghost will act as a comforter, speaking peace to our minds and hearts. Other times the influence of the Holy Ghost will give us sudden bursts of thought or inspiration, as if a light were turned on in our minds and hearts, and in the light we discern some new truth. This is the pure intelligence spoken of by Joseph Smith. It is the still small voice speaking “in your mind and in your heart” (D&C 8:2), the burning in your bosom (see D&C 9:8).

Conclusion

Summary

- What must we do in order to enjoy the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, the third member of the Godhead? (Exercise faith in Christ, repent, pray, study the scriptures, and obey the still small voice.)

Point out that as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we have been baptized and have received the gift of the Holy Ghost. The door has been opened for us to receive the Holy Ghost as a constant companion according to our worthiness. We must follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost to return to the presence of the Father and the Son. The Holy Ghost teaches us the truth of all things and leads us to eternal life.