

ASIA AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

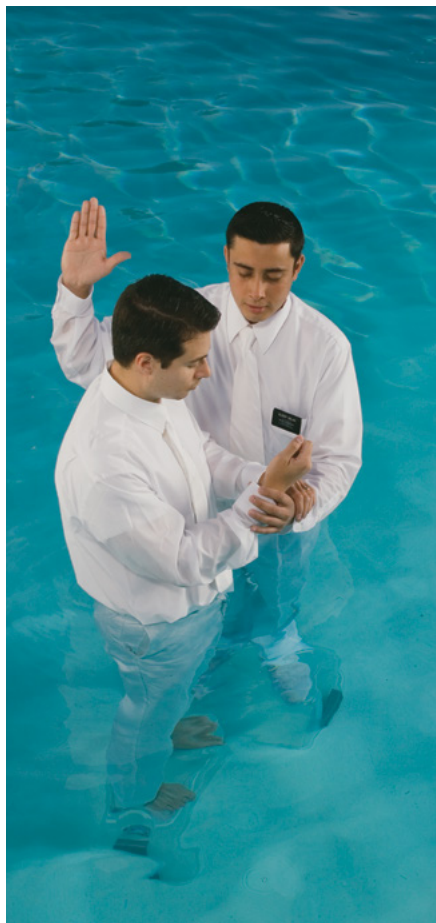
Companionship of the Holy Ghost

By Elder Fook Chuen Zeno Chow
Of the Seventy



Elder Fook Chuen
Zeno Chow

It has been almost 40 years since I attended my first meeting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: a baptismal service in which a classmate of mine would be performing a baptism.



It was a cold winter night and a long walk to the Kam Tong Hall from Central in Hong Kong. I still remember vividly the white ceiling, the wooden walls, and the warm greetings from missionaries standing in the hallway.

I was early and my classmate escorted me down to the basement, where the baptismal font was located and a preparation meeting was being held.

At the end of the preparation meeting, a young elder who conducted the meeting bore his testimony. He testified that “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true church upon the face of the earth.”

At that very moment, I had a special peaceful feeling enter into my heart. However, I quickly brushed aside that funny feeling and replaced it with a thought: “How dare you say that yours is the only true church when thousands of churches are out there?!”

Shortly after, I was invited to have discussions with the missionaries. When I arrived at the small meeting-house in Causeway Bay for my first missionary discussion, I felt like I was returning home even though it was

the very first time I had ever set foot in that building.

When I was presented with the hard-to-believe experience of Joseph Smith seeing God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, a comfortable feeling came over me and I felt that Joseph Smith’s story was credible.

I have since always been grateful that my heart was softened as I was investigating the Church and that I was receptive to the gospel truths.

It wasn’t until years later that I came across the Lord’s counsel to Oliver Cowdery, saying:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, if you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things. Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God?” (D&C 6:22–23).

I finally realized that the peaceful feeling I first felt by the baptismal font, the feeling of coming home when I arrived at the Church building, and the comfort I felt while learning the Joseph Smith story all came from the

Holy Ghost who testified to me of the truthfulness of the gospel.

We all have had the privilege of being touched by the Holy Ghost when searching for truths. We might not have recognized it immediately, but His power has changed each of our lives.

Near the end of the Lord's mortal ministry and before His departure to the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord

was concerned regarding the disciples' readiness to face the upcoming trials. He assured His disciples that:

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave

you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:16–18).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled,



"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever . . . I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:16–18)

neither let it be afraid” (John 14:26–27).

“It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:7–8).

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead. Unlike our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who have bodies of flesh and bone, the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit that is able to dwell within us, to lead and guide us in our daily actions.

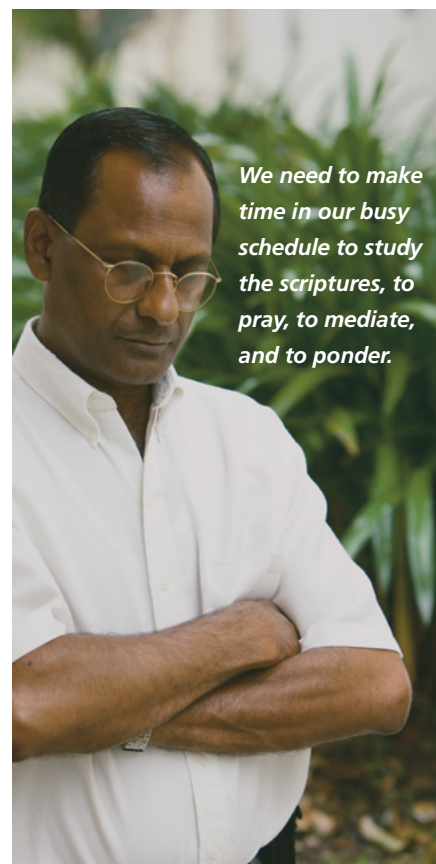
President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, reminded us that the Holy Ghost can:

1. protect us from temptations by making “what is good more attractive and temptation less compelling,”
2. “give us power to discern truth from falsehood,”
3. enlighten us with inspiration and personal revelations,
4. comfort us and give us strength to endure our trials,
5. help us to “see people and events as God sees them,” and
6. purify us as we follow his promptings.¹

Every individual who has repented of his or her sins and is baptized by an authorized minister of the Lord will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which gives the remarkable privilege of enjoying the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. During this sacred ordinance of confirmation, we are instructed to “receive the Holy Ghost.”²

Receiving the Holy Ghost requires active engagement on our part. As suggested by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, in order to have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, we must have a sincere desire, then live our lives in a way that would invite the Holy Ghost to abide with us, and finally, act according to the impressions from the Holy Ghost.³

Our strong desire to have the companionship of the Holy Ghost will motivate us to examine our thoughts, our words, and our habits to see whether there is anything that would be offensive to the Holy Ghost. One of the most appropriate times to examine ourselves is when we prepare to partake of the sacrament each week. As we partake the sacrament, we promise our Heavenly Father that we “are willing to take upon [us] the name of [Jesus Christ], and always remember him and keep his commandments” (D&C 20:77), which then



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qualifies us to have the Holy Ghost to always be with us.

Furthermore, we need to make time in our busy schedule to study the scriptures, to pray, to mediate, and to ponder. These activities will better prepare us to hear the whispering of the Holy Ghost, allowing him to speak to us in our hearts and in our minds (see D&C 8:2).

As we feel the impressions from the Holy Ghost, we should act on them.

Our compliance with his guidance will bring us even closer to the Holy Ghost. President Eyring suggests that we “can treat those moments of inspiration like the seed of faith that Alma described (see Alma 32:28). Plant each one. You can do that by acting on the prompting you felt. The most valuable inspiration will be for you to know what God would have you do. If it is to pay tithing or to visit a grieving friend, you should do it. Whatever it



In our seeking and following the impressions of the Holy Ghost, we will gradually become the people our Heavenly Father wants to us to be.

is, do it. When you demonstrate your willingness to obey, the Spirit will send you more impressions of what God would have you do for Him.”⁴

Elder Bednar assures us that “the Holy Ghost can tarry with us much, if not most, of the time—and certainly the Spirit can be with us more than it is not with us.”⁵

In our seeking and following the impressions of the Holy Ghost, we will gradually become the people our Heavenly Father wants to us to be.

Although we need to be worthy to have the Holy Ghost as our constant companion, we do not need to be perfect before we can receive his guidance and comfort. His companionship is a gift of love from our Heavenly Father; let us all receive him with gladness and a grateful heart.

I testify that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and that the Holy Ghost is our best companion on the journey back to our heavenly home. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. See Henry B. Eyring, “The Holy Ghost as Your Companion,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 104–107.
2. See *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 20.3.10.
3. See David A. Bednar, “Receive the Holy Ghost,” *Liahona*, November 2010, 95–97.
4. See Henry B. Eyring, “The Holy Ghost as Your Companion,” 105.
5. See David A. Bednar, “That We May Always Have His Spirit to Be with Us,” *Liahona*, May 2006, 30.

Personalizing the Atonement of Jesus Christ

By Raja Solomon, Coimbatore Third Branch, Coimbatore District

The Atonement of Jesus Christ is the center of the plan of happiness. I often think how inadequate I am to use that magnificent and glorious sacrifice of our Savior—His Atonement. I believe the sacrifice of our Savior is significantly important to all human souls from past to future generations who are yet to come. However, I do not want to make a statement or a sermon to the world about His Atonement; instead, I want to make it personal to my life and the lives of our family members.

Many times as I look at my daily activities, I look upon my sins with the highest degree of guiltiness.

My life would have been jeopardized without the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am grateful for His love to guide me. As stated in Ether 12:4, “Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them

Raja Solomom and his family



sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God." I truly believe this verse is true for the people who believe in Him and give ear to His word.

As a Sunday School teacher, I felt that teaching about Christ's Atonement to the class members is always monotonous, but when I realized that I needed to make it

personal, the class was more spiritual and gave me more enthusiasm to make it lively. Jesus Christ's death on the cross and subsequent Resurrection from the grave made the Atonement perfect for all mankind. This makes us change the way we feel about the people we meet every day: Some treat us different than the way we want to be treated, some are people with differences of opinion, and some mock us for accepting the restored gospel, but with an understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we feel how important it is to love the people around us.

My family and I will always be grateful for His unconditional love to save us from the Fall. This makes us to be more loyal, more loving, more forgiving, quick to repent of our sins, and willing to partake of sacrament more worthily every week.

Personal testimony:

I was born in a traditional Catholic family from the coastal town of Thoothukudi of southern Tamilnadu. I lived there till I completed my post-graduation. I was desperately searching for job, and a pastor of a well-known church gave me a blessing that I would soon get a call to move to a western part of Tamilnadu and eventually find a true church, and

Christ in Gethsemane, by Harry Anderson



that by joining it, real blessings would flow into my life.

These words were fulfilled when I moved to Coimbatore (western Tamilnadu) for a job and I found the true Church. The blessings still continue to come into my life.

I truly believe that He calls every person to His place, a place of learning and joy which eventually makes us feel closer to our Lord and governs our lives through the Atonement—the center of the plan of happiness. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

Companionship of the Holy Ghost

By John Sunil Sapuri

I am humbled and grateful for the opportunity to share my testimony, experience, and thoughts about the companionship of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead; he is a personage of spirit and bears witness of all truth. In the scriptures, the Holy Ghost is referred to as the Comforter, a teacher, a guide, and the Spirit of God.

The power of the Holy Ghost can come upon one before baptism to bring one to the knowledge of the restored gospel and the Book of Mormon, and to testify that Jesus is the Christ. By this power one can receive a testimony of the gospel and of Jesus Christ. However, the gift of the Holy Ghost can come only after baptism is performed by proper priesthood authority and by the laying on of hands.

The Holy Ghost carrieth the gospel unto the hearts of the children of men and reveals the truth (see 2 Nephi 33:1).

Prior to my baptism, the missionaries would pass by my home every day on their bicycles to proselyte; when I saw them I had a strong feeling to



talk to them and was prompted by the power of the Holy Ghost to meet and speak to them. One day I finally approached and spoke to them. The missionaries proclaimed and testified about the gospel and I received a testimony on the truthfulness of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

While at the missionary training center in the Philippines, an elder from our batch who was from Cambodia did not know English but bore a heartfelt testimony. We all felt the Spirit and literally everyone cried.

When I was serving my mission in Chennai, we had opened a new area to proselyte and our teaching was zero. The summer was hot and we had to find new people to teach. My companion and I always had the help of the Holy Ghost to find the elect, and we were able to baptize many individuals and families, including a brother named Francis who had been searching for truth for several years.

In the year 2006, I was in search of a job. After a day-long search, my wife and I were returning home unsuccessfully. However, my wife had a strong prompting to visit a consultancy. When we visited the consultancy, there were representatives there from a company interviewing. I attended the interview and

was selected. I am grateful for the companionship and promptings of the Holy Ghost that my wife had. The Holy Ghost has helped me to be a better husband, father, son, brother, and individual. Having worked closely with my bishop, I have seen the bishop constantly enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost in making hundreds of decisions to bless and direct the lives of the members in the Lord's work. Every calling, including the teacher, is guided by the constant companionship of Holy Ghost in assisting with the Lord's work.

Whenever I was sad and disappointed and burdened with the daily tasks and challenges, I was comforted and consoled by the gifts of the Spirit like peace, comfort, and assurance.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that "the Holy Ghost does not become operative in our lives merely because hands are placed upon our heads and those four important words are spoken. As we receive this ordinance, each of us accepts a sacred and ongoing responsibility to desire, to seek, to work, and to so

live that we indeed 'receive the Holy Ghost' and its attendant spiritual gifts" ("Receive the Holy Ghost," *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 95). As our body is the temple of God (see 1 Corinthians 6:19), by keeping our thoughts and actions clean, we allow and can enjoy the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. Whenever I've missed my scripture study and prayer, I have felt my companionship of the Holy Ghost decrease.

I testify that when we keep the commandments of the Lord, do our regular scripture study, have our regular prayers, attend all church meetings, do family home evening, and have clean thoughts, we will be guided safely in this mortal life and be led by the hand of the Lord as we receive revelations and peace and safety in our lives. As a promise given in Doctrine and Covenants 121:45–46, "*The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion*, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever" (emphasis added).

I know these things to be true, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

John Sunil Sapuri lives in the Hyderabad India Stake

Strengthened by the Living Prophet

By Sujatha Pedely, Madinaguda First Ward, Hyderabad India Stake

My testimony of the prophet was strengthened as many questions that I had were answered.

I love to sustain the living prophet. Sustaining the living prophet makes me feel much closer to the Lord because he reveals things to us from the Lord and helps us know what the Lord is expecting and wants from us.

Many times I have felt the Lord whispering to me by the prophets' voice to do what is right. This knowledge that I receive helps me prepare for my physical and eternal perspective. Yes! When I heed and obey the prophet's counsel, I enjoy blessings in my life.

My family and I look forward to general conference. Hearing general conference talks as a family



Sujatha Pedely

strengthens our bonds within our family. The talks at the conference are like a modern-day Liahona (see

1 Nephi 16:10, 16; Alma 37:38).

We, as a family, get much direction in our life through these talks. We get clarification and assurance for choosing the right path. So as a family, when we go to listen to a prophet's voice, we prepare ourselves to attend all the sessions by seeking the Lord's direction in our lives through prayers.

Listening to prophet's voice strengthens my relationship with the Lord, my family, my work, and myself. I feel lucky as I have always listened to and followed the prophet as a road map in my life so I may not lose my direction in life. This earthly life helps my family prepare well to meet God again and live with Him forever with my loved ones. This is the most important thing to know and live a gospel-centered life. We, as a family, always look forward to listening to a prophet's voice. ■

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