



# Teaching in the Savior's Way

For All Who Teach in the Home and in the Church

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Published by  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
Salt Lake City, Utah

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Version: 1/22  
PD80000498 000  
Printed in the United States of America

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# **Message from the First Presidency**

Beloved brothers and sisters,

What a glorious opportunity you have to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ! Whether or not you have a specific calling to teach, you *are* a teacher. As a disciple of the Master Teacher, Jesus Christ, you have opportunities to share His light wherever you go—in the home, at church, as you minister to others, and among your friends. To teach the gospel is a sacred trust. It is an essential part of the Lord’s work, and it works best when we do it in His way.

We invite you to learn more about Jesus Christ and how He taught the gospel. Prayerfully study His words, His actions, and His attributes, and strive to follow Him more closely. *Teaching in the Savior’s Way* can be your guide.

*The First Presidency*

# The Purpose of *Teaching in the Savior's Way*

The principles described in this resource can help every gospel teacher teach in the Savior's way. That includes parents, ministering brothers and sisters, seminary and institute teachers, and anyone whose Church calling gives them opportunities to teach.

You can study this resource on your own or use it to guide discussions with others about how to become a better teacher. For example, this resource could be used in home evenings, presidency meetings, ward or stake council meetings, seminary and institute in-service meetings, and teacher council meetings (see "For Leaders—Helping Teachers Succeed").

## How This Resource Is Organized

Part 1 emphasizes the importance of focusing on Jesus Christ whenever we teach the principles of His gospel. This section describes *what* we teach.

Part 2 emphasizes the principles of Christlike teaching. This section describes *how* we teach.

Part 3 gives practical suggestions to help teachers *apply* the principles of Christlike teaching.

## Overview of Christlike Teaching

The following charts provide an overview of the principles taught in this resource.

# Overview of Christlike Teaching

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## Focus on Jesus Christ

Teach about Jesus Christ No Matter What You Are Teaching	Help Learners Come unto Jesus Christ
Emphasize the example of Jesus Christ.	Help learners recognize the Lord's love, power, and mercy in their lives.
Teach about the titles, roles, and attributes of Jesus Christ.	Help learners strengthen their relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
Look for symbols that testify of Jesus Christ.	Help learners intentionally strive to be more like Jesus Christ.

## Principles of Christlike Teaching

Love Those You Teach	Teach by the Spirit	Teach the Doctrine	Invite Diligent Learning
See learners the way God sees them.	Prepare yourself spiritually.	Learn the doctrine of Jesus Christ for yourself.	Help learners take responsibility for their learning.
Seek to know them—understand their circumstances, needs, and strengths.	Always be ready to respond to spiritual promptings about the needs of learners.	Teach from the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets.	Encourage learners to come to know the Savior by studying the gospel daily.
Pray for them by name.	Create settings and opportunities for learners to be taught by the Holy Ghost.	Help learners seek, recognize, and understand truths in the scriptures.	Invite learners to prepare to learn.
Create a safe environment where all are respected and know their contributions are valued.	Help learners seek, recognize, and act on personal revelation.	Focus on truths that lead to conversion and build faith in Jesus Christ.	Encourage learners to share the truths they are learning.
Find appropriate ways to express your love.	Bear testimony often, and invite learners to share their feelings, experiences, and testimonies.	Help learners find personal relevance in the doctrine of Jesus Christ.	Invite learners to live what they are learning.



## Part 1: Focus on Jesus Christ





*Peace I Leave with You*, by Walter Rane

## Teach about Jesus Christ No Matter What You Are Teaching

There are many things to teach about in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ—principles, commandments, prophecies, and scripture stories. But all of these are branches of the same tree, for they all have one purpose: to help all people come unto Christ and be perfected in Him (see Jarom 1:11; Moroni 10:32). So no matter what you are teaching, remember that you are really teaching about Jesus Christ and how to become like Him. The Holy Ghost can help you learn to recognize truths about the Savior and His redeeming power in each gospel principle, commandment, and prophetic teaching (see Jacob 7:10–11).

Are you teaching about sacrifice? Consider exploring with learners how the sacrifices we make point our souls to the Savior’s “great and last sacrifice” (Alma 34:10). Are you teaching about unity? Consider discussing the unity Jesus Christ achieved with His Father and His invitation for us to be one with Them (see John 17). See every gospel topic as an opportunity to teach and learn about Jesus Christ.

Every commandment also provides this opportunity. Don’t just focus on the laws of the gospel—learn also about the Lawgiver. If you discuss the Word of Wisdom

and stop at the dos and don’ts of healthy living, you miss the opportunity to ponder how deeply Jesus Christ must care about us—both our spiritual and physical well-being—to give us this law. Focus on how willing and anxious the Savior is to bless us with His power to help us live His laws. Every commandment He gives us reveals something about His mind and will and heart—find joy in discovering this together!

### Emphasize the Example of Jesus Christ

We can place Jesus Christ at the center of teaching and learning by recognizing and emphasizing that He is the perfect example of all gospel principles. As disciples, we don’t just follow principles—we follow Jesus Christ. As we focus on the Savior’s perfect example, the Holy Ghost will testify of Him and inspire us to follow Him.

Imagine for a moment that you are teaching the principle of enduring to the end. A discussion about how the Savior is an example of enduring to the end could bring feelings of sweet reverence for Him. What might those you teach learn and feel from His example?



The Savior set a perfect example for all of us. *He Healed Them All*,  
by Michael Malm

## Teach about the Titles, Roles, and Attributes of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ has many titles in the scriptures. Each one reflects one of His roles in God's plan and teaches us about His divine attributes. You might consider exploring with learners what titles like Lamb of God, Advocate, Finisher of Our Faith, and Light of the World teach us about Jesus Christ. Also, as you help learners come to know more about the Savior,

go beyond what He said and did to who He is and what role He desires to play in our lives. As you learn together about the Savior's character and attributes, the Holy Ghost will deepen your understanding of and love for Him.

## Look for Symbols That Testify of Jesus Christ

"All things," the Lord declared, "are created and made to bear record of me" (Moses 6:63; see also 2 Nephi 11:4). With that truth in mind, we can learn to see a multitude of symbols in the scriptures that testify of the Savior. These symbols include things like bread, water, and light. Once we understand how these objects relate to the Savior, they can teach us of His power and attributes. You can even find parallels to the Savior's life in the lives of prophets and other faithful men and women in the scriptures. Looking for symbols reveals truths about the Savior in places you might otherwise overlook.



As teachers of Jesus Christ’s gospel, we help others understand and rely on His teachings, power, and love.

## Help Learners Come unto Jesus Christ

Nothing you do as a teacher will bless learners more than helping them know Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and feel Their love (see John 17:3). Think of experiences that have helped you come to know and love Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. What have you done to learn about Their attributes, power, and love? How has your love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ brought you joy? Then think of what Their love and power can do for each person you teach. (See Alma 26:16; Moses 5:11.)

Our ultimate goal in this life is to become more like our Heavenly Father and return to Him. The way we accomplish that goal is by coming unto Jesus Christ (see John 14:6). This is why, as the prophet Nephi taught, “we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ” (2 Nephi 25:26).

Every child of God needs the light and truth that comes from the Savior and can choose to respond to it. To be a teacher of Jesus Christ’s gospel means to help others understand and rely on His teachings, redeeming power, and perfect love. Consider how the following ideas can help you inspire others to better know Jesus Christ and follow Him.

### Help Learners Recognize the Lord’s Love, Power, and Mercy in Their Lives

It’s good to *know about* the Savior’s love, power, and mercy, but we also need to *experience* it. Seeing how He blessed and healed people in the scriptures helps us develop greater faith that He can bless and heal us. For example, learning about the experiences of Daniel is incomplete if it doesn’t inspire us to trust the Lord when we face our own figurative den of lions.

As you help learners recognize the Lord’s “tender mercies” (1 Nephi 1:20), both in the scriptures and in their own experiences, they will feel and know that the Lord is with them and will lovingly stand by them (see Doctrine and Covenants 68:6). They will see and feel the reality of the Lord’s love and mercy in their personal needs and circumstances.



Teachers can help learners experience the Savior's love, power, and mercy.

## Help Learners Strengthen Their Relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ

The purpose of teaching and learning about Jesus Christ is to help each person draw closer to Him and our Heavenly Father. Help the people you teach to never lose sight of that purpose. Encourage them to strengthen their relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ by studying the scriptures, repenting continually, speaking with the Father in prayer, and testifying of the Father and Son. Teach learners by word and example how making and keeping covenants binds us to Them. Help them know how precious and beloved we are to Them. Strengthen their faith that Jesus Christ, by virtue of His perfect Atonement, is the only way back to our Father. Provide opportunities for learners to receive a witness from the Holy Ghost, “which beareth record of the Father and the Son” (Moses 5:9).

## Help Learners Intentionally Strive to Be More like Jesus Christ

Ultimately, learning about Jesus Christ inspires us to become more like Him. But becoming like Him happens only as we act in faith, both in and out of class, making intentional choices to follow His example and receive His grace. Invite learners to seek the help of the Holy Ghost to identify ways they can become more like the Savior. Offer guidance and support as learners make striving to be like Him a lifetime pursuit.

Jacob taught that “all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world” can teach us about Jesus Christ (2 Nephi 11:4). Your teaching can be one of those things. Place Jesus Christ at the center of each teaching and learning experience. As you and the learners “talk of Christ, . . . rejoice in Christ, . . . preach of Christ” (2 Nephi 25:26), the Holy Ghost can plant a witness of the Savior deep in each person’s mind and heart. As you help your learners come to know Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ for themselves, they will be more likely to turn to Them for help, hope, and healing throughout their lives.



## Part 2: Principles of Christlike Teaching



Mary Heard His Word, by Walter Rane



With the Savior as our example, love becomes the motivation for our teaching.

## Love Those You Teach

Everything the Savior did throughout His earthly ministry was motivated by love. As we strive to be true followers of Christ, we can be filled with this same love (see John 13:34–35; Moroni 7:47–48; 8:26). When the Savior’s love is in our hearts, we seek every possible way to help others learn of Christ and come unto Him. Love becomes the motivation for our teaching.

### To Love Those You Teach

- See learners the way God sees them.
- Seek to know them—understand their circumstances, needs, and strengths.
- Pray for them by name.
- Create a safe environment where all are respected and know their contributions are valued.
- Find appropriate ways to express your love.

## The Savior Saw Divine Potential in Everyone He Taught

Most people in Jericho thought they knew all they needed to know about Zacchaeus. He was a publican and a tax collector—the chief publican, in fact—and

he was rich. Clearly, they thought, he must be dishonest and corrupt. But Jesus looked on Zacchaeus’s heart and saw an honorable “son of Abraham” (see Luke 19:1–10). The Savior saw people not just as they appeared to be but as they really were—and as they could become. In unpolished fishermen like Simon, Andrew, James, and John, He saw the future leaders of His Church. In the feared persecutor Saul, He saw “a chosen vessel,” who would preach His gospel before kings and nations (see Acts 9:10–15). And in you and each person you teach, the Savior sees a son or daughter of God with limitless potential.

Among the people you teach, you are likely to have some who seem faithful and converted and others who seem uninterested or even rebellious. Be careful not to make assumptions based only on what you see. The Holy Ghost can help you see in each person some of what the Savior sees—and help you begin to love them the way He does.

*Questions to Ponder:* Think about each person you teach, and ponder how Heavenly Father and Jesus feel about each one. What might They see in him or her? How will these thoughts affect the way you teach that person?

*From the Scriptures:* 1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 8:4–5; Romans 8:16–17; Doctrine and Covenants 18:10–14

## The Savior Knows Us and Understands Our Circumstances, Needs, and Strengths

The Samaritan woman did not come to the well to hear a gospel message. She came to get water. But the Savior could perceive that her thirst was more than physical. He knew that she had a troubled past with unstable relationships. So Jesus took the physical need that had her immediate interest—life-sustaining water—and connected it with her deeper spiritual needs for “living water” and “everlasting life.” By the end of their conversation, the woman had a personal witness that Jesus was the Christ, inspired in part by how well He knew her. “[He] told me all things that ever I did,” she said. “Is not this the Christ?” (see John 4:6–29).

Being a Christlike teacher includes getting to know the people you teach and striving to understand what is in their hearts. You can take an interest in their lives and show compassion. You can look for ways to understand their backgrounds, talents, interests, and needs. You can find out how they learn best. You can ask questions, listen carefully, and observe. Above all, you can pray for the understanding that only the Spirit can give. The better you know a person, the better able you are to help him or her find personal meaning and power in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Once you understand a person’s thirst, the Spirit can teach you how to help quench it with the Savior’s living water.

*Questions to Ponder:* What do you already know about the people you teach? What is important to them? What are their strengths? What do they struggle with? What can you do to understand them better?

*From the Scriptures:* Psalm 139:1–5; Matthew 6:25–32; Mark 10:17–21; John 10:14; 3 Nephi 17:1–9

## The Savior Prayed for Those He Taught

Imagine how Simon Peter must have felt when he heard the Savior say to him, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, . . . but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:31–32). How would it have affected you to know that Jesus Christ prayed to the Father for you? The people of ancient America had an experience like this, and they described it in this way: “No one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard [Jesus] pray for us unto the Father” (3 Nephi 17:17).

You might also think about what happens inside you when *you* pray for someone—consistently, by name. How do your prayers affect the way you feel about that person? How do they affect your actions? Certainly our Father in Heaven hears and answers the sincere prayers of a teacher who desires to help a learner. And in many cases, one way He answers those prayers is by touching the heart of the teacher and inspiring him or her to do or say something that will help the learner feel His love.

*Questions to Ponder:* As you think about the people you teach, is there anyone who you feel has a special need for your prayers? What do you feel inspired to pray for on his or her behalf? What blessings might come as you invite learners to pray for each other?

*From the Scriptures:* John 17; Alma 31:24–36; 3 Nephi 18:15–24; 19:19–23, 27–34

## The Savior Ensured That All Felt Respected and Valued

The general attitude among religious leaders in Jesus’s day was that sinners should be shunned. Because of this, when these leaders saw Jesus interacting with sinners, they were appalled. How could someone who associated with such people be a spiritual teacher?

Jesus, of course, had a different approach. He sought to heal those who were spiritually sick (see Mark 2:15–17; Luke 4:17–18). He consistently reached out to those who were different from those around them or who had a troubled past, and He interacted with those who had sinned. He praised the faith of a Roman soldier (see Matthew 8:5–13). He called a mistrusted tax collector to be one of His trusted disciples (see Mark 2:14). When a woman was accused of adultery, He made her feel safe and inspired her to repent and live a better life (see John 8:1–11).

But Jesus did more than that. He fostered this same attitude of acceptance and love among His followers. His example was surely in the hearts of His Apostles when the time came for them to take the gospel to all people. It is reflected in Peter’s words: “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34).

There’s a very good chance that almost everyone you are called to teach is struggling in some way to feel respected and valued. By the way you love and respect them, you can communicate that they are not only welcome but *needed*. You can reach out to those who don’t attend, who struggle, or who don’t seem interested, being patient if progress seems slow. You can help everyone feel safe and comfortable sharing their concerns with fellow believers. And you can do more than that. You can inspire all learners to help you create an environment where the doctrine is taught in a spirit of respect, belonging, and love.

*Questions to Ponder:* What helps a person feel respected and valued? What inspires a person to respect and value others? As you prayerfully think about the people you teach, what are you prompted to do so that they all can feel welcome and needed?

*From the Scriptures:* John 4; 2 Nephi 26:27–28, 33; Alma 1:26; 3 Nephi 18:22–25



Teachers can help those they teach feel loved.

## The Savior Expressed His Love for Those He Taught

At the end of a wonderful, uplifting day of teaching and ministering among the Nephites, Jesus observed that it was time for Him to go. He had other people to visit. “Go ye unto your homes,” He said, “and prepare your minds for the morrow.” But the people just sat there “in tears,” looking “steadfastly upon him as if they would ask him to tarry a little longer with them.” Perceiving their unspoken need and “filled with compassion,” Jesus did stay a little longer (3 Nephi 17:3, 5–6). He blessed their sick and afflicted. He knelt and prayed with them. He wept with them, and He rejoiced with them.

Consider prayerfully studying the Savior’s words and actions in 3 Nephi 17. Ponder the love He expressed for those He taught. Look for expressions of His love in other places in the scriptures. Then think about the people you teach. How do you appropriately express love for them? Let the Spirit guide you. If you find it difficult to feel or express love for those you teach, start by testifying of God’s love. Then “pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with [the pure love of Christ], which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ” (Moroni 7:48). And remember that your concern for teaching a lesson should never distract you from

expressing love through your words and actions. Often the way you treat people is just as important as what you teach them.

*Questions to Ponder:* How has the Savior helped you know of His love for you? How has a parent or other teacher helped you feel His love? Do the people you teach know that you love them? Do they know that the Savior loves them?

*From the Scriptures:* Mark 6:31–42; John 13:3–16, 34–35; 15:12–13; 1 Corinthians 13:1–7; 1 John 4:7–11

## Some Ways to Apply What You Are Learning

- If you are teaching a class, learn the names of learners and use them when you teach.
- Express your gratitude when learners contribute.
- Interact with learners before and after you teach.
- Help learners develop an atmosphere of love and respect for each other.
- Listen intently—when you are teaching and at other times.
- Perform acts of service for those you teach.
- Be willing to alter your teaching plans to spend more time on principles that are meaningful to those you teach.



Just as the Savior took time to prepare spiritually for His ministry, we should prepare ourselves to teach by the Spirit.

## Teach by the Spirit

When the Savior commanded Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon to preach His gospel, He promised them, “The Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say” (Doctrine and Covenants 100:8; see also Doctrine and Covenants 42:15–17; 50:17–22). The same promise applies to all those who teach the gospel, including you. As you teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, you can have the Holy Ghost with you to guide you and to testify of the truth to the minds and hearts of those you teach (see Doctrine and Covenants 8:2). You are not alone when you teach, for “it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost” (Mark 13:11).

The Holy Ghost is the true teacher. No mortal teacher, no matter how skilled or experienced, can replace His role in witnessing of truth, testifying of Christ, and changing hearts. But all teachers can be instruments in helping God’s children learn by the Spirit.

### To Teach by the Spirit

- Prepare yourself spiritually.
- Always be ready to respond to spiritual promptings about the needs of learners.
- Create settings and opportunities for learners to be taught by the Holy Ghost.
- Help learners seek, recognize, and act on personal revelation.
- Bear testimony often, and invite learners to share their feelings, experiences, and testimonies.

### The Savior Prepared Himself Spiritually to Teach

To prepare for His ministry, the Savior spent 40 days in the wilderness “to be with God” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 4:1 [in Matthew 4:1, footnote *b*]). But His spiritual preparation had begun long before. When Satan tempted Him, He was able to draw upon the “words of life” that He had treasured up for the “very hour” when He would need them (Doctrine and

Covenants 84:85). Think about your own efforts to prepare yourself spiritually to teach. What do you learn from Matthew 4:1–11 about how you can follow the Savior’s example in your spiritual preparation?

The Spirit is the real teacher and the true source of conversion. Powerful gospel teaching requires not just preparing a lesson but preparing yourself spiritually well before you begin to teach. If you are spiritually prepared, you will be better able to hear and follow the guidance of the Spirit as you teach. The way to invite the Holy Ghost into your teaching is to invite Him into your life. This includes diligently striving to follow the Savior’s example and live His gospel with all your heart. And because none of us does this perfectly, it also means repenting each day.

*Questions to Ponder:* What does it mean to you to prepare yourself spiritually to teach? What do you feel inspired to do to improve the way you prepare yourself spiritually? How do you think spiritual preparation can make a difference in your teaching?

*From the Scriptures:* Ezra 7:10; Luke 6:12; Alma 17:2–3, 9; Doctrine and Covenants 11:21; 42:13–14

## The Savior Was Always Ready to Respond to the Needs of Others

Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, had fallen at Jesus’s feet, begging Him to help his dying daughter. Jesus and His disciples were pressing their way through the crowded streets toward Jairus’s house when suddenly Jesus stopped. “Who touched me?” He asked. It seemed like an odd question—in the press of people, who *wasn’t* touching Him? But the Savior perceived that in that multitude, someone had approached Him with a specific need and with the faith to receive the healing He offered. There would still be time to visit Jairus’s daughter. But first He said to the woman who had touched His clothes, “Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace” (see Luke 8:41–48).

As a teacher, you might sometimes find yourself in a rush to cover something you had prepared to teach. While that may be important, be sure that in your haste you don’t unintentionally hurry past an urgent need of someone you’re teaching. In addition to the spiritual guidance you sought as you *prepared* to teach, seek also the Spirit’s guidance *while* you are teaching. Try to be aware of the needs, the questions, and the interests of learners. The Holy Ghost can help you discern how a learner is receiving or understanding something you have taught. He may prompt you, at times, to alter your plans. For example, you might be impressed to spend more time than you had intended on a topic or to leave some discussions for later in favor of something that is more important to learners now.

*Questions to Ponder:* When have you felt that a parent or other teacher was aware of your needs as a learner? Do those you teach know that you are more interested in their learning than in completing a lesson? How can you better communicate your interest?

*From the Scriptures:* 1 Peter 3:15; Alma 32:1–9; 40:1; 41:1; 42:1

## The Savior Provided Opportunities for People to Be Taught by the Holy Ghost

It was difficult for many in Jesus’s time to understand who He really was, but there were plenty of opinions. “Some say that thou art John the Baptist,” His disciples reported, “some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.” But then Jesus asked a question that invited His disciples to set aside the opinions of others and look inside their own hearts: “Whom say ye that I am?” He wanted them to find their answer not from “flesh and blood” but directly from “my Father which is in heaven.” It was this kind of witness—personal revelation from the Holy Ghost—that enabled Peter to declare, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (see Matthew 16:13–17).

To survive spiritually in the latter days, the people you teach will need a spiritual witness of the truth. You can't give it to them, but you can invite, encourage, inspire, and teach them to seek it. You can make clear—through your words and actions—how crucial the Holy Ghost is to gospel learning. Consider, for example, the learning environment you create and encourage. Something as simple as the arrangement of the chairs in a room or the way you greet and interact with learners sets a spiritual tone for the experience the learners will have. You can also invite learners to prepare themselves spiritually to learn, just as you prepare spiritually to teach. Ask them to take responsibility for the spirit they bring. And you can provide opportunities for them to feel the Spirit testify of Jesus Christ and His gospel. That witness will become a “rock” for them, “and the gates of hell shall not prevail against [them]” (Matthew 16:18).

*Questions to Ponder:* What have you observed that contributes to a spiritual environment for learning the gospel? What detracts from it? What helps the people you teach learn from the Spirit? Think about the setting where you most often teach. How do you feel when you are there? How can you more effectively invite the Spirit to be present there?

*From the Scriptures:* Luke 24:31–32; John 14:26; 16:13–15; Moroni 10:4–5; Doctrine and Covenants 42:16–17; 50:13–24



As we teach, we can invite learners to seek their own spiritual witness of the truth.

## The Savior Helped Others Seek, Recognize, and Act on Personal Revelation

The Lord wants to communicate with us—and He wants us to know that He's communicating with us. In 1829, a 22-year-old schoolteacher named Oliver Cowdery was learning about the bold, exciting doctrine that anyone can receive personal revelation. But he had questions similar to what many of us have asked: “Is the Lord really trying to speak to me? And how can I know what He is saying?” To answer these questions, Jesus Christ invited Oliver to think back on a private moment of spiritual searching. “Did I not speak peace to your mind?” He asked (see Doctrine and Covenants 6:21–24). Later, He taught Oliver about other ways the Spirit could speak to him (see Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3; 9:7–9; see also Doctrine and Covenants 11:12–14).

Living in a world that is so often oblivious to spiritual things, we all need help recognizing the voice of the Spirit. We may have felt the Spirit without realizing it. And we all can learn more about how to seek the Spirit, recognize His influence, and act on the promptings He gives us. As you teach, help learners discover the ways the Spirit can communicate—and how He has communicated with them. One of the greatest gifts you can give as a teacher is to help those you teach progress in this lifelong pursuit of personal revelation.

*Questions to Ponder:* Why is it important to learn to receive personal revelation? Has someone ever helped you understand how to seek and recognize revelation? How can you encourage those you teach to seek, recognize, and act on revelation from the Holy Ghost?

*From the Scriptures:* Galatians 5:22–23; Alma 5:45–47; Doctrine and Covenants 42:61; 121:33; Joseph Smith—History 1:8–20

## The Savior Bore Testimony to Those He Taught

During an especially tender moment of teaching and ministering, Jesus sought to comfort His friend Martha, whose brother had died. He shared with her a simple testimony of an eternal truth: “Thy brother shall rise again” (John 11:23). His witness prompted Martha to share her own testimony: “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (John 11:24). Notice how this pattern repeats in John 11:25–27. What impresses you about the Savior’s example? Why is sharing testimony of gospel truths such an important part of teaching?

Your testimony can have a powerful influence on those you teach. It doesn’t need to be eloquent or lengthy. And it doesn’t need to begin with “I’d like to bear my testimony.” Simply share what you know by the power of the Holy Ghost. A testimony of truth is most powerful when it is direct and heartfelt. Bear testimony often of the Savior, His gospel, and His power in your life, and encourage those you teach to do the same. And remember that sometimes the most powerful witness is borne not by the teacher but by a fellow learner.

*Questions to Ponder:* Look for examples in the scriptures that illustrate the powerful influence of someone bearing testimony. What do you learn from those examples? When have you been blessed by someone’s testimony? How has sharing your testimony influenced those you teach? How has it influenced you?

*From the Scriptures:* Acts 2:32–38; Mosiah 5:1–3; Alma 5:45–48; 18:24–42; 22:12–18; Doctrine and Covenants 46:13–14; 62:3

### Some Ways to Apply What You Are Learning

- Ask learners to share what the Holy Ghost taught them as they studied the word of God.
- Prepare beforehand to receive spiritual promptings while teaching.
- Write down spiritual impressions that come as you prepare.
- Provide occasional opportunities for class members to quietly ponder what the Spirit is teaching them.
- Use sacred music and pictures to invite the influence of the Spirit.
- Listen for promptings as you plan and teach, and be willing to adjust your plans.
- Provide opportunities for all learners to bear testimony of what they are learning.
- Help others recognize when the Spirit is present.
- Live the truths you are teaching so that you can bear witness of them.
- Follow promptings to teach in spontaneous, informal moments.



*Christ in the Temple*, by Heinrich Hofmann

## Teach the Doctrine

Although Jesus grew in wisdom and knowledge throughout His life, He was not formally educated like other religious leaders of His day. And yet when He taught, the people marveled, saying, “How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” Why were His teachings so powerful? “My doctrine is not mine,” the Savior explained, “but his that sent me” (John 7:15–16). Doctrine is eternal truth—found in the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets—that shows us the way to become like our Father in Heaven and return to Him. Regardless of how experienced you are as a teacher, you can teach with power, as the Savior did, by teaching the Father’s doctrine. You and those you teach will marvel at the blessings God sends when your teaching and learning are grounded in His word.

### To Teach the Doctrine

- Learn the doctrine of Jesus Christ for yourself.
- Teach from the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets.
- Help learners seek, recognize, and understand truths in the scriptures.
- Focus on truths that lead to conversion and build faith in Jesus Christ.
- Help learners find personal relevance in the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

### The Savior Learned the Doctrine

It seems clear that the Savior learned from the scriptures in His youth as He increased “in wisdom . . . and in favour with God” (Luke 2:52). His deep understanding of the Father’s doctrine became evident when His parents found Him in the temple at a young age, teaching Jewish teachers and answering their questions (see Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 2:46 [in Luke 2:46, footnote c]). Later, when Satan presented him with extreme temptation in the wilderness, Jesus’s

knowledge of the doctrine in the scriptures helped Him resist the temptation (see Luke 4:3–12).

You too can seek to learn true doctrine more deeply before you teach it. As you prepare to teach and learn with others, look carefully for what the Lord has said about the truths you are teaching. Search the scriptures and words of living prophets for explanation and counsel. Living and applying the truths you study will invite the Spirit to teach you the doctrine in even deeper ways and to confirm the doctrine’s truthfulness in the hearts of those you teach.

*Questions to Ponder:* Why is it important to understand gospel truths for yourself? How have you gained a deeper understanding of the truths of the gospel? What do you feel inspired to do to improve your study of the scriptures and the words of living prophets?

*From the Scriptures:* Proverbs 7:1–3; 2 Nephi 4:15–16; Doctrine and Covenants 11:21; 88:118

## The Savior Taught from the Scriptures

After the Savior’s death, two of His disciples were walking and talking with a mix of sadness and astonishment in their hearts. How could they make sense of what had just happened? Jesus of Nazareth, the man they trusted to be their Redeemer, had been dead for three days now. And then there were the reports that His tomb was empty, with angels declaring that He was alive! At this pivotal point in these disciples’ faith, a stranger joined their journey. He consoled them by “expound[ing] unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning [the Savior].” Eventually, the travelers realized that their teacher was Jesus Christ Himself and that He was indeed risen. How did they recognize Him? “Did not our heart burn within us,” they later reflected, “while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?” (Luke 24:27, 32).

Elder D. Todd Christofferson taught, “The central purpose of all scripture is to fill our souls with faith in God the Father and in His Son, Jesus Christ” (“The Blessing

of Scripture,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 34). Throughout His ministry, Jesus used the scriptures to teach, correct, and inspire others. Be sure that your teaching does not drift away from the scriptures and words of prophets. As you faithfully rely on God’s word in your teaching, you can do for others what the Savior did. You can help them to know Him, for we all need our faith in the Savior strengthened regularly. Your love for the scriptures will be evident to those you teach, and your teaching will invite the Spirit to cause their hearts to burn with a testimony of the Father and the Son.

*Questions to Ponder:* How have you been influenced by a teacher who used the scriptures to help you come to better know the Savior? What might you do to rely more on the scriptures and words of prophets as you teach? How can you help those you teach know and love God’s word?

*From the Scriptures:* Luke 4:14–21; Alma 31:5; Helaman 3:29–30; 3 Nephi 23

## The Savior Helped People Seek, Recognize, and Understand Truth

A lawyer once asked Jesus, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” In response, the Savior guided the questioner to the scriptures: “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” This led the man not only to his answer—“Love the Lord thy God . . . and thy neighbour”—but also to a follow-up question: “And who is my neighbour?” The Savior answered this question with a parable about three men who saw a fellow traveler in need. Only one of the three, a Samaritan, who was hated by the Jews just because of where he came from, stopped to help. Jesus then invited the lawyer to answer his own question: “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him?” (see Luke 10:25–37).

Why do you think the Savior taught in this way—responding to questions with invitations to search, ponder, and discover? Part of the answer is that the

Lord values the effort of seeking truth. “Seek, and ye shall find,” He has invited over and over again (see, for example, Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:9; Doctrine and Covenants 4:7). He rewards the seeker’s acts of faith and patience.

Like the Savior, you can help those you teach recognize and understand truth. The scriptures, for example, are filled with gospel truths, but sometimes it takes conscious effort to find them. As you are learning together from the scriptures, stop and ask those you teach what gospel truths they notice. Help them see how these truths relate to Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation. Sometimes eternal truths are stated in the scriptures, and sometimes they are illustrated in the stories and lives of the people we read about. It can also be helpful to explore together the historical background of the verses you are reading, as well as the meaning of the verses and how they apply to us today.

*Questions to Ponder:* How do you identify eternal truths in the scriptures or words of prophets? How are those truths blessing your life? What are some ways you can help learners recognize and understand truths that will be meaningful to them and bring them closer to God?

*From the Scriptures:* John 5:39; 1 Nephi 15:14; Doctrine and Covenants 42:12



We can help those we teach find and recognize truth for themselves.

## The Savior Taught Truths That Lead to Conversion and Build Faith

One Sabbath day, the Savior and His disciples, feeling hungry, passed a field and started eating the grain. The

Pharisees, always eager to emphasize the finer points of the law of Moses, pointed out that gathering grain was technically a form of work, which was forbidden on the Sabbath (see Mark 2:23–24). To use the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob’s phrase, the Pharisees were “looking beyond the mark” (Jacob 4:14). In other words, they were so focused on traditional interpretations of the commandments that they missed the divine purpose of those commandments—to draw us closer to God. In fact, the Pharisees didn’t even realize that the One who gave the commandment to honor the Sabbath was standing before them.

The Savior took this opportunity to testify of His divine identity and to teach *why* the Sabbath is important. It was created for us as a day to worship the Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus Christ Himself (see Mark 2:27–28). Such truths help us understand that God’s commandments are about more than just our outward behavior. They are meant to help us change our hearts and become more fully converted.

Carefully consider the doctrine and principles you decide to focus on. While there are many truths in the scriptures that can be discussed, it is best to focus on truths of the gospel that lead to conversion and build faith in Jesus Christ. The simple, basic truths the Savior taught and exemplified have the greatest power to change our lives—truths about His Atonement, the plan of salvation, the commandments to love God and love our neighbor, and so on. Invite the Spirit to bear witness of these truths, helping them go deep into the hearts of those you teach.

*Questions to Ponder:* What are some truths of the gospel that have helped you become more converted to Jesus Christ and have greater faith in Him? How has a teacher helped you focus on the most essential truths of the gospel? What can you teach that will help others become more deeply converted to Jesus Christ?

*From the Scriptures:* 2 Nephi 25:26; 3 Nephi 11:34–41; Doctrine and Covenants 19:31–32; 68:25–28; 133:57; Moses 6:57–62

## The Savior Helped People Find Personal Relevance in His Doctrine

“This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them,” the Pharisees complained about Jesus—implying that this was not appropriate behavior for a spiritual teacher (Luke 15:2). Jesus saw that this was an opportunity to teach them some profound spiritual truths. How would He do it? How would He help the Pharisees see that it was their hearts—not His—that were impure and needed healing? How would He use His doctrine to show them that their thinking and behavior needed to change?

He did this by speaking to them of a sheep that wandered from the flock and of a coin that went missing. He spoke of a rebellious son who sought forgiveness and of an older brother who refused to receive him or eat with him. Each of these parables contained truths that were relevant to how the Pharisees viewed others, teaching them that every soul has great worth (see Luke 15). The Savior did not tell the Pharisees—or any of us—who to identify with in His parables. Sometimes we’re the anxious father. Sometimes we’re the envious brother. Often we’re the lost sheep or the foolish son. But whatever our circumstances, through His parables, the Savior invites us to find relevance in His teachings—to discover what He wants us to learn and what we may need to change in our own thinking and behavior.

You may notice that some learners don’t see why some truths matter to them. As you consider the needs of those you teach, think about how the truths in the scriptures could be meaningful and useful in their circumstances. One way you can help learners see the relevance of the truths they are discovering is by asking questions like “How can this help you with something you are experiencing now?” “Why is it important for you to know this?” “What difference can this make in your life?” Listen to those you teach. Allow them to ask questions. Encourage them to make connections between the Savior’s teachings and their own lives. You could also share how you have found relevance to your own life in what you are teaching. Doing this can

invite the Spirit to teach learners individually how the doctrine can make a difference in their lives.

*Questions to Ponder:* What is it that makes gospel truths meaningful and useful to you? What helps you find personal relevance as you study the gospel? What are you doing to focus on truths that are relevant to those you teach?

*From the Scriptures:* 1 Nephi 19:23; 2 Nephi 32:3; Doctrine and Covenants 43:7–9

### Some Ways to Apply What You Are Learning

- Evaluate what you are teaching to make sure you are teaching true doctrine. These questions can help:
  - Is what I’m planning to teach founded on the scriptures and words of latter-day prophets?
  - Have multiple prophets taught this? What are current Church leaders teaching about it?
  - How will this help others build faith in Jesus Christ, repent, and progress along the covenant path?
  - Is this consistent with the promptings of the Holy Ghost, or do I feel spiritually unsettled about it?
- Daily study the word of God to learn true doctrine for yourself.
- Ask learners to read scriptures and the words of modern prophets as you teach.
- Teach learners how to use the footnotes, the Guide to the Scriptures, and other resources as they study the scriptures.
- Invite learners to find truths in a scripture passage or a story.
- Bear testimony of how you have come to know a doctrine is true.
- Use stories or metaphors to help learners gain a deeper understanding of gospel truths.



*Finisher of Faith*, by J. Alan Barrett

## Invite Diligent Learning

It was surely awe-inspiring to watch the Savior walking on the water. But that wasn't enough for Peter. He wanted to do what the Savior did, be where He was, and have the same experience himself. "Bid me come unto thee on the water," he said. The Savior responded with a simple invitation: "Come." With that, Peter leaped from the safety of the boat and showed us that discipleship is not a passive experience (see Matthew 14:24–33). It requires faith in Christ and diligent effort. But it also brings the rich reward of walking with the Savior.

"Come." "Come and see." "Come, follow me." "Go, and do thou likewise" (Matthew 14:29; John 1:39; Luke 18:22; 10:37). From the beginning of His ministry, the Savior invited His followers to experience for themselves the truths, power, and love that He offered. He did this because this is what learning really is. It's not just listening or reading; it's also changing, repenting, and progressing. In the Savior's words, learning comes "by study *and also* by faith" (Doctrine and Covenants 88:118; emphasis added). And faith includes acting for ourselves, not simply being acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:26).

When we follow the Savior's example, we invite those we teach to ask, seek, and knock—and then find (see Matthew 7:7–8). And we accept that invitation

ourselves. Together, through our own faith in Christ and diligent effort, we will come to know for ourselves what it means to walk with Him.

### To Invite Diligent Learning

- Help learners take responsibility for their learning.
- Encourage learners to come to know the Savior by studying the gospel daily.
- Invite learners to prepare to learn.
- Encourage learners to share the truths they are learning.
- Invite learners to live what they are learning.

### The Savior Helped Others Take Responsibility for Their Learning

Building barges that would safely cross oceans would be a difficult task for anyone. The brother of Jared was "directed continually by the hand of the Lord" (Ether 2:6), receiving instructions about the shape of the vessels and how they would be ventilated. But what

do you notice about how the Lord responded when the brother of Jared asked about providing light in the barges? (see Ether 2:22–25). How was the brother of Jared blessed by the invitation to exercise his faith in this way? (see Ether 3:1–16).

It might seem easier to just tell learners all the things you think they should know. However, Elder David A. Bednar counseled: “Our intent ought not to be ‘What do I tell them?’ Instead, the questions to ask ourselves are ‘What can I invite them to do? What inspired questions can I ask that, if they are willing to respond, will begin to invite the Holy Ghost into their lives?’” (evening with a General Authority, Feb. 7, 2020, broadcasts.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

Consider how you can invite learners to take responsibility for their learning. For example, you could invite them to ask their own questions, search for answers, ponder, and share or record their thoughts and feelings. As they do, they will strengthen their faith, discover truths in God’s word, and have their own experiences with these truths. As we take responsibility for our own learning, we can say, as Joseph Smith did, “I have learned for myself” (Joseph Smith—History 1:20).

*Questions to Ponder:* Why is it important for learners to be active rather than passive in their learning? How can you help them take responsibility for their learning? How have teachers helped you do this? What examples from the scriptures can you think of where people were invited to learn for themselves? How do these examples affect how you teach?

*From the Scriptures:* 1 Nephi 11; Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–8; 58:26–28; 88:118–125; Joseph Smith—History 1:11–20

## The Savior Encouraged Others to Come to Know Him by Studying His Word

When it came time for the Savior to officially organize His Church in the latter days, He told His servants, “Rely upon the things which are written” (Doctrine and

Covenants 18:3). Indeed, the Book of Mormon, which they had nearly finished translating, contained helpful instruction for the task, including how to baptize, how to administer the sacrament, and other valuable details. But the Savior also wanted His servants to see His revelations as an opportunity to hear Him and to come to know Him more deeply. In that same revelation, He told them, “It is my voice which speaketh [these words] unto you; . . . wherefore, you can testify that you have heard my voice, and know my words” (Doctrine and Covenants 18:35–36).

Think about the people you teach. How do they see scripture study? For that matter, how do you see it? Is it more than a daily obligation? When you study the scriptures, do you sense the Savior speaking directly to you? President Russell M. Nelson taught: “Where can we go to hear Him? We can go to the scriptures. . . . Daily immersion in the word of God is crucial for spiritual survival, especially in these days of increasing upheaval. As we feast on the words of Christ daily, the words of Christ will tell us how to respond to difficulties we never thought we would face” (“Hear Him,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 89). As you teach, encourage learners to study the scriptures with the purpose of finding the Savior—not just finding verses or facts about Him but finding *Him*. Hearing the Lord’s voice every day in the scriptures is foundational to a lifetime of diligent, independent gospel learning.

*Questions to Ponder:* Consider your own scripture study habits. How has studying the word of God strengthened your relationship with Him? What can you do to improve your study? How will you inspire others to study God’s word diligently and regularly? What blessings will they receive as they do?

*From the Scriptures:* Joshua 1:8; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; 2 Nephi 32:3; Jacob 2:8; 4:6; Doctrine and Covenants 33:16

## The Savior Invited Others to Prepare to Learn

Even the best seeds cannot grow on hard, stony, or thorny ground. Similarly, even the most precious

and faith-promoting doctrine is unlikely to change a heart that is unprepared to receive it. That's part of the message of the Savior's parable about a sower, seeds, and soil of various conditions. It is in the "good ground"—the heart that has been softened and cleared of spiritual stones and thorns—that the word of God bears life-giving fruit (see Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23).

Spiritual preparation matters—for you and for the people you teach. So how do we help prepare our hearts so they are "good ground" for God's word? Consider the following principles of preparation, which you can apply in your life and encourage in the lives of those you teach. Pray to find out what the Lord wants you to learn. Live in a way that invites His presence in your life. Repent daily. Nurture your desire to learn by asking sincere questions. Study the word of God with faith that He will lead you to answers. Open your heart to whatever He will teach you.

As learners prepare to learn in this way, they will have spiritual eyes to see and ears to hear what the Lord would have them know (see Matthew 13:16).

*Questions to Ponder:* What do you do to prepare yourself to learn? How does your preparation affect the way you see, hear, and understand the word of God? How can you inspire others to prepare to learn? What difference could that make in how they receive the truths of the gospel?

*From the Scriptures:* Enos 1:1–8; Alma 16:16–17; 32:6, 27–43; 3 Nephi 17:3



Learners benefit from opportunities to share with each other what they are learning.

## The Savior Encouraged Others to Share the Truths They Were Learning

"I am slow of speech," Enoch lamented when the Lord called him to preach the gospel. But eloquence has never been a requirement for a servant of the Lord. Instead, the Lord promised Enoch that if he had enough faith to open his mouth, the words would come. "I will give thee utterance," He said (Moses 6:31–32). Enoch exercised his faith, and the Lord did indeed speak through him, with words so powerful that they caused the people to tremble (see Moses 6:47). In fact, they caused the earth itself to tremble. Mountains fled, rivers changed their course, and nations feared the people of God, "so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the power of the language which God had given him" (Moses 7:13).

The Lord wants all of us—not just His prophets—to have the power to speak His word. He wants that for all of us, including for the people you teach (see Doctrine and Covenants 1:20–21). Our words may not move mountains or redirect rivers, but they can help change hearts. That is why it is so important to give learners opportunities to share with each other what they are learning about the Savior and His gospel. Doing this will help them internalize the truths they are taught and express them. It will also help them gain confidence in their ability to share truths in other settings.

*Questions to Ponder:* Think about a time when you talked about a gospel truth with someone. What did you learn from the experience? When were you grateful that someone had the courage to share their thoughts and beliefs? How will the people you teach benefit from opportunities to talk about the things they are learning? What opportunities can you create for them?

*From the Scriptures:* Alma 17:2–3; Moroni 6:4–6; Doctrine and Covenants 84:85; 88:122; 100:5–8

## The Savior Invited Others to Live What He Taught

“Let your light so shine before men.” “Love your enemies.” “Ask, and it shall be given.” “Enter ye in at the strait gate.” (Matthew 5:16, 44; 7:7, 13.) Some of the most vivid, memorable invitations in the Savior’s entire earthly ministry were spoken as He taught His disciples on a mountainside overlooking the Sea of Galilee. The Savior’s purpose was to change lives, as made clear by His concluding invitation: “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and *doeth them*, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock” (Matthew 7:24; emphasis added).

Rain descends and floods come and winds blow in everyone’s life. *Learning* about the gospel is not sufficient if learners are to withstand all the trials they will face. This is why we should not hesitate to invite learners to consider how they can *live* what they are learning. Out of respect for the agency of others, many of our invitations will be general: “What do you feel impressed to do?” Occasionally our invitations may need to be more specific: “Will you choose one attribute of the Savior you would like to work on?” As you provide opportunities for learners to hear, recognize, and share promptings from the Holy Ghost, He will teach them what personal actions they need to take. Help learners consider the blessings that will follow as they act on what they learn, and encourage them to persist even when it gets hard. Living the truth is the quickest path to greater faith, testimony, and conversion. As the Savior said, living the Father’s doctrine is the way for all of us to really know the doctrine is true (see John 7:17).

*Questions to Ponder:* When have you been inspired to act because of an invitation someone extended? How did your life change as a result? Notice invitations that have been given in the scriptures and by Church leaders. What do you learn that can help you as you invite others to act? In what ways can you follow up on your invitations?

*From the Scriptures:* Luke 10:36–37; John 7:17; James 1:22; Mosiah 4:9–10; Doctrine and Covenants 43:8–10; 82:10

## Some Ways to Apply What You Are Learning

- Ask others to come prepared to share something the Holy Ghost has taught them, such as an insight from a meaningful scripture passage.
- Give learners opportunities to teach a portion of a lesson.
- Encourage learners to review a video, scripture, or message before you meet.
- Resist the tendency to answer every question. Involve others in seeking answers.
- Before sharing your insights about a scripture, ask learners to share their own.
- Ask questions that encourage learners to find answers in God’s word.
- Invite learners to ask their own questions about what they are learning.
- Provide time for all learners to ponder a question before asking them to share answers.
- Consider dividing learners into small discussion groups, as appropriate.
- Express clear expectations to help learners grow.
- Extend invitations that inspire learners to improve but are not overwhelming. Follow up and invite learners to share their experiences.
- Help learners learn from the scriptures by:
  - Marking meaningful passages, if desired.
  - Inviting revelation through pondering and prayer.
  - Writing down spiritual impressions.
  - Keeping a study journal.
  - Setting goals to act on what they learn.



## Part 3: Practical Helps and Suggestions





## Suggestions for a Variety of Teaching Settings and Learners

The principles of teaching in the Savior’s way can apply to any teaching opportunity—at home, at church, and elsewhere. However, every opportunity comes with its own unique circumstances. This section gives additional suggestions that are specific to various learners and teaching settings.

### Home and Family

#### The Home Is the Best Place for Teaching and Learning the Gospel

President Russell M. Nelson has taught that the home should be the “center of gospel learning” (“*Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints*,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 113). The teaching that happens at church or in seminary is valuable and needed, but it’s meant to support the teaching that happens at home. The main setting—and the best setting—for gospel learning, for both ourselves and our families, is the home.

But that doesn’t mean that good gospel learning happens automatically at home; it takes conscientious effort. President Nelson has suggested that you might need to “transform” or “remodel your home”—not necessarily by tearing down walls or adding new

flooring but perhaps by evaluating the overall spirit in your home, including your contribution to that spirit (“*Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints*,” 113). For example, consider the music, videos, and other media in your home; the pictures on the walls; and the way the members of your family speak to and treat each other. Do these things invite the influence of the Holy Ghost? Do you set aside time for learning the gospel, individually and as a family? Do family members feel loved, safe, and close to God when they are in your home?

You may not feel that you have control over the spiritual environment in your home. If that’s the case, be the best influence you can and ask the Lord for help. He will honor your righteous efforts. When you try to teach and learn the gospel, even if you don’t see desired results right away, you *are* succeeding.

#### Learning at Home Is Founded on Relationships

“Love those you teach” applies to all settings for gospel teaching, but in the home, love ought to come most naturally and be felt most deeply. Even if your home is less than ideal, it is meant to be the center of gospel

teaching because that's where our most lasting relationships are built. Teachers outside the home may have more experience or training as teachers, but they can never duplicate the potential for loving, eternal relationships that exists at home. So nurture those relationships. Spend the time and effort necessary to listen to your family members and build trust and understanding with them. This will help create a firm foundation for your efforts to teach and learn the gospel at home.

### **Learning at Home Can Be Planned but Also Spontaneous**

Most Church classes happen once a week, with a scheduled beginning and end, but this is not always the case at home. You may have a scheduled home evening lesson or family scripture study, but teaching opportunities in the family frequently occur in informal, everyday moments—while eating a meal, doing chores, playing a game, traveling to work or school, reading a book, or watching a movie together. A rainstorm can be a chance to talk about how the Savior shelters us from spiritual storms. A teenager with a difficult decision to make may be ready to learn about personal revelation. A child who is frightened may benefit from your testimony about the Comforter. Children who misbehave or mistreat each other can be taught about repentance and forgiveness.

Because such moments are unplanned, you can't prepare for them the way you would prepare for a traditional lesson. However, you can prepare *yourself* by being sensitive to the Spirit and striving to "be ready always" (1 Peter 3:15). Any moment may become a teaching or learning moment.

### **Learning at Home Consists of Small, Simple, Consistent Efforts**

Parents sometimes get discouraged when their attempts to teach the gospel at home don't seem to be succeeding. Taken individually, a single home evening, scripture study session, or gospel conversation may not seem like it is accomplishing much. But the accumulation of small, simple efforts, repeated consistently over

time, can be more powerful and strengthening than an occasional monumental moment or landmark lesson. "All things must come to pass in their time," the Lord has said. "Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great" (Doctrine and Covenants 64:32–33; see also Alma 37:6–7). So don't give up, and don't worry about accomplishing something grand every time. Just be consistent in your efforts.

### **In the Home, Learning and Living Are Inseparable**

The gospel takes on immediate relevance in the home. There the people with whom you are learning the gospel are the people with whom you will live it—every day. In fact, much of the time, living the gospel is *how* we learn the gospel. So as you learn and teach the gospel at home, look for ways to connect what you are learning with what you are doing. In your home, let the gospel be something you strive to live by, not just something you talk about.



Teaching opportunities in the family frequently occur in informal, everyday moments.

## **Teaching Children**

### **Children Need Variety**

All children are different, and as they develop, their needs will change. Varying your teaching methods will help you meet their diverse needs. For example, consider using the following:

- *Stories.* Stories help children see how the gospel applies to everyday life. Use stories from the scriptures, from your own life, from your family history, or from Church magazines, especially stories about the Savior. Plan ways to involve children in the story—by holding pictures, repeating phrases, or acting out parts.
- *Visual aids.* Pictures, videos, and objects can help children understand and remember gospel principles. Many pictures and videos can be found in the Media Library on [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org).
- *Music.* Hymns and other sacred songs can help children feel God’s love, feel the Spirit, and learn gospel truths. The melodies, rhythms, and simple rhymes can help children remember gospel truths for years to come. As you sing with children, help them discover and understand the principles taught in the songs.

Most children learn best when multiple senses are involved. Find ways to help children use their senses of sight, hearing, and touch as they learn. In some situations, you may even find ways to include their senses of smell and taste!

### Children Are Creative

When you invite children to draw, build, color, or write something related to a gospel principle, you help them better understand the principle and you give them a tangible reminder of what they have learned. They can also use what they have created to share what they learned with others. Each issue of the *Friend* magazine includes creative activities for children.

### Children Are Curious

When children ask questions, see them as opportunities, not as distractions. Children’s questions are an indication that they are ready to learn, and their questions give you valuable insights into what they are thinking and feeling. Help them see that the answers to

their spiritual questions can be found in the scriptures and the words of living prophets.

### Children Need Love Even When They Are Disruptive

Sometimes a child acts in ways that disrupt the learning of others. Most behavioral disruptions grow out of an unmet need. When this happens, be patient, loving, and understanding about the challenges the child may be facing. He or she may just need more opportunities to participate in the lesson in positive ways—for example, by holding a picture, drawing something, or reading a scripture.

If a child continues to be disruptive, it may be helpful to speak to him or her individually. In a spirit of love and patience, explain your expectations and your confidence that he or she can meet them. Praise the child when he or she makes better choices.

### Children Have Much to Share

When children learn something new, they naturally want to share it with others. Encourage this desire by giving children opportunities to teach gospel principles to each other, their family members, and their friends. Also ask them to share with you their thoughts, feelings, and experiences related to the principles you are teaching. You will find that they have insights that are simple, pure, and powerful.

### Children Can Feel the Spirit but May Need Help Recognizing His Influence

Even children who have not yet received the gift of the Holy Ghost can feel His influence, especially when they are learning about Jesus Christ and His gospel. When they make righteous choices, they can feel the Savior’s approval through the Spirit. Teach children about the different ways the Spirit communicates with us. Help them recognize His voice as He speaks to them. This will help them develop a habit of seeking and acting on personal revelation throughout their lives.

## Teaching Youth

### Youth Have Great Potential

Youth have the potential to do remarkable things in the Lord's service. Many experiences recorded in the scriptures illustrate that God has confidence in the spiritual abilities of young people. If the youth sense that you trust them, their confidence in their divine potential will grow and they will amaze you with what they can accomplish. Lovingly help them see what Heavenly Father knows they can become. Follow the Savior's example by continuing to love and encourage them, patiently working with them, and never giving up on them.

### Youth Are Learning about Themselves

The youth you teach are forming the foundations of their testimony. They are in the process of discovering their beliefs and convictions. They are making decisions that will affect the course of their lives. To survive spiritually in these perilous times and to fulfill the Lord's mission for them, the youth you teach will need to know how to find strength during their trials, answers to their questions, and courage to "stand as witnesses of God" (Mosiah 18:9).

Youth have a growing desire to learn things by reasoning and experience rather than by simply being told things. This means that teaching youth will require good listening skills. When youth feel understood, they will feel more open to counsel and guidance. Assure them that the Lord knows them and will help them as they wrestle with questions and trials. They can exercise their faith in Him by developing a daily habit of prayer and scripture study and by serving others. Encouraging youth to participate in Church classes and study on their own can help them have personal experiences that will build their testimony of their divine heritage.

### Many Youth Are Comfortable Using Technology

If the youth you teach have their own electronic devices, remember that these devices are tools to enhance learning. Teach them how to use their electronic scriptures and other resources found in the Gospel Library. You can also send messages and links to youth to help them prepare for upcoming lessons.



Youth need to understand what Heavenly Father knows they can become.

## Teaching Adults

### Adults Can Take Responsibility for Their Learning

Adult learners are capable of acting for themselves in gospel learning settings (see 2 Nephi 2:26). Invite them to prepare for gospel discussions by studying something ahead of time, and encourage them to share what they are learning by the Spirit. You might also ask them which gospel principles they would like to spend time learning about together.

### Adults Draw on Their Experiences When Learning

Job stated, "With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding" (Job 12:12). Generally, wisdom and spiritual understanding come after years of experience. As you teach adults, invite them to share

experiences that have built their faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. This will give them opportunities to testify about how they have come to know that the gospel principles they are studying are true. Sharing experiences will also build relationships between those you teach, helping “all . . . be edified of all” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:122).

### Adults Seek Practical Application

The adults you teach may have many roles and responsibilities in their professions, communities, Church callings, and families. When they study the gospel, they are often thinking about how what they are learning can help them in those roles. Invite them to see how the word of God is relevant to their unique circumstances. You can do this by asking them how gospel principles are meaningful and applicable to their lives.

### Adults Can Think in Complex Ways

Because of their experience and knowledge, adults know that there are not always easy answers to gospel questions. They can appreciate that a scripture passage may have multiple meanings, and they can apply a gospel principle to a variety of life situations. Invite them to ponder how gospel principles relate to each other and to what is happening in their lives. Encourage participation and discussion so that they can learn from each other’s unique perspectives.



Adults can share many experiences that have built their faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

## Teaching People with Disabilities

### Help Each Person Grow and Progress

Joseph Smith taught, “All the minds and spirits that God ever sent into the world are susceptible of enlargement” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 210). Assume that all God’s children are capable of increasing in knowledge and progressing. Ask the Lord to help you know how to help each person.

### Learn about Specific Needs

Talk to learners or their parents or caregivers. Find out how each individual best learns and what strategies are most helpful. You could also counsel with other leaders and teachers who have experience and insights to share. For helpful teaching strategies, see [disabilities.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://disabilities.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

### Create a Positive Atmosphere

Create a positive atmosphere where everyone feels safe and loved. Do not assume that all learners with disabilities are the same, and treat each person with love and respect. Encourage others to be kind and accepting.

### Ensure That All Can Participate

Small changes can be made to activities to ensure that all learners can learn, including those with physical limitations or learning difficulties. For instance, if an activity suggests showing a picture, you could sing a related song instead to include learners with visual impairments.

### Establish Consistent Routines and Structure

One way to establish a routine is to create a poster with a schedule. Your schedule might include prayers, teaching time, and activity time. Following a schedule can help reduce feelings of uncertainty and anxiety for some learners.

## Understand Why Challenging Behaviors Happen

Learn about disabilities or circumstances that may influence a person to act inappropriately. Pay careful attention to what is happening when challenging behaviors arise. Prayerfully consider how to modify the situation in order to better support learners.

For more information about teaching people with disabilities, see [disabilities.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).



Teachers can create a positive learning environment where everyone feels accepted and loved.

## Virtual Teaching

### Become Familiar with Technology

Before your class or meeting, spend some time getting familiar with the technology you'll be using. Explore some of its features, such as how to share videos or pictures. Consider holding a "test" meeting with family members or friends.

Most wards and stakes have a technology specialist. You might also know others who have experience with virtual meetings. Ask for their advice or guidance.

### Eliminate Potential Distractions

If possible, find a quiet place to attend your meeting. Noises in the background can be distracting. Encourage learners to do the same or to keep their microphones muted if they're not speaking.

### Use the Camera

If possible, keep your camera on so that learners can see your face. Invite (but don't require) learners to turn their cameras on too. This can help create a spirit of unity and mutual support.

### Use the Virtual Chat Feature

Many virtual meeting programs allow participants to type questions or comments in a chat window. Some also allow participants to virtually raise their hands. Let learners know about these features. You may want to assign someone to watch for raised hands or comments in the chat so that you can focus your attention on leading the discussion.

### Find Ways to Involve Learners

Virtual learning settings sometimes make it hard for people to be seen and heard. Make a conscious effort to involve those who want to be involved. Sometimes this means creating smaller groups (for example, by breaking up a large Sunday School class). Sometimes it means asking learners beforehand to participate in a specific way. Don't let the limitations of technology cause you to forget about or overlook people who are eager and willing to learn.

# Sample Lesson-Planning Outline

This chart can help you consider the scriptures, questions, and other resources you will use to help learners better understand each principle or doctrine you will teach. Record each principle or doctrine and the resources you will use.

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## Principle or Doctrine

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Supporting Scriptures

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Questions

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Teaching Aids

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Invitations and Promised Blessings

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## Principle or Doctrine

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Supporting Scriptures

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Questions

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Teaching Aids

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Invitations and Promised Blessings

# Improving as a Christlike Teacher— A Personal Evaluation

As teachers, we should regularly evaluate our strengths and weaknesses so that we can help learners build faith in Jesus Christ and become more like Him. The following activity can help you apply principles of Christlike teaching. Consider how well each of the following statements describes you as a teacher. Choose the most appropriate response for each statement: (1) rarely, (2) sometimes, (3) often, (4) almost always.

Then, as guided by the Spirit, prayerfully select a few things you would like to improve. Set some goals, and use this resource to help you improve.

## Focus on Jesus Christ

- I teach about Jesus Christ no matter what I am teaching.
- I emphasize the example of Jesus Christ.
- I help learners recognize the Lord’s love, power, and mercy in their lives.
- I help learners strengthen their relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
- I help learners intentionally strive to be more like Jesus Christ.

## Love Those You Teach

- I strive to see learners the way God sees them.
- I seek to know those I teach—to understand their circumstances, needs, and strengths.
- I pray for learners by name.
- I create a safe environment where all are respected and know their contributions are valued.
- I find appropriate ways to express my love.

## Teach by the Spirit

- I prepare myself spiritually to teach.
- I respond to spiritual promptings about the needs of learners.
- I create settings and opportunities for learners to be taught by the Holy Ghost.
- I help learners seek, recognize, and act on personal revelation.
- I bear testimony often, and I encourage learners to share their feelings, experiences, and testimonies.

## Teach the Doctrine

- I learn the doctrine of Jesus Christ for myself.
- I teach from the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets.
- I help learners seek, recognize, and understand truths in the scriptures.
- I focus on truths that lead to conversion and build faith in Jesus Christ.
- I help learners find personal relevance in the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

## Invite Diligent Learning

- I help learners take responsibility for their learning.
- I encourage learners to come to know the Savior by studying the gospel daily.
- I invite learners to prepare to learn.
- I encourage learners to share the truths they are learning.
- I invite learners to live what they are learning.



## Teacher Council Meetings— For Parents and Called Teachers

Each ward should hold quarterly teacher council meetings, both for parents and for called teachers in the ward. In these meetings, parents and other teachers can counsel together about principles of Christlike teaching (see *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 13.4, 13.5, 17.4, 17.5, Gospel Library).

Both kinds of teacher council meetings are held once a quarter during the 50-minute class time on Sunday.

### Teacher Council Meetings for Parents

*Who Leads These Meetings?* Usually, a member of the Sunday School presidency leads teacher council meetings for parents. However, the bishopric may assign other ward members to lead meetings on occasion.

The ward council, with assistance from the Sunday School presidency, oversees teacher council meetings for parents. They counsel together about the needs of parents and families, and they work together to determine which principles from *Teaching in the Savior's Way* will best meet those needs.

*Who Should Attend?* The ward council determines whether to invite specific parents or to make attendance open to all who want to participate.

*When Should These Meetings Be Held?* Teacher council meetings for parents can be held on any Sunday, as determined by the ward council.

### Teacher Council Meetings for Called Teachers

*Who Leads These Meetings?* Usually, a member of the Sunday School presidency leads teacher council meetings for called teachers. However, the bishopric may assign other ward members to lead meetings on occasion.

The ward council, with assistance from the Sunday School presidency, oversees teacher council meetings for called teachers. They counsel together about the needs of teachers and learners, and they work together to determine which principles from *Teaching in the Savior's Way* will best meet those needs.

*Who Should Attend?* Everyone who teaches a quorum or class in the ward should attend teacher council

meetings. Quorum and organization presidency members are also invited.

*When Should These Meetings Be Held?* Teachers attend teacher council meetings on a Sunday when they are not teaching their regular class.

- Priesthood quorum, Relief Society, and Young Women teachers can attend on either the first or third Sunday, as determined by local leaders.
- Sunday School teachers can attend on either the second or fourth Sunday, as determined by local leaders.
- Primary teachers can attend on any Sunday, as determined by the ward Primary and Sunday School presidencies. If desired, Primary teachers may meet separately from other teachers to counsel about the unique aspects of teaching children. This can happen during the 20-minute singing time, before or after regular Sunday meetings, or on another day of the week. More than one teacher council meeting may be held quarterly for Primary teachers so that they do not all miss Primary classes in the same week. (*Note:* As needed, the Primary presidency assigns substitute teachers, combines classes, or makes other arrangements to allow Primary teachers to attend teacher council meetings.)

## Format for the Meetings

Teacher council meetings—both for parents and for called teachers—follow this format:

1. *Share and counsel together (about 20 minutes).* Invite parents or teachers to share what is working well as they teach the gospel at home or in their classes. They could also share challenges they are facing or things they would like to improve.
2. *Learn together (about 15 minutes).* Discuss with parents or teachers one of the principles in *Teaching in the Savior's Way. Come, Follow Me* may also be used as a resource for these discussions.
3. *Plan and invite (about 10 minutes).* Invite parents or teachers to share what they learned during the meeting and how they plan to apply it.



## For Leaders—Orienting and Supporting Teachers

As a leader, you have the responsibility to “meet with newly called teachers” in your organization and “help them prepare for their callings” (*General Handbook*, 17.3, Gospel Library). These meetings are an opportunity to introduce new teachers to their sacred callings and inspire them with a vision of what it means to teach in the Savior’s way. As a leader, you can help new teachers prepare to serve by doing the following:

- Express confidence that the Savior will help them in their calling (see *Doctrine and Covenants* 88:78).
- Give new teachers a copy of this resource, and encourage them to look for ways to apply its principles in their teaching.
- Share with new teachers anything about your organization that would be helpful for them to know.
- As needed, tell new teachers which room to teach in and what lesson to begin with. Provide any information they need about their class and class members.

- Explain to new teachers that you can help them with their calling. Offer support in the classroom and access to teaching resources if needed.
- Offer to observe teachers’ classes occasionally, and provide feedback as prompted by the Spirit.
- Invite teachers to participate in quarterly teacher council meetings.

Throughout the teachers’ service, continue to meet with them periodically to give ongoing support. For example, you could have a brief discussion with a teacher before or after class to discuss the principles of *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*. Ask the teacher about what they feel they are doing well and ways they would like to improve. Encourage them with kindness and with gratitude for the service they give.

You should prepare for these discussions by watching the teacher teach. Seek to better understand the teacher’s strengths and discover ways you can offer support. Building on a teacher’s strengths is just as important as identifying opportunities for improvement.









