

# Understanding Personal Revelation

There is so much more that God is trying to help you with than the “hot cold game of personal direction” and knowing that you are loved. But in order to understand and follow that guidance preparation is needed. Some of that preparation is spiritual, like building up how much faith and confidence you have in God and in your ability to hear him. Some preparation is mental, like learning language, math, or science. Some preparation is physical, like improving dexterity, strength, or endurance. Some revelation (answers and aid) won’t come until you’ve learned how to ask the right question, like “What can I learn from this?” as opposed to “Why me?”. For some types of revelation it is useful to keep careful notes so that as you ask “What more can I learn?” you can update and/or add to your notes so that you can grow to understand deeper and more fully all that God has for you.

As you might have noticed from the previous guidance on Listening to the voice of God, there are different ways to recognize the different types of revelation. The way that God tells me he loves me is much more emotional than when I’m given to realize that some course of action would probably be beneficial. And even more distinction can be made between promptings to say hello to someone, verses promptings to eat well or exercise, verses promptings to read scripture or study the word of God. Some promptings are so subtle that you might not recognize that it came from God until after this life is over, while others come with undeniable force.

As we delve into advanced spiritual guidance and revelation it is also important to realize that it is possible to get information or guidance from God that will harm you if you are not careful and diligent in listening to warnings and/or get arrogant, selfish, lazy, (or succumb to any of the deadly sins). It’s also possible to get fooled into thinking something is coming from God, but is really coming from a place bent on your destruction. So a thorough master of the basics, dedication to doing what is good, and focus on love (and learning what love really is and isn’t love) is highly recommended.

Now that I think I’ve covered the basic overview of what I would like to cover in this lesson let’s start with gaining personal direction. Frequently when we ask God “What should I do?”, there comes a reply something like “What would you like to do?” (That response may feel like He’s not answering you at all, fervent prayer and intent listening can sometimes help clear this up but not always. Whether we are in need of more preparation, or more practice in listening, or reflection on guidance already given, or He’s just giving you the reins for other reasons ... as we gain experience talking with and listening to God, it makes it easier to understand the different types of ways and means that he uses to “talk” with us.) The main purpose of life is growth, and more particularly trying to become something at least a little more divine. For a lot of us hearing the Lord can be particularly challenging with all of the distractions that inundated us on a daily basis. -- While television, social media, computer games, sporting events, etc. are not necessarily bad in and of themselves, they can rob us of a more rich and fulfilling life by taking up too much of our time. But perhaps we can learn from those things that we find distracting to us to figure out what kinds of things we might be passionate about, and use that passion to fuel more meaningful activities that can help prepare us for each next step in our process of growth.

God will not force any of us to learn, nor can he teach us any faster than we are able to follow His direction and guidance. As we do better at following the direction that is given, promptly and with increasing joy and determination to follow His wisdom, we are better positioned to hear, understand, and enjoy the blessings of healthy interactions with the universe. The messages we receive from heaven also become clearer, the better we listen and more devoted we become in following. The guidance and directions that we are given can and will help us with every aspect of our lives, helping us to become better at everything that is worth doing and even a lot of the stuff that's of more questionable worth -- stuff that might just mean something to us personally.

So as an example to try and make things as clear as possible. Let's say that you're just starting and you want to test to see if turning your life over to God will actually improve your life. So you say to God something like, "I'm turning my life over to you, what would you like me to do?" Maybe something will come to mind, that you knew you should probably do, something like apologize to someone that you might have offended, or go to church, or help someone that you can see needs help, ... you might even feel prompted to quit your job or start a new job. You might, however, not hear or feel anything -- hopefully you are aware of good things that you could be doing or doing better, just start there. There are endorphins that the body releases as a natural reward for doing good. It may take some time to develop a love (or acquire the taste) for this new good thing that you're doing. No matter where you are on the path you will more than likely get discouraged from time to time, probably even frequently. Feel free to share all of your frustration with God, also ask Him for suggestions, tips, and help. Prayers aren't always answered in the way that we want, but they are answered, so listen (with your eyes, heart, and mind as well as with your ears). Keep a lookout for all of the possible ways that God can send help: sometimes it's peace of mind, sometimes it's a prompting for course correction, sometimes it's another person or an additional resource of some kind, sometimes it's with added strength or patience or some other added ability.

Writing down impressions that come into your mind is an excellent way to help refine this revelation process. [Elder Scott in October 2009](#) describes a process that he used to iteratively gain deeper insight from God. Similar methods to this apply if you are looking for solutions to problems at home, school, work, or wherever in life you would like additional help from God (i.e. in [Take the Holy Spirit as Your Guide](#) Elder Wilson describes how Ensign Blair used iterative study and prayer to resolve an issue with a ship's engines and save lives). When studying out of the best books (or online text) or learning from the best instructors that you have available to you, write down the insight that you receive then ask God for additional help and keep your mind, eyes, ears, and heart open to any direction that He might give, then write down these impressions as well.

When you feel overwhelmed, frustrated, angry, upset, disillusioned, tired, etc. rest and take time to focus on what I am certain is the most important revelation, knowing that God loves you. Find a place that is as quiet and peaceful as you have available. Make a space in your home or room that you can dedicate for this purpose and (or if the previous is not possible) find a place of peace that you can go to. I go to the temple, where the symbolism of heaven makes it easier for me to feel heaven's influence. It's alright to have fun and enjoy life. Maybe as you progress

in your heavenly endeavors you may find more fun and enjoyment in helping people than in the diversions that once tried to distract you. But you don't need to sprint continuously, your muscles, mind, and spirit need a chance to rest in order to grow. Getting the proper amount of sleep is vital.

There will also be times when we feel directed by God to do a certain thing and it turns out [wrong](#). I love the way that [Kisten Yee](#) describes her process of revelation with respect to her painting, and how when something disheartening happened to her in the process and she was afraid that all was lost that she was able to find God's love, wisdom, and mercy.

**Perhaps the best questionnaires and forms to facilitate developing and improving spiritual guidance and revelation is just an open journal. As you pray, meditate, study, and act on promptings, make a record of your interactions with God, and continue to ask what more you can learn and do.**