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A Formula for Spiritual Knowledge

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Abstract: Eyre believes that the formula for understanding spiritual truth is found in Moroni 10:4-5, “by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.” Some of the best tools to find spiritual truth are desire, sincerity, faith, pure living, and communication with God.

A FORMULA FOR SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

By ELDER FLOYD G. EYRE

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I RAISE this challenge and ask you to think it through with me: How do we obtain spiritual knowledge? Can there be a verification in the moral and spiritual world? Can we put spiritual truths to a test, as we do the physical? Where is the laboratory, and what methods must we use in that field of the spiritual? I propose to discuss these queries and hold before you the great spiritual formulas of the ages, used by the spiritual experts, if I may choose to so call them. Also to apply them in our educational process.

A very close personal friend and student of the Master Spiritual Expert, Jesus the Christ, gives a formula in his record, James 1: 5-6: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed."

This wavering man is like the one in the physical laboratory who substitutes one chemical for another, who does not follow his formula. Of course, the experiment fails. The law was not followed nor obeyed.

This truth expressed by James has been tested. It works. It has been verified. To know the origin and the interesting history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—"a marvellous work and a wonder"—is to know the verification of this New Testament spiritual formula.

Moroni, spiritual expert who lived in America about 400 A.D., gives us one in these words:

And when ye shall receive these things—things of God, spiritual things—I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, He will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.—Moroni, 10: 4-5

The last sentence especially gives us a fact concerning spiritual knowledge. I quote it again: "By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things."

When man discovers the way to receive the Holy Ghost, the supreme spiritual awakening blessing given of God to man, when that spiritual influence is the source of our inspiration, then our spiritual lamp is lighted; we walk in the light of truth; our spiritual birth becomes a reality.

The great character of the Christian era, who received his training and knowledge at the feet of, and by personal experience with our Lord Jesus, not only found this question answered, and the how of it, but he passed it on to us in his second general Epistle. Here it is:

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience Godliness; and to Godliness brotherly kindness;

and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.—2 Peter, 1: 5-8

You will notice these things, these virtues must be a part of us—our minds, our hearts, our souls, features of our make-up.

Now, how different in method and materials is this to that of the physical laboratory? Men, it seems, are not willing to follow this formula. As a result, few, relatively, obtain the truth. Surely law is just as certain and fixed in the realm of moral and spiritual things as it is in this material world. A classical expression of this law is given by a modern expert in this field. Hear his language:

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated. And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.—Doc. & Coy. 130: 20-21.

Where will you find a more profound statement in all literature?



“By the power of the Holy Ghost shall truth be poured upon the world.”

Great things are usually simple things. Life is sustained by obedience to the physical laws related to life. If we desire to become efficient in any of the arts of life we must obey certain laws by which the respective talents are developed. In the same way, if we desire to obtain any spiritual blessings, we must obey the laws upon which they are predicated.

Christ, our Lord, the highest authority one can introduce or consult on this theme, laid down the general principle of verification in religion, when he said: “If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.—John 7: 17.

Our problem is simple: Find the will of God and do it. The result is certain. The promise will hold.

Spiritual truth is derived by direct contact of the human spirit with spiritual forces.

Job says: “There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”—Job 32: 8.

Paul said: “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, the Messiah, the anointed one, but by the Holy Ghost.”

So do we not see the harmony in all the formulas, even though they were given on different lands in different ages? Truth is always in harmony with truth. The test of truth is coherency. We note it running all through these.

Our answer again is found in the words of Christ to a modern prophet. Let us ask ourselves if it has the right ring. That is a good test, I have discovered.

Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve Him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day. Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God, ye are called to the work;

And faith, hope, charity and love, with an eye single to the glory of

God, qualify him for the work.

Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, Godliness, charity, humility, diligence. Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.—Doc. & Cov. Section 4.

The same Master Genius revealed our answer through the Prophet of this dispensation, to a man named Oliver Cowdery. Test it by the same test. He said:

Therefore, if ye will ask of me you shall receive; if you will knock it shall be opened unto you.

Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion;

Seek not for riches, but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich.—Doc. & Cov. 6: 5-7

Perhaps the clearest expression on our query to be found in sacred writ is this:

Behold, thou hast a gift, or thou shalt have a gift if thou wilt desire of me in faith, with an honest heart, believing in the power of Jesus Christ, or in my power which speaketh unto thee.

And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, put your trust in that spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously. . . . I will impart unto you of my spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy.

And then shall ye know, or by this shall you know, all things whatsoever you desire of me, which are pertaining unto things of righteousness, in faith believing in me, that you shall receive.—Doc. & Cov. 11: 10-14

These are a few of the best formulas for obtaining spiritual knowledge and becoming what we may term a spiritual person. These must be used in the great laboratory of life, in the stream of living, for here the test tube, the X-ray, the microscope, or the microphone, are of no use whatever.

You have noted that the equipment necessary is first, a desire to know, sincerity, faith invincible, a pure life, a righteous, unselfish desire, a finding of the great spiritual forces of life; a contact with God, a receiving literally of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. With these qualities, in this way men have obtained the great body of spiritual truths we now have. This is an individual process. No soul has ever entered into this sacred shrine except through this door. You and I can enter no other way.

The educational programme of the Latter-day Saint Church utilizes the major facts of this thesis in its many institutions for the spiritual direction of her youth. I might say that no people place greater emphasis on education than the Mormons, because of the basic belief and philosophy we teach. May I present just a mere sample of these basic principles:

“The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words light and truth; light and truth forsake that evil one.”

Here is another one: “It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance.”

Here is one: “I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth.”

And what about this one: “Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection.”

In the light, then, of these major statements, a Chicago judge, in discussing youthful criminals the other day, said

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the age at which children may be baptized into the Church. At an earlier age, however, children are to be brought to the elders of the Church, and be blessed in the name of Jesus Christ, after the pattern set by the Master in the course of His personal ministry.

It is by taking advantage of these divine rites which God has placed in His Church that men obtain a fullness of life. When these rites are changed by the authority of men, then mankind must not expect to be able to gain that fullness.

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this—I quote from this judge in Chicago:

In the check-up I have made so often, I have, as I have told you, usually found the elements which, blended, make a good boy or girl, and later a worthwhile citizen or a fine mother. All except the most important one.

I have asked, concerning these youths, "What spiritual education did he have?" And the answer has almost invariably been, "None!"

The judge further says:

I would say to parents that when they worry about all the other modern things, to also worry about religion. Teach children, or have them taught, through religion, the great lesson of life—that goodness is happiness. I mean by that the happiness that comes from a home reasonably comfortable; where parents are reasonably kind; where study and play are reasonably balanced.

Do these things for the growing children, and the problem of youth in connection with crime will be as nearly solved as the human element can solve it.

Such is the verdict of a man on the bench, with thousands of cases before him.

It is our conviction that youth can be brought to a religious and spiritual character, through right nurture and training in religion.

I would have you understand that in addition to a professional staff of teachers, the Church has thousands of teachers in the auxiliary organizations who teach and direct spiritual activities on the Sabbath day throughout the whole Church.

I think it helps for you to know that God is dependable, just and righteous; that morality is that established harmonic relation that we sustain to the constructive principles of our own nature. It helps a young man when he knows that life's greatest enrichment comes from intellectual and spiritual activities. I find it helps young people to know that the good life and self realization are found in a life of temperance, moderation and self control.

It helps greatly in youth to know that cheerfulness, gentleness, courage, honesty, sincerity, refinement, service, faith, virtue and love are among the positive qualities of character which will insure happiness and joy in life to-day.

I discover that it helps youth to get on the right path to know that religion is life to-day—that rich, full, complete, more abundant life. It helps a lot of young men to keep straight to know that the universe is one of order, uniformity and law; that the great spiritual truths are the ones to which we must

anchor our lives.

I have discovered in men, young men, that when they get that vision of life it literally transforms them and they see with new vision; they comprehend, as never before, life has a purpose, it has become objectified, and it becomes a stay and guide to that youth in his problems.

One thing trained Mormon youth is conscious of is that his glory is his intelligence, and that intelligence or "light and truth" forsakes evil. This might sound hard, but we are not afraid of truth, so I present it: It is an indictment on the intelligence of a trained young man or woman to indulge in the negative things of worldly practice. "True intelligence forsaketh evil." The highest authority under heaven is responsible for that statement. I personally know hundreds of young people who are free from the common ills of physical life, because of their training through spiritual activities and spiritual experiences that are rational.

The Prophet Malachi long ago pointed to the time when the youth of God's Kingdom would be trained in a far different spirit and doctrine of life than that of the materialistic view. He saw the day that the youth of the Lord's Kingdom would "grow up as calves of the stall." Well, I was reared on a cow ranch in Wyoming. I know what Malachi meant by the pasture and the stall-raised calves. There is a lot of difference.

It is my conviction that the solution of our moral and social problems of our youth is found in rearing youth in an atmosphere and in activity of a rational spiritualized educational programme.

We court inquiry, and ask the sincere seeker for truth to study the plan of this organization, as to how it provides this rather unique and complete programme.

It is my testimony of a life of experience of twenty years in this field, that life becomes enriched, its purposes named more clear, by the application of these spiritual formulas in our private life and in our educational activities. I beg of you an interest in this thesis, and an application sufficient to bring us to the level where life's greater and permanent values are found.

SPECIAL STAR NEXT WEEK

Next week's *Star* will commemorate the Church Centennial in Britain and will contain 32 pages, double the size of the usual edition. There will be many other features in the unique issue, including a beautiful, two-colour picture on the cover, an extra number of pictures inside, including all of the Mission auxiliary officers, district presidents, and visiting General Officers.

Next week's *Star* will also contain the official programme for the Centennial conference in Preston and Rochdale, announcement of the winners of the prose and poetry contests, and the prizewinning poem and article. There will be many other features to make it a worth-while souvenir of the never-to-be-forgotten Centenary.