



Joseph Fielding McConkie discusses what it takes to become a master teacher.

Richard B. Crookston

## *Becoming Master Teachers*

JOSEPH FIELDING MCCONKIE AND RICHARD NEITZEL HOLZAPFEL

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***Holzapfel:** After all of your years of studying and learning, what would you like to pass on to a third generation of teachers?*

**McConkie:** First of all, drink from the fountainhead; that is, teach the scriptures from the scriptures. When we read the scriptures, they do not always tell us what we need to know because we are not looking for the right things. Let me give you an illustration: often in reading the Book of Mormon we are preoccupied with finding references to Christ. Interestingly enough, in that process we are missing the major message from the Book of Mormon writers, which is that you come to the knowledge of Christ through the covenant. And so we spot the word *Christ*, but we do not notice the word *covenant*.

Think about this for a minute. You start the book on the title page, where Moroni says the reason he is writing is so that we may come to the knowledge of the covenants the Lord made with our fathers and also that we might come to the knowledge that Jesus is the Christ. If I go out and take a random sample of a hundred returned missionaries on BYU campus and ask them what the purpose of the Book of Mormon is, they will tell me it is to bear witness and testimony to the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, but they will miss the

concept of covenant. If we miss the concept of the covenant, we do not have anything to distinguish our testimony of Christ from the testimony of Christ being borne by others in the world. It is only through keeping covenants that we come to the knowledge of Christ that has the power of salvation in it.

I will read you a scriptural text to illustrate the point. Nephi talks to his brothers about this record that is going to come forth in the last days: “And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved” (1 Nephi 15:14).

**Holzappel:** *So what is the covenant?*

**McConkie:** What Nephi is saying is that if you are not baptized, you cannot receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Without the Holy Ghost, you cannot come to the knowledge of Christ that has the power of salvation. It is generally thought that the testimony of Christ leads us to covenants, but look at the world. The early members of the Church read the Book of Mormon differently than we do. They were the grandchildren of the Pilgrims, who had come to America as a covenant people and established a covenant community. If we read it that way, we would read: covenant, covenant, covenant. We would be reading a different book, and we would see that the message of the book is “come to the covenant” to get knowledge of the saving power of Christ.

**Holzappel:** *You say that to become a master teacher is to drink from the fountainhead. In what ways do teachers not do that when teaching the gospel?*

**McConkie:** Sometimes we feel like we have to improve on the scriptural story because we are afraid it will not be interesting to our students. So we focus on a hair-raising or emotional story in its place. You see the same kind of thing in a testimony meeting in which people feel like they have to have a story to tell or they cannot bear testimony. This kind of thing can get in the way of the bearing of a pure testimony. We get in the habit of using a lot of doctrinal substitutes and a lot of faith substitutes. We would be better served if we just spent our major attention and effort on asking, “What is this saying, where is it taking us, and why?”

**Holzappel:** *Nephi talks about likening the scriptures unto ourselves. How would you distinguish between the unchanging fountainhead of the scriptures and applying them or likening them unto ourselves?*

**McConkie:** What Nephi did was to pick up the scriptures and say, “Isaiah said this, and Isaiah is talking to you and me. And this is what the scriptures are saying to us.”

**Holzappel:** *So instead of telling a story, he is using the scriptures that truly apply in that sense.*

**McConkie:** Exactly. He said that we are of the house of Israel and that Isaiah was talking to us.

**Holzappel:** *The second point you made is to let the scriptures speak for themselves. You have written much, your father has written much, your grandfather wrote much, and your great-grandfather wrote a great deal. We have many things that master teachers have written to help guide us. How do you let the scriptures speak for themselves when we have so many guides to understanding scripture?*

**McConkie:** We are all blessed by teachers. If you were to ask me what the single most important gospel or scriptural understanding that I have learned from my father is, my answer would be to go to the fountainhead of the scriptures and listen to what the Spirit is teaching you the scripture is saying. Let me give you an example. I was up at my father’s place with my brothers and sisters, and we were having family home evening. My father was giving us a lesson on one of his favorite scriptural texts. He was teaching us from the scriptures. I am sure if the point was to tell a lot of personal experiences, he would be the man to do it, but that is not what he told his family when we got together. He taught us from the scriptures. A particular text came up, and I said, “Look, when you teach that, you teach it with greater clarity, greater power, greater force than anybody else in the Church. But if I say the same kind of thing at BYU, my colleagues jump on me and tell me to slow down. They say, ‘You’re going beyond the period that ends the sentence.’” My father said, “Look, if you cannot go beyond the period at the end of the sentence, it means you do not have the Holy Ghost. And if you do not have the Holy Ghost, you have no business teaching in the first place.”

Now, let me take that story and combine it with another story. Many years ago, my dad came down and spent a day with the faculty. During the course of the question-and-answer session, he was asked a particular question. In response to the question, he gave some background on how he wrote

his Messiah series. He said that when he wrote *The Promised Messiah* (1978), “I took the scriptures and read the standard works from cover to cover as if I had never read them before in my life. Then I listed everything that I learned about the Messiah, and then I wrote the book. And when I wrote *The Millennial Messiah* (1982), I took the standard works and read them from cover to cover as if I had never read them before, and I listed everything I learned, and then I wrote the book.” Now, a little commentary—if anyone on that faculty had been given a research grant to write *The Promised Messiah* or *The Millennial Messiah*, they would have hired some research assistants. They would have collected everything that everybody who is anybody in a position of authority had said on the subject. Then they would collate all the information, put it together, and write it in a book. But that really is not the way Bruce McConkie thought. He never bothered to look up what anybody else had said on the subject, save the scriptures themselves. So he went back and drank at the fountainhead. He added this comment: “Now, I have to be responsible for what I write and how I came to that knowledge. I never quote another man unless he said it better than I could and unless I could justify what he said from the scriptures.” Then he added, “Last week, for the first time in my life, I quoted Parley P. Pratt, and I did so because he said it better than I could, and I can justify what he said from the scriptures.”

**Holzappel:** *In response to that, somebody might say, “He was a General Authority, and the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve have the exclusive right to interpret doctrine. As a teacher, my job is to teach the scriptures as the current General Authorities interpret them. And so, maybe for him, he could go past the period, but I don’t know that I should.”*

**McConkie:** Going back to that story, I think that if my father was sitting across the table from you and responding to your questions, he would take exception with the basic premise that he had an exclusive right to interpret doctrine. I do not think he would have believed that for a moment. In fact, in the context of getting answers and getting instructed by them, I would often go to him and ask, “What about this?” and he would say “Look, you have access to the same sources that I do.” He sincerely believed that I had the same right to get the same answers from the scriptures he did and that getting answers was not the exclusive providence of a particular office. In fact, I think that although this is an idea that we use to keep everybody in line, it is potentially dangerous and destructive to gospel scholarship because in a way, what we are saying is, “OK, Richard, you can be an echo, but you cannot be an independent witness.”

The scriptures do not teach me that. The scriptures teach me that I have an obligation to be an independent witness. I used to teach the class for the CES graduate program on the Doctrines of the Restoration. I would often pose these questions: “What does it mean to follow the Brethren? Does it mean you can only think what they have thought and quote what they have said, or does it mean that you should have an independent spiritual experience and an independent testimony and get it the way they got it?” Their response was the first.

In a sense, we have raised a generation who do not realize that they have the right to think and to get answers. This is a little facetious, but it is almost as if when you are eight years of age you receive the gift of the Holy Ghost on the condition that you will not use it unless whatever you receive has been cleared through general Church channels. And in that mentality I see a very real danger. I saw that danger when a stake president called me and said, “Hey, I have this problem in my stake. Can you help me find a quotation that says thus and thus?” And I said, “President, you are the leader of the stake, just teach them. Just say it. The Spirit has borne witness to you what they need to be taught.” And he said, “Oh, I can’t do that. I have got to have a General Authority statement.”

We sometimes go to sacrament meeting in which all the speakers are assigned to repeat the same general conference talk. What we get are the best-crafted talks in the history of the Church and fewer people listening than ever before. In my judgment, the reason we have fewer people listening is not because of the quality of what is being said, but because the speaker is bringing nothing to the altar that constitutes his own offering. It is just a handoff: this man said something, and we have picked it up and handed it to you as though nothing went through us.

A fellow temple worker shared his impression about how sweet temple work was and what a wonderful spirit attended it. He told how he had thought of a friend who is not a member of the Church and sat down and wrote his friend a letter, telling him, “You ought to be here with me. There is a great spirit here.” His friend, in response, got on the Internet and found all the prewritten objections to the need for temples and sent them to him. My colleague then got on the Internet and found an article that responded to the objections of his friend, which he sent back to him. The problem is that nothing had gone through either one of them; it was just passed along. We have gotten really good at handing things off.

**Holzappel:** *The Internet has really facilitated that.*

**McConkie:** It has. Again, I believe that one of the greatest needs we have is to drink at the fountainhead once again. Get off the Internet and get into the scriptures. Get into the Sacred Grove. We need personal experience. Frankly, that is what Elder Jeffrey R. Holland was talking about in his recent conference talk on the Book of Mormon (October 2009). Some of our members have not laid their foundation on scriptural understanding but on information from the Internet. Then, when faced with objections to the Church, they do not know how to handle them. They have not laid the foundation that they should have, and they are jumping off the good ship *Zion*. It is a terrible tragedy. So Elder Holland offers this solution: get back into the Book of Mormon. Opponents of the Church may be able to write some question that we cannot answer, but they cannot answer the Book of Mormon. They cannot crawl around it, and they cannot climb over it—it is there. And when you put your foundation on that, you do not jump off the good ship *Zion*.

The Internet has greatly facilitated our ability to find things, but it has not facilitated our ability to understand things. I am from the old generation of teachers who taught without PowerPoint presentations; and frankly, in my judgment, many PowerPoint presentations are without power or point! They can be an excellent tool, but sometimes they allow us to get lost in the presentation. We might be greatly blessed if we went into a classroom and turned off all the media helps except the lights.

**Holzapfel:** *So master teachers go to the fountainhead—read their scriptures—and do not let anyone get between them and the scriptures.*

**McConkie:** That would certainly be one of the characteristics.

**Holzapfel:** *What else does a master teacher do?*

**McConkie:** The same thing all over again, doing it consistently. When I begin a New Testament class, I tell them the text for the class will be the New Testament. And when I teach a Pearl of Great Price class, I say that the text for the class will be the Pearl of Great Price and that anyone who cites a source outside of the scriptures will lose credit. I build that wall because that is the course where we retell the story of Creation. As soon as we begin to retell the story of the Creation, people revert to all the quotations they have heard, and I must then engage the quotes. I refuse to play that game. I want the students, for this one experience, to get the story from the scriptures, and to deal with it the way that the scriptures taught it.

And so, for instance, the way I teach the Creation is to go into class and say, “Now, in a moment I am going to snap my fingers. And when I snap my fingers,

you are going to go into a state of rapture. In that state of rapture, all you can do is pay perfect attention to everything that I say. You can ask no questions. You cannot be diverted or have your attention taken away by anything else. Then I am going to lay out for you some basic principles. I am going to teach you what you can learn about the Creation and the history of the earth from the revelations of the Restoration, from revelations that no one else in the world has. This cannot be taught at Harvard or at Yale or at Berkeley or anywhere else in the world. This is the School of the Prophets, and I am going to give you information that you can acquire only on a high mountain. And then, when you have the information, I will snap my fingers again and bring you out of rapture, and then you may begin to ask whatever questions you want.”

I have learned that I cannot get them into the scriptures unless I establish those rules. So I absolutely insist that for this occasion in their lives, they get the story of the history of the earth from the revelations and no other source, and then we will get commentary and help them sharpen their understanding. Before that point, all other quotes are inadmissible. For the purpose of the class, they cannot quote any other source on the story of the Creation than the scriptures.

**Holzapfel:** *I completely agree with you on that. What about the message of the revelations themselves, “Seek ye out of the best books” (D&C 88:118)?*

**McConkie:** First, let us operate with the understanding that the primary reference for this statement is the scriptures themselves. Now, we need help in understanding the scriptures. If you are in a New Testament class, you need a good Bible dictionary. We need good aids that articulate the customs, traditions, historical setting, context, and other things that sharpen our understanding and appreciation of what was taking place. Certainly we do not want to exclude those aids and helps. I wrote a little book on the how of gospel study, and I have a cousin who, in true McConkie form, said to me, “Why on earth would I need any help in understanding the scriptures? I just read the scriptures.” Well, that is fine, but if you take your Latter-day Saint Bible, you will notice that you have over a thousand pages of aids and helps. Obviously, somebody somewhere thought we needed some help. There are maps, cross-references, a Bible dictionary, and so forth. It is a given that we will always need help of some kind. If you are preparing a Sunday School lesson on 1 Nephi chapter 15, you should first sit down and read it. Then you think about it, you pray about it, and you draw your conclusions about it. And it is not until you have done all of that that you look to see what anyone

else has said. If I wait until after I have done my own studying before I read a commentary, then when I come across something that I had missed, I am more appreciative of it. Or I come across something and say, “Wait a minute! That doesn’t fit.” But if I read the commentary first, the course of the river is already set. I am not saying that we should not read commentaries; I am just saying that there is an important order to follow.

**Holzappel:** *Yes, it makes a big difference. It seems to me that often we are a busy people, and whether we are giving a sacrament talk, teaching Relief Society, or anything, we have limited time. So if we spend our whole time reading what everybody else says about it, sometimes it is a while before we actually get back to reading the scriptures.*

**McConkie:** Let me give you an example of how that works. I was in a stake presidency where we had a large enough stake that not everyone fit in our stake center, so we would have two sessions of stake conference. The talks in the morning and afternoon sessions would be on the same subject but given by different speakers. Amazingly, they would all give almost the same talks, with the same examples, the same quotations, and the same words because they were all studying the same material on the Internet.

Everybody wants to talk about what the Book of Mormon is, what it means, and they sit in their counsels as bishoprics or amongst themselves and tell everyone to read the Book of Mormon again. They say to mark the name *Jesus* in a certain color whenever they see it. I’m thinking, “Why don’t we mark the word *covenant* this time?” My brother, Stanford, called the other day and said, “Hey, my wife and I are reading the Book of Mormon again. We just read 1 Nephi, and we counted thirty-nine references to the Abrahamic covenant.” The greatest evidence we have that the Book of Mormon is true is the way it picks up the promises of the Old Testament, continues the story, and extends the promise. It is the reference to the Abrahamic covenant. If you want the great evidence that Joseph Smith is a prophet, it is not that he restored New Testament Christianity. There were a host of small groups on the frontier seeking to replicate New Testament Christianity. What Joseph Smith restored was the Abrahamic covenant. That is the genius of the whole thing—that is who we are.

**Holzappel:** *So you go to the fountainhead—read your scriptures—and do not let someone else be a lens for you initially. It is all right once you have read the scriptures. This is discernment—looking for the best books, people who are citing doctrine, and then judging that by what you have read.*

**McConkie:** It is always based on your own reading. You are adding to the light you have gained. You are always more appreciative of others’ insights after you have worked out your own by doing the best you can. Then you can read something that reaches far beyond what you were thinking, and you can say, “How did I miss that?” or “That’s wonderful.” I do not think you have that experience if you have not done your own reading first. I have had this happen many times when teaching a class. We read a passage as a class and ask, “Now what is this saying?” You get programmed responses that have been handed down from generation to generation—responses that have nothing to do with the text but that students have accepted as the answers. I have to say, “Oh my goodness, come on! Read the text again, and comment on it.” Sometimes I have to ask two or three or more times before I get somebody who finally does not give a canned response and actually considers what the text is saying. If you and I have been hired to go into a classroom and teach the Book of Mormon or the Doctrine and Covenants or the Pearl of Great Price, then that is really what we ought to teach.

Let me give you a classic illustration. A son-in-law said, “We had elders quorum today, and we talked about Abraham chapter 3. Now, every time there is a lesson on Abraham 3, particularly if there is somebody with a scientific mind teaching, you end up with a lesson on astronomy. We get lost in the ethereal blue. It is almost as if the first principles of the gospel are faith, repentance, baptism, and astronomy.” So if you have the blessing of not knowing anything about astronomy, you just have to stick with the text and discover what took place. Here we use the order in heaven as a teaching device to say, “See the order of the stars in the heaven? The same order is here on earth, and it is found in the Church.” We get the great priesthood lesson on organization and order, which is invariably lost if we are too anxious to get something else in the scriptures and show how sophisticated we are, how much we have learned about astronomy, and how that proves Abraham was a prophet. But if astronomy is the focus, we miss the whole lesson, the whole purpose of the chapter.

**Holzappel:** *So far we have the fountainhead, reading the scriptures unfiltered, and being careful about what sources you are going to read as aids to your own understanding. But using these other sources comes only after you have read the text yourself. That seems like a very academic approach. Where does the Spirit play a role in all of this?*

**McConkie:** I think if that was just an academic experience, we would miss the whole experience.

**Holzapfel:** *How does someone move from studying the Civil War or biology or something else strictly academic? If we were studying the Civil War, we would go to the sources. We would go to the documents—the Gettysburg Address and such. You want to make sure you do not let a Marxist, for example, interpret what was going on in the Civil War. So that primary document approach works for history. But what, then, would you teach somebody when it comes to the scriptures and the added element of the Holy Ghost? What has been your experience?*

**McConkie:** My experience is that the Spirit will inevitably enlighten your mind and direct you not only to see how something relates with other texts but also to see how it ought to be applied in the lives of those you are teaching.

**Holzapfel:** *But how did you learn that? What were you taught? What did you experience growing up?*

**McConkie:** When you say “growing up,” I interpret that to mean growing up in my ability to teach from the scriptures. I will give an example. In the stake presidency, while preparing stake conference, I would say, “President, we’ve got this meeting pretty tightly timed, but let’s allow about ten minutes for the Holy Ghost.” It was always remarkable what would happen in the meeting. If you are teaching things that are attractive to the Holy Ghost, then the Holy Ghost is going to be there and what *should* happen *will* happen. So my suggestion is not to prepare a detailed outline or follow it slavishly. If I can’t go into class and remember long enough to tell you what it is that I wanted you to know, how in the world do I have the right to expect you to remember it for the rest of your life? What we should be doing is connecting with a feeling and an experience and an expansion of mind and thought.

Going back to our Abraham 3 illustration, I realized what was taking place when I read verse 18 where it says “as, also.” At first I was reading about the stars, and then it says “as, also” and I was reading about spirits. I realized that the Lord was likening the order among the stars to the order among the spirits. This discovery happened in the classroom. My father used to say, “I learned the gospel by paying attention to what I said when I taught.” He learned to pay attention to what the Spirit was saying.

**Holzapfel:** *Like the Marion G. Romney quote: “I always know when I am speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost because I learn something from what I’ve said.”*

**McConkie:** Yes, teaching by the Spirit. And maybe doing that takes on the form of figuring out how to liken what we are learning unto ourselves. Or maybe it is just its relationship to other principles.

**Holzapfel:** *I do not want to make it sound like a five-step program to becoming a master teacher, but what is the process? How is it different than mechanical scripture reading? I pull out my Sunday School manual and see that this is the scripture block for this week. Next I am going to close my manual and read it myself. Now, once I have read it, I am going to read the manual.*

**McConkie:** And I do my best to understand it and see how it applies to the students and why I am teaching this at this time to this class.

**Holzapfel:** *I have a scripture block. Do I bypass the chapter introduction material, go right to the scriptures we are reading, and then go back to the chapter introduction to see what insights there are?*

**McConkie:** I do not think there is one right answer to that. In fact, a moment ago you said you did not want to make this a step-by-step program, and there is a little bit of a danger even with constructing a scripture block. We build these artificial boundaries. Be careful of the artificial boundaries that constrain or restrict what might be very helpful in understanding. I had the experience once where I was teaching something and someone did not quite understand. I told that person that if they took out the chapter breaks and just let the story flow, they would get it. Often the aids, helps, and chapter headings are very helpful and the chapter and verse divisions are necessary, but sometimes they get in the way.

**Holzapfel:** *Where does a master teacher get spiritual strength? What kind of things does one do? You have to have confidence that the Holy Ghost can speak to you, so what do you do?*

**McConkie:** You must trust it. This is what I keep telling my wife and others. When you get up to speak, you have to trust the Spirit. People resist and say, “Oh, I cannot do that. I have to have a prepared text. I have to have my notes.” Well, at some point, we have to venture out and trust the Spirit. Really good things happen when we trust the Spirit. Frankly, it takes some time and experience to learn that the Spirit is trustworthy, that he is going to be there. You tell yourself, “I’ve got something prepared so that I’m not going to be embarrassed to death, but I’m going to go up there and be flexible enough so that if the Spirit starts to move me in a particular direction, I can follow it.” This is what you do when giving a priesthood blessing. You do not want to predetermine the blessing. What you do is lay your hands on a

person's head and restate promises that belong to everybody or give general, good counsel and feel your way until the Spirit gets hold of you and gives you some particulars, but you have to be willing to trust the Spirit.

**Holzappel:** *So what you are suggesting is that maybe our classes should be more Spirit-directed and perhaps fewer prescribed PowerPoint presentations outlined, "At 2:15, I should be at this point. At 2:20, I should be at this point."*

**McConkie:** Yes, we need to quit doing that.

**Holzappel:** *To review—master teacher, fountainhead, prioritize, read the scriptures first and then look for aid, and let the Holy Ghost speak. Would you add anything to that review?*

**McConkie:** I think a teacher inherently has an obligation to teach. I do not have any business going into the classroom and saying, "Now, here is today's lesson. Richard, what do you think about? So-and-so, what do you think about it? I am glad that everyone came with their own personal plan of salvation; let's evaluate them all and discuss them." Rather, I walk into class and say, "Look, here is the subject that we are dealing with. Let me review. Let me highlight. Let me read again with you what the scriptures are saying about it. Let's get clearly in mind what has been revealed to us on this matter. Okay now, with that background, let's stop for you to ask whatever questions you ought to ask to make sure that you can focus in on this, you can apply this, you can believe this and it makes sense to you." It is not that we get to redecide the gospel together. Sadly, we do too much of that. I can remember in seminary when the supervisor would come by with a chart he would mark to show how many students said something in class. There was this feeling that everyone in the class had to say something to be involved, everyone had to have an opinion, and class discussion was extremely important. Superimpose Jesus as the teacher, and it would be as if he were asking: "Peter, what do you think about baptism? Do you think it ought to be by immersion?" This is the wrong approach. If you are a teacher, you go prepared to teach. You go in and say, "This is the subject. Here is what the scriptures clearly teach. Let's review it together; then let's struggle with it together to make sure that we understand it as well as we possibly can." But we are not inviting everybody to bring their own plan of salvation, listen to them all, and decide as a class which one we like best, based on who is the most persuasive or how we think it ought to be.

**Holzappel:** *In one sense, the manual is a guide and protection that keeps people from believing outlandish rumors. But the manual is still just a guide, and we need to use the scriptures and the Spirit.*

**McConkie:** I remember when I was a stake president in a student ward, a young man poked his head in my office and said, "Hey, I just wanted to introduce myself to you. I'm a member of your stake." I asked him what he did. He told me that he was the elders quorum instructor. I said, "I hope you are doing a good job." He told me, "Oh, I never depart from the lesson manual." I told him, "If all the Lord wanted was for the manual to be repeated, then we would have sent a tape recorder. But we didn't send a tape recorder. We sent you because you have the Holy Ghost and you have the priesthood and you have some marvelous experience."

**Holzappel:** *Let me ask you one final question. After all these years you have been teaching, imagine you are reborn and you are going to start your teaching career all over again. What one thing would you change, would you do differently now that you have experienced teaching and have learned the skills of a master teacher and have come to these conclusions?*

**McConkie:** I think the answer is that I do not know yet, and I will not know until I get into the classroom. That is the exciting thing about it. I know fairly well what we are going to talk about and what we are going to cover, but how we are going to respond to questions and what we are going to teach—we just do not know these things. So, that is what I know: I do not get to know until I get there.

**Holzappel:** *So master teachers go to their scriptures first and then look for the helps, the footnotes, Topical Guide, Bible Dictionary, and other good sources, but ultimately the master teacher is someone who is led by the Spirit.*

**McConkie:** Yes, this is the difference between teaching a lesson and teaching a class. So if I could answer your question about what I would do in advance, then I would be teaching a lesson. But if I cannot answer it until I get there, then I teach people. That is why it is always fun to be a teacher: it never ceases to be exciting.

**Holzappel:** *If you had one last thing to say to your children or grandchildren about becoming a master teacher, what would it be?*

**McConkie:** You cannot teach what you do not know, and you should never waste time teaching what does not matter. **RE**

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#### Notes

1. Marion G. Romney, quoted in Boyd K. Packer, *Teach Ye Diligently* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 357.