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President Henry B. Eyring noted, “Our goal is to teach and learn eternal truth in such a way that a child of God can choose to know and to love our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son.”

Teaching for Conversion: Recent Refinements in Teaching and Learning

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During the 2012 centennial celebration of the formation of the seminary program, President Henry B. Eyring noted: “Much has happened in 100 years. . . . Our task has always been and will always be to teach and to learn so that the gospel of Jesus Christ will go down into the heart of the one—the individual son or daughter of Heavenly Father. Our goal is to teach and learn eternal truth in such a way that a child of God can choose to know and to love our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son.”¹ In the century since their creation, the fundamental goal of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion (S&I) has remained constant. However, with the introduction of the Current Teaching Emphasis in 2003 (later renamed the Teaching and Learning Emphasis), an updated objective statement in 2009, and the release of the *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook in 2012, there have been several noteworthy refinements to the description of effective teaching and learning methods in S&I. These three significant innovations represent S&I’s response to the increased clarity in direction received from senior Church leaders regarding the elements of teaching and learning that assist individual students in their process of conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ. This

article explores the history of each of these adjustments and the contributing factors that led to their creation. This article also shows how these adjustments comprise a “set of practical principles,”² elucidated by prophets, that invite, develop, and enhance a student’s journey toward personal conversion.

A Request from the Brethren

Around the turn of the twenty-first century, senior Church leaders began asking S&I to increase their effectiveness in teaching for conversion. Gary Moore, former S&I administrator, still remembers the Thursday in 2001 that two Apostles visited the administrative offices of S&I to express their concern for the youth. Moore noted that “when a member of the Twelve comes to meet with you after you know they have just finished a meeting with the Twelve and the First Presidency, it is critically important to listen and to be ready to go to work. When two [Apostles] come together, it gives greater emphasis.”³ Stanley Peterson (CES administrator of religious education from 1990 to 2001) reported that the Brethren had expressed their concern that S&I needed “to do a better job of instilling in the hearts and souls of our young people the importance of keeping the commandments of God and helping them to be more faithful.” They said, “Many young people who attend seminary and institute carry their scriptures; they memorize the verses, but they don’t internalize the doctrine into their spirits. They don’t internalize the gospel into their lives. We are losing too many of them.”⁴ Elder Richard G. Scott and President Gordon B. Hinckley had likewise expressed concerns that the gospel was not going down into the hearts of the students in a way that would lead to deep personal conversion.⁵

In August 2001, Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles also issued a formal call to S&I to do more. Elder Eyring taught that Latter-day Saint youth needed to gain more spiritual strength as an outcome of their time in S&I classrooms. His call was not for a philosophical shift, but for a clearer focus and a more concentrated effort to bless and strengthen the young Latter-day Saints who participated in S&I. At a 2001 CES conference on the Book of Mormon, Elder Eyring said:

The spiritual strength sufficient for our youth to stand firm just a few years ago will soon not be enough. . . . We must raise our sights. . . . Students need more during the time they are our students.

The pure gospel of Jesus Christ must go down into the hearts of students by the power of the Holy Ghost. It will not be enough for them to have had a spiritual witness of the truth and to want good things later. It will not be enough for them to hope

for some future cleansing and strengthening. Our aim must be for them to become truly converted to the restored gospel of Jesus Christ while they are with us.⁶

Due to intensified threats to the moral and spiritual strength of young people, the Brethren needed increased effort from S&I to teach in a way that facilitated conversion by and through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Raising the Bar

Around this same time, an additional request was made for S&I to increase their effectiveness. Shortly after Elder Eyring’s address to S&I, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles expressed the need to prepare the “greatest generation of missionaries.” In the October 2002 general conference, he told members of the Church that it was time to “raise the bar” in regards to missionary work.⁷ The Church needed young people to be better prepared and have more gospel knowledge before entering the mission field. Elder Ballard’s challenge was issued during the development phase of the *Preach My Gospel* manual for missionaries. This manual was printed and distributed in 2004, but it had been in the works since 1999.⁸ *Preach My Gospel* was intended to help each missionary teach from his or her own knowledge and experience, rather than reciting memorized lessons.

In 2002, the Missionary Department made a request of S&I. Randall Hall, an S&I administrator at the time, noted that “the Missionary Executive Committee had asked ‘What can S&I do to help students be better prepared to teach the way that we are going to ask them to teach in . . . *Preach My Gospel*?’”⁹ This request included a desire for students to gain some experience in “[teaching] by the Spirit and from the heart.”¹⁰ Around this same time, Paul V. Johnson (CES administrator of religious education from 2001 to 2007) was invited to visit President Boyd K. Packer’s home. President Packer read to Brother Johnson a draft of the letter that the First Presidency was going to send out on “raising the bar” for missionaries. Brother Johnson related that after “he [President Packer] read it through with me [he] said, ‘Now what does that mean for seminary and institute?’ I said, ‘Well, it probably means that we need to step up to the plate.’ He said, ‘That’s right. You’ve got to prepare them better. You’ve got to make sure they’re ready to go on their mission[s].’”¹¹

The Current Teaching Emphasis

In 2003, S&I responded to the requests of senior Church leaders through the creation of the Current Teaching Emphasis. The Emphasis included the following:

- We are to learn and teach by the Spirit. We are to encourage students to learn and teach by the Spirit.
- We are to emphasize more strongly the importance of reading the scripture text for each scripture course of study. We are to help students develop a habit of daily scripture study.
- We are to help students understand the scriptures and the words of the prophets, identify and understand the doctrines and principles found therein, and apply them in their lives in ways that lead to personal conversion.
- We are to help students learn to explain, share, and testify of the doctrines and principles of the restored gospel. We are to give them opportunities to do so with each other in class. We are to encourage them to do so outside of class with family and others.
- We are to emphasize the mastery of key scriptural passages and help students understand and explain the doctrines and principles contained in those passages.¹²

The intent of the Current Teaching Emphasis was to clarify the principles of teaching and learning that would help students “become truly converted to the restored gospel of Jesus Christ while they are with us.”¹³ The Emphasis was not meant to be seen as a replacement to what has been done previously in S&I, but rather as the next step required to meet the contemporary challenges facing the youth. Chad H. Webb, administrator of Seminaries and Institutes, explained:

The Teaching Emphasis is an attempt to incorporate and emphasize those principles of learning that we believe will lead to deepened conversion—to help the gospel go from a young person’s head to their heart. We’re not saying that what we have done in the past was not right or that there’s a new way of doing things. What we are suggesting is that we should continue to do all of the good things we’ve always done, as well as working to identify additional principles of learning that will deepen conversion, protect our students against the influences of the world, and prepare them for what the Lord is expecting of them.¹⁴

In the August 2003 satellite training broadcast, S&I presented the Current Teaching Emphasis to the global S&I faculty.¹⁵ Randall Hall, who led the introduction, noted that the Emphasis constituted a “distillation of thoughts, feelings, and ideas flowing from . . . various events and circumstances,” including direction from the Brethren that S&I needed to play a

more capable role in preparing the Church’s young people to serve missions.¹⁶ Due to the requests from the Missionary Department in particular, the Emphasis deliberately increased the focus on “student participation and the idea of them explaining, sharing, and testifying, because that’s what a missionary does.”¹⁷

Brother Hall also explained that the Current Teaching Emphasis was a response to “the continuing invitation from senior Church leaders to do more to get the gospel from the head to the heart of the students.”¹⁸ Years later, in his role as S&I administrator, Chad H. Webb remarked that the Emphasis “was an answer to a question began by those who preside over us, asking how we could help the gospel get more into the hearts and lives of the students.”¹⁹ Thus, by developing the Current Teaching Emphasis, S&I heard and responded to the requests of the Brethren for both converting youth and preparing more capable missionaries.

The Current Teaching Emphasis was not only formulated in direct response to specific requests from prophets and apostles, but the principles embedded in the Emphasis (and subsequently, the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning) are founded upon the teachings of prophets as well. Brother Hall, who was a principal figure in the formation of the Emphasis, recalled:

[The Emphasis] was . . . a response to what [S&I has] been taught. A fascinating thing was, when we started to go back and look at the talks that had been given [to S&I from the Brethren], back in the 70s and 80s, and even “The Charted Course,” we thought, wow, here it is! And there were some parts of what they had been teaching us that we had sort of assumed were happening, but had not made clear, had not defined with any real degree of clarity. And that is one of the things which I think the Current Teaching Emphasis began to do was to take what had been taught and to distill it more clearly. Doctrines and principles had been talked about for years. But, it had sort of been taken for granted that it was happening, and it wasn’t to the degree [needed]. . . . If you go back [through the addresses of the Brethren to S&I], there is nothing that is embodied in “Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning” that we had not been told or encouraged to do by the Brethren.²⁰

Although each principle in the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning has a long prophetic parentage,²¹ the introduction of the Current Teaching Emphasis marked a significant step in clarifying expectations and refining the standards of success for S&I. No longer would these principles be “something that we sort of took for granted was happening, or hoped was happening.”²²

Brother Webb told of a conversation that occurred between Paul V. Johnson and Elder Richard G. Scott (who was involved with the Missionary Executive Committee) during the formation of the Current Teaching Emphasis. This exchange profoundly connected the purposes of personal conversion and missionary preparation that inspired the Emphasis. It also illustrates the power behind the principles embedded therein. Brother Webb related the following:

Elder Scott remarked that missionaries are an interesting model of going through an experience that deepens conversion, because you come back a different person. He started to ask what the experiences are that missionaries have that lead to that deepening of conversion. They talked about things like seeking for the Holy Ghost every day, studying, praying for the Holy Ghost, looking for principles and doctrines in the scriptures, identifying them and seeking to really understand them, and then having the opportunity to explain them to people, to share your experiences and testimony with other people, and those kinds of things that missionaries do. . . . As they talked about the experiences that a missionary has, they asked the question: “How can we create an environment and create an experience for S&I students that would replicate on some level what a missionary goes through that helps them to become more converted?”²³

Through the Current Teaching Emphasis, students were invited to do more than simply attend seminary. They were invited to participate in processes and experiences that would help them progress along a path of personal conversion. Elder Scott used missionaries as a model to identify principles that aid in this conversion, such as studying sacred scripture in order to identify, understand, and feel the truth and importance of gospel principles, applying and sharing gospel principles, and testifying of their value to others. These elements, which a teacher can incorporate into a classroom setting, assist a student in attaining a personal understanding of and deeper conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Following its 2003 release, the Current Teaching Emphasis went through three further iterations, each bringing slight but significant changes. The first change was to drop the word *current* from the title. The first formal reference to the “Teaching Emphasis” was during the 2005 August CES satellite broadcast.²⁴ Randall Hall explained that the decision to drop *current* from the title was based on the realization that “these are basic principles that . . . are going to last for a while.”²⁵

In 2009, the Teaching Emphasis was officially reintroduced as the Teaching and Learning Emphasis.²⁶ It was reduced from 275 words to 63 words, streamlined and simplified for its global audience. Adding “and

Learning” to the title seemed fitting, since the role of the learner is a significant part of the Emphasis. This name change came on the heels of three foundational addresses given by the Brethren to S&I.

In February of 2005, Elder Richard G. Scott delivered his landmark “To Understand and Live Truth” address.²⁷ During his talk, he repeatedly admonished S&I teachers to engage the students in meaningful participation. He memorably cautioned S&I teachers that they should “never, and I mean never, give a lecture where there is no student participation. A ‘talking head’ is the weakest form of class instruction.”²⁸

The following year, in February of 2006, Elder David A. Bednar delivered his foundational “Seek Learning by Faith” address.²⁹ Elder Bednar opened his remarks by observing that “we emphasize and know much more about a teacher teaching by the Spirit than we do about a learner learning by faith.”³⁰ He then went on to instruct S&I in the doctrine, principles, and implications of facilitating learning by faith through inviting students to fulfill their role in the learning process. He taught that when a student exercises faith as an active participant in the learning process, the likelihood of meaningful personal conversion is greatly increased.

In addition to these two critical addresses, S&I personnel were invited in February of 2007 to participate in a worldwide leadership training meeting for the Church entitled “Teaching and Learning.”³¹ Therefore, for three years in a row, the message to S&I from the Brethren was to increase the focus on the role of the learner in order to teach for conversion.

The Teaching and Learning Emphasis underwent one further iteration when the *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook was released in 2012. The emphasis appeared therein as “The Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning”³²:

Teachers and students should—

- Teach and learn by the Spirit.
- Cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose.
- Study the scriptures daily, and read the text for the course.
- Understand the context and content of the scriptures and the words of the prophets.
- Identify, understand, feel the truth and importance of, and apply gospel doctrines and principles.
- Explain, share, and testify of gospel doctrines and principles.
- Master key scripture passages and the Basic Doctrines.³³

These seven Fundamentals are the desired “principles, practices, and outcomes” of teaching and learning in S&I.³⁴ Randall Hall described them as playing “the dominant role in [the] teaching philosophy” of S&I.³⁵

The Current Teaching Emphasis marked the presentation of a unified and concise description of the basic building blocks of teaching and learning which should be present in every S&I classroom throughout the world. The Emphasis was more focused than any earlier commission on describing conditions and factors that would lead to personal conversion and missionary preparation. The Emphasis was designed to help facilitate teachers in their quest to help the “gospel of Jesus Christ . . . go down into the hearts of students by the power of the Holy Ghost.”³⁶ It focused on “teaching the scriptures by the Spirit and helping students identify, understand, and apply doctrines and principles of the gospel.”³⁷ And, significantly, it emphasized the need for students to explain, share, and testify of gospel truths rather than being passive listeners. The evolution of the Current Teaching Emphasis into the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning included a significant perspective in describing the principles and processes that assist conversion as something that “teachers and students should” experience together.³⁸ Brother Hall recalled that when the Emphasis was presented to the Church Board of Education, which is chaired by the First Presidency, they “responded by giving their endorsement, and the new [emphasis] was characterized as ‘very timely.’”³⁹

The Objective

With the sharpened focus that resulted in the Current Teaching Emphasis, an update to the “why” behind it soon followed. In the S&I *Teaching the Gospel* handbook, which was used from 1994 to 2012, the organization’s objective and commission appeared as follows:

The objective of religious education in the Church Educational System is to assist the individual, the family, and priesthood leaders in accomplishing the mission of the Church by—

- *Teaching students the gospel of Jesus Christ* as found in the standard works and the words of the prophets.
- *Teaching students by precept and example* so they will be encouraged, assisted, and protected as they strive to live the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- *Providing a spiritual and social climate* where students can associate together.
- *Preparing young people for effective Church service.*

The commission of teachers and leaders in the Church Educational System is to—

1. *Live* the gospel.
2. *Teach* effectively.
3. *Administer* appropriately.⁴⁰

In 2009, a new mission statement was introduced to clarify the vision behind the new Emphasis.⁴¹ This mission statement replaced the objective and commission, and is now known as the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion.⁴²

The new objective was a response to two influences. First, it was a response to the Current Teaching Emphasis—including both the concerns of and training from the Brethren which led to its formation. The second influence came from Elder W. Rolfe Kerr, who was appointed Commissioner of CES in 2005.⁴³ During his three-year tenure, he emphasized, among other things, having a “clarity of focus” and “increasing the impact” that S&I was having by teaching in a way that would change students’ lives.⁴⁴ In connection with Elder Kerr’s teachings, he suggested to Gary Moore (CES administrator of religious education from 2007 to 2008) that the objective and commission which existed at that time had some gaps in it. Although the change was not mandated by Elder Kerr, Brother Moore took the initiative to assign an administrative team to look at the objective, and even perhaps rewrite it, in order to clarify the focus of S&I.⁴⁵

Chad Webb was assigned to chair the committee to create a new objective, and Grant Anderson was asked to assist him. Both were fulfilling assignments as assistant administrators at the time. Brother Anderson reported that not much happened with the objective until the fall of 2008, after Chad Webb was appointed administrator of S&I. Because of his new responsibilities, Brother Webb asked Brother Anderson to chair the objective committee. Grant Anderson focused almost exclusively on the Objective from October 2008 until March 2009.⁴⁶

In the early developmental stages of the new objective, many sources were consulted. Brother Webb recalled that they reached out for input from the Young Men and Young Women organizations of the Church. Suggestions from teachers in the field were requested as well. Brother Webb still keeps in his office a binder filled with the input gathered from S&I personnel via letters and email. He remarked that suggestions from the field “honestly shaped to some degree the objective statement. . . . [They] really did influence our thinking.”⁴⁷

Brother Anderson explained that they also referred to articles and books written about forming effective corporate mission statements.⁴⁸ These sources taught that a mission statement should highlight the niche of an organization and how they set themselves apart from other similar organizations. Brother Anderson and Brother Webb began to brainstorm regarding how S&I differed from Sunday School and other youth organizations in the Church. They settled on the fact that S&I taught the scriptures daily and on a deeper level than is possible in other venues in the Church where youth learn the gospel. Though common to all Church organizations, they also felt that the new objective should include an increased focus on helping each individual student to come unto Christ.⁴⁹

As they employed this approach of trying to highlight S&I's niche, they would send iterations to Elder Paul V. Johnson (who had been appointed Commissioner of CES in 2008), and he would send it back with suggestions. At times, Elder Johnson would suggest that they walk over to Elder Russell M. Nelson's office and get his input. Their desire was to create a solid draft of the new objective before it was formally presented to the Executive Committee of the Board of Education, which at the time was chaired by Elder Nelson. Brother Anderson remarked that "this flow between Elder Nelson and Elder Johnson and us happened a lot."⁵⁰ They created fifty-nine drafts of the new objective within a time span of five months.

Brother Anderson remembered one particular visit to Elder Johnson's office to review a draft of the objective and see if he felt that it was ready to take to the Executive Committee. After he reviewed the proposed objective, Elder Johnson asked what it was that they were trying to accomplish. Brother Anderson explained their focus on finding S&I's niche, to which Elder Johnson responded, "Why do you have to be different than everybody else?" Brother Anderson related that this question changed the way they approached the objective. They realized they did not need to focus on how S&I was different, but rather focus on what they hoped would happen in the life of the S&I students. Brother Anderson stated that this new perspective

turned a corner for us, because our [objective] was still very centered on what the teacher did. [Our initial drafts said]: "Our objective is to teach the young people the scriptures on a daily basis in a way that . . ."—well, you notice now that the opening statement [of the new objective] doesn't even mention scriptures. That's a means to an end. And so we finally landed on that our opening statement ought to be not what we do, but on what we hope happens to students . . . [and] we knew

we had to center it on the Atonement and on Christ . . . not just to understand [the Atonement], but to rely on [the Atonement].⁵¹

With the decision to focus on the desired influence of S&I in the lives of students—namely, encouraging and assisting their personal journey of coming unto Christ—the new objective began to take shape. Not only was Elder Nelson "heavily involved," but some drafts of the objective went "unofficially to the Executive Committee." Each time this happened, it came back with specific suggestions, including the need to incorporate Heavenly Father, the family, and temple and missionary work into the statement. More suggestions came as the Executive Committee continued to work with the objective, prompting Elder Nelson at one point to say, "That's enough. This is good enough."⁵²

Elder Nelson suggested that rather than keep the prior format of an objective with a separate commission, there should be just one objective statement. It was decided that the objective would have an opening statement, and then include some qualifying statements derived from the former commission to "live, teach, and administer." Brother Anderson noted that although Elder Nelson was heavily involved in the formation of the opening statement of the new objective, "he left it up to us to go back, and he didn't have as much to say as we crafted the three [paragraphs]: live, teach, and administer." It was decided that each paragraph would include three sentences that would encompass what an S&I teacher should do in order to achieve the vision captured within the opening objective statement. After having gone through an extensive review process with the Executive Committee, the new objective went to the Church Board of Education, where it "went through without a hitch."⁵³

An important lesson learned from the formation of the 2009 Objective is how *directly* S&I is led by prophets, seers, and revelators. Most personnel understand that S&I is governed generally by the Church Board of Education. This board is chaired by the First Presidency, and is comprised of three of the Twelve Apostles, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, the Relief Society general president, and the Young Women general president.⁵⁴ However, the Brethren's involvement in S&I extends far beyond an organizational formality. Chad Webb observed that "the Church Board of Education is not a token board. They truly oversee the major decisions within our programs, and we do the best we can to carry out their direction and counsel."⁵⁵ Brother Anderson remarked, "It was interesting to see how hands-on Elder Nelson was with [the Objective]. . . . I may have written out the document, but . . . Elder Nelson's guidance about having things like the Father in it and the temple, and saying

that we had to include those kinds of things” was deeply influential.⁵⁶ Elder Nelson and the members of the Executive Committee truly helped to mold and shape the opening statement of the Objective. Brother Webb added, “I think virtually every person on the Executive Committee of the Board has a phrase or a word in there that they said to ‘make sure and say it this way, or include this idea.’”⁵⁷

Not only were Elder Nelson and other members of the board influential, but so too were the addresses given to S&I by the Brethren throughout the years. Brother Webb explained, “We reviewed some things like ‘The Charted Course.’ We reviewed a lot of the recent talks from the evening with a General Authority. . . . We tried . . . to say something that is inclusive of all of them. . . . There is no question that there is a huge influence from the talks of the Brethren and especially from the evening with a General Authority and the August Broadcast, Symposiums, [and] General Conference talks on teaching and learning.”⁵⁸ Just as with the Current Teaching Emphasis and the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, the Objective encapsulated the direction given to S&I from prophets, seers, and revelators “over the last 20 years.”⁵⁹

The new objective statement was the subject of a “Global Faculty Meeting” released to S&I personnel in April of 2009.⁶⁰ Brother Webb and Brother Anderson introduced the newest encapsulation of their charge, and the vision behind why they do what they do, to teachers and administrators worldwide. The final product consisted of a forty-three-word statement of purpose, followed by three paragraphs containing three sentences each. These three paragraphs were derived from the previous three-part commission to “1. *Live* the gospel. 2. *Teach* effectively. 3. *Administer* appropriately.”⁶¹ The opening paragraph of the new objective states, “Our purpose is to help youth and young adults understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven.”⁶²

The Objective has now become the definitive statement of vision regarding an S&I teacher’s purpose. Fundamentally, the purpose expressed in the new and old objectives is the same: S&I has always been concerned with helping young people learn and live the gospel of Jesus Christ. The new objective statement, however, represents a more compact and comprehensive description of S&I’s “aim.”⁶³ The Objective begins with a clear and overt focus on a student gaining a personal conviction of and relationship with Jesus

Christ, his teachings, and his Atonement. This implies that the teachers have gained, and are continuing to deepen, the same conviction and relationship. Whereas the old objective highlighted what teachers do, the new objective describes what S&I hopes will happen in the lives of students and teachers. Though subtle, this shift is both significant and profoundly complementary to the Fundamentals. Brother Anderson concluded that the new objective was another direct response to the request made by Elder Eyring and other Church leaders for S&I to refocus their efforts at getting the gospel into students’ hearts and teaching for long-term conversion.⁶⁴

In a 2011 address to S&I, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf offered a powerful endorsement of the Objective. Quoting its exact language, he taught that “religious education is all about helping our young people *understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ*.”⁶⁵

The Gospel Teaching and Learning Handbook

In consequence of the Teaching and Learning Emphasis and the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, the teaching handbook which had been provided for S&I teachers and administrators was now outdated. This handbook was first printed in 1994 and went by the title *Teaching the Gospel: A Handbook for CES Teachers and Leaders*. One writer of the new handbook noted that “the old . . . handbook . . . was adequate for its day, in fact it was more than adequate, it was a step forward and helpful, it was perfect for its time.” However, he also noted that the principles embedded in the Teaching and Learning Emphasis were scattered throughout the handbook in a way that “you would have to dig it out.”⁶⁶ Since each teacher was asked to apply the Objective and incorporate the Emphasis—both of which presented principles of teaching for conversion to be applied by both teachers and students—a handbook built around these guideposts was necessary.

Initially, approval was granted to S&I for a revision of *Teaching the Gospel*. The idea was to update the objective, include the Teaching and Learning Emphasis, and include some quotes from the Brethren that supported these directives. As the revision neared completion, it was sent to select members of the training and curriculum departments for a review. The feedback received was that the revision was inadequate because it tried to explain the Emphasis and the Objective using old tools and old language. Additionally, several quotes from the Brethren were inserted in ways that made the handbook feel

like a quote book rather than a training document. One reviewer reported that it felt “disjointed” and scattered, “like shooting skeet.”⁶⁷

As the principal agents of the revision counseled together, they quickly came to the consensus that they should seek approval for a rewrite of the handbook. Once approval was granted, it was evident that the new handbook needed to clarify the standard of teaching and learning in S&I by explaining this standard in terms of the Objective and the principles contained in the Teaching and Learning Emphasis. It was also critical that the new handbook illustrate how these standards align with the teachings and expectations of the Brethren.

Clarifying the standard of teaching and learning in S&I

One writer of the new handbook stated that “the primary purpose of this manual is to establish a clear standard and example of how that standard is to be implemented.”⁶⁸ This primary purpose is evident in the very layout of the new handbook. The first chapter is a presentation of the Objective, and therefore an explanation of the *why* behind what is presented in each chapter that follows. The second and third chapters explain *how* teachers and students achieve the Objective through application of the Seven Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning. Chapters 4 and 5 present ways that teachers can apply the Fundamentals in lesson preparation and through the use of various teaching skills and methods. To understand the *why* behind a method or skill, one would refer to the previous chapter. To understand *how* to implement a principle of teaching and learning explained in the handbook, one would refer to the following chapter.

Each method or skill in the handbook is tied to one of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, which in turn are tied to the Objective of S&I. Each of the skills, as with the focus of the Fundamentals, is designed to assist a teacher in creating an environment where students, acting as agents, can learn in a way that would invite conversion through meaningful participation. *Gospel Teaching and Learning* is “custom designed to tie *what*, *how*, and *why* together in extreme clarity.”⁶⁹ Regarding the layout, Randall Hall stated that because of the new handbook,

you ought to be able to stop at any time in your lesson and ask the question: “Now, why did I ask that question?” and you ought to be able to go back to one of the Fundamentals and say “this one was what I was trying to accomplish.”

And so, the new handbook . . . gives . . . an understanding of the Objective . . . [and] how the Fundamentals [help us to] reach it. . . . And so, we feel that it really, in a very cogent, but in a very logical progression, helps make sense of what we are trying to accomplish.⁷⁰

Brother Webb observed that because of *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, S&I has a “common standard and common language to refer to.” When introducing this new handbook to teachers worldwide, he explained that it would “unify us as to what we believe is effective teaching. It will give clarity and definition to a standard of effective teaching for all of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion.”⁷¹

This new handbook not only describes clearly the standard, thereby allowing for greater impact, but it also unequivocally builds the standard upon the foundation of prophetic direction given to gospel teachers.

Connecting the standard with the teachings and expectations of the Brethren

One writer of the new handbook explained that “part of the reason why *Gospel Teaching and Learning* was needed was because we had not tied together as a system, overtly, what the Brethren were teaching as far as the doctrinal underpinnings of the objectives that we are trying to go to. . . . We had the Teaching Emphasis . . . and we had the Brethren who were talking about what needed to happen; but as a system, we were not connecting the dots very well.”⁷² A clear connection needed to be made between the Emphasis and the Brethren. One writer observed, “If you asked a teacher why they did something that way, a lot of times they would say ‘because it works.’ But they couldn’t give you an answer that would mirror very closely anything that the Brethren were teaching in their talks to us. There was a disconnect in the curriculum between them, there was a disconnect in . . . *Teaching the Gospel*, which means the disconnect went to training and in-service.”⁷³ The *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook is the connecting bridge between the Objective, the Emphasis, and the Brethren.

One way the writers went about building this bridge was to “get the Brethren in [S&I’s] thinking”⁷⁴ and to clearly position the instruction of the Brethren as the foundation behind the Objective and the Fundamentals. Through the new handbook, teachers could see the Objective and the Fundamentals “in terms of Elder Eyring, in terms of Elder Bednar, in terms of Elder Scott.”⁷⁵ Brother Hall remarked that “the words of the Brethren are

very clear to us, and we're to do what they have asked us to do. . . . And so that continued to inform the way we worded things in the handbook and the fact that we included so many quotations of the Brethren."⁷⁶

By way of illustration regarding the importance of the words of the Brethren in the new handbook, consider the following:

- The 2012 printing of *Gospel Teaching and Learning* contains 82 pages with explanatory text.⁷⁷
- Within these 82 pages, there are 88 citations in *Gospel Teaching and Learning* from prophets and apostles. Taking the average of the frequency of citations in the entire handbook, there is a citation every 0.93 pages.
- In the chapter on the Objective, there is a citation every 0.45 pages. In the chapter on the Fundamentals, there is a citation every 0.64 pages. These numbers highlight a density of citations from the Brethren in the chapters that establish the definition of teaching and learning in S&I.
- Of the 88 citations, 44 come from addresses from the Brethren to S&I, and 26 come from general conference addresses about gospel teaching.
- Of the 44 citations from addresses to S&I, 23 postdate the publication of *Teaching the Gospel*, 13 are derived from foundational talks to S&I,⁷⁸ and 8 come from talks prior to 1994 (when *Teaching the Gospel* was published).

Chad Webb explained the connection between the Brethren and *Gospel Teaching and Learning* in a worldwide internet introduction of the new handbook. He stated:

Over the last 20 years, we have had a handbook that served us very well. And through that time we have continued to learn and to grow as an organization. We have the wonderful blessing of being led by inspired leaders who have taken many opportunities to instruct us about effective teaching. One of the reasons for this new handbook is to have a collection where we have compiled much of what we've learned throughout the years in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion about effective teaching and about effective learning. I am grateful for the opportunity to have the words of living prophets and the things that they are teaching us about teaching gathered together and placed in this wonderful new handbook.⁷⁹

In this citation, Brother Webb asserts that the *Gospel Teaching and Learning* represents the direction and training S&I has received over the past twenty years from prophets, seers, and revelators. The history of the handbook's creation supports this claim.

In a 2013 address to S&I personnel worldwide, Elder Russell M. Nelson gave the *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook the following endorsement: "If teachers will incorporate these fundamentals effectively . . . if you do all you can—teach in the way that is outlined in your handbook—you will be doing what you need to do to assist with [the] prophetic priority."⁸⁰ *Gospel Teaching and Learning* represents a remarkable effort by S&I to clarify the standard of teaching and learning in S&I and to demonstrate how the standard aligns with the teachings and expectations of the Brethren.

Gospel Teaching and Learning "was a massive effort. . . . In some ways there are 150 people who wrote it."⁸¹ The project started in 2010, with a goal to present the new handbook at the area director's convention in the spring of 2011. However, as that date neared, the handbook was not yet finished and the decision was made to aim for a later release date. Because those working on the project had made such an intense and consuming effort to finish by the initial deadline, the S&I administration decided to step back from the project for a season once it became evident that the desired release date would not be realized. This period of time away from working on the handbook became a blessing for three reasons:

First, it allowed S&I to unify some of their efforts with the *Come, Follow Me* youth curriculum released by the Church in 2012.⁸² This unification occurred through a shared introduction to *Gospel Teaching and Learning* and the *Come, Follow Me* teacher handbook, as well as through sharing common "Basic Doctrines."⁸³

Second, the time taken away from the project allowed the writers to see what was being produced in the handbook through different lenses. One writer was also working on a project to create new S&I curriculum. As he worked to directly incorporate the Objective and the Fundamentals into the new curriculum, he gained insights that improved *Gospel Teaching and Learning*. As another writer, who had responsibilities in the training department, worked to incorporate portions of the new handbook-in-process into training experiences, he too gained insights that improved how the handbook was worded and arranged.⁸⁴

And third, the time away allowed the writers to reflect on all that they had been working on and to "let it stew."⁸⁵ It was after this time away that the decision was made to include in the fifth fundamental desire for each S&I student to "feel the truth and importance of . . . gospel doctrines and principles."⁸⁶

In May of 2012, S&I published and distributed *Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders* in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion as a capstone to the decade of adjustments to the definition of teaching and learning in S&I.⁸⁷ *Gospel Teaching and Learning* has been distributed to the worldwide cadre of more than forty-five thousand teachers.⁸⁸ It has been translated into thirty-eight languages.⁸⁹ The content of the new handbook is the foundation of preservice and in-service training for all full-time personnel, as well as for the volunteer teachers, who make up 90 percent of the teaching corps.⁹⁰ *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, therefore, potentially affects not only S&I teachers and administrators, but also more than 740 thousand students worldwide.⁹¹ Brother Webb explained that the handbook “will help to increase the impact that we have on our students while they are with us in our classrooms. That will help them to deepen conversion and protect them from the influences of the world, and to prepare them for the things that lay ahead in their future.”⁹²

Adjusting the Aim

Prophets have led S&I through an important shift in their understanding of teaching and learning in ways that cultivate personal conversion.⁹³ The Brethren have always instructed S&I teachers to teach by the Spirit “so that the gospel of Jesus Christ will go down into the heart of the one.”⁹⁴ However, since the turn of the twenty-first century, the Brethren have repeatedly focused the attention of S&I on helping students fulfill their role in *learning* by the Spirit.⁹⁵ By so doing, the teacher helps the student along the path of personal conversion.

The desired conversion for each individual teacher and student is described generally in the Objective. Conversion includes not only understanding, but also relying upon, the Savior. To “rely” denotes a daily dependence upon the Savior and a consistent incorporation of his teachings and Atonement into one’s personal progression. The Objective also explains that this conversion should deepen continually, through Church and temple service, until one qualifies for eternal life with Heavenly Father.⁹⁶ Elder Bednar described conversion in the following terms: “The learning I am describing reaches far beyond mere cognitive comprehension and the retaining and recalling of information. The type of learning about which I am speaking causes us to put off the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19), to change our hearts (see Mosiah 5:2), and to be converted unto the Lord and to never fall away (see Alma 23:6).”⁹⁷

Elder Eyring added that the “mighty change” desired for S&I teachers and students “is reported time after time in the Book of Mormon. The way it is wrought and what the person becomes is always the same. The words of God in pure doctrine go down deep into the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. The person pleads with God in faith. The repentant heart is broken and the spirit contrite. Sacred covenants have been made. Then God keeps His covenant to grant a new heart and a new life, in His time.”⁹⁸

The principles embedded within the Fundamentals represent some of the necessary elements that create an environment where conversion may occur. Elder Bednar explained:

A learner exercising agency by acting in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost—and invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. It is in the sincerity and consistency of our faith-inspired action that we indicate to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our willingness to learn and receive instruction from the Holy Ghost. Thus, learning by faith involves the exercise of moral agency to act upon the assurance of things hoped for and invites the evidence of things not seen from the only true teacher, the Spirit of the Lord.⁹⁹

Consider the several different ways that a student is invited to act “in accordance with correct principles” by a teacher applying the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning. The student is invited to read and study the scriptures and to identify, explain, share, testify of, and apply gospel principles. By these actions, students can invite the Holy Spirit to teach, witness, and strengthen them to become what God would have them be.

Regarding the adjustment represented by the Fundamentals, Chad Webb observed that the “biggest change in our approach would probably come down to the role of the student. Is the student actively participating? Is the student discovering things? Are students talking about ways the gospel blesses their lives? Are they sharing their own experiences with gospel principles? Those kinds of experiences with the scriptures and with their peers will help to take gospel principles into their hearts and will prepare them to be able to share it with others.”¹⁰⁰ Rather than teachers simply sharing with the students all that they have learned about the scriptures, instructor and student are both engaged as teachers and learners who explore together the doctrines and principles of the gospel to learn saving truths for themselves.

The Objective complements and clarifies the Fundamentals by keeping S&I grounded in the primary purpose underlying increased student

engagement: so that students and teachers might come to understand and rely on the Savior. Brother Webb explained that the goal is not just to have students participate for participation's sake, but to have students "participating in a very meaningful way." This means that both teachers and students must "participate in a way that their conversion is deepened and . . . they are discovering truths in the scriptures for themselves." The Objective adds a second witness to the clarification of the role of both teacher and student found in the Fundamentals when it states that the teacher's purpose is to "help the youth," but it is the learner that must "understand . . . rely on . . . [and] qualify" for the conversion experience.¹⁰¹ Through the Fundamentals and the Objective, the roles of teacher and student are brought into sharp focus.

S&I teachers have always desired to invite the Holy Ghost to teach students. They have always desired conversion for those they teach. So, what is the shift represented by the Fundamentals and the Objective? Elder Bednar explained that "we emphasize and know much more about a teacher teaching by the Spirit than we do about a learner learning by faith."¹⁰² Clearly, the principles and processes of both teaching and learning are spiritually essential. However, as we look to the future and anticipate the ever more confused and turbulent world in which we will live, I believe it will be essential for all of us to increase our capacity to seek learning by faith." Prior to the formation of the Current Teaching Emphasis, the main emphasis of training and instruction provided for teachers by S&I focused primarily on the role of the teacher. While it was not silent on the role of the student, such was not emphasized to the degree now present in S&I. By way of illustration, in *Teaching the Gospel*, the S&I teacher handbook from 1994 to 2011, three out of forty-four pages were specifically dedicated to explaining "The Role of the Student in Gospel Learning."¹⁰³ In contrast, the new *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook has been specifically designed to tie each teaching skill and teacher method into the Fundamentals and the Objective,¹⁰⁴ which have as their driving purpose to invite students to learn by faith through the righteous exercise of their personal agency.

The role of the teacher in the conversion process is vitally important and has been consistently emphasized in S&I throughout its history. That importance has not diminished, but has been appropriately counterbalanced with an understanding that a "teacher can explain, demonstrate, persuade, and testify, and do so with great spiritual power and effectiveness. Ultimately, however, the content of a message and the witness of the Holy Ghost penetrate into the

heart only if a receiver allows them to enter."¹⁰⁵ Elder Bednar reminded S&I that "the Holy Ghost is the teacher who, through proper invitation, can enter into a learner's heart" and that an S&I teacher has an important "responsibility to preach the gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter, as a prerequisite for the learning by faith that can be achieved only by and through the Holy Ghost (see D&C 50:14)."¹⁰⁶ Therefore, a teacher should learn, understand, and apply what Elder Bednar taught when he said that gospel teachers "are most effective as instructors when we encourage and facilitate learning by faith."¹⁰⁷ This clarification, born of prophetic instruction, lies at the heart of the Fundamentals, the Objective, and the *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook. Elder Bednar's instruction to S&I in 2006 is emblematic of this clear message from the Brethren:

The most important learnings of life are caught—not taught.

The spiritual understanding you and I have been blessed to receive, and which has been confirmed as true in our hearts, simply cannot be given to another person. The tuition of diligence and learning by faith must be paid to obtain and personally "own" such knowledge. Only in this way can what is known in the mind be transformed into what is felt in the heart. Only in this way can a person move beyond relying upon the spiritual knowledge and experience of others and claim those blessings for himself or herself. Only in this way can we be spiritually prepared for what is coming.¹⁰⁸

Many passages from *Gospel Teaching and Learning* reflect the most recent prophetic counsel given to teachers in S&I to facilitate productive and meaningful student engagement that leads to personal conversion.¹⁰⁹ One passage from the new handbook teaches that "students are edified when they are led through a learning process. . . . Students should be led to search the scriptures for understanding and to discover the truths of the gospel for themselves. They should be given opportunities to explain the gospel in their own words and to share and testify of what they know and feel. This helps to bring the gospel from their heads down into their hearts."¹¹⁰ The new handbook emphasizes that teachers should focus on "helping students fulfill their role." It states, "As teachers prepare how they will teach, they should stay focused on the learner and not just on what the teacher will do. Rather than merely asking 'What will I do in class today?' or 'What will I teach my students?' a teacher should also approach lesson preparation thinking, 'What will my students do in class today?' 'How will I help my students discover what they need to know?'"¹¹¹

The *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook cements the refinement of focus described in the Objective and the Fundamentals and ties it inextricably

to the instruction given to S&I by the Brethren. Prophets, seers, and revelators have not only highlighted the need for greater student conversion, but have also taught the *why* and the *how* regarding teachers facilitating student conversion.

Summary and Conclusions

The Savior taught, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent” (John 17:3). Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the Brethren have taught S&I, with increased clarity and urgency, the principles and practices which would meaningfully impact a student’s journey toward “eternal life with their Father in Heaven.”¹¹² The Brethren have focused S&I on helping a student individually connect with their Heavenly Father and choose to “understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ”¹¹³ *for him- or herself*. Building a personal relationship with a loving Father in Heaven is of far greater importance than teacher knowledge, presentation, and charisma. President Eyring taught S&I that their job is “to teach eternal truth in such a way that a child of God can choose to know and love our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son.”¹¹⁴ The Current Teaching Emphasis in 2003, the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes in 2009, and the *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook in 2012 represent S&I’s response to prophetic direction. These advances have established a clear standard and have brought increased focus on the principles and processes that effectively help the learners fulfill their role in the learning process so that they might progress along the path of personal conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Conversion is a deeply personal process that comes in the Lord’s time and in the Lord’s way. Elder Eyring reminded S&I teachers that “true conversion depends on a student seeking freely in faith, with great effort. . . . Then it is the Lord who can grant, in His time, the miracle of cleansing and change. . . . Whether the miracle occurs in a moment or over years, as is far more common, it is the doctrine of Jesus Christ that drives the change.”¹¹⁵ Although conversion cannot be coerced or manufactured, when the principles embedded in *Gospel Teaching and Learning* are applied, an environment is created which fosters both personal conversion and preparation for future family and Church responsibilities.

Each individual chooses for himself or herself whether or not to rely on the Savior, and each should be invited to do so by an effective teacher. S&I

teachers should “teach out of [their] own changed hearts.”¹¹⁶ They should expect and encourage, through their very teaching methods and constructs, each student to “[seek] freely in faith, with great effort” while they are enrolled in S&I. Elder Bednar reminded S&I teachers that their students “really are the young people that have been reserved for these latter days. Let’s quit telling them that and start treating them like that, and expecting them to come through.”¹¹⁷

The success of S&I depends upon the application of the principles and processes that have been taught with increased clarity by prophets, and are the heart of *Gospel Teaching and Learning*. Understanding these principles and processes precedes effective application. Each teacher should personally pay the price to know the new handbook. It should inform their preparation, teaching, and administering. Elder Maxwell once noted to S&I personnel that “God is giving away the spiritual secrets of the universe” and then asked, “Are we listening?”¹¹⁸ **RE**

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Notes

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2. Richard G. Scott, “How to Obtain Revelation and Inspiration for Your Personal Life,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 45–47.
3. Barbara Morgan, Garry Moore, and LaNell Moore, “Seminaries and Institutes of Religion,” *Religious Educator* 11, no. 3 (2010): 181–213.
4. Stanley A. Peterson, “Carrying the Scriptures unto the Hearts, Not Just into the Hands, of Students,” CES conference on the Book of Mormon, August 14, 2001.
5. See Elder Richard G. Scott’s account of speaking with President Hinckley about these concerns in Richard G. Scott, “To Understand and Live Truth,” address to CES religious educators, February 4, 2005.
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8. Benjamin Hyrum White, “The History of Preach My Gospel,” *Religious Educator* 14, no. 1 (2013): 129–58.
9. Randall Hall, interview by author, October 14, 2013, copy in author’s possession.
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11. Casey Paul Griffiths, interview by Paul V. Johnson, January 19, 2010, copy in author’s possession.
12. Randall L. Hall, “The Current Teaching Emphasis: An Update,” CES Satellite Broadcast, August 2003, 8.

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14. Chad H. Webb and Kenneth L. Alford, "Serving Students: A Conversation with Chad H. Webb," *Religious Educator* 10, no. 3 (2009): 237–46.
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17. Hall, interview.
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21. This phrase is borrowed from Henry B. Eyring, "To Know and to Love God," address to CES religious educators, February 26, 2010, 3.
22. Hall, interview.
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24. Paul V. Johnson, "Follow the Lord's Path," CES Satellite Training Broadcast, August 2005.
25. Hall, interview.
26. Randall L. Hall, "2009 June Global Faculty Meeting—The Teaching and Learning Emphasis," si.lds.org, <https://si.lds.org/training/talks/gfm/2009-june-global-faculty-meeting--the-teaching-and-learning-emphasis?lang=eng>
27. Scott, "To Understand and Live Truth," 3.
28. Scott, "To Understand and Live Truth," 3.
29. David A. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," address to CES religious educators, February 3, 2006.
30. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 1.
31. See "Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting: Teaching and Learning, February 10, 2007," in *Ensign*, June 2007.
32. Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, *Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2012), 10.
33. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 10.
34. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 10.
35. Hall, personal writings.
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37. Hall, "The Current Teaching Emphasis: An Update," 8.
38. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 10.
39. Hall, personal writings.
40. The Church Educational System, *Teaching the Gospel Handbook* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1994), 3–4.
41. Grant Anderson, email to author, November 13, 2013.
42. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 10.
43. Ewer, "A Century of Seminary," 5.
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45. Grant Anderson, interview by author, September 25, 2013, copy in author's possession.

46. Anderson, interview.
47. Webb, interview.
48. Regarding the sources accessed, Grant Anderson stated, "Unfortunately, I didn't keep any documentation of what we looked at. It included articles from business magazines, books, etc." Grant Anderson, email to author, October 15, 2014.
49. Anderson, interview.
50. Anderson, interview.
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55. Webb and Alford, "Serving Students," 239.
56. Anderson, interview.
57. Webb, interview.
58. Webb, interview.
59. Chad Webb, *Welcome to the New S&I Handbook: A Video from Brother Chad H. Webb*, si.lds.org.
60. Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, "2009 April Global Faculty Meeting—The Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion," si.lds.org.
61. *Teaching the Gospel Handbook*, 3–4.
62. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, x.
63. Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights," 2.
64. Grant Anderson, email to author, November 13, 2013.
65. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "A Teacher of God's Children," address to CES religious educators, January 28, 2011, 7; emphasis added.
66. The principal writers of the *Gospel Teaching and Learning* handbook, interview by author, September 18, 2013. These writers requested to remain unnamed; they did not want to assume undue credit for their contribution to a handbook. Although the handbook was the outcome of input from many sources, there were three principal writers who worked under the supervision of Chad Webb and Elder Paul V. Johnson. A transcript of each interview is in the author's possession.
67. Principal writers, interview.
68. Principal writers, interview.
69. Hall, interview.
70. Hall, interview.
71. Webb, *Welcome to the New S&I Handbook*.
72. Principal writers, interview.
73. Principal writers, interview.
74. Principal writers, interview.
75. Principal writers, interview.
76. Hall, interview.
77. This includes the introduction and subtracts one page that displays the objective and one page that contains only an illustration of the First Vision.
78. An address must fit the following criteria in order to be considered foundational: (1) The source is an LDS prophet or apostle; (2) The address was included in Charge to religious educators, which was a portion of the seminary preservice curriculum from 1981 to 2004;

and (3) The address is included in Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings, which is a portion of the seminary preservice curriculum from 2004 to Present.

79. Webb, *Welcome to the New S&I Handbook*.

80. Russell M. Nelson, "Teaching Youth in the Day of the Wave," Seminaries & Institutes of Religion broadcast, August 6, 2013, 3.

81. Principal writers, interview.

82. *Teaching the Gospel in the Savior's Way: A Guide to Come, Follow Me: Learning Resources for Youth* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2012), 4–5.

83. See Matthew O. Richardson, "Come, Follow Me: Learning Resources for Youth," *Religious Educator* 14, no. 3 (2013), 23–47; and Barbara J. Morgan, "Improving Learning and Teaching: A Conversation with Russell T. Osguthorpe," *Religious Educator* 15, no. 3 (2014): 78.

84. Principal writers, interview.

85. Principal writers, interview.

86. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 10.

87. Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, "The New Gospel Teaching and Learning Handbook," official memo, May 28, 2012, si.lds.org.

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92. Webb, *Welcome to the New S&I Handbook*.

93. Elder Eyring asked S&I to adjust their aim in Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights," 2.

94. Eyring, "A Foundation of Faith."

95. This focus was emphasized in Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights"; Henry B. Eyring, "Inquire of the Lord," address to CES religious educators, February 2, 2001, Hales, "Teaching by Faith," address to CES religious educators, February 1, 2002; Henry B. Eyring, "The Spirit Must Be Our Constant Companion," address to CES religious educators, February 7, 2003, Richard G. Scott and Henry B. Eyring, "Discussion with Elder Richard G. Scott and Elder Henry B. Eyring," CES Satellite Broadcast, August 1, 2003; Scott, "To Understand and Live Truth"; Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith"; and Jeffrey R. Holland, "Teaching and Learning in the Church," Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting: Teaching and Learning, February 10, 2007, as well as others.

96. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, x.

97. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 3.

98. Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights," 3.

99. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 3.

100. Webb and Alford, "Serving Students," 240–41.

101. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, x.

102. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 1.

103. *Teaching the Gospel Handbook*, 13–15.

104. Hall, interview.

105. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 1.

106. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 4.

107. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 4.

108. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith," 5.

109. For illustrative examples of this, see Hales, "Teaching by Faith"; Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith"; and Scott, "To Understand and Live Truth."

110. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 55.

111. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 57.

112. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, x.

113. *Gospel Teaching and Learning*, x.

114. Eyring, "To Know and Love God," 1.

115. Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights," 3–4.

116. Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights," 3.

117. David A. Bednar, "A Discussion with Elder Bednar," August 2, 2011, si.lds.org.

118. Neal A. Maxwell, "The Creators Cosmos," CES Conference on the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History, August 13, 2002, 2.