

#15: The Gifts of the Spirit

Monte F. Shelley, 10 May, 2009

Quotes

- God could not be everywhere, so he created mothers.
- When I had my first child, I understood how much my mother loved me.
- Insanity is hereditary; you get it from your children.
- Any mother could perform the jobs of several air-traffic controllers with ease. (Lisa Alther)
- The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother.

1. Historical context of section 46

“In the beginning of the church, ... the disciples used to exclude unbelievers, which caused some to marvel, and converse of this matter because of the things that were written in the Book of Mormon [3 Ne. 18:22–33]. Therefore, the Lord deigned to speak on this subject [D&C 46]” (John Whitmer)

2. Public, sacrament, and confirmation meetings

Nevertheless ye are commanded never to cast any one out from your public meetings. ... Ye are also commanded not to cast any one who belongeth to the church out of your sacrament meetings; ... [Concerning] your sacrament meetings ... [or] your confirmation meetings, ... if there be any that are not of the church, that are earnestly seeking after the kingdom, ye shall not cast them out. (46:3–6)

3. Conduct all meetings as guided by the Holy Spirit

²Notwithstanding those things which are written, it always has been given to the elders of my church ... to conduct all meetings as they are directed and guided by the Holy Spirit. ... ⁷But ye are commanded in all things to ask of God, ... and *that which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do* in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils. (46:2, 7)

4. For what purpose are gifts of spirit given?

⁸Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and *that ye may not be deceived* seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering ... they are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments, and *him that seeketh so to do*; that all may be benefited that seek or that ask of me, that ask and not for a sign that they may consume it upon their lusts. ¹¹*For all have not every gift* given unto them; for there are many gifts, and *to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God*. ¹²To some is given one, and to some is given another, *that all may be profited thereby*.

5. Know or believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God

¹³To some it is given by the Holy Ghost *to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, and that he was *crucified for the sins of the world*. ¹⁴To others it is given [by the Holy Ghost] *to believe on their words*, that they also might *have eternal life* if they continue faithful. ^a3 Ne. 12:2

Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am; (D&C 93:1)

“Mortal man, while in the flesh, has it in his power to see the Lord, to stand in his presence, to feel the nail marks in his hands and feet, and to receive from him such blessings as are reserved for those only who keep all his commandments and who are

qualified for that eternal life which includes being in his presence forever.” (Elder McConkie, *A New Witness ...*, 492–99)

See Elder Packer quotes at end of lesson 2 handout.

6. Differences of administration

¹⁵To some it is given by the Holy Ghost *to know the differences of administration*, as it will be pleasing unto the same Lord, according as the Lord will, suiting his mercies according to the conditions of the children of men.

7. Diversities of operations

¹⁶It is given by the Holy Ghost to some to know the *diversities of operations, whether they be of God*, that the manifestations of the Spirit may be given to every man to profit withal.

8. Word of wisdom and word of knowledge

¹⁷To some is given, by the Spirit of God, the *word of wisdom*. ¹⁸To another is given the *word of knowledge, that all may be taught* to be wise and to have knowledge.

To one is given by the Spirit of God, that he may teach the word of wisdom; And to another, that he may teach the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; (Moroni 10:9–10)

If any person needed wisdom from God, I did; for *how to act* I did not know, (JS—H 1:12)

9. To heal and to be healed

¹⁹To some it is given to have faith to be healed; ²⁰And to others it is given to have faith to heal.

“God does notice us, and he watches over us. But it is usually through another person that he meets our needs. Therefore, it is vital that we serve each other in the kingdom.” (S. W. Kimball)

Faith = _____ and _____

- Naaman, a leper, came to Elisha the prophet (2 Kings 5:9–14)
- Hip of Amanda Smith’s son was blown away at Haun’s Mill
- Elder Nelson operated without knowing how (*Ensign*, 05/2003)

Priesthood blessings

And the elders of the church, two or more, shall be called, and shall pray for and lay their hands upon them in my name. ... He that hath faith in me to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed. (42:44, 48)

Herbs and Mild Food

Whosoever among you are sick, and have not faith to be healed, but believe, shall be nourished with all tenderness, with *herbs and mild food*, and that not by the hand of an enemy. (D&C 42:43)

- Joseph and Dr. Levi Richards in 1837 (HC 2:493)
- Few died of “fevers, because of the excellent qualities of the many plants and roots which God had prepared to remove the cause of diseases, to which men were subject by the nature of the climate” (Alma 46:40)
- “Herbs are to be used, and mild food; but those herbs are to be used by skillful hands. ... We should judge ... that a person who is acquainted with the *physiology* of the human system, and the nature and *medicinal properties of herbs*, is more competent to judge of those things, and to administer with judgment and skill, than the one who is ignorant, both of the organization of the human system, of the medicinal properties of herbs, and of the nature and effects of disease.” (*Times and Seasons*, 4:325–326)
- “The sick should be nursed with herbs and mild food. ... Who are better qualified to administer than our faithful and zealous sisters, whose hearts are full of faith, tenderness, sympathy, and compassion? No one.” (TPJS, 229)

Modern Medicine

- Elder Kimball set apart Elder Nelson as a stake president.
- Elder Nelson operated on Elder Kimball eight years later.
- Elder Nelson gave priesthood blessings to Elder Kimball.
- Elder Nelson and Paul Dunn

Obedience to law and the faith to be healed

“Divine law is incontrovertible! I see people who wish, who hope, who pray for health. But as a surgeon I can tell you that all of the wishes, the hopes, and the prayers of people can be overridden by lack of compliance to law. If a law cannot be obeyed, those blessings cannot come. ... Please don't construe my remarks as an indication that wishes, prayers, and faith are not important. They too are part of the process of law, for they help healing also. All I am saying is that if one breaks the law one has to reap the consequences.” (Elder Nelson)

Will of the Lord:

- President Harold B. Lee's blessing to Delores Knighton

Healing of spirits and hearts

- Snakebite story (H. Burke Peterson, *Ensign*, Nov 1983, 59)

10. “To some is given the working of miracles” (46:21)

The **Liahona** “did work ... according to their faith in God; ... therefore they had this *miracle*, and also *many other miracles* wrought by the power of God, *day by day*.⁴¹ Nevertheless, because those miracles were worked by small means ... they were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence ...⁴⁶ Do not let us be slothful because of the easiness of the way; ... if they would look they might live; even so it is with us. The way is prepared, and *if we will look* we may live forever.” (Al. 37:40–46)

11. “And to others it is given to prophecy” (46:22)

12. “And to others the discerning of spirits.” (46:23)

To another, the beholding of angels and ministering spirits (Moro. 10:14)

President George Q. Cannon: “The gift of discerning of spirits not only gives men and women who have it the power to discern the spirit with which others may be possessed or influenced, but it gives them the power to *discern the spirit which influences themselves*. They are able to detect a false spirit and also to know when the Spirit of God reigns within them. ... Possessing and exercising this gift they will not allow any evil influence to enter into their hearts or to prompt them in their thoughts, their words or their acts. They will repel it; and if perchance such a spirit should get possession of them, as soon as they witness its effects they will expel it or, in other words, refuse to be led or prompted by it.” (Elder Bednar, *Ensign*, Dec. 2006)

President Stephen L Richards: “I mention the gift of discernment, embodying the power to discriminate ... between right and wrong. I believe that this gift when highly developed arises largely out of an acute sensitivity to impressions—spiritual impressions, if you will—to *read under the surface* as it were, to detect hidden evil, and more importantly to find the good that may be concealed. The highest type of discernment is that which *perceives in others* and uncovers for them *their better natures, the good inherent within them*. ... *Every member in the restored Church of Christ could have this gift if he willed to do so*. He could not be deceived with the sophistries of the world. He could not be led astray by pseudo-prophets and subversive cults. Even the inexperienced would recognize false teachings, in a measure at least. ... We ought to be grateful every day of our lives for this sense which keeps alive a conscience which constantly alerts us to the dangers inherent in wrongdoers and sin.” (Elder Bednar, *ibid.*)

13. Speaking with and interpretation of tongues

²⁴ It is given to some to *speak with tongues*; ²⁵ And to another is given the *interpretation of tongues*.

14. To whom are they given?

²⁶ And all these gifts come from God, for the benefit of the children of God.

All these gifts come by the Spirit of Christ; and they come unto every man severally, according as he will. (Moro. 10:17)

15. How are gifts sought, given and received?

For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift. (D&C 88:33)

⁷ But ye are commanded in all things to *ask of God*, who giveth liberally; and *that which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do* in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, *doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving*. ...⁸ Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived *seek ye earnestly the best gifts*, always remembering for what they are given; ...³⁰ He that *asketh in the Spirit* asketh according to the will of God; wherefore it is done even as he asketh.³¹ And ... all things must be done in the name of Christ, whatsoever you do in the Spirit;³² And ye must *give thanks unto God* in the Spirit for whatsoever blessing ye are blessed with.³³ And ye must **practise** virtue and holiness before me continually.

16. Other gifts of the spirit

Elder Bruce R. McConkie: “Spiritual gifts are endless in number and infinite in variety. Those listed in the revealed word are simply illustrations” (*A New Witness ...*, 371).

Elder Marvin J. Ashton said some “less-conspicuous gifts” include “the gift of asking; the gift of listening; the gift of hearing and using a still, small voice; ... the gift of avoiding contention; the gift of being agreeable; ... the gift of seeking that which is righteous; the gift of not passing judgment; the gift of looking to God for guidance; the gift of being a disciple; the gift of caring for others; the gift of being able to ponder; the gift of offering prayer; the gift of bearing a mighty testimony; and the gift of receiving the Holy Ghost” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 20).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained how his mother applied the principle of seeking gifts of the Spirit: “Having lost her husband, my widowed mother was incomplete. How she prayed for what she needed to fulfill her responsibility to raise her three small children! She was seeking, she was worthy, and she was blessed! Her prayers were answered in many ways, including the receipt of spiritual gifts. She had many, but the ones that stand out in my memory are the gifts of faith, testimony, and wisdom. She was a mighty woman in Zion” (*Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 72).

President George Q. Cannon: “If any of us are imperfect, it is our duty to pray for the gift that will make us perfect. ... If I am an angry man, it is my duty to pray for charity, which suffereth long and is kind. Am I an envious man? It is my duty to seek for charity, which envieth not. So with all the gifts of the Gospel. They are intended for this purpose. No man ought to say, ‘Oh, I cannot help this; it is my nature.’ He is not justified in it, for the reason that God has promised to give strength to correct these things, and to give gifts that will eradicate them” (*Millennial Star*, 23 Apr. 1894, 260).

Though I speak with the tongues ... have the gift of prophecy, ... and have not *charity*, I am nothing. (1 Cor. 13:1–2)