

#15: The Gifts of the Spirit

Monte F. Shelley, 10 May. 2009

Quotes

- God could not be everywhere, so he created mothers.
- It was when I had my first child that 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.
- It's not easy being a mother. If it were easy, fathers would do it.
- Of all the rights of women, the greatest is to be a mother.
- My mother had a great deal of trouble with me, but I think she enjoyed it. -- Mark Twain
- Sweater, n.: garment worn by child when its mother is feeling chilly. ~Ambrose Bierce
- A Freudian slip is when you say one thing but mean your mother. ~Author Unknown

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)

Context/Question

"*Missionary John Murdock and his companions were preaching in Cleveland, Ohio, when a deceiver came forward and knelt as if to pray, but actually he was giving 'a sign to the banditry to begin their abuse.'* [John Whitmer] *Immediately his cohorts blew out the candles and threw inkstands and books at the speaker. Later back in Kirtland, the brethren counseled about the situation.* Some favored excluding from Church meetings all who were not firm in the faith. Others opposed this idea, citing the Book of Mormon passage in which the Lord commands the Church to 'not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together' for sacrament or confirmation meetings (3 Ne. 18:22). Both positions seemed justified." (Harper, 159)

Some Christian denominations sought and received *manifestations of 'the spirit' that were rather questionable* and that sometimes led to bizarre or shocking behavior. Some Kirtland Saints had been particularly prone to the influence of these counterfeit spirits and their 'gifts.' (Robinson, 72)

Spiritual gifts lost and restored

Spiritual gifts in New Testament. **Apostasy** → Loss of spiritual gifts by AD 200. "The church was no longer a place where the Spirit of prophecy could be heard. More and more people were joining the churches, but the distinction between church and world was fading. The church was becoming secularized; it was coming to terms with heathen thought and culture and philosophy" (Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, 64–65; quoted in McC, 360)

A Methodist preacher told Joseph Smith "there were no such things as visions or revelations in these days; that all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there would never be any more of them" (JS—H 1:21).

"For it shall come to pass in that day that the churches which are built up, and not unto the Lord, ... shall contend one with another;

... and they shall teach with their learning, and *deny the Holy Ghost*. ... and they say unto the people: ... behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men; ... if they shall say there is a miracle wrought by the hand of the Lord, believe it not; for this day *he is not a God of miracles; he hath done his work*. Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us. (2 Ne. 28:3–7)

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)

Public meetings usually held in town meeting places.

Sacrament and confirmation (after baptism) meetings usually held in homes since no church meeting houses.

3. Conduct all meetings as guided by the Holy Spirit

² *Notwithstanding 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*. ... 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*, 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)

Early Catholic church → kill dissenters, ...

"All inspiration does not come from God. The evil one has the power to tap into those channels of revelation and send conflicting signals which can mislead and confuse us. There are promptings from evil sources which are so carefully counterfeited as to deceive even the very elect. (See [Matt. 24:24](#).)" (Boyd K. Packer, "Revelation in a Changing World," *Ensign*, Nov 1989, 14)

4. For what purpose are gifts of spirit given?

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; ⁹ For ... *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*. ¹² To some is given one, and to some is given another, *that all may be profited thereby*.

- To help us avoid being deceived
- To strengthen and bless us individually

Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught that gifts of the Spirit "can lead us to God. They can shield us from the power of the adversary. They can compensate for our inadequacies and repair our imperfections" ("Spiritual Gifts," *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 72).

- To help us serve others

Elder Orson Pratt: "Spiritual gifts are distributed among the members of the Church, according to their faithfulness, circumstances, natural abilities, duties, and callings; that the whole may be properly instructed, confirmed, perfected, and saved" (*Masterful Discourses and Writings of Orson Pratt*, 571).

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.

³ Ne. 12:2
"blessed are ye if ye shall believe in me and be baptized, after that ye have seen me and know that I am. ² And again, more blessed are they who shall believe in your words because that ye shall testify that ye have seen me, and that ye know that I am." (3 Nephi 12:1 - 2)

Saber, conocer

(1 Cor. 12:3) no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

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 for the Articles of Faith*, 492-99)

See Elder Packer quotes at end of lesson 2 handout.

Elder Packer: "I am asked occasionally... "Have you seen Him?" That is a question that I have never asked of another. I have not asked that question of my Brethren in the Council of the Twelve, thinking that it would be so sacred and so personal that one would have to have some special inspiration—indeed, some authorization—even to ask it. Though I have not asked that question of others, I have heard them answer it—but *not* when they were asked. I have heard one of my Brethren declare, 'I know, from experiences too sacred to relate, that Jesus is the Christ.' I have heard another testify, 'I know that God lives, I know that the Lord lives, and more than that, I know the Lord.' I repeat: they have answered this question not when they were asked, but under the prompting of the Spirit, on sacred occasions, when 'the Spirit beareth record.' (D&C 1:39.)" ("The Spirit Beareth Record," *Ensign*, June 1971, 87)

Elder Packer: "I was on Ie Shima, a tiny ... island off the northwest coast of Okinawa. ... One calm, clear, moonlit night I sat alone on a cliff, high above the beach. ... I had a burning witness of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. I had some knowledge of the scriptures from ... months of study. ... It has been 59 years. ... I do not know now any more surely that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, ... than I did as a soldier boy, sitting on the cliff. ... There is one difference. Now, I know the Lord. I bear witness of Him and invoke His blessings upon you." (*Boyd K. Packer: A Watchman on the Tower*, 59-60, 279)

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.

NIV "There are different kinds of service"

GR → different kinds of ministries or differences in ways of serving.

A variety of services must be rendered in house of Lord. (McC)

SOED administer dispensed, steward, ???

(Moroni 10:8) deny not the gifts of God, for they are many; and they come from the same God. And there are different ways that these gifts are administered; [dispensed]

Administer: sacrament, baptism, oaths, to poor, gospel, washing of feet, the word, in temporal/spiritual things, outward ordinances, blessings, law. [SOED act as a steward]

{Harper} Different ways gifts may be used in different circumstances.

Ridges: gift of leadership, including understanding and skillfully using the various organizations within the Church to save souls.

Elder McConkie said this gift is "used in administering and regulating the church. ... All of the gifts of the Spirit must be dispensed in an orderly way, according to the needs and conditions of the moment." (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, 278).

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.

NIV "There are different kinds of working"

GR → differences in activities or the different kinds of things that go on.

(McC) Many tasks and many ways they can be done.

Different ways gifts are manifest.

8. Word of wisdom and word of knowledge

¹⁷To some is given, by the Spirit of God, the *word of wisdom*. ¹⁸

To 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)

Words of wisdom from mothers

"Stand up straight."

"Always eat your vegetables."

"Don't forget to wear clean underwear in case you get in an accident."

"Stop, look, and listen."

"If you can't say something nice, say nothing."

Solomon: God appeared unto Solomon, and said, Ask what I shall give thee. ⁸ And Solomon said ... ¹⁰ Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, *that is so great?*

¹¹ And God said to Solomon, Because ... [thou] hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people: ... ¹² Wisdom and knowledge *is* granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that *have been* before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like. (2 Chronicles 1:7 - 12)

(1 Kings 4:29 - 34) ³⁰ And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country. ... ³² And he spake *three thousand proverbs*: and his songs were a thousand and five. ... ³⁴ And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

9. To heal and to be healed

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

(1 Cor. 12:9) To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

(Moroni 10:11) to another, exceedingly great faith; and to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

“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.” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball*, 82)

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)

(2 Kings 5:9–14) Naaman, a leper, came to Elisha to be healed. Elisha sent messenger to say “go and wash in [river] Jordan seven times, ... and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, ... and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³ And his servants ... said, ... if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? ¹⁴ Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: ... and he was clean.

After Haun’s Mill massacre, Amanda Smith ... was overjoyed to find another son, little Alma, still alive though severely wounded. His hip had been blown away by a musket blast. With most of the men dead or wounded, Amanda knelt down and pleaded with the Lord for help: “Oh my Heavenly Father, I cried, what shall I do? ...” She said that she “was directed as by a voice,” instructing her to make a lye from the ashes and cleanse the wound. She then prepared a slippery elm poultice and filled the wound with it. The next day she poured the contents of a bottle of balsam into the wound. ... “Then I laid him comfortably on his face, and said: ‘Now you lay like that, and don’t move, and the Lord will make you another hip.’” “So Alma laid on his face for five weeks, until he was entirely recovered—a flexible gristle having grown in place of the missing joint and socket.”

(Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, May 2003, 7)

One of mine was shared with a stake patriarch from southern Utah. I first met him in my medical office more than 40 years ago, during the early pioneering days of surgery of the heart. This saintly soul suffered much because of a failing heart. He pleaded for help, thinking that his condition resulted from a damaged but repairable valve in his heart.

Extensive evaluation revealed that he had *two* faulty valves. While one could be helped surgically, the other could not. Thus, an operation was *not* advised. He received this news with deep disappointment.

Subsequent visits ended with the same advice. Finally, in desperation, he spoke to me with considerable emotion: “Dr. Nelson, *I have prayed for help and have been directed to you. The Lord will not reveal to me how to repair that second valve, but He can reveal it to you. Your mind is so prepared.*

If you will operate upon me, the Lord will make it known to you what to do. Please perform the operation that I need, and pray for the help that you need.”

His great faith had a profound effect upon me. How could I turn him away again? Following a fervent prayer together, I agreed to try. In preparing for that fateful day, I prayed over and over again, but still did not know what to do for his leaking tricuspid valve. Even as the operation commenced, my assistant asked, “What are you going to do for that?”

I said, “I do not know.”

We began the operation. After relieving the obstruction of the first valve, ²³ we exposed the second valve. We found it to be intact but so badly dilated that it could no longer function as it should. *While examining this valve, a message was distinctly impressed upon my mind: Reduce the circumference of the ring.* I announced that message to my assistant. “The valve tissue will be sufficient if we can effectively reduce the ring toward its normal size.”

But how? We could not apply a belt as one would use to tighten the waist of oversized trousers. We could not squeeze with a strap as one would cinch a saddle on a horse. *Then a picture came vividly to my mind, showing how stitches could be placed—to make a pleat here and a tuck there—to accomplish the desired objective. I still remember that mental image—complete with dotted lines where sutures should be placed. The repair was completed as diagrammed in my mind. We tested the valve and found the leak to be reduced remarkably.* My assistant said, “It’s a miracle.”

I responded, “It’s an answer to prayer.”

The patient’s recovery was rapid and his relief gratifying. *Not only was he helped in a marvelous way, but surgical help for other people with similar problems had become a possibility.*

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)

E. Packer’s blessing to E. McConkie

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)

In the early 1800s herbs were commonly used by physicians. Being ill and unable to raise his head from his pillow, Joseph Smith wrote, “I continued to get worse and worse until my sufferings were excruciating, and ... I found it expedient to call to my assistance those means which a kind Providence had provided for the restoration of the sick, in connection with the ordinances; and Dr. Levi Richards, at my request, administered to me herbs and mild food, and nursed me with all tenderness and attention; and my heavenly Father blessed his administrations to the easing and comforting of my system, for I began to amend in a short time, and in a few days I was able to resume my usual labors.” (HC 2:493, 1837)

- 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; in McC, 310–311)
- “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 (*Heart to Heart*)

- Elder Kimball set apart Elder Nelson as a stake president. Mortality rates were about 21%. “In the blessing that he pronounced upon my head that day, he specifically blessed me that our mortality rates with aortic valve surgery in particular would be reduced, and that no longer would the procedure be the drain on my time and energy that it had been in the past. The following year, the time demands of the operation *did* decrease, and I’ve had the time necessary to serve in that and other callings. In fact, our mortality rates went down to less than 5% where they are today—at a very low and acceptable, tolerable range. Interestingly enough, that’s the very operation I did for President Kimball eight years later.”

- Elder Nelson operated on Elder Kimball eight years later.

That summer of 1971 SWK attended an area conference in Manchester, England. ... Subsequent tests showed a deteriorating aortic valve and a dangerous obstruction in one of his arteries. As Dr. Nelson explained it, “The risks of an aortic valve replacement alone in a man aged seventy-seven are high. The risks of a coronary graft operation alone in a man of that age are high. To combine them would compound enormously the risk of either one alone.” Surgery was therefore very risky; but on the other hand, the chances for spontaneous recovery without surgery were considered nil.

A special meeting with the First Presidency was called. A weary Elder Kimball, faced with these seemingly insurmountable problems, said, “I’m an old man and ready to die. It is well for a younger man to come to the Quorum and do the work I can no longer do.”

Then President Lee rose and in a firm voice declared, “Spencer, you have been called! You are not to die! You are to do everything that you need to do to care for yourself and continue to live.”

Elder Kimball said, “Then I will have the operation performed.”

At that point Dr. Nelson’s heart sank, for the weight of responsibility then seemed to pass to his shoulders. However, on the eve of the operation, he received a blessing under the hands of President Lee and President Tanner. “I was promised that the operation would be performed without error, that all would go well, and that I need not fear for my own inadequacies, for I had been raised up by the Lord to perform this operation.”

The operation was performed on 12 April 1972. It was flawless—thousands of intricate manipulations performed without error, according to the blessing he had received. Even more special to Dr. Nelson was an overpowering feeling that came upon him at the conclusion of the operation: “The Spirit

told me that I had just operated on a man who would become president of the Church,” he said.

- Elder Nelson gave priesthood blessings to Elder Kimball. (1) To SWK before surgery then SWK told him to make blessing come true. (2) To SWK before tests revealed diagnosis. “I felt the power of the Lord surge through me, prompting me to pronounce a blessing on his prophet that now was not the time for his life to be terminated. ... He would recover fully and be able to resume his duties of presiding over the church ... He would recover even before the diagnosis was made and would not miss a single appointment of significance. ... I was most shocked and amazed of all, for I knew that the words which had been pronounced were not products of my own thinking.” (*Heart to Heart*, 184–185)

- Elder Nelson and Paul Dunn

E. Nelson prompted to return home from conference early. Arrived in tome to operate on Paul Dunn.

- *E. Nelson: Gave blessing to man when surgery not possible.
- *E. Packer: No one has touched me more deeply.
- *Pres. Hinckley: Russell can I have a piece of chocolate cake?

Elder Nelson: In 1978 at a resort hotel in Mexico, one of the doctors in our graduating class “became gravely ill with massive bleeding into his stomach. ... We helplessly realized that we were in a resort hotel in a remote fishing village. There was no hospital. ... All the combined knowledge and concern there could not be converted into action to help our friend. ... He asked for a blessing. ... I was asked to seal the anointing. The Spirit dictated that he be blessed that the bleeding would stop, that he could continue to live and return to his home and his family. ... The following morning, he was better. The bleeding had stopped.” (*Heart to Heart*, 294–295)

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, “Four Lessons, One Life”)

EASIER to get one to take a pill than change lifestyle

Picking scabs, **Christy Rae:** had blessings but did not do

Will of the Lord:

- President Harold B. Lee’s blessing to Delores Knighton
Delores Knighton: Not long after birth, Delores got encephalitis which left her crippled and unable to use an voluntary muscles. “For many years after her birth, Delores and all of us in the family believed that the day would come when she would be healed through faith and the assistance of good doctors. We often fasted and prayed as a family for her health, and on several occasions she received special blessings, usually from her worthy father. At the time of her baptism, we all hoped that she would be healed; ... but it was not the will of the Lord. One time when she was a little older, she was given a special blessing ... [by] President Harold B. Lee. ... As the blessing was concluded without a promise of a restoration of her health, President Lee comforted our dear parents with the message that it was not the will of the Lord

that she be healed, though her faith and that of her family and friends was strong and worthy of it. He said that her mission here on earth could not be fulfilled as she was foreordained to fill it if she were healed.”

Healing of spirits and hearts

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

Healing spirit → forgiving (get poison out).

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 O my son, 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.” (Alma 37:40–46)

Healing, *converted Ammonites*,

Reduce contention, avoid accident solve problems, improve

Elder Nelson: Heart/Lung machine

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

“Dan Jones, a Welsh convert, joined the Prophet in the Carthage Jail. On 26 June 1844, the last night of his life, Joseph heard a gun fire, left the bed, and lay on the floor near Jones. The Prophet whispered, “Are you afraid to die?” “Engaged in such a cause I do not think that death would have many terrors,” Jones replied. “You will yet see Wales and fulfill the mission appointed you before you die,” Joseph prophesied. Thousands of faithful Latter-day Saints enjoy the blessings of the Church today because Dan Jones later served an honorable and successful mission to Wales.” (*Our Heritage*, 63)

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

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

JS: “A man must have the discerning of spirits before he can drag into daylight this hellish influence ...; for nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit when they think they have the Spirit of God” (TPJS, 205).

A way that seemeth right but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Prov)

(7:12–19) How to judge/know good from evil?

Every good gift → invites and entices to believe in Christ

OED Discern, v.

†1. *trans.* To separate (things, or one thing *from* another) as distinct; to distinguish and divide.

2. To recognize as distinct; to distinguish or separate mentally (one thing *from* another); *to perceive the difference between* (things). *arch.*

3. *intr.* To perceive or recognize the difference or distinction; to make a distinction; to distinguish or discriminate *between*. *arch.*

4. *trans.* To distinguish (one thing or fact) by the intellect; to recognize or perceive distinctly. (With simple obj., or clause expressing a proposition.)

c. *intr.* To have cognizance, to judge *of*.

5. *trans.* *To distinguish (an object) with the eyes*; to see or perceive by express effort of the powers of vision; to ‘make out’ by looking, descry, behold.

c. *trans.* To distinguish or perceive distinctly by other senses. *rare.*

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 (served as a counselor to President David O. McKay): “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, *Ensign*, Dec. 2006)

Missionary cults: leaders, score based on rules broken

Satan can try to deceive people with counterfeit spiritual gifts. Concerned about some false manifestations of these gifts among Church members, Joseph inquired of the Lord and received D&C 50.

Review D&C 50:17–24. If a gift is of God, it will be edifying and cause us to rejoice. It will lead us to do good, to love and serve God, and to believe in Christ. If a spiritual manifestation does not edify, or if it leads us to sin, it is not of God. The subject of avoiding deception and evil influences will be discussed in greater detail in lesson 24.

13. Speaking with and interpretation of tongues

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

(Moroni 10:15 - 16) to another, all kinds of tongues; And again, to another, the interpretation of languages and of divers kinds of tongues.

During NT and BoM times speaking was the primary way to communicate one’s thoughts to others. No bookstores or movies. → communicate with others; Interpret scriptures and words of others

Language of spouse, teens. Elona: I assume you mean ...

Husband cleaned house, breakfast in bed, brought flowers to depressed wife. She asked for divorce because he must be having an affair.

(2 Nephi 31:3) The Lord God ... speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding.

(D&C 90:11) every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language

JFS: "There is perhaps no gift of the spirit of God more easily imitated by the devil than the gift of tongues. ... I believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit unto men, but I do not want the gifts of tongues, except when I need it. ... If the Lord will give me ability to teach the people in my native tongue, or in their own language to the understanding of those who hear me, that will be sufficient gift of tongues to me." (Joseph F. Smith, CR, Apr. 1900, 41).

JS: "Do not speak in tongues except there be an interpreter present; the ultimate design of tongues is to speak to foreigners." (JS, HC 5:31–32)

14. To whom are they given?

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

(1 Cor. 12:11) all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

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

Boyd K. Packer: "I have thought that the last phrase, 'every man severally, according as he will,' [Moro. 10:17] refers to the man himself. If a man wills that the gift should come to him, and he desires it, the gift shall be his." (*Teach Ye Diligently*, 20)

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.

Which are the best gifts that I should seek?

- The ones you need to serve now in family, church, work.
- The ones listed in section 46
- Those more spiritually useful to salvation; **more Christlike**
- If I have not *charity*, I am nothing. (1 Cor. 13:2)

How do we seek the gifts of the spirit?

- a. D&C 46:7, 30. (Ask God and follow the Spirit's guidance)
- b. D&C 46:9. (Seek gifts for the benefit of others, not for self) ACCEPT callings to serve. E. Nelson → stake president.
- c. D&C 46:31. (Do all things in the name of Christ.)
- d. D&C 46:32. (Thank God for the gifts He has given us.)
- e. D&C 46:33. (Practice virtue and holiness continually.)

Gifts are skills that require practice to improve.

How are gifts given?

Gifts often come wrapped as problems or callings that take a long time to open. Gift of tongues takes missionaries time and practice to develop. **Tom's eyes**

Sis. Missionary crying because she could not speak French fluently after three days. Some gifts take time to open/receive.

Elder Randall Ellsworth: injured in Patzicia during earthquake. Four months before returning with 2 canes. (see last page)

Praying for gift of healing without someone being sick → praying for someone to get sick. Praying for faith to be healed without being sick → praying to get sick.

How did E. Nelson develop gift to heal. Followed promptings.

"When I started medical school, we were taught that one must not touch the heart, for if one did, it would stop beating. Yet the 88th section of the Doctrine and Covenants tells us that "all kingdoms have a law given" (D&C 88:36). Therefore I knew that even the blessing of the heartbeat was predicated upon law and reasoned that, if those laws could be understood and controlled, then perhaps they could be utilized for the blessing of the sick. To me this meant that, if we would work, study, and ask the proper questions in our scientific experiments, we could learn the laws which govern the blessing of the heartbeat." (Four Lessons)

Time and circumstances required

JS: "All the gifts of the Spirit are not visible to the natural vision, or understanding of man; indeed very few of them are. ... Suppose a man had the gift of healing or power to work miracles; ... it would *require time and circumstances to call these gifts into operation*."

- **Elder Nelson's mental image**
- **Pres. McKay (1873–1970):** "Somehow in my youth I got the idea that we could not get a testimony unless we had some manifestation. ... I prayed fervently and sincerely and with as much faith as a young boy could muster. ... The Lord did not see fit to give me an answer on that occasion, but in 1899 [age 26], after I had been appointed president of the Scottish Conference, the spiritual manifestation for which I had prayed as a boy in my teens came as a natural sequence to the performance of duty" (Clare Middlemiss, comp., *Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay* 1976, 6–7)

What comes EASY is not appreciated.

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 for the Articles of Faith*, 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)

17. Conclusion

Promptings are the gifts of the spirit. (one time?)

Learn by our own experience to discern good and evil.

Good judgment comes from experience ... but experience comes from bad judgment.

God gives us weakness or mortal limitations that we might be humble. He commands us to receive his spirit who will help us deal with mortal challenges. When he brings things to our remembrance, shows us how to do something, or prompts us, these are daily gifts of the spirit. Small means.

(46:7) *that which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do*

Thomas S. Monson, "Which Road Will You Travel?," *Ensign*, Nov 1976, 51

One who listened and who followed was the Mormon missionary Randall Ellsworth, about whom you may have read in your daily newspaper or watched on the television set in your home.

Six months ago, while serving in Guatemala as a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Randall Ellsworth survived the devastating earthquake which *hurled a beam down on his back, paralyzed his legs, and severely damaged his kidneys*.

After receiving emergency medical treatment, Randall was flown to a large hospital near his home in Rockville, Maryland. While confined there, a television newscaster conducted with Randall an interview which I witnessed through the miracle of television. The reporter asked, "Can you walk?" The answer, "Not yet, but I will." "Do you think you will be able to complete your mission?" Came the reply, "Others think not, but I will."

With microphone in hand, the reporter continued: "I understand you have received a special letter containing a get-well message from none other than the president of the United States." "Yes," replied Randall, "I am very grateful to President Ford for his thoughtfulness; but I received another letter, not from the president of my country, but from the president of my church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—even President Spencer W. Kimball. This I cherish. With him praying for me, and the prayers of my family, my friends, and my missionary companions, I will return to Guatemala. The Lord wanted me to preach the gospel there for two years, and that's what I intend to do."

I turned to my wife and commented, "He surely must not know the extent of his injuries. Our official medical reports would not permit us to expect such a return to Guatemala."

How grateful am I that the day of faith and the age of miracles are not past history but continue with us even now.

The newspapers and the television cameras directed their attention to more immediate news as the days turned to weeks and the weeks to months. ...

And God did not forget him who possessed an humble and a contrite heart, even Elder Randall Ellsworth. Little by little the feeling in his legs began to return. In his own words, Randall described the recovery: "The thing I did was always to keep busy, always pushing myself. In the hospital I asked to do therapy twice a day instead of just once. I wanted to walk again on my own."

When the Missionary Committee evaluated the amazing medical progress Randall Ellsworth had made, word was sent to him that his return to Guatemala was authorized. Said he, "At first I was so happy I didn't know what to do. Then I went into my bedroom and I started to cry. Then I dropped to my knees and thanked my Heavenly Father."

Two months ago Randall Ellsworth walked aboard the plane that carried him back to the mission to which he was called and back to the people whom he loved. Behind he left a trail of skeptics, a host of doubters, but also hundreds amazed at the power of God, the miracle of faith, and the reward of determination.

Thomas S. Monson, "Courage Counts," *Ensign*, Nov 1986, 40

On his return to Guatemala, Randall Ellsworth supported himself with the help of two canes. His walk was slow and deliberate.

Then one day, as he stood before his mission president, Elder Ellsworth heard these almost unbelievable words spoken: "You have been the recipient of a miracle," said the mission president. "Your faith has been rewarded. If you have the necessary confidence, if you have abiding faith, if you have supreme courage, place those two canes on my desk and walk."

After a long pause, first one cane and then the other was placed on the desk, and a missionary walked. It was halting, it was painful—but he walked, never again to need the canes.

This spring I thought once more of the courage demonstrated by Randall Ellsworth. Years had passed since his ordeal. He was now a husband and a father. An engraved announcement arrived at my office. It read: "The President and Directors of Georgetown University announce commencement exercises of Georgetown University School of Medicine." Randall Ellsworth received his Doctor of Medicine degree. More effort, more study, more faith, more sacrifice, more courage had been required. The price was paid, the victory won.

"No matter who believeth, these signs, such as healing the sick, casting out devils, etc. should follow all that believe, whether male or female. ... If the sisters should have the faith to heal the sick, let all hold their tongues, and let everything roll on. ... If God gave His sanction by healing; that there could be no more sin in any female laying hands on and praying for the sick, than in wetting the face with water; it is no sin for anybody to administer that has faith, or if the sick have faith to be healed by their administration." (TPJS, 224–225, 229)

John ... [said], Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, ... and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.³⁹

But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.⁴⁰

For he that is not against us is on our part. (Mark 9:38–40)