

“Prayer Mapping” For Mighty Prayer  
Volume 2

# *Spiritual Gifts*



**Question:** *"What doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift?"*

**Answer:** *"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)

*By David John Potter*

©2019 DLP Enterprises, LLC

Version 4.0

# “Prayer Mapping” For Mighty Prayer

## Volume 2

# *Spiritual Gifts*

## Table of Contents

• INTRODUCTION	3
• SPIRITUAL GIFTS	4
• PRAYER MAPPING AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS	15
• CONCLUSION	33
• APPENDIX: TALKS	34
○ “Spiritual Gifts” - Elder Bruce R. McConkie	
○ “There are Many Gifts” – Elder Marvin j. Ashton	
○ “Gifts of the Spirit” – Elder Robert D. Hales	
○ “To Be Healed” – Elder Richard G. Scott	
○ “Spiritual Gifts” – Elder Mervyn B. Arnold	
○ “Gifts and Talents” – Elder Henry D. Taylor	
○ “How to Discover Your Gifts” – Sister Justina Lichner	

# *Introduction*

In 2017 I was impressed to write my first book about my thoughts and ideas about **“Mighty Prayer”** and **“Prayer Mapping”**. This has touched many lives. Since that time, additional insights and concepts have come to me concerning the importance of **“Spiritual Gifts”**. This second book applies the **“Prayer Mapping”** and **“Mighty Prayer”** concepts to assist others in seeking after and praying for the **“Spiritual Gifts”** the Lord has already given us and those gifts he will make available to us.

This second book initially reviews and discusses the various important concepts about the **Gifts of the Spirit**. It will then how to apply **“Prayer Mapping”** techniques to this subject.

Specific examples will show how one can immediately begin incorporating the **“Gifts of the Spirit”** into their lives. Knowing how to acquire and utilize these **“Gifts”** will result in one being able to change for the better in their life and the lives of those they love.

At the end of the book, I have included several very special talks concerning the **“Gifts of the Spirit”** which will provide additional in depth understanding of this topic. These are located in the Appendix

I pray that your heart will be touched by these concepts and that you will feel inspired to draw closer to the Lord and allow Him to lead, guide, and bless you with the special Gifts that he has reserved for you.

Regards,

*Dave Potter*

# *Spiritual Gifts*

## **What are Spiritual Gifts**

“**Spiritual Gifts**” are blessings or abilities given by God to His children through the power of the Holy Ghost. Gifts of the Spirit are given to bless and benefit those who love the Lord and seek to keep His commandments. (see D&C 46:9).

Each faithful member of the Church **has at least one spiritual gift**, and the Lord encourages His children to

“seek ... earnestly the best gifts,  
**always remembering for what they are given**”  
D&C 46:8

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Spiritual Gifts are Given to Bless Others**

The Apostle Paul in the New Testament taught:

“Now concerning **spiritual [gifts]**, brethren, **I would not have you ignorant ...** Wherefore I give you to understand ... [that] no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Now there are **diversities of gifts**,  
but the same Spirit.  
And there are **differences of administrations**,  
but the same Lord.  
And there are **diversities of operations**,  
but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

**But the manifestation of the Spirit  
is given to every man to profit withal.**

For to one is given by the Spirit **the word of wisdom**;  
to another the **word of knowledge** by the same Spirit;  
to another **faith** by the same Spirit;  
to another the **gifts of healing** by the same Spirit;  
to another **the working of miracles**;  
to another **prophecy**;  
to another **discerning of spirits**;  
to another **[divers] kinds of tongues**;  
to another **the interpretation of tongues**:... “

1 Corinthians Chapter 12

\*\*\*\*\*

## “Deny Not the Gifts of God”

The ancient American prophet, Moroni, taught:

“And again, I exhort you, my brethren, **that ye 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; but it is the same God who worketh all in all; and they are given by the manifestations of the Spirit of God unto men, **to profit them.**”

Moroni 10:8-18

Moroni also spoke about the dependencies of one Gift upon another. In Moroni 7:40-48 he teaches us about the relationships between **meekness, lowliness of heart, hope, faith, and charity**. Also note all the requirements associated with having **Charity** and that all the other gifts are contingent on having **Charity**. He also pleads with us to “**pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart**” in order to have these gifts and blessings.

“And again, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you concerning **hope**.  
How is it that ye can attain unto **faith**,  
save ye shall have **hope**?  
And what is it that ye shall hope for?

Behold I say unto you  
that ye shall have **hope**  
through the **atonement of Christ** and the **power of his resurrection**,  
**to be raised unto life eternal**,  
and this because of your **faith** in him according to the promise.

Wherefore,  
if a man have **faith**  
he must needs have **hope**;  
for without **faith**  
there cannot be any **hope**.

And again, behold I say unto you  
that he cannot have **faith** and **hope**,  
save he shall be **meek**, and **lowly of heart**.

If so, his **faith** and **hope** is vain,  
for none is acceptable before God,  
save the **meek** and **lowly in heart**;  
and if a man be **meek** and **lowly in heart**,  
and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ,  
he must needs have **charity**;  
for if he have not **charity**  
he is nothing;

wherefore  
he must needs have **charity**.

And **charity** suffereth long,  
and is kind,  
and envieth not,  
and is not puffed up,  
seeketh not her own,  
is not easily provoked,  
thinketh no evil,  
and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth,  
beareth all things,  
believeth all things,  
hopeth all things,  
endureth all things.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not **charity**,  
ye are nothing,  
for **charity** never faileth.

Wherefore,  
cleave unto **charity**,  
which is **the greatest of all**,  
for all things must fail—

But **charity is the pure love of Christ**,  
and it endureth forever;  
and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day,  
it shall be well with him.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren,  
**pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart,**  
**that** ye may be filled with this love,  
which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ;  
**that** ye may become the sons of God;  
**that** when he shall appear we shall be like him,  
for we shall see him as he is;  
**that** we may have this **hope**;  
**that** we may be purified even as he is pure.  
Amen.”

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **ADDITIONAL SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

**Elder Marvin J. Ashton** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1915–94) pointed out some less conspicuous but very important gifts (see his talk in the Appendix):

- “the gift of asking;
- the gift of listening;

- the gift of hearing and using a still, small voice;
- the gift of being able to weep;
- the gift of avoiding contention;
- the gift of being agreeable;
- the gift of avoiding vain repetition;
- 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.”

\*\*\*\*\*

### How do we obtain these Spiritual Gifts ?

In the Doctrine & Covenants Student Manual it teaches:

***“He That Asketh in Spirit Shall Receive in Spirit”*** D&C 46:28 – 33

The gifts of the Spirit are available **to all who will pay the price**, which includes

- **entering into a covenant relationship** with the Lord,
- **obeying the commandments**, and
- **seeking perfection** with all one’s heart.

The gifts will be the greatest **to those who seek most earnestly**, but they are **available to all**:

to the missionary who needs help in learning a foreign language,  
to the man whose temper frequently gets the best of him,  
to the couple who seek help in rearing their children.

**President George Q. Cannon** wrote:

- “How many of you. . .are **seeking for these gifts** that God has promised to bestow?
- How many of you, when you bow before your Heavenly Father in your family circle or in your secret places **contend for these gifts** to be bestowed upon you?
- How many of you ask the Father, in the name of Jesus, **to manifest Himself** to you through these powers and these gifts? Or do you go along day by day like a door turning on its hinges, without having any feeling upon the subject, without exercising any faith whatever; content to be baptized and be members of the Church, and to rest there, thinking that your salvation is secure because you have done this? . . .

If any of us are imperfect, **it is our . . .duty to pray to God to give [us] the gifts** that will

correct these imperfections. . . 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. . . **He gives these gifts, and bestows them upon those who seek after them**, in order that they may be a perfect people upon the face of the earth, notwithstanding their many weaknesses, because **God has promised to give the gifts that are necessary for their perfection.**” (In Millennial Star, Apr. 1894, pp. 260-61; also in D&C Student Manual pp. 101-102)

**Elder Mervyn Arnold** of the Seventy taught (see his talk in the Appendix):

“We are taught that in order to receive any spiritual gift, **we must be worthy of it.** The Lord has said that spiritual gifts

**“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”** (D&C 46:9).

When we seek to obtain a spiritual gift, **we can study the examples and teachings of the Savior that pertain to that particular gift** and then try to incorporate those teachings into our life.

## **Blessings from the Lord and Binding the Lord**

In April 1829, the Lord told Oliver Cowdery:

**“Verily, verily, I say unto thee,  
blessed are thou for what thou hast done;  
for thou hast inquired of me,  
and behold  
as often as thou hast inquired  
thou hast received instruction of my Spirit ....”** (D&C 6:14)

The Lord told his disciples:

**“Blessed are they  
which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:  
for they shall be filled.”** (Matthew 6:6)

As we seek after any of the Spiritual Gifts, we need to understand that **“all blessings”** are predicated by obedience to certain laws. When we are obedient to those laws then the Lord is **“bound”** to bless us.

In **D&C 130:18-19** Joseph Smith teaches:

**“There is a law,  
irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world,  
upon which all blessings are predicated—**



**And when we obtain any blessing from God,  
it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.**

In **D&C 82:10**, the Lord states:

***“I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say;  
but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.”***

Thus, when we are seeking the Lord’s help in obtaining any one of these Spiritual Gifts, **if we are obedient to the law(s) which is predicated on, THEN, the Lord is BOUND to bless us.**

## **Why is it important to use these Spiritual Gifts to Bless Others?**

The Lord asks the question,

***“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)***

In the **Parable of the Talents** in **Matthew Chapter 25**, the Lord teaches the importance of using the talents (gifts) that are given to us. Even though to some more gifts are initially given ... the Lord expects each of us to use the gifts we are given or else they will be taken away from us.

***“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.***

***And unto one he gave **five talents**, to another **two**, and to another **one**; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.***

***Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.***

***After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying,***

***“Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents:  
behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.”***

His lord said unto him,

***‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant:  
thou hast been faithful over a few things,  
I will make thee ruler over many things:  
enter thou into the joy of thy lord.’***

He also that had received two talents came and said,  
*“Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents:  
behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.”*

His lord said unto him,  
*“Well done, good and faithful servant;  
thou hast been faithful over a few things,  
I will make thee ruler over many things:  
enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”*

Then he which had received the one talent came and said,  
*“Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man,  
reaping where thou hast not sown,  
and gathering where thou hast not strawed:  
And I was afraid,  
and went and hid thy talent in the earth:  
lo, there thou hast that is thine.”*

His lord answered and said unto him,  
*“Thou wicked and slothful servant,  
thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not,  
and gather where I have not strawed:  
Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers,  
and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.*

*Take therefore the talent from him,  
and give it unto him which hath ten talents.*

*For unto every one that hath shall be given,  
and he shall have abundance:  
but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.*

*And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness:  
there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

## **Spiritual Gifts are a lot like “Smart Phone Apps”**

I recently visited with a good friend. He shared with me **his analogy** about how Spiritual Gifts are a lot like **“Smart Phone Apps”**. He taught me that some “apps” just come with your phone when you buy it. However other “apps” need to be sought after, purchased, and then downloaded to our phone.

He taught me that some Spiritual Gifts just come with us when we enter this earthly life. They are gifts from God. If we desire additional Spiritual Gifts we need **“to seek earnestly”** for them and then **“download”** them into our lives.

He also taught me that even though an “app” may be on our smart phone, if we don’t learn to use and then actually use it, then it really does us nor others any good. Just like these “apps” **we need “to learn” how to use the Spiritual Gifts we have.**

I indicated to him that one also needs **to learn how to download an “app”**. We may really want a particular “app” on our phone but if we don’t know how to locate it and download it, we will never get it.

As such, **we also first need to learn how to receive Spiritual Gifts**. As mentioned previously, we need to know whatever “laws” are associated with the gift (blessing) and then be obedient to them. We also need “**to keep in remembrance at all times**” what the Spiritual Gifts are and what they are to be used for. We may have a smart phone, but if we are not even aware what “apps” are available then we will never be able to take advantage of them.

## Should we seek after these Spiritual Gifts?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught (see his talk in the Appendix):

### ‘Is it proper to seek for spiritual gifts?’

- Should we plead with the Lord for **the gift of prophecy**, or of **revelation**, or of **tongues**?
- Is it fitting and right to pray for the soul-sanctifying privilege of **seeing the face of the Lord Jesus** while we yet dwell as mortals in a sin-filled world?
- Does the Lord expect us to desire and seek for **spiritual experiences**, or do the divine prophecies call for us simply to love the Lord and keep his commandments, knowing that if and when he deems it proper, he will grant special gifts and privileges to us?

By way of answer, it almost suffices to ask such questions as these:

- Are we not expected to seek **salvation**, the greatest of all the gifts of God?
- Why, then, should we not prepare ourselves for this greatest of all boons by seeking the enjoyment of the lesser ones?
- If we are to **see his face** in that eternal realm where the same sociality that exists among us here, then coupled with eternal glory, shall endure everlastingly, can we go amiss by seeking to establish that sociality here and now?
- Are we not commanded:  
*“Ask and ye shall receive;  
seek and ye shall find;  
knock and it shall be opened?”*
- Why, then, should we **smother a desire to heal the sick or raise the dead or commune with friends** beyond the veil?

Also by way of answer to the queries at hand, we might with propriety reason along this line

- If spiritual gifts are interwoven with and form part of the very gospel of salvation itself can we enjoy the fulness of that gospel without possessing the gifts that are part of it?

- If gifts and miracles shall-inevitably, always, and everlastingly-follow those who believe, **how can we be true believers without them?**
- And if we are to seek the gospel, if we are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, if our whole souls must cry out for the goodness of God and his everlasting association how can we exempt ourselves from **seeking the gifts of the Spirit** that come from and prepare us for his presence?

If such be our thoughts, we are in harmony with the counsel given in the divine word. Paul says: "*Covet earnestly the best gifts*" (1 Corinthians 12:31), "*desire spiritual gifts,*" and be "*zealous of spiritual gifts,*" seeking "*that ye may excel to the edifying of the church*" (1 Corinthians 14:1, 12). Moroni says: "*Lay hold upon every good gift.*" (Moroni 10:30). But the great exhortation to seek for spiritual gifts is found in latter-day revelation.

***"Ye are commanded in all things to ask of God, who giveth liberally,"*** the holy word acclaims. Note the Lord's language: **We are commanded to seek the gifts of the Spirit; if we do not do so, we are not walking in that course which is pleasing to Him whose gifts they are.**

***"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."***

These are the words of the Lord; they summarize the course he desires us to pursue. Why should we ask, and seek, and obey? He answers:

***"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."***

If we do not receive gifts and guidance and doctrine and commandments from on high, we shall of necessity receive them from some other source. Others have guidance to offer, doctrine to teach, and commandments to give.

We must choose what to believe and elect how we shall live.

***"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."***

**Why, for what purpose, and to whom are the gifts given?**

***"Verily I say unto you,***

*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."*

It is inherent in the whole plan of righteousness **that those who seek the gifts of the Spirit do so for their own salvation and for the glory of God**, and not for lustful and selfish and worldly reasons.

*"And again, verily I say unto you,  
I would that ye should always remember,  
and always retain in your minds what those gifts are,  
that are given unto the church." (D&C 46:7-10.)*

Truly all of the Lord's saints should seek him, should seek his Spirit, **should seek his gifts**. Where these gifts are, there is the true and saving gospel, and where they are not, there is no hope of salvation."

Later in his talk, Elder McConkie mentions several of the Spiritual Gifts we should seek after. These include:

1. Faith Precedes the Miracle
2. Gifts Without Number
3. The Gift of Testimony
4. Believing the Lord's Witnesses
5. The Gifts of Administration and Discernment
6. Wisdom and Knowledge
7. The Gift of Faith
8. The Working of Miracles
9. The Gift of Prophecy
10. Beholding Angels and Discerning Spirits
11. The Gift of Tongues and Their Interpretation
12. Revelation and Visions

I encourage you to review his talk in the Appendix. I especially enjoyed his teachings about miracles.

**“Healing and being healed and raising the dead are only the beginning of miracles.**

**Properly gifted persons:**

- control the elements,

- **move mountains,**
- **turn rivers out of their course,**
- **walk on water,**
- **quench the violence of fire,**
- **are carried by the power of the Spirit from one congregation to another,**
- **are translated and taken up into heaven,**
- **or-and this above all-gain for themselves an eternal inheritance in the presence of Him who is Eternal.**

**Miracles are now, have always been, and always will be part and portion of the true gospel of that God who is a God of miracles. They are gifts of the Spirit. (D&C 46:21; Moroni 10:12; 1 Corinthians 12:10.) “**

# Prayer Mapping and Spiritual Gifts

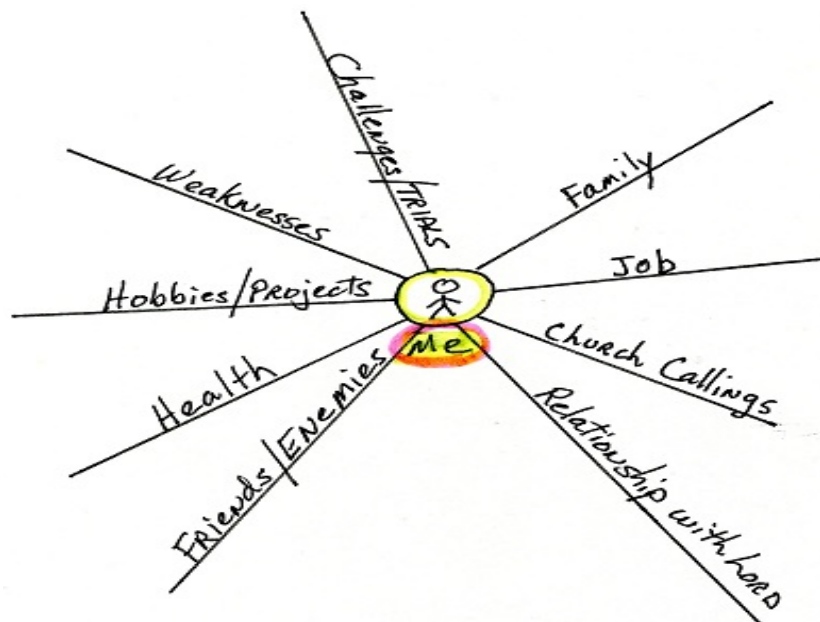
“**Prayer Mapping**” is a term I coined for describing how to visually put on paper the areas of your life in which you wish to pray and receive inspiration about. This concept helped me to identify all the various aspects my life and to begin seeking the Lord’s specific help in each of them. My “Prayer Maps” were initially drawn on 8x11 standard paper ... but now I find that larger paper (11x16) works better.

As I started mapping out the areas of my life, I would then take just one area at a time and make a separate map just for it. After a while, I found that I had made dozens of these maps which really helped me better understand myself. I also found it very helpful to have a special journal in which to record my questions to the Lord that I planned to ask Him for ... and then to record not only the inspirations/instructions I received but the additional follow up questions and answers. The journal comes in handy to refer back to these items and to track how I am doing.

A basic “**Prayer Map**” is very easy to construct. Simply draw a stick figure of yourself in the middle of the page, put a circle around it, and then put lines going out from it which would represent the various major segments of your life. Some of these segments could include:

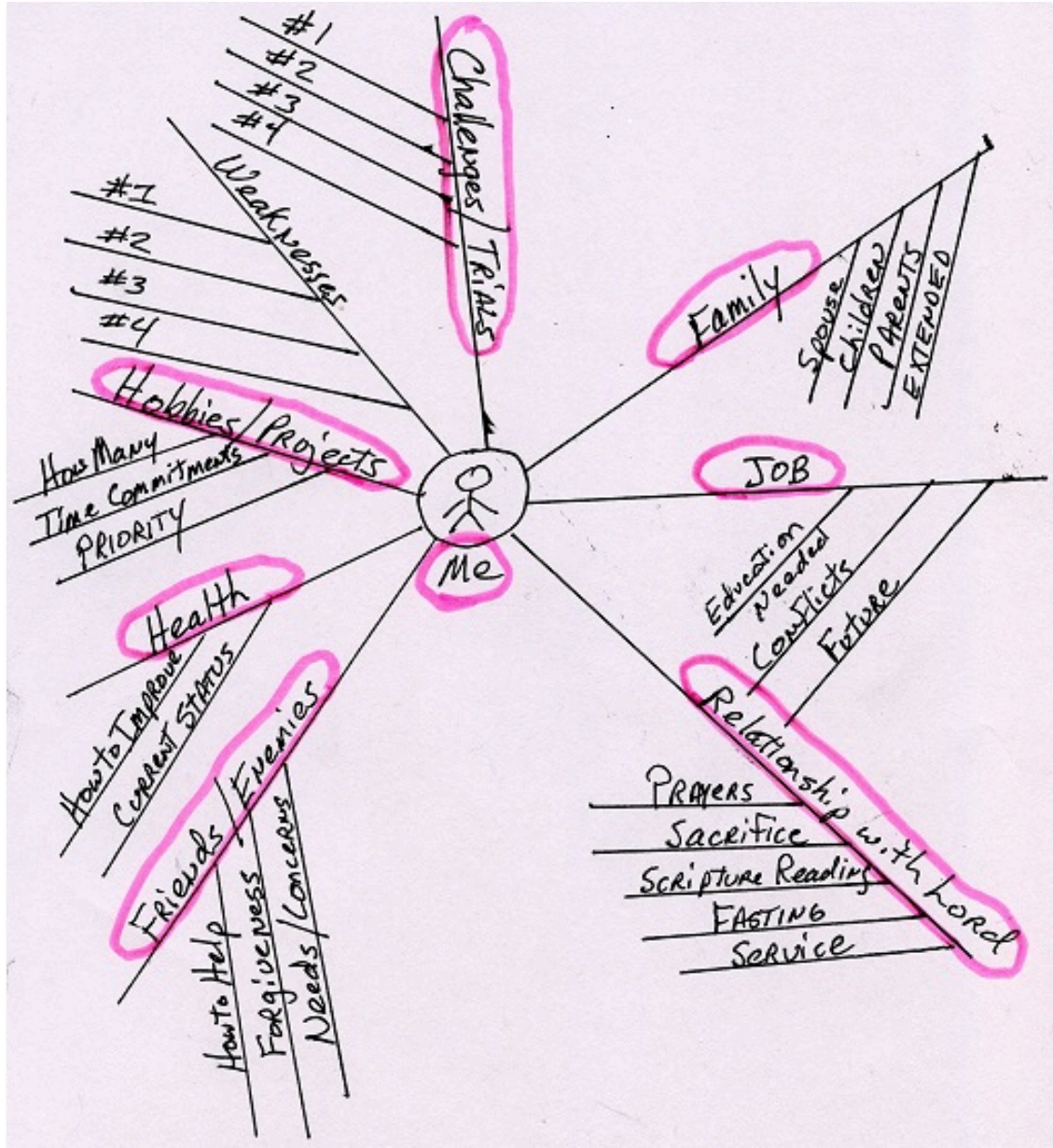
- your family (wife, children, etc.)
- your job at work
- your church callings
- your health
- your hobbies/projects
- your weaknesses
- your challenges/trials
- etc.

Here is an example of a basic “**Master Prayer Map**”.



Now that you have the **basic areas** that you want to focus on, continue to **draw additional lines** out from these lines. For example draw lines from your family for your wife and one for each of your children. For your church callings, draw a line for each one of them. When this is finished, add on additional sublines to those lines.

Below is an example with some additional fields added to each line. Note that the use of color pens really helps to highlight the larger areas. Now by looking at just this one sheet of paper you can see how your whole life can be **'Mapped'** out.





## ADDING QUESTIONS

Now that your initial map is taking shape, begin to create additional maps. Each one of these would have at its center one of the major areas on your initial map. Take just of these maps and in your journal begin to write down a few questions from each of the areas that you would like to ask the Lord about.

Some sample questions might include:

- **your wife:** what can I do to help her out today and make her happy?
- **your children:** which child has need of my special help today and what can I do?
- **your job:** what can I do to be happier at my work?
- **your health:** what do I need to start doing to improve my health?
- **your hobbies:** which of all my hobbies should I do and leave the rest for a while?
- **your weaknesses:** which weakness should I work on this week and how?
- **your challenges/trials:** what is my greatest challenge right now and what can I do to start overcoming it?

With your **'Prayer Map'** and **'Questions'** in hand, you are ready to start studying/thinking/pondering about these in preparation to go to the Lord with them in **"Mighty Prayer"**. In 1829, the Lord told Oliver Cowdery to study things out in his mind first **then** he must ask Him.

**"Behold,  
you have not understood;  
you have supposed that I would give it unto you,  
when you took no thought save it was to ask me.  
But, behold,  
I say unto you,  
that you must study it out in your mind;  
then you must ask me ...  
Yea, behold,  
I will tell you in your mind and in your heart,  
by the Holy Ghost,  
which shall come upon you,  
and which shall dwell in your heart.  
Now, behold,  
this is the spirit of revelation ....  
Remember,  
that without faith  
you can do nothing;  
therefore ask in faith."**

D&C 8:2-3, 9:7-8

## MIGHTY PRAYER

In my previous book, I wrote about the differences between just praying and having **“Mighty Prayer”** with the Lord. **“Mighty Prayer”** is the type of prayer where there is sincere communication going on between you and the Lord where inspirations/revelations come to you and the Lord is able to reveal His will to you.

I recommend you search the scriptures for the term **“Mighty Prayer”** and see how it is used and the examples of it. I especially recommend the story of the **“brother of Jared”**.

The **“brother of Jared”** was a prophet of the Lord and through revelation led his family and friends out away from the Tower of Babel. When they reached a sea shore, they remained there for 4 years. At the end of this time, the brother of Jared went to pray to the Lord. During the prayer, the Lord came to him and chastised him for **over three hours for not saying his prayers** ... not the kind you say in 30 seconds before you go to bed ... but real true **“Mighty Prayer”**. The Lord had many important things to reveal to the brother of Jared that affected not only him but also his family and friends. The brother of Jared repented and eventually was privileged to see the Lord himself.

After studying/pondering over your **“Prayer Maps”** and **“Questions”**, set aside some private time to go to the Lord to seek His guidance, council, inspiration, revelation, etc. Explain to Him what you had done and that you need His help in these areas.

Start with your first question and then stop and **just LISTEN**. As the first couple of impressions come to your mind, immediately write them down in your journal and then go on to the next question. Usually these first impressions are the most important. Since you may have a lot of questions, just continue on asking the questions until the Spirit prompts you to stop for a while. By this time you may have your 1-2 minute prayer has turned into a half hour or more of basking in the Lord’s spirit.

This method will provide you with your initial **‘to do list’** from the Lord. With your **‘errands from the Lord’**, begin working on them. Try to accomplish as many of these as you can and keep track of the results so that you can **“RETURN AND REPORT”** to the Lord.

## RETURN AND REPORT

During the next day, try to visualize in your mind’s eye the maps that you created and mentally go over the items that the Lord wants you to do. When evening comes begin to prepare for your next **“prayer”** with the Lord. Review what He had asked me to do so you can give a **“stewardship accounting”** to Him. Pondered over the things you were able to accomplish and on the effects those items had on you and upon others. Those things that you weren’t able to accomplished, try to understand why and what you will say to the Lord.

Before praying, I would review my prayer maps and see if there were some additional questions that I would like to ask and then would write them down in my journal.

Now, praying took on a little different approach. I knew my knees wouldn’t hold up for any length of time so I sat at my desk with my maps and journals so that I could continue to write the inspirations that would come to me.

One by one, I gave an accounting of each of the things the Lord had asked me. I would also describe the effects it had on me and on others. I would then ask a follow up question of **“What should I do now?”** I would then write the first couple of impressions down and then go on to the next question.

After I had gone through all the previous day's questions then I would start on my list of the new questions. I would then write down what I needed to do for the next day.

Each day I would follow this process and I began to learn **"line upon line, precept upon precept"**. I was beginning to teach myself how to receive the inspiration/revelation that I needed in my life. I also learned that some of the inspirations weren't from the Lord, but from myself. I had to learn how to discern between the various voices.

So this is the pattern that I began to follow. It is very interesting that a year after I wrote my first book, I read a talk given by **President Russel M. Nelson** that he gave to the Priesthood brethren entitled **"Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives"**. While my first book gave a 'pattern' of how to approach the Lord in prayer, President Nelson gave a more in-depth '**pattern**' of how to approach the Lord and the importance of doing so. Here are just some of the main ideas he taught:

- "In the coming days, it will **not be possible to survive spiritually** without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost."
- President Lorenzo Snow, "This is the **grand privilege** of every Latter-day Saint .. that it is our right to have the manifestations of the Spirit **every day of our lives.**"
- "The **privilege of receiving revelation** is one of the **greatest gifts** of God to His children.
- "If we will truly receive the Holy Ghost and learn to discern and understand His promptings, **we will be guided in matters large and small.**"
- "Because I know **the good inspiration is based upon good information ...**"
- Here is the **prayer pattern** President Nelson encouraged us to follow:
  - **Find a quiet place** where you can regularly go.
  - **Humble yourself** before God.
  - **Pour out your heart** to your Heavenly Father.
  - **Turn to Him** for answers and for comfort.
  - **Pray in the name of Jesus Christ** about your **concerns**, your **fears**, your **weaknesses** – yes, the very **longings of your heart**.
  - And then **listen**.
  - **Write the thoughts** that come to your mind.
  - **Record your feelings** and
  - **follow through with actions** that you are prompted to take.
  - As you **repeat this process** day after day, month after month, year after year, you will "grow into the principle of revelations.
- I urge you to **stretch beyond your current spiritual ability** to receive personal revelation.
- Our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, **will perform some of His mightiest works between now and when He comes again.**"

Note carefully that He recommended **"writing down the thoughts that come you"**, **"to record your feelings"**, and **"to follow through with actions that you are prompted to take"**.

Hopefully my ideas about "prayer maps" and "questions" and a "prayer journal" will help you accomplish what President Nelson was teaching about.

## PRAYER MAPPING AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Now let's look at how we can use the **"Prayer Mapping"** concepts with **"Spiritual Gifts"**. You have already learned about these gifts but now let's examine these gifts in your own life. Ask yourself the following questions:

- **What spiritual gifts do I have?**
- **What am I doing with these gifts?**
- **How can I use these gifts to bless others and to help me in my life?**
- **If I have these gifts but are not using them how can I change?**
- **What additional Gifts am I in need of? How can I receive them?**

To assist you in identifying your current **"Spiritual Gifts"** I have a worksheet at the end of this section which you can use to identifying the ones you have. I suggest if you have had a **Patriarchal Blessing** that you pull it out and read it again. On the worksheet list put a check mark next to those gifts that are mentioned in your blessing. Next, add additional gifts to the bottom of the list that you have but are not in the list.

Some of these gifts are just ones that "you were born with". Others may be ones that Lord has given to you through your Patriarchal Blessings. There may be others gifts mentioned in your blessing that are conditional upon your faithfulness and in doing His will. You might also ask someone in your family to help you review the list and see which ones they feel you have that you may not even be aware of.

With this finished list, go back to each gift and on **a scale of 1 to 10**, mark how well you are currently using these gifts to bless others with. Don't be discouraged if your marks are low. One reason may be that you have never thought about the relationship between the gifts you have and using them to bless others. These scales can help you begin to decide which Gifts you would like to start working on first.

**NOTE: you probably have additional Spiritual Gifts that are not listed. If so, please add them to the lists.**

## Your Spiritual Gifts

Check the boxes for the gifts for the following categories (1) those you have been promised unconditionally in your Patriarchal blessing , (2) those that are given conditionally to you, (3) those that you just have naturally, and (4) those gifts that you need/desire. In the yellow column, rank yourself on a scale of 1 to 10 on how well you are currently using this gift to bless others.

Gifts Promised in Patriarchal Blessing	Gifts given conditionally (based upon some action or obedience)	Gifts that are just natural for you	Gifts that you need	Gifts that I currently need or desire	Scale of 1 to 10 on how well I am using this gift	<p><i>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. D&amp;C 46:11</i></p> <p><b>Spiritual Gifts</b></p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Teach the Words of Wisdom
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Learn
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To have Great Faith
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Heal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To be Healed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Work Mighty Miracles
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Prophecy concerning all things
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Beholding of angels and ministering spirits
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Speak all kinds of tongues
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Interpret languages and of divers kinds of tongues
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Discern spirits
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Discern other's hearts and intents
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Know that Jesus is the Christ
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Believe on the words of those that Know Jesus
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Translate (like Joseph Smith)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Receive revelations (like the Brother of Jared)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Know what questions to ask of God (like Jared)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## Your Spiritual Gifts

Check the boxes for the gifts for the following categories (1) those you have been promised unconditionally in your Patriarchal blessing, (2) those that are given conditionally to you, (3) those that you just have naturally, and (4) those gifts that you need/desire. In the yellow column, rank yourself on a scale of 1 to 10 on how well you are currently using this gift to bless others.

Gifts Promised in Patriarchal Blessing	Gifts given conditionally (based upon some action or obedience)	Gifts that are just natural for you	Gifts that you need	Gifts that I currently need or desire	Scale of 1 to 10 on how well I am using this gift	<i>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. D&amp;C 46:11</i>
<b>Spiritual Gifts (cont.)</b>						
						Gift of Asking
						Gift of Listening
						Gift of Hearing and using a still, small voice
						Gift of Being able to Weep
						Gift of Avoiding contention
						Gift of Being Agreeable
						Gift of Avoiding vain repetition
						Gift of Seeking that which is righteous
						Gift of not Passing Judgement
						Gift of Looking to God for guidance
						Gift of Being a disciple
						Gift of Caring for others
						Gift of Being able to ponder
						Gift of Offering prayer
						Gift of Bearing a mighty testimony
						Gift of Receiving the Holy Ghost
						Gift of Patience
						Gift of Being a Peace Maker
						Gift of Music
						Gift of Being able "to think outside of the box"
						Gift of Having a desire to help others
						Gift of being able to bare on another's burdens
						Gift of being able to feel one another's pains
						Gift of being Patient
						Gift of being able to Forgive others

“**Spiritual Gifts**” are to bless the lives of others. The Lord had reasons why certain gifts were given to certain individuals. Not all have the same gift. In **D&C 46:9-12**, the Lord declares:

*“For verily I say unto you,  
they (Spiritual Gifts) 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.*

*And again, verily I say unto you,  
I would that ye should always remember,  
and always retain in your minds what those gifts are,  
that are given unto the church.  
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.  
To some is given one,  
and to some is given another  
that all may be profited thereby.”*

Being that the Lord has not given the same gifts to everyone, in our families we can help each other by using the Gifts we have received. If an issue/challenge/trial comes up and we know who in the family has a special gift that could help out, then we can ask that family member to utilize that gift to help out.

For example, in **The Book of Ether** (in the Book of Mormon), **Jared** knew his brother had the “**gift of revelation**”. He would go to his brother and ask him to ask the Lord about what they should do. Jared had the “**gift of knowing what questions to ask**”. Together as a family, their individual gifts complimented each other and they were able to accomplish what the Lord wanted for them.

Moses and Aaron were similar. Moses told the Lord that he was ‘**slow of speech**’ so the Lord called Aaron to speak for him. Together as a team they went back to Egypt and accomplished the Lord’s will.

With this in mind, I encourage you to visit with the other members of your family and discuss which Spiritual Gifts each of them has. Encourage each other to learn more about the gifts they have. Challenge each other to start using their gifts to help others especially other family members.

I have included a worksheet where you can indicate which gifts each family member currently has. With this list, and in following the admonition of the Savior of *“always retain in your minds what those gifts are”*, the family can now draw upon each other as issues and trials come up. In this way, the family can begin working together to receive the blessings the Lord has for you.

The following worksheet will also assist in helping family members to remember to develop and use their gifts more often. As a family you can pray for each other that each member will be able to magnify the Spiritual Gifts they have been given.



## Spiritual Gifts that Family Members are blessed with

Check the boxes for the Gifts that other family members have. When an issue arises, use this list to help identify which family members have the special Spiritual Gifts that could help out with the issue. Encourage family members and yourself to "seek" after additional Spiritual Gifts and then add them to the list.

Myself	Other Family Members					<i>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. D&amp;C 46:11</i>
						<b>Spiritual Gifts</b>
						To Teach the Word of Knowledge
						To Teach the Words of Wisdom
						To Learn
						To have Great Faith
						To Heal
						To be Healed
						To Work mighty Miracles
						To Prophecy concerning all things
						To Beholding of angels and ministering spirits
						To Speak all kinds of tongues
						To Interpret languages and of divers kinds of tongues
						To Discern spirits
						To Discern other's hearts and intents
						To Know that Jesus is the Christ
						To Believe on the words of those that Know Jesus
						To Translate (like Joseph Smith)
						To Receive revelations (like the Brother of Jared)
						To Know what questions to ask of God (like Jared)

## Spiritual Gifts that Family Members are blessed with

Check the boxes for the Gifts that other family members have. When an issue arises, use this list to help identify which family members have the special Spiritual Gifts that could help out with the issue. Encourage family members and yourself to "seek" after additional Spiritual Gifts and then add them to the list.

Myself	Other Family Members					<i>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. D&amp;C 46:11</i>
						<b>Spiritual Gifts (cont.)</b>
						Gift of Asking
						Gift of listening
						Gift of hearing and using a still, small voice
						Gift of being able to weep
						Gift of avoiding contention
						Gift of being agreeable
						Gift of avoiding vain repetition
						Gift of seeking that which is righteous
						Gift of not passing judgement
						Gift of looking to God for guidance
						Gift of being a disciple
						Gift of caring for others
						Gift of being able to ponder
						Gift of offering prayer
						Gift of bearing a mighty testimony
						Gift of receiving the Holy Ghost
						Gift of Patience
						Gift of being a Peace Maker
						Gift of Music
						Gift of Being able "to think outside of the box"
						Gift of Having a desire to help others
						Gift of being able to bare on another's burdens
						Gift of being able to feel one another's pains
						Gift of being Patient
						Gift of being able to Forgive others

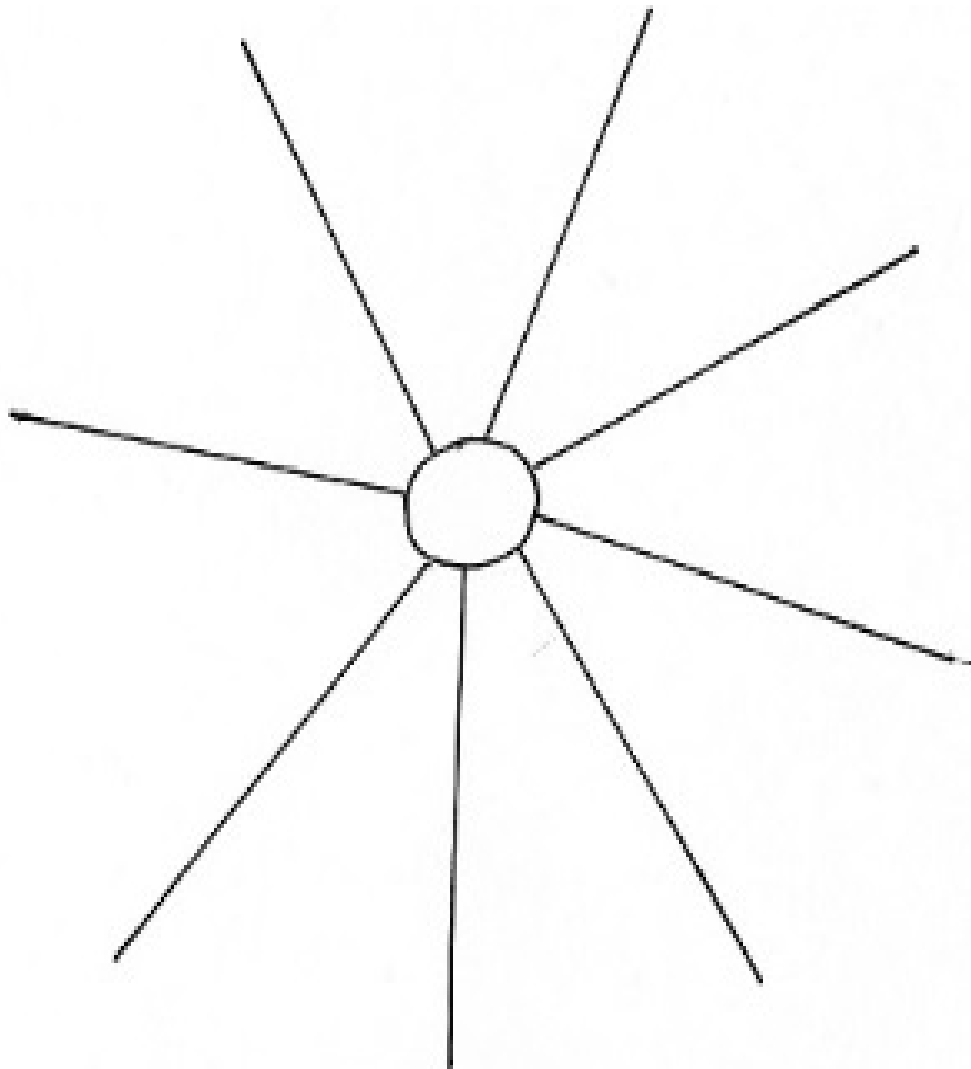
Now, let's begin creating a series of **"Prayer Maps"** which will deal with these **Spiritual Gifts**. These maps will assist you in the following ways:

- in identifying how you can start using your gifts
- how you can apply them in your life, and
- how you can begin to obtain/understand these gifts.

### **PRAYER MAP #1: MASTER PRAYER MAP**

Begin by making a **"Master Prayer Map"** of your life (as I did earlier). Put yourself in the center of the page, draw a circle around it, and then draw lines coming out from the circle for each of the major areas of your life. This will be your **"Master Prayer Map"** which will be used when we create the other Prayer Maps.

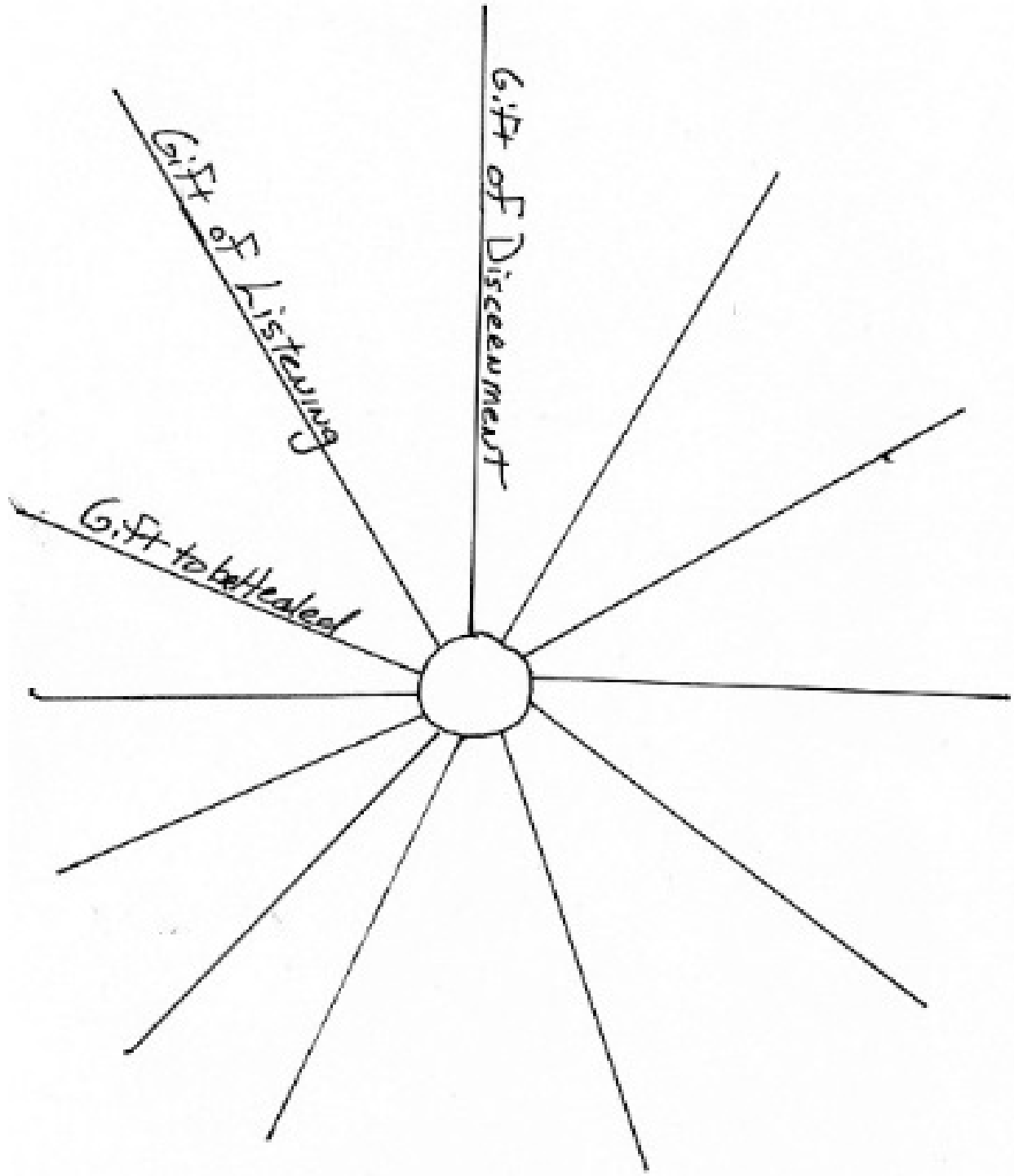
Just fill in the lines ... add more lines if needed 😊



## PRAYER MAP #2

This **second Prayer Map** will start off again with **you in the center**. However, the lines coming out from the center will have the **major Spiritual Gifts the Lord has blessed you with** as well as those you would like to have. I would suggest color coding these two types differently. This map will give you an overall view of the Gifts you have and those you would like to seek after.

I put down three gifts as an example. Fill in the other lines ... adding more if needed.

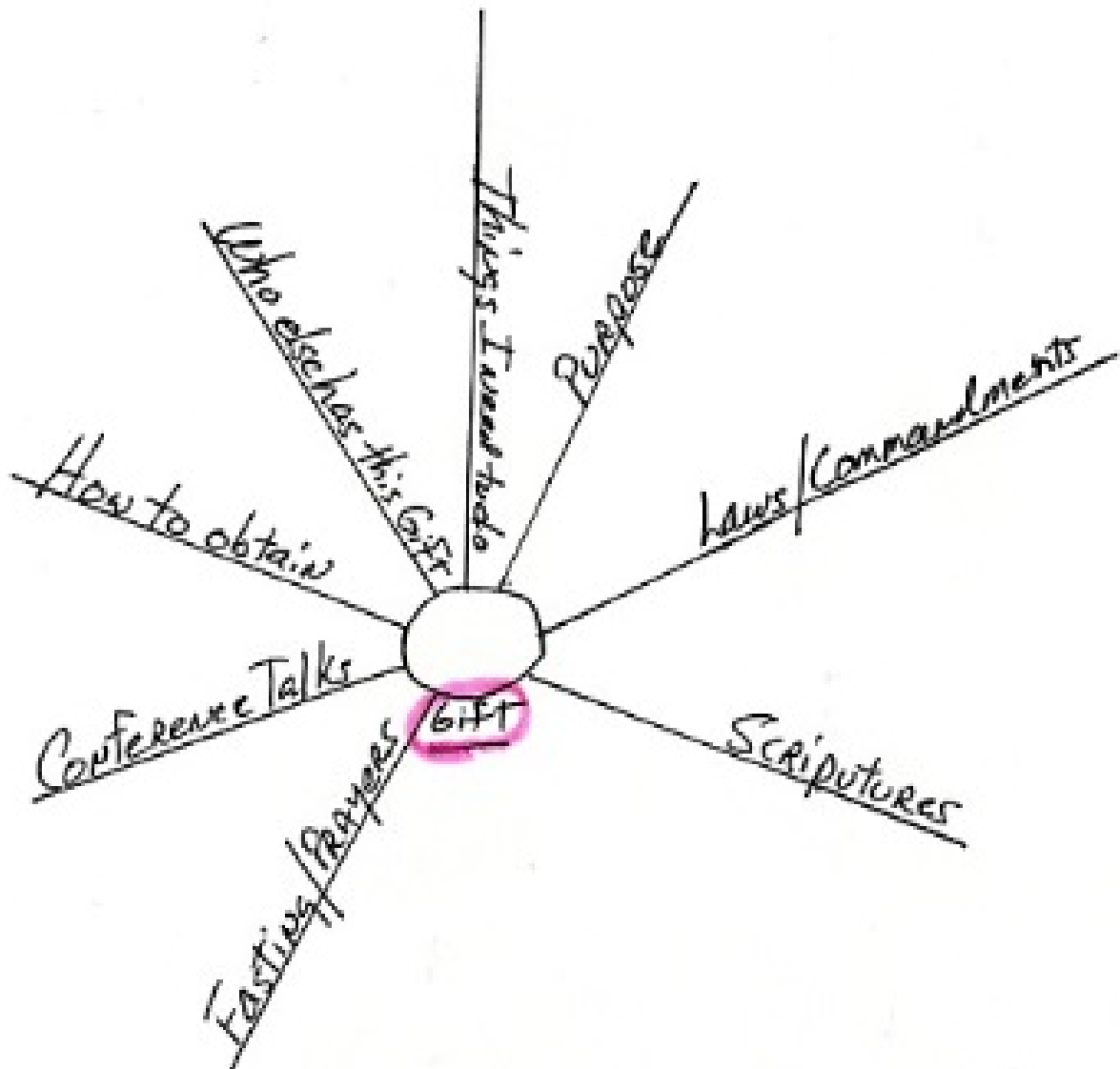


### PRAYER MAP #3

This third map will concentrate on **just one of the Spiritual Gifts** from your second prayer map. Select one of the Gifts and place it in the center of the page. Draw lines coming out of it with the following.

- Purpose of this Gift
- Laws/commandments (pertaining to this Gift)
- Scriptures (associated with this gift)
- Fasting/Praying to Obtain
- Conference talks concerning this Gift
- How do I utilize this gift
- Who else has this gift (and how do they use it)
- Things the Lord has asked me to already do that I need to do before He will give me this gift

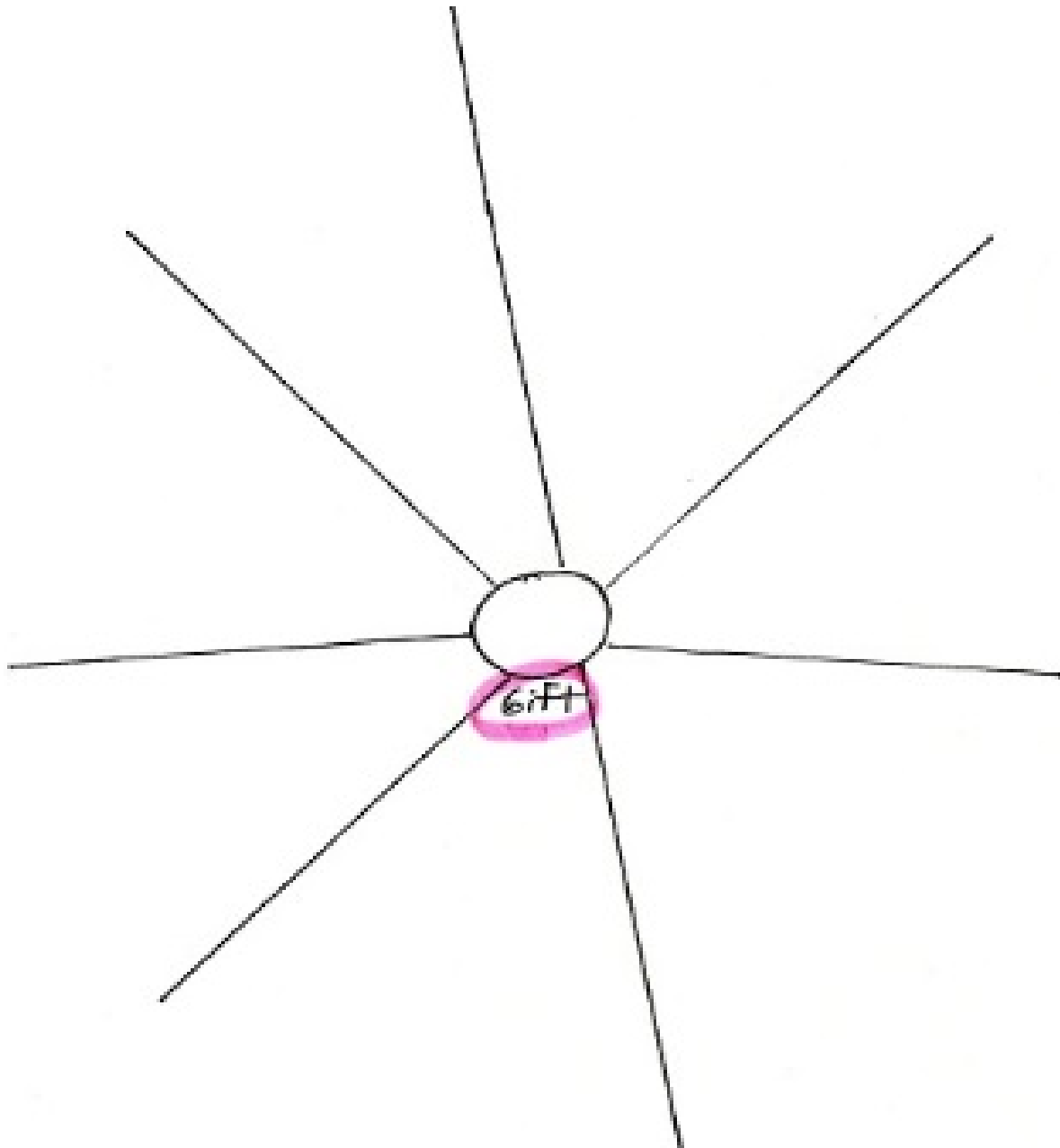
Off of each of these lines, begin writing down what you find in your study, research and pondering. Your goal is to try to get the **best understanding you can** about all the facets of this particular gift. In your **journal**, begin writing what you learn about this gift and begin writing down questions you have about it.



## PRAYER MAP #4

This fourth map will concentrate **on how you can apply this “Spiritual Gift” in the various areas** of your life that you identified in your **“Master Prayer Map”**. Start this map with the **“Spiritual Gift”** in the center and add all the various areas of your life to the lines that you put down in your **“Master Prayer Map”**.

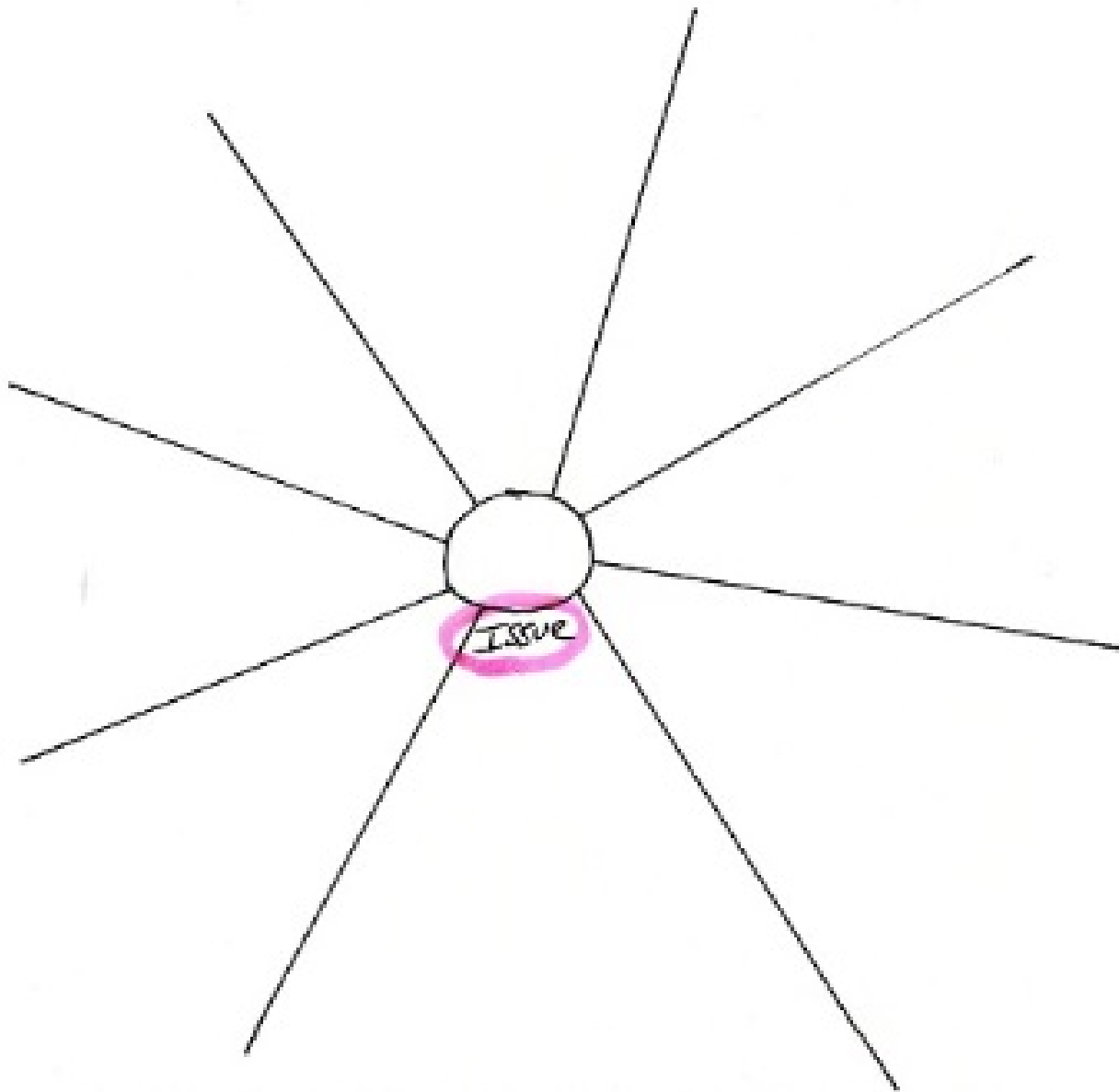
Now with this map in hand you can begin to **ponder and think** of how this particular Gift could be used to help you out in each of these areas. With your journal, begin writing down your thoughts and impressions about it as well as questions for the Lord on how you could use **this gift** in each of these areas.



## PRAYER MAP #5

This fifth map will concentrate on **one of your greatest concerns, worries, challengers or trials**. From your **"Master Prayer Map"** choose one of these. Put it in the middle of the page, draw a circle around it, and then draw lines out from it. On these lines write down the **Gifts of the Spirit** you have or that you feel you will need.

Next, ponder how each of these gifts could assist you with this issue. Perhaps it is **the gift of 'patience'** that you are needing, or **the gift of 'wisdom'**. Once finished, ponder on each of these gifts, write down questions for the Lord, record your impressions and inspirations, then let the Lord know that you are seeking His help by using one or more of these gifts. **You can use this type of Prayer Map to address your other issues, worries, concerns, etc.**



## PRAYER MAP #6

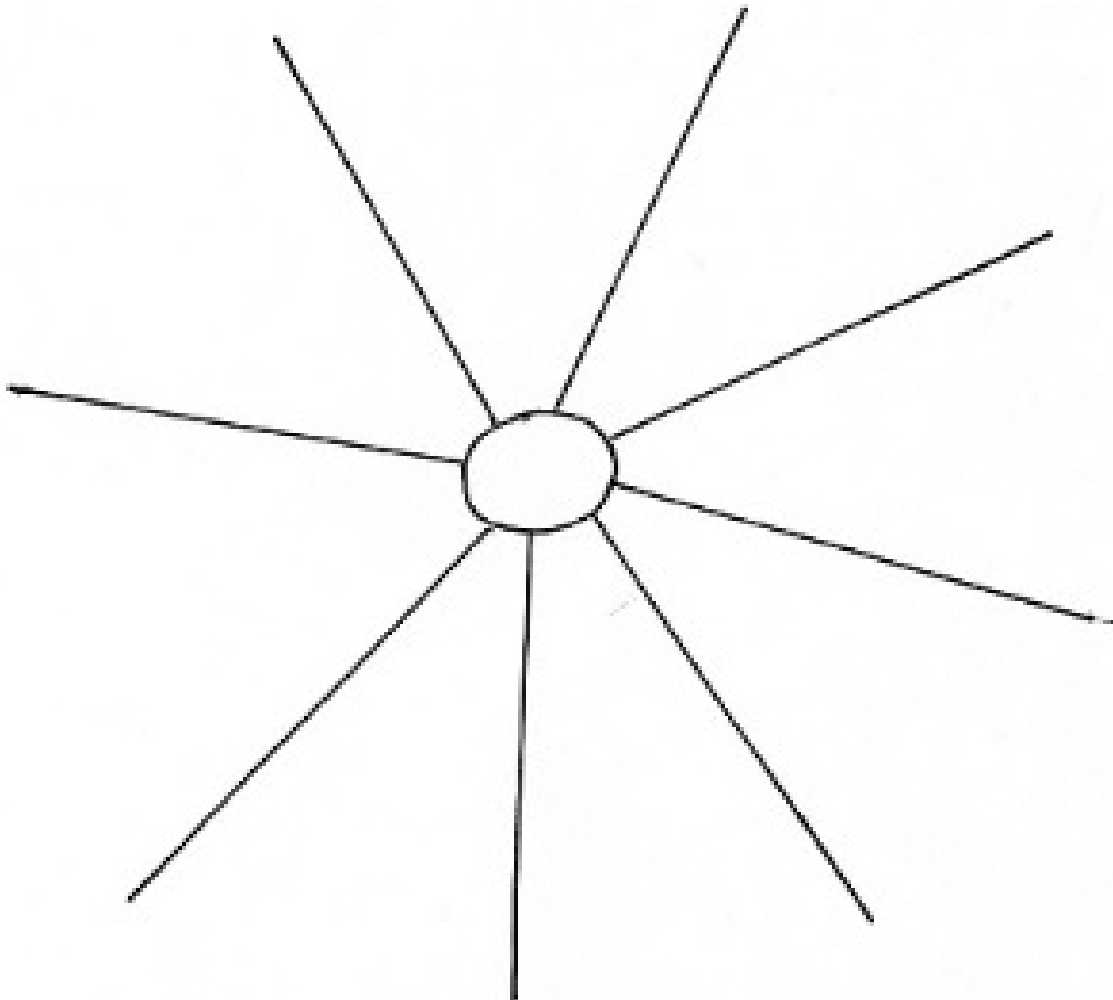
This last type of pray map deals with **helping your family members**. Create a prayer map similar to your **"Master Prayer Map"** but you **put a family member in the middle with the lines coming out being the major areas** in their life. Once again, you can continue to draw additional lines coming off the main lines for subareas. In going before the Lord, you can ask questions like:

- What is one thing I could do to make them happy?
- What is one thing I could do to help them in this particular area?
- What is one thing I could do to help them with their relationship with Thee?
- How can I help them with their greatest fears, concerns, etc. (if you don't know what their greatest ones are, then ask them).

This type of map should be made for each member of your family. Consider using **a three-ring binder** to keep these maps together along with their associated questions and responses.

This type of map is great to bring out when you are just praying for this family member. With their map, you can see their life on one page and can begin to let the spirit direct you to which area you should concentrate on.

When the Lord sees your desire to help this family member, He will bless you with the inspiration that you need.





# Conclusion

I hope these sample Prayer Maps will be useful for you. I know the Lord loves us and is more than anxious to inspire us to improve our lives and to help others around us. Seek the Lord's guidance in making these Maps. As President Nelson taught ... **"follow up and repeating the process is very important"**.

As you better understand your personal needs and the needs of others, begin to explore how certain **"Spiritual Gifts"** could be helpful

- **Do you know what Spiritual Gifts you, your spouse or other family members have?**
  - Seek after the "gifts of wisdom and knowledge".
- Do you have the desire to asked the Lord how you can help them magnify their gifts?
  - Seek after "the gift of desiring to the know the Lord's will".
- Are there problems or concerns in your family?
  - Seek after the "gift of discernment".
- Does someone in the family have special Spiritual Gifts they could be called upon to help out with?
  - Seek after the "gift of love and discernment".
  - Seek after the "gift of patience".
- Are your sick?
  - Seek after **"the Gift to be Healed"**.
- Are you having marital problems?
  - Seek after the "gift of **Discernment**"
  - Seek after the "gift of **Patience**"
  - Seek after the "gift of **Listening**"
  - Seek after the "gift of **Hope**"
  - Seek after the "gift of **Charity**"
- Are you having financial difficulties?
  - Seek after the **"gift of Knowledge and Wisdom"**
- Are you needing a miracle in your life?
  - Seek after the **"gift of Mighty Miracles"**

May the Lord bless you in your journey.

I would love to hear about how this works for you and your family.

Please email me at [davidjohnpotter@hotmail.com](mailto:davidjohnpotter@hotmail.com) or call me at **801-703-8516**.

Regards,

*Dave Potter*

# Appendix: Talks

- TALKS:

- "Spiritual Gifts" - Elder Bruce R. McConkie
- "There are Many Gifts" – Elder Marvin j. Ashton
- "Gifts of the Spirit" – Elder Robert D. Hales
- "To Be Healed" – Elder Richard G. Scott
- "Spiritual Gifts" – Elder Mervyn B. Arnold
- "Gifts and Talents" – Elder Henry D. Taylor
- "How to Discover Your Gifts" – Sister Justina Lichner

\*\*\*\*\*

## Spiritual Gifts

Elder Bruce R. McConkie  
of the Quorum of the Twelve  
(*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.367-377)

---

### Spiritual Gifts Come By Faith

**Those gifts of God that come to faithful people by the power of the Holy Ghost are called spiritual gifts or gifts of the Spirit.** They come from God, they are administered by the Holy Ghost, and they are transmitted to men by the Spirit of Christ, which is the light of Christ, which is the agency of God's power. **Their receipt is predicated upon faith, obedience, and personal righteousness;** hence they are reserved for the saints of God, for those who believe in his name and live his laws. They are the signs and miracles that follow those who believe, and their receipt, in one degree or another, is essential to salvation. No one can be saved in the celestial kingdom unless he receives some or many of the gifts of the Spirit.

Why do signs and miracles cease in certain ages? Why are they not found at all times and among all peoples? Were those of old entitled to greater blessings than those of us who now dwell on the same earth that once was theirs? Moroni answers: "The reason why" a God of gifts and miracles "ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men," and to pour out his gifts upon them, "is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust." They worship false gods whom they define in their creeds, and they no longer walk in the same paths pursued by the saints of former days.

It is men who have changed, not God; he is the same everlastingly. All men who have the same faith and live the same law will reap the same blessings. **"Whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing," saith Moroni, "whatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him; and this promise is unto all, even unto the ends of the earth."** Moroni then quotes the promise of the Lord Jesus about signs following those who believe, which promise concludes with these wondrous words: "And whosoever shall believe in my name, doubting nothing, unto him will I confirm all my words, even unto the ends of the earth." (Mormon 9:20-25.)

Then, after setting forth many of the spiritual gifts by name, Moroni exhorts us to remember that God "is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and that all these gifts, . . . which are spiritual, never will be done away, even as long as the world shall stand, only according to the unbelief of the children of men." And as his custom was, he again anchored his words to those of his Master. "And Christ truly said unto our fathers: **If ye have faith ye can do all things which are expedient unto me.**" Knowing this and being guided by the Spirit, Moroni proclaimed: "And now I speak unto all the ends of the earth-that if the day cometh that the power and gifts of God shall be done away among you, it shall be because of unbelief."

Sad to say, the gifts of God were done away in the Americas with the death of Moroni, and in the Old World shortly after the death of the apostles. "And wo be unto the children of men if this be the case," Moroni said of that dire and fateful era; "for there shall be none that doeth good among you, no not one. For if there be one among you that doeth good, he shall work by the power and gifts of God. And wo unto them who shall do these things away and die, for they die in their sins, and they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God; and I speak it according to the words of Christ; and I lie not." (Moroni 10:19-26.)

## Seek Spiritual Gifts

**Is it proper to seek for spiritual gifts?** Should we plead with the Lord for the gift of prophecy, or of revelation, or of tongues? Is it fitting and right to pray for the soul-sanctifying privilege of seeing the face of the Lord Jesus while we yet dwell as mortals in a sin-filled world? Does the Lord expect us to desire and seek for spiritual experiences, or do the divine proprieties call for us simply to love the Lord and keep his commandments, knowing that if and when he deems it proper he will grant special gifts and privileges to us?

By way of answer, it almost suffices to ask such questions as these: Are we not expected to seek salvation, the greatest of all the gifts of God? Why, then, should we not prepare ourselves for this greatest of all boons by seeking the enjoyment of the lesser ones? If we are to see his face in that eternal realm where the same sociality that exists among us here, then coupled with eternal glory, shall endure everlastingly, can we go amiss by seeking to establish that sociality here and now? Are we not commanded: Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened? Why, then, should we smother a desire to heal the sick or raise the dead or commune with friends beyond the veil?

Also by way of answer to the queries at hand, we might with propriety reason along this line: **If spiritual gifts are interwoven with and form part of the very gospel of salvation itself can we enjoy the fulness of that gospel without possessing the gifts that are part of it?** If gifts and miracles shall-inevitably, always, and everlastingly-follow those who believe, how can we be true believers without them? And if we are to seek the gospel, if we are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, if our whole souls must cry out for the goodness of God and his everlasting association how can we exempt ourselves from seeking the gifts of the Spirit that come from and prepare us for his presence?

If such be our thoughts, we are in harmony with the counsel given in the divine word. Paul says: **"Covet earnestly the best gifts"** (1 Corinthians 12:31), **"desire spiritual gifts,"** and be **"zealous of spiritual gifts,"** seeking "that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" (1 Corinthians 14:1, 12). Moroni says: "Lay hold upon every good gift." (Moroni 10:30.) But the great exhortation to seek for spiritual gifts is found in latter-day revelation.

"Ye are commanded in all things to ask of God, who giveth liberally," the holy word acclaims. Note the Lord's language: **We are commanded to seek the gifts of the Spirit; if we do not do so, we are not walking in that course which is pleasing to Him whose gifts they are.** "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." These are the words of the Lord; they summarize the course he desires us to pursue. Why should we ask, and seek, and obey? He answers: **"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."** If we do not receive gifts and guidance and doctrine and commandments from on high, we shall of necessity receive them from some other source. Others have guidance to offer, doctrine to teach, and commandments to give. We must choose what to believe and elect how we shall live. "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."

**Why, for what purpose, and to whom are the gifts given?**

***"Verily I say unto you, 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."***

It is inherent in the whole plan of righteousness that those who seek the gifts of the Spirit do so for their own salvation and for the glory of God, and not for lustful and selfish and worldly reasons.

***"And again, verily I say unto you, I would that ye should always remember, and always retain in your minds what those gifts are, that are given unto the church."*** (D&C 46:7-10.)

Truly all of the Lord's saints should seek him, should seek his Spirit, should seek his gifts. Where these gifts are, there is the true and saving gospel, and where they are not, there is no hope of salvation.

## Gifts Given the Saints

There are three scriptural accounts which name a limited few of the gifts of the Spirit that are reserved for the saints. They come from the pens of Paul and Moroni and from the lips of the Lord Jesus as he spoke to Joseph Smith. Interweaving the three accounts together, we gain the following overview of the matter:

### 1. Faith Precedes the Miracle

The gifts of the Spirit come to those who receive the Spirit. Men must receive the gift of the Holy Ghost before that member of the Godhead will take up his abode with them and begin the supernal process of distributing his gifts to them. The gift of the Holy Ghost is the right to the constant companionship of that member of the Godhead, based on faithfulness. It is given at baptism. Those saints who keep the commandments and walk in paths of truth and righteousness after baptism actually receive the promised companionship-not at all times, but from time to time, for no man is perfect; none in mortality walk eternally and unceasingly in the blazing light of heaven. Thus the gifts of the Spirit are for believing, faithful, righteous people; they are reserved for the saints of God. They come from God in heaven to man on earth in a miraculous manner. Their receipt is a miracle, and faith precedes the miracle.

## 2. Gifts Without Number

**Spiritual gifts are endless in number and infinite in variety.** Those listed in the revealed word are simply illustrations of the boundless outpouring of divine grace that a gracious God gives those who love and serve him.

***"All have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man [who is true and faithful] is given a gift by the Spirit of God. To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby."*** (D&C 46:11-12.)

"And there are different ways that these gifts are administered; but it is the same God who worketh all in all; and they are given by the manifestations of the Spirit of God unto men, to profit them." (Moroni 10:8. See also 1 Corinthians 12:4-7.)

## 3. The Gift of Testimony

**Testimony is the first and greatest of all the gifts given of God to mortals.** It is the rock foundation upon which men build their houses of faith and righteousness and salvation. It is the beginning of all righteousness, and because of it, faithful men endure all things as though they constantly saw the face of "the invisible God" in whose image Christ came. (Colossians 11:4-15.) A testimony is to know the doctrine of the divine Sonship by personal revelation from the Holy Ghost. It comes when Spirit speaks to spirit, when the Holy Spirit of God speaks to the spirit within us, giving knowledge with absolute certainty. "To 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." (D&C 46:13.) "And ye may know that he is, by the power of the Holy Ghost." (Moroni 10:7.) Indeed, "No man can say [or rather, know] that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Corinthians 12:3.)

## 4. Believing the Lord's Witnesses

Prophets and apostles and the elders of Israel preach the gospel and testify of Christ and his divine Sonship, having first received the divine message by personal revelation. Some believe their words and know in their hearts that they have heard the truth. The truths taught may be new and strange to the hearers, but their acceptance is instinctive, automatic, without restraint; they need hear no further arguments. The Spirit-guided words find firm lodgment in their souls by the power of the Spirit. This ability to believe is a gift of God.

Individuals who have not yet advanced in spiritual things to the point of gaining for themselves personal and direct revelation from the Holy Ghost may yet have power to believe what others, speaking by the power of the Spirit, both teach and testify. They have power to recognize the truth of the words of others who do speak by the power of the Spirit, even though they cannot attune themselves to the Infinite so as to receive the divine word direct from heaven and without the helps of others to teach them. Thus it is written: "To others [the hearers of whom we speak] it is given to believe on their words [that is, on the words of those who have the message direct from God in heaven], that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful." (D&C 46:14.) Thus, men can obey and be saved even though they do not see the Lord, or entertain angels, or receive, independent of any other persons, the heaven-sent word of salvation.

## 5. The Gifts of Administration and Discernment

These gifts, given to those who administer the church and who are appointed to discern between true and false spirits, are considered in Chapter 31, "The Holy Ghost-The Lord's Minister."

## 6. Wisdom and Knowledge

Worldly wisdom and knowledge gained by intellectual talents are available to all men. But the knowledge of God and his eternal laws-gospel knowledge, saving knowledge, the hidden wisdom that comes from on high, the wisdom of those to whom the wonders of eternity are an open book, divine wisdom-all these are gifts of the Spirit. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Corinthians 2:11.)

Among the true saints are those endowed with divine knowledge and heavenly wisdom "that all may be taught to be wise and to have knowledge." (D&C 46:17-18. See also Moroni 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:8.) Of those so endowed, Paul says: "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Corinthians 2:12-13.)

## 7. The Gift of Faith

Faith itself--faith in all its glory, wonder, and power--is a gift of God. Some have it; some do not. Among those so endowed are those who have faith to heal, or to be healed, or to work miracles, or to do all things according to the will of Him in whom they trust. (D&C 46: 19-20; Moroni 10:11; 1 Corinthians 12:9.) Faith, and all that appertains to it, we have heretofore considered at some length.

## 8. The Working of Miracles

**Healing and being healed and raising the dead are only the beginning of miracles.**

**Properly gifted persons:**

- **control the elements,**
- **move mountains,**
- **turn rivers out of their course,**
- **walk on water,**
- **quench the violence of fire,**
- **are carried by the power of the Spirit from one congregation to another,**
- **are translated and taken up into heaven,**
- **or-and this above all-gain for themselves an eternal inheritance in the presence of Him who is Eternal.**

Miracles are now, have always been, and always will be part and portion of the true gospel of that God who is a God of miracles. **They are gifts of the Spirit.** (D&C 46:21; Moroni 10:12; 1 Corinthians 12:10.)

## 9. The Gift of Prophecy

The **gift of prophecy** is an extension and an enlargement of the **gift of testimony**.

**"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."** (Revelation 19:10.)

A person who gains personal revelation from the Holy Spirit that Jesus is Lord of all, being thus attuned to the Infinite, "may prophesy concerning all things." (Moroni 10:13. See also D&C 46:22; 1 Corinthians 12:10.) There is no difference between receiving revelation that Jesus was crucified for the sins of the world and receiving revelation that he shall soon come again in all the glory of his Father's kingdom. Thus it is that Peter said of the holy word given anciently by the mouths of the prophets: "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21.) And even as men seek for a testimony so should they desire the gift of prophecy. Thus it is that Paul says: "Let the prophets speak. . . . For ye may all prophesy one by one. . . . Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy." (1 Corinthians 14:29, 31, 39.)

## 10. Beholding Angels and Discerning Spirits

If a man has power to part the veil and converse with angels and with the ministering spirits who dwell in the realms of light, surely this is a gift of the Spirit. Also, how can anyone discern between the spirits sent of God and the evil spirits that do the devil's bidding except by revelation? Among us, there are those so endowed.

## 11. The Gift of Tongues and Their Interpretation

These are of two kinds: (1) learning to speak foreign tongues, to understand the words spoken by aliens, and to translate what is written in other languages; and (2) speaking or understanding alien and unknown languages without premeditation. The first kind is by far the more important and more commonly conferred; the second type is more dramatic and may involve languages spoken by others now living or dead languages long unknown among men. Some have spoken, for instance, in the pure Adamic language.

**Both the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation of tongues are given primarily for the preaching of the gospel.** Missionaries learn the languages of those among whom they labor, and sometimes they are given power, for a short time, to preach and understand without the labor of study and the struggle for understanding. Moroni speaks both of "tongues" and of "the interpretation of languages and of divers kinds of tongues." (Moroni 10:15-16. See also D&C 46:24; 1 Corinthians 12:10.) Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon from Reformed Egyptian into English falls within this broad scope.

**Tongues and their interpretation are the most dangerous and most easily imitated of all the gifts of God.** Men can speak and interpret by intellectual power and thus use their abilities to teach lies and foster heresies. Lucifer can cause his disciples to give forth nonsensical gibberish in tongues known to devils. In a long discourse about tongues and their proper usage, Paul counsels the saints to restrict them in their dramatic form. Interpreters, he says, must always be present. And, having in mind their proper purpose, he says of himself: "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." (1 Corinthians 14:19.)

## 12. Revelation and Visions

Revelation and prophecy and testimony and visions-these are the foundation upon which the Lord builds his earthly church. As gifts of the Spirit, they are poured out upon the saints. Revelation is the making known of divine truths by communication from heaven; it is God speaking to man in numerous available ways; it is the giving of saving truths to unsaved mortals. One means is by rending the heavens and permitting fallen man to entertain angels and see within the veil; in vision the faithful are thus permitted to see the wonders of eternity and to come to know their Maker. When revelation dips into the future beyond what mortal eyes can see, it becomes prophecy. The earthly kingdom is governed and guided and sustained by the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of revelation. Testimony is the beginning of personal revelation in the life of a believing soul. And "upon this rock"-the rock of testimony and personal revelation-"I will build my church," saith the Lord, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18.)

Visions and revelation are always found in the true church. They always abound among the saints of God, and without them there would be no divine kingdom on earth. Without them there is no true religion, no salvation, no hope of eternal glory, no way in which man can be as his Maker. They are as much a part of true religion as sunshine and rain are part of mortal existence. Unless the sun shines and the rains fall, men could not live on earth; and when visions and revelations cease, men die spiritually. Is it any wonder, then, that the divine word intones, "Deny not the spirit of revelation, nor the spirit of prophecy, for wo unto him that denieth these things"? (D&C 11:25.)

### Good and Evil Gifts

"It must needs be," Lehi taught, "that there is an opposition in all things." (2 Nephi 2:11.) In the very nature of things this must be so. It is inherent in the whole scheme of life and being. Life itself depends upon the existence of opposites. Without evil there could be no good; without misery, no happiness; without death, no life. (2 Nephi 2.) Thus, if there are good gifts that come from God there are also evil gifts that spring forth from Satan. Heaven is the source of all that is good; hell, of all that is evil.

Satan and his fallen angels abide on earth. They seek to destroy men and doom them to an everlasting perdition. If they alone had influence and there were no help from above men, would slide everlastingly downward until, bound by the chains of hell, they would be in bondage to that evil spirit who fell from the presence of the Eternal God. As we have seen, God gives gifts to men to lift them up, to light their way back to heaven, to let them gain glimpses, while yet on their mortal pilgrimages, of that eternal home whence they came. These good gifts are shown forth in the midst of a world filled with evil gifts. And as we have also seen, these good gifts are given so that men need "not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men." **The Lord's people are to "beware lest [they] are deceived; and that [they] may not be deceived," they are to "seek . . . earnestly the best gifts."** (D&C 46:7-8.)

After discoursing upon "the gifts of God," Moroni says: **"And I would exhort you, my beloved brethren, that ye remember that every good gift cometh of Christ."** (Moroni 10:18.) The biblical word, as phrased by James, teaches: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow



of turning." (James 1:17.) The Father and the Son are the source of all that is good; conversely, Lucifer originates all that is evil.

Is there a **gift of preaching** by the power of the Holy Ghost that enlightens spiritual souls and leads them to eternal life? So also there is a gift of intellectual persuasion, a gift of sophistry and delusion, that pleases carnal men and lets them feel that they can believe what they will and live after the manner of the world, and yet be saved.

Is there a **gift of charity**, of enjoying and possessing the pure love of Christ, that leads men to peace in this present world and assures them of eternal life in that world which is to be? So also there is a gift of selfishness, of putting one's own interests first in all things, of spewing forth hatred and animosity upon others, all of which leads to war and desolation here and now and to everlasting destruction hereafter.

Are there **gifts of purity, of chastity, of clean thoughts, of upright living**, all of which cleanse and perfect the souls of men and prepare them to be at ease in the fellowship of angels and holy beings hereafter? So also there are gifts of lust, of lewdness, of profane and evil speaking, of filling one's mind with carnal and evil thoughts, all of which lead to vulgar and immoral acts that prepare men for the continuing association of evil spirits in the realms ahead.

It was Mormon who addressed these words to the true believers of his day: "All things which are good cometh of God; and that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually. But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God."

This mortal probation is so designed that it requires each person to choose for himself what he will believe and how he will live. And "the Spirit of Christ is given to every man," Mormon says, "that he may know good from evil." The great and eternal standard of judgment is given in these words: "Every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil." (Moroni 7:12-17.)

The grand conclusion of the whole matter is couched by Moroni in this exhortation: "**Lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing.**" (Moroni 10:30.) To this, it seems appropriate to add only these words of the Lord.

**Question:** "What doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift?"

**Answer:** "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.)

## How to Receive Gifts of the Spirit

Access to the gifts of the Holy Ghost is guaranteed only when we live our lives in harmony with the principles of the gospel. There was a period of time following the Savior's earthly ministry when these gifts were not active in the lives of God's children. The loss of these gifts resulted from a turning away from heavenly thoughts or acts and an acceptance of earthly gods.

# “There Are Many Gifts”

Marvin J. Ashton

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

One of the great tragedies of life, it seems to me, is when a person classifies himself as someone who has no talents or gifts. When, in disgust or discouragement, we allow ourselves to reach depressive levels of despair because of our demeaning self-appraisal, it is a sad day for us and a sad day in the eyes of God. For us to conclude that we have no gifts when we judge ourselves by stature, intelligence, grade-point average, wealth, power, position, or external appearance is not only unfair but unreasonable.

From [D&C 46:11–12](#), we have this truth:

***“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.*”**

***“To some is given one,  
and to some is given another,  
that all may be profited thereby.”***

God has given each of us one or more special talents. Socrates made the famous statement, ***“The unexamined life is not worth living”*** (“Apology,” *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952, p. 210).

It is up to each of us to search for and build upon the gifts which God has given. We must remember that each of us is made in the image of God, that there are no unimportant persons. Everyone matters to God and to his fellowmen.

From the Book of Mormon, particularly 3 Nephi, chapters 11 through 26 [[3 Ne. 11–26](#)], when the Savior Jesus Christ showed himself to the people on the American continent, many gifts are referred to as being very real and most useful. Taken at random, let me mention a few gifts that are not always evident or noteworthy but that are very important. Among these may be your gifts—gifts not so evident but nevertheless real and valuable.

Let us review some of these less-conspicuous gifts:

- the gift of asking;
- the gift of listening;
- the gift of hearing and using a still, small voice;
- the gift of being able to weep;
- the gift of avoiding contention;
- the gift of being agreeable;
- the gift of avoiding vain repetition;
- 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.

We must remember that to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God. It is our right and responsibility to accept our gifts and to share them. God’s gifts and powers are available to all of us.

Time will permit my emphasizing only a few of these God-given gifts.

## 1. The Gift to Ponder

As I study the scriptures, I am challenged and moved by the word **ponder** used so frequently in the Book of Mormon. Dictionaries say that *ponder* means to weigh mentally, think deeply about, deliberate, meditate.

When Jesus Christ came to teach the Nephites, he said, “*Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again*” ([3 Ne. 17:3](#)).

Moroni used this term as he closed his record. “Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, ... ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, ... and ponder it in your hearts” ([Moro. 10:3](#)).

By pondering, we give the Spirit an opportunity to impress and direct. Pondering is a powerful link between the heart and the mind. As we read the scriptures, our hearts and minds are touched. If we use the gift to ponder, we can take these eternal truths and realize how we can incorporate them into our daily actions.

Today, millions, at President Benson’s encouragement, are reading the Book of Mormon, some for the first time, others as a regular habit. We must remind all that the fruits of this great book are the most beneficial when we ponder as we read.

Pondering is a progressive mental pursuit. It is a great gift to those who have learned to use it. We find understanding, insight, and practical application if we will use the gift of pondering.

## 2. The Gift to Look to God for Direction

How often have we ourselves said or have heard others exclaim in times of crisis or trouble, “I just don’t know where to turn”?

If we will just use it, there is a gift available to all of us—the gift of looking to God for direction. Here is an avenue of strength, comfort, and guidance.

“Behold, I am the law, and the light. Look unto me, and endure to the end, and ye shall live; for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life” ([3 Ne. 15:9](#)).

“Look to God and live.” This is the wonderful promise given so often in the scriptures.

If we look to God for guidance, what do we look for in his children that we may be profited thereby? Some of us seem to prefer the practice of looking for and pointing out the weaknesses of our associates. The gifts others have, not their failings, make it possible for all to profit thereby.

What a spiritual comfort and blessing it is to know that, if we look to our Savior Jesus Christ and endure to the end, eternal life and exaltation can be ours. Our capacity to see and comprehend is increased only in proportion to our willingness to look. God becomes more approachable as we look to him. Looking to God teaches us to serve and live without compulsion. Being a leader in the Church should never diminish our “looking to God” time.

### 3. The Gift to Hear and Use the Small Voice

Still, small heavenly voices penetrate the heart with their gentle, convincing declarations:

“And it came to pass that while they were thus conversing one with another, they heard a voice as if it came out of heaven; and they cast their eyes round about, for they understood not the voice which they heard; and it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice; nevertheless, and notwithstanding it being a small voice it did pierce them that did hear to the center, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn” ([3 Ne. 11:3](#)).

Most often, hope, encouragement, and direction come from a soft, piercing voice.

Small voices are heard only by those who are willing to listen. Soft and small voice communications with our associates make priceless friendships possible. I am appreciative of people who find no need to raise their voices as they try to impress or convince. It seems most people who argue and shout have ceased listening to what the small voice could powerfully contribute.

We love the small voice of a child saying, “Mommy, Daddy, I love you.”

How powerful is a small voice that knows how and when to say, “Thank you.”

Think of the heavenly voice saying, Joseph, this is my beloved son. Hear him (see [JS—H 1:17](#)).

It is heartwarming and reassuring to hear the small voice declare, “Be still and know” ([D&C 101:16](#)).

Remember that one of our greatest gifts is the small voice of the Holy Ghost whispering directions in our lives and making mighty testimonies possible.

### 4. The Gift to Calm

What a majestic gift it is to be able to calm others! We thank God for those who are calm instead of contentious.

“For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another” ([3 Ne. 11:29](#)).

Contention is a tool of the adversary. Peace is a tool of our Savior. What a wonderful tribute we pay people when we describe them as being gentle, firm, and calm!

Contention stops progress. Love brings eternal progression.

Where contention prevails, there can be no united effort in any purposeful direction.

“Cease to contend one with another; cease to speak evil one of another” ([D&C 136:23](#)).

Argument and debate must be supplanted by calm discussion, study, listening, and negotiation.

The gospel is one of harmony, unity, and agreement. It must be presented in love, and with glad tidings, by those who are calm.

We should learn to talk together, listen together, pray together, decide together, and avoid all forms of possible contention. We must learn to curb anger. Satan knows that when contention begins, orderly progress is thwarted.

There has never been a time when it is more important for us as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to take a stand, remain firm in our convictions, and conduct ourselves with calm assurance under all circumstances. We must not be manipulated or enraged by those who subtly foster contention over issues of the day.

“Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away” ([3 Ne. 11:30](#)).

“Ye should live in peace one with another” ([Mosiah 2:20](#)). Those with the gift of being calm make lasting peace possible.

## 5. The Gift to Care

How grateful we should be for families, friends, and organizations who care! They make life easier and more meaningful. They, too, reap rewards in their Christlike caring when they serve for the right reasons. Leaders on every level should be primarily interested in rendering compassionate caring for others.

“And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” ([Mosiah 2:17](#)).

Our Savior cares for all of his sheep. What a tribute it is to be recognized as one who cares. Let me share with you a story about the quiet caring of an unusual person who was brought to my attention during the last few weeks.

Recently, during a twenty-fifth anniversary ward reunion in the Salt Lake Valley, a “Best Scouter Ever” award was presented. The special evening in the cultural hall, which included

dinner as well as a fine program, drew many people back to the ward event because of the good feelings created over the past twenty-five years.

The person acting as master of ceremonies introduced a young man to make this special award. He looked to be about six feet four inches tall and well over two hundred pounds. He walked to the microphone and said, “We would now like to pay tribute to the best Scouter this ward has ever had.”

Immediately names and faces of past Scout leaders jumped into the minds of those attending. Who would it be? There had been many great Scoutmasters in this ward. How could those in charge decide?

The tall, handsome young man mentioned many names of past Scout leaders and then said, “No, it is none of these, though they have all been great Scouters. Our ward ‘Best Scouter Ever’ award goes to someone who has worked in the Primary and as a Scout leader teaching boys for forty years. This individual has received the Silver Beaver Award, one of the highest awards given in Scouting, and the Silver Beehive Award, the highest award given by the Church in Scouting.” Then with a voice that trembled slightly, he said, “Our ‘Best Scouter Ever’ recognition goes to Sister Jennie Verl Keefer.” There came a hush over the audience, then knowing voices of approval, then a burst of applause that seemed to go on forever.

Sister Keefer was called up to the front. All present intently watched her quietly make her way. From the back of the room, this gray-haired bundle of energy hesitatingly came forward, her five-foot frame barely taller than those who were seated. Once at the microphone, the surprised recipient expressed a quiet and emotional, yet firm, thanks. She said between tears of gratitude it wasn’t quite forty years she had served. It was only thirty-seven years. And then Sister Keefer proudly added that during all her time of service, she had never had a bad boy.

Then the presenter asked all those whom Sister Keefer had ever taught and cared for to come to the stage. Here was the amazing thing. Men and boys started from the audience and filled the space behind this tiny woman. Big men, men in suits, doctors, bishops, presidents of companies, husbands, fathers holding babies, returned missionaries, contractors, computer workers, dentists, carpenters, and more. All these Scouts had been boys touched by the service and caring of this one noble and great woman—the best Scouter ever in the ward’s entire history. She had the gift of caring, and here were some of the fruits of her labors. Generations yet to come will bless her name for what she has done. What a great gift have those who know how to care!

“And to every man is given a gift” ([D&C 46:11](#)). This is true. God help us to recognize, develop, and share our gifts that all may profit thereby is my earnest hope and plea.

God does live. He does bless us with gifts. As we develop and share our God-given gifts and benefit from the gifts of those around us, the world can be a better place and God’s work will move forward at a more rapid pace. To these truths I bear my testimony and leave my personal witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

# Gifts of the Spirit

[By Elder Robert D. Hales](#)

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**Spiritual gifts are given as a blessing and benefit for those who love God and keep His commandments.**

The phrase “return with honor” is a very clear description of the purpose of life here in our mortal probation. In our premortal state in heaven, we lived in the presence of [God the Father](#); His Son, [Jesus Christ](#); and the [Holy Ghost](#).

Our goal in coming to this mortal probation is to “return with honor” back into the presence of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost eternally. This is called eternal life. Eternal life is our goal at the end of our sojourn on earth.

After birth one of the most significant events in our life is [baptism](#). The prophet Nephi describes baptism as a gate that we enter, after the gift of faith and repentance, to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. After entering the gate of baptism, we begin traveling a straight and narrow path that we remain on through our obedience, and that, if we endure to the end, leads us to eternal life (see [2 Ne. 31:17–21](#)).

I’d like to discuss the role of the gifts of the Spirit that will help each of us achieve our goal of eternal life.

## What Are Gifts of the Spirit?

These gifts of the Spirit are encompassed by the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the third member of the eternal Godhead and is identified as the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit is a gift from God to help us make the decisions that will allow us to find and fulfill our mission. These gifts were part of the ministry of the early prophets and were well known by the Apostles of the New Testament. Paul writes in the First Epistle to the Corinthians ([1 Cor. 12:4–10](#)):

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

“And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

“And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

“For to one is given by the Spirit the [word of wisdom](#); to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

“To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

“To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.”

In these latter days, an understanding of the gifts of the Spirit has been given to us by revelation as recorded in section 46 of the [Doctrine and Covenants](#). Section 46 identifies specific gifts of the Spirit as follows:

“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” ([D&C 46:11](#)).

We are clearly instructed that each of us is given a gift or gifts. Do we know what gift we have been given? Are we seeking to find our gifts?

“To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby” ([D&C 46:12](#)).

The phrase “that all may be profited thereby” is a very important concept to understand about the gifts of the Spirit. The gifts given to each individual are given not only for the one who receives, but also for those who can benefit when the gift is shared with others.

For example, you may be given the gift of faith and never question the existence of God, our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ.

“To 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.

“To others it is given to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful” ([D&C 46:13–14](#)).

With the gift of faith, you may be given the gift of prophecy or testimony.

In addition, you may be given the gift that others would believe on your words, that they might have eternal life if they continue faithful. Many of you, as missionaries for the Church, have experienced all that I have just outlined. Or you may have brought a friend or neighbor into the Church by the way you have lived your life or through your testimony.

Other examples of the gifts that you have participated in are from [verses 19 and 20](#):

“And again, to some it is given to have faith to be healed;

“And to others it is given to have faith to heal.”

There have been times when I have laid hands upon one who was ill and felt their spirit and their faith so strongly that they would be healed that I felt a surge of the power of their faith.

The Prophet [Joseph Smith](#) taught that the faith to be healed is one of the greatest gifts an individual can have.



On the other hand, I have seen the faith of parents when fathers and mothers desired their children to be healed. Through great faith, their children have been blessed.

“And again, it is given to some to speak with tongues;

“And to another is given the interpretation of tongues” ([D&C 46:24–25](#)).

Many of you who have gone to foreign lands have been given the gift to speak with tongues and to translate, or have the interpretation of tongues.

“And all these gifts come from God, for the benefit of the children of God” ([D&C 46:26](#)).

We are told by prophets in this dispensation that revelation for the direction of the Church will not be given through the gift of tongues. The reason for this is that it is very easy for Lucifer to falsely duplicate the gift of tongues and confuse the members of the Church.

Satan has the power to trick us as it pertains to some of the gifts of the Spirit. One in which he is the most deceptive is the gift of tongues. Joseph Smith and Brigham Young (1801–77) explained the need to be cautious when considering the gift of tongues.

“You may speak in tongues for your own comfort, but I lay this down for a rule, that if anything is taught by the gift of tongues, it is not to be received for doctrine” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 229).

“Speak not in the gift of tongues without understanding it, or without interpretation. The devil can speak in tongues” (*Teachings*, 162).

“The gift of tongues is not ... empowered to dictate ... the Church. All gifts and endowments given of the Lord to members of his Church are not given to control the Church; but they are under the control and guidance of the Priesthood, and are judged of by it” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, comp. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 343).

The gift of tongues is used by missionaries to teach the gospel to the nations of the world.

The gifts identified in section 46 give rise to other gifts, such as:

- **The gift to ponder; looking to God for direction.**
- **The gift to hear and respond to the still, small voice.**
- **The gift to be calm, which includes the ability to curb anger and to be temperate rather than contentious.**
- **The gift to study and to listen.**
- **And, perhaps the greatest gift of all, to have charity.**

There are many gifts. Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote, “Spiritual gifts are endless in number and infinite in variety” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 371).

Of the sacred gifts of the Spirit, one that I believe has impact on each of our lives is the gift of prophecy or revelation. This gift is different from the priesthood office of prophet. The gift of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

The Apostle Paul taught that Christians should “desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy [meaning to testify of the Savior]” ([1 Cor. 14:1](#)).

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) taught, “All members of the Church should seek for the gift of prophecy, for their own guidance” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2 vols. [1953], 1:201).

Every Church member, if faithful, has the right to receive revelation for his or her personal blessing.

## How Do We Recognize the Gifts of the Spirit?

One might ask, What are the spiritual manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit? The scriptures are clear with regard to the feelings one has within when touched by the Spirit.

For guidance, perhaps the following words to Oliver Cowdery represent a primary manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit:

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, blessed art thou for what thou hast done; for thou hast inquired of me, and behold, as often as thou hast inquired thou hast received instruction of my Spirit. If it had not been so, thou wouldst not have come to the place where thou art at this time.

“Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and I did enlighten thy mind; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou hast been enlightened by the Spirit of truth” ([D&C 6:14–15](#)).

It is very important for us to pray and to fast and to be close to our Heavenly Father so when that light is brought to our mind, we will recognize it.

“Yea, I tell thee, that thou mayest know that there is none else save God that knowest thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart.

“I tell thee these things as a witness unto thee—that the words or the work which thou hast been writing are true” ([D&C 6:16–17](#)).

The Lord reminded Oliver of the night he prayed to “know concerning the truth of these things.” He helped Oliver remember by saying, “Did I not speak peace to your mind ... ? What greater witness can you have than from God?” ([D&C 6:22–23](#)). Oliver had to learn to recognize influences of the Spirit, as you and I must learn.

## The Gift of Translation

The gift of translation was something that Oliver took for granted. Consider Oliver Cowdery’s desire to translate and the instruction given him by the Lord, as recorded in section 9 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This scripture describes the process he must follow and then describes how the Lord

responds: “Behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right” ([D&C 9:8](#)).

It is important that as we read the sections given to Oliver Cowdery ([D&C 6](#) and [D&C 9](#)), we understand how they apply to us.

## How to Receive Gifts of the Spirit

Access to the gifts of the Holy Ghost is guaranteed only when we live our lives in harmony with the principles of the gospel. There was a period of time following the Savior’s earthly ministry when these gifts were not active in the lives of God’s children. The loss of these gifts resulted from a turning away from heavenly thoughts or acts and an acceptance of earthly gods.

Elder Orson Pratt (1811–81) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles discussed John Wesley’s insightful words from the mid-1700s (*Sermon 94*) as he wrote about the Dark Ages:

“The real cause why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the [christian](#) church, was, *because the christians were turned heathens again. ...*’ If then, the ‘whole of christendom,’ without one exception, have been ‘buried in the most abominable idolatry for upwards of eight hundred years,’ ... And if they, because they are destitute of the gifts, are not even now christians, but heathens ... , we ask where the authority was during this eight hundred years, and where is it now? Surely God would not recognise ‘the most abominable idolaters,’ as holding authority” (*Divine Authenticity of the [Book of Mormon](#)*, no. 2 [1850], 21).

Through the faith and instrumentality of Joseph Smith, the gifts of the Holy Ghost were restored with the restoration of the priesthood.

The [sixth and seventh articles of faith](#) state:

“We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth” ([A of F 1:6](#)).

“We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth” ([A of F 1:7](#)).

Following our baptism, each of us had those holding the Melchizedek Priesthood lay hands on our heads for us to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. If we are faithful, we can have His influence with us. Through Him, we each can be blessed with certain spiritual powers called gifts of the Spirit. These gifts are given to those who are faithful to Christ. They will help us know and teach the truths of the gospel. They will help us bless others. They will guide us back to our Heavenly Father.

While the Holy Ghost can influence all mankind, the gift of the Holy Ghost functions when:

- an individual has been baptized and confirmed by one having the priesthood and has been given the gift of the Spirit,
- an individual continues to act under the principles of righteousness,
- the recipient is striving to be virtuous and pure,

- the recipient acts with integrity and truth and keeps the commandments of God.

Ponder this message from President George Q. Cannon (1827–1901) as he served as First Counselor in the First Presidency:

“If any of us are imperfect, it is our duty to pray for the gift that will make us perfect. ... 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. If a man lack wisdom, it is his duty to ask God for wisdom. The same with everything else. That is the design of God concerning His Church. He wants His Saints to be perfected in the truth. For this purpose He gives these gifts, and bestows them upon those who seek after them, in order that they may be a perfect people upon the face of the earth” (*Millennial Star*, 23 Apr. 1894, 260).

So, as we consider each of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, remember the counsel of heaven is to “seek ... earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given;

“For verily I say unto you, 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” ([D&C 46:8–9](#)).

A prerequisite for seeking after the gifts may require that we find out which gifts we have been given. The scriptures further record:

“And again, verily I say unto you, I would that ye should always remember, and always retain in your minds what those gifts are, that are given unto the church.

“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” ([D&C 46:10–11](#)).

To find the gifts we have been given, we must pray and fast. Often patriarchal blessings tell us the gifts we have received and declare the promise of gifts we can receive if we seek after them. I urge you each to discover your gifts and to seek after those that will bring direction to your life’s work and that will further the work of heaven.

During our time here on earth, we have been charged to develop the natural gifts and capabilities Heavenly Father has blessed us with. Then it will be our opportunity to use these gifts to become teachers and leaders of God’s children wherever they may be found on earth. To exercise these gifts, we must develop a purity of heart.

The world needs people who can keep their word, who have a code of honor, and who can finish a task and endure to the end.

As Latter-day Saints, we need not look like the world. We need not entertain like the world. Our personal habits should be different. Our recreation should be different. Our concern for [family](#) will be different. As we establish this distinctiveness firmly in our life’s pattern, the blessings of heaven await to assist us.

How can we accomplish this goal? I know there is a loving Heavenly Father who wishes to help. He has made available sacred gifts—even the gifts of the Spirit. As we exercise and magnify these gifts, we will be able to accomplish the callings and responsibilities that will come into our lives.

## The Gift of Discernment

We can have the gift of discerning of spirits. George Q. Cannon has called the gift of discerning of spirits “a gift that is of exceeding value and one that should be enjoyed by every Latter-day Saint. ... No Latter-day Saint should be without this gift, because there is such a variety of spirits in the world which seek to deceive and lead astray” (*Gospel Truth*, sel. Jerreld L. Newquist, 2 vols. in 1 [1987], 156–57).

Some may mean well but are listening to the wrong influence. Some people operate in a spirit of contention—clever with words from much practice, but not focused on correcting their own imperfections. They focus on the imperfections of others.

The Spirit of the Lord withdraws from them with their faultfinding and contentions. Unless they change, they rarely endure to the end but fall away in time. The Lord and the prophets of this day have set the course we should follow.

How can I question without losing the Spirit? This is a question often asked of me by young people. All of us have questions at times in our lives on policies, procedures, or even principles. The best way to find the answers we seek is to search out the solution for ourselves.

How do we go about it?

First and foremost, it is our attitude, or how we ask the question, that is very, very important. If it is a demand, one loses the opportunity for an answer.

Second, if we have strong feelings about the way something should be and are unwilling to listen, we may lose the opportunity to get an answer.

One only has to remember when Martin Harris wanted to take home pages of the Book of Mormon translation to show to others. Joseph Smith prayed to the Lord a number of times to finally be allowed to let the man do it. The Lord knew that the pages would be lost. But sometimes we want something so much and keep praying about it that the Lord lets us do it for our learning experience.

Sometimes we are drawn into seeking and giving answers that bring recognition or notoriety to “our” thinking and to “our” opinion. Don’t look for signs or answers that build you up. Humility and submissiveness to God will always be fundamental in receiving direction from Him.

Others operate in a spirit of [gratitude](#) to the Lord for the gospel and concentrate on correcting their own imperfections. We can develop the ability to discern what spirit is influencing others and ourselves. We should seek and pray for this gift lest we be deceived.

The gift of discernment is like the rod of iron; it will keep us on the path toward the tree of life, which means eternal life.

This gift is of significant value in determining personal direction and in ministering in God's service. In [1 John 4:1-3](#) we read:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

How does one distinguish between manifestations of the Spirit and counterfeits? One might ask these questions:

Is the manifestation edifying? Spiritual gifts are not given to satisfy one's lusts or curiosities, but are given as a blessing and benefit to those who love God and keep His commandments.

In acts of healing, does the healer follow the divinely established procedures? That is, does he do it in the manner in which Jesus did, seeking faith and purity of heart and then anointing with oil?

Has the worker of miracles received the gift of the Holy Ghost himself through the prescribed ordinances? One cannot invoke the blessings of heaven without having received the gifts and the right or authority to act in His name.

## Cautions

May I take a moment to talk of some cautions taught me by experiences that I have observed regarding the gifts of the Spirit.

Too often people feel that answers to their prayers and their pleading for guidance and direction will be given in dramatic manifestations or through a direct voice giving specific directions from a heavenly host. My personal experience and my observation of the Brethren as they guide and direct the Church and solve problems has taught me that the answers come oftentimes over an extended period of time with almost a natural solution whereby people take actions on the feelings of their hearts—which bring them peace and comfort—rather than through dramatic revelation.

Let me give you an example of how I learned this lesson. As a regional representative, I was traveling with President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988) to a stake conference for the selection of a new stake president. We had been driving in a car for more than an hour discussing the Church and priesthood administration. For some reason, I asked a question that, at the moment I asked it, I realized was inappropriate.

The question I asked President Romney was "What is the most spiritual experience you have had as an Apostle of the Lord?" There was a pause. It seemed like an eternity. Then he said, "I believe what Joseph Smith and Brigham Young taught, that if we would keep our spiritual experiences to ourselves, many more spiritual experiences could be shared with us."

It seemed like there was a long period of silence after that remark, and then he said to me, “I owe you a better answer.” Then he gave me great counsel. He said the greatest spiritual experiences of his life had been when he had been on assignment from the President of the Church or the President of the Quorum of the Twelve, as we were that day. He said: “We will interview 25 or 30 priesthood brethren, and there will be more than one who will be qualified to be the stake president. But after we have done all we can do, we will get on our knees and pray to our Heavenly Father. We will tell Him of our feelings of who the new stake president ought to be and the reasons why. We will tell Him of the needs of the stake at this time. Then He will give us a confirmation.”

It was interesting that he said “us,” because it was true on that occasion that as we knelt and prayed, we both were able to receive a confirmation.

This is one of the best examples that I have had of what the gifts of the Spirit are and how they are manifest in our life’s work. Apply the principles taught by President Romney to understand that you can have discernment and confirmation of the concerns that confront you, such as choosing a companion or choosing a career that is best for you.

Isn’t it interesting that President Romney was sent to interview 25 or 30 men to choose one stake president rather than being told directly who it should be before his arrival? This is what the Lord means when He tells us to study it out in our own minds. Too often we want to be given answers to questions and problems that, if they were given in the manner we ask for them, would take away our agency and the blessings that come from reaching out to the Lord for answers and direction.

Some think it would be nice to have “spiritual fortune cookies” we could open to find the answers to life’s challenges. Wouldn’t it be nice to have a labeled jar we could reach into for our answers? But that is not the way it is meant to be.

I would like to express my love for my companion. I would not be what I am without her. I love her dearly. She has gifts of the Spirit. We study the scriptures together, and many of the concepts I teach have come because we have had companion study and prayer. That is why I am who I am, and I must acknowledge that.

Many of you young adults are in the process of choosing a companion, and you must go through a long process before you make your decision. You have spent years thinking about what qualities or attributes you would like your companion to have. But at the same time you must be working very hard to make yourself the type of person who will attract the companion you desire.

As you go through your dating and courting relationships, I would hope that you will assess the spiritual inclinations of the individuals you’re getting to know better. How is their testimony? How do they treat their parents? How do they treat their brothers and sisters? Do they respect authority? Do they love the Lord, His servants, and the scriptures? What plans do they have for their lives?

It isn’t enough if they are handsome or beautiful, if they are rich or poor, what kind of car they drive, what kind of clothes they wear, what kind of athletic ability they have, or what kind of intellect they are. You should be seeking to understand the gifts they have that will be eternal in nature.

## Use and Develop the Gifts

We must work together to use and develop gifts of the Spirit. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said: “God loves you as He loves each and every one of His children, and His desire and purpose and glory is to have you return to Him pure and undefiled, having proven yourselves worthy of an eternity of joy in His presence” (“A Message to the Rising Generation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 30).

Satan is mindful of each of us. He is committed to our destruction. He hopes we will fail to keep the covenants we have made to our Heavenly Father at baptism and in the temple. That is the only joy and satisfaction he and his disciples will ever have—when one of us falls. Think about it.

Lehi records that an angel of God had fallen from heaven, and he became a devil, having sought that which was evil before God.

“And because he had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind” ([2 Ne. 2:18](#)).

“Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself” ([2 Ne. 2:27](#)).

## The Gift of Charity

There is one gift I would like to focus on—the gift of charity. Use charity, “the pure love of Christ” ([Moro. 7:47](#)), and give service for the right reasons. Charity is the ability to make life more meaningful for others. It is the theme of the Relief Society for a reason.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

“Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil” ([1 Cor. 13:1–5](#)).

If we have these gifts and do not give of them to lift and to strengthen those around us in a caring way, this scripture tells us that “it profiteth [us] nothing.” My wife has taught us in our home a simple phrase: “Thee lift me and I’ll lift thee, and we’ll ascend together.” There are times when we need to be lifted. There are times when we need to be strengthened. Be that kind of friend and that kind of person who lifts and strengthens others. Never make someone have to choose between your ways and the Lord’s



ways. And always make sure that you're making it easier to live God's commandments for those who are by your side and who are your friends. Then you will understand whether you have charity.

Remember that the reason we want to have the stability and strength of the gifts of the Spirit is that we want to weather the storms when they come. We will be tried in this mortal probation. We don't want to decide to learn how to swim when the boat is already sinking. When a severe disability or problem comes to a family or an individual, a high percentage of families and individuals break up, disintegrate, because they are overwhelmed and unprepared. That is why we are faithful, and that is why we remain strong and have those spiritual gifts.

Through His knowledge and obedience, when Jesus was in pain and upon the cross, He thought about taking care of His mother and spoke to John the Beloved about it (see [John 19:25-27](#)). In all of the pain we must go through, we have to remember the pain that is in others.

The gifts of the Spirit can guide and enrich our lives. They can strengthen us spiritually and temporally. They can help us bless the lives of others. Most important, they can bring us comfort in times of trial. They can help us magnify our callings. They can help guide us in our relationships. They can help us avoid being deceived.

I bear testimony that God has given us the gifts of the Spirit to allow us to be drawn more closely into His circle of love. He desires that we should receive these gifts of the Spirit and magnify them and have them grow within us. We have to teach one another how to seek after them. As we do, our faith in Him will increase and our true destiny will be fulfilled, ultimately to return to His presence as His valiant sons and daughters. May we seek after and obtain these gifts, I humbly pray.

# To Be Healed

Richard G. Scott

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Easter brings thoughts of the Savior, His life, His atonement, His resurrection, His love. He *has* risen from the dead “with healing in his wings.”<sup>1</sup>

Oh, how we all need the healing the Redeemer can provide. Mine is a message of hope for you who yearn for relief from heavy burdens that have come through no conscious act of your own while you have lived a worthy life. It is based on principles embodied in the teachings of the Savior. Your challenge may be a serious physical disability, a struggle with lingering illness, or a daily wrestle with a life-threatening disease. It may have roots in the death of a loved one, the anguish caused by another bound by sin, or come from abuse in any of its evil forms. Whatever the cause, I testify that lasting relief is available on conditions established by the Lord.

Help from the Lord always follows eternal law. The better you understand that law, the easier it is to receive His help. Some of the principles upon which His healing is predicated follow.

It is important to understand that His healing can mean being cured, or having your burdens eased, or even coming to realize that it is worth it to endure to the end patiently, for God needs brave sons and daughters who are willing to be polished when in His wisdom that is His will.

Recognize that some challenges in life will not be resolved here on earth. Paul pled thrice that “a thorn in the flesh” be removed. The Lord simply answered, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”<sup>2</sup> He gave Paul strength to compensate so he could live a most meaningful life. He wants you to learn how to be cured when that is His will and how to obtain strength to live with your challenge when He intends it to be an instrument for growth. In either case the Redeemer will support you. That is why He said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; ... For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”<sup>3</sup>

When you feel you can do no more, temporarily lay your challenges at His feet. The scriptures tell you how. For example, when the oppressed people of Alma “did pour out their hearts to him; and he did know the thoughts of their hearts,” the Lord blessed them, saying:

“I will ... ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that ... you cannot feel them, ... that ye may know ... that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.

“And ... the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did *submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord.*”<sup>4</sup>

Submitting “cheerfully and with patience” to all His will lets you learn precious if difficult lessons and eternal truths that will yield blessings.<sup>5</sup> The example of Alma and Amulek is enlightening. While striving to do good among the people of Ammonihah, they were taken captive. Amulek trusted his more seasoned companion, Alma, who led him to greater confidence in the Lord. Forced to observe women and children consumed by fire, Amulek said, “Perhaps

they will burn us also.” Alma answered, “*Be it according to the will of the Lord*”—a vital principle. “But ... our work is not finished; therefore they burn us not.”<sup>6</sup>

The chief judge and others over many days smote, spit upon, starved, questioned, and harassed them with mocking words and threats. Though commanded to speak, they withstood, bound and naked, in silence waiting patiently for the Lord to inspire them to act. Then “the power of God was upon Alma and Amulek, and they rose.” Alma cried, “Give us strength *according to our faith which is in Christ, even unto deliverance*. And they broke the cords with which they were bound.”<sup>7</sup> The earth shook; the prison walls were rent. All who smote Alma and Amulek were slain, and they were freed. On another occasion Alma prayed, “O Lord ..., have mercy on this man, and heal him *according to his faith which is in Christ*.”<sup>8</sup>

These two examples give the essential key to healing. The Lord will give relief with divine power when you seek deliverance in humility and *faith in Jesus Christ*.

Don’t say, “No one understands me; I can’t sort it out, or get the help I need.” Those comments are self-defeating. No one can help you without faith and effort on your part.<sup>9</sup> Your personal growth requires that. Don’t look for a life virtually free from discomfort, pain, pressure, challenge, or grief, for those are the tools a loving Father uses to stimulate our personal growth and understanding. As the scriptures repeatedly affirm, you will be helped as you exercise *faith in Jesus Christ*.<sup>10</sup> That faith is demonstrated by a willingness to trust His promises given through His prophets<sup>11</sup> and in His scriptures, which contain His own words. You may not fully understand how to do this yet, but trust that He will help you use your agency to open the doors for His healing to occur. Faith in Christ means we trust Him; we trust His teachings. That leads to hope, and hope brings charity, the pure love of Christ—that peaceful feeling that comes when we sense His concern, His love, and His capacity to cure us or to ease our burdens with His healing power.

Is there a potentially destructive pattern in your life? When discouraged do you feel overwhelmed and in desperation seek for others to solve your problems, overlooking your own capacity to make much improvement? Do you understand the necessity to do what you can so that the Lord can do what He will to help you?

Your access to the Savior’s help comes in different ways. The most direct and often the most powerful way is through humble, trusting prayers to your Father in Heaven, which are answered through the Holy Ghost to your spirit.<sup>12</sup> Yet this help is sometimes difficult to initiate and hard to recognize when you are learning how to pray with faith. If so, begin elsewhere. Trust someone near to you; then as you learn, that trust will extend to God and His healing.<sup>13</sup> Begin with a friend or bishop who understands the teachings of the Savior. Often they have personally obtained healing through application of truth with faith in the Redeemer. They can show you how. Or start by reading, pondering, and applying the teachings of the scriptures. They are a very powerful source of assistance.<sup>14</sup> While examples and anecdotes will help to understand principle, you will find that power comes from scriptural doctrine, as these quotes illustrate:

- **“I see that your faith is sufficient that I should heal you.”<sup>15</sup>**
- **“Come unto me with full purpose of heart.”<sup>16</sup>**
- **“Return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you.”<sup>17</sup>**
- **“Turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart, and put your trust in him, and serve him with all diligence of mind, [and] if ye do this, he will, according to his own will and pleasure, deliver you out of bondage.”<sup>18</sup>**

Even if they had unlimited time and resources, which they don't, priesthood leaders could not provide all of the help. They are agents of the Lord, and His law requires that you do your part. They will show you the way. They can provide priesthood blessings.<sup>19</sup> Your faith,<sup>20</sup> purity, and obedience and that of the priesthood holder have great effect on the pronouncement and realization of the blessing. Healing can occur in the act, yet more often it occurs over a period of time determined by the faith and obedience of the individual and the will of the Lord.<sup>21</sup> I feel that the pace is generally set by the individual, not by the Lord. He expects you to use other resources available, including competent professional help when indicated; then He provides the balance needed according to His will.<sup>22</sup>

**Love is a potent healer.** Realizing that, Satan would separate you from the power of the love of God, kindred, and friends, who want to help. He would lead you to feel that the walls are pressing in around you and there is no escape or relief. He wants you to believe you lack the capacity to help yourself and that no one else is really interested. If he succeeds, you will be driven to further despair and heartache. His strategy is to have you think you are not appreciated, loved, or wanted so that you in despair will turn to self-criticism, and in the extreme even to despising yourself and feeling evil when you are not. Remember the wisdom of the Lord "is greater than the cunning of the devil."<sup>23</sup> If you have such thoughts, break through those helpless feelings by reaching out in love to another in need. That may sound cruel and unfeeling when you long so much for healing, but it is based upon truth. Paul taught, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."<sup>24</sup>

Love comes by learning how to give it to another in a spirit of trust. If you feel deprived of love, that is difficult. Yet sustained concern and support of others will engender their interest and love. You will feel needed. You become an instrument through which the Lord can bless another. The Spirit will let you feel the Savior's concern and interest, then the warmth and strength of His love. President Kimball said: "God does notice us, and he watches over us. But it is usually through another mortal that he meets our needs. Therefore, it is vital that we serve each other."<sup>25</sup>

Challenge comes as testing from a wise, knowing Father to give experience, that we may be seasoned, mature, and grow in understanding and application of His truths. When you are worthy, a challenge becomes a contribution to growth, not a barrier to it. Yet no matter what the source of difficulty and no matter how you begin to obtain relief—through a qualified professional therapist, doctor, priesthood leader, friend, concerned parent, or loved one—no matter how you begin, those solutions will never provide a complete answer. The final healing comes through faith in Jesus Christ and His teachings, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit and obedience to His commandments. That is why human reaction to challenge in life that engenders hatred, despondency, distrust, anger, or revenge must be supplanted by the tender mercies of a loving Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son.

When anguish comes from evil acts of others, there should be punishment and corrective action taken, but the offended is not the one to initiate that action. Leave it to others who have that responsibility. Learn to forgive; though terribly hard, it will release you and open the way to a newness of life.<sup>26</sup> Time devoted by one injured to ensure the offender is punished is time wasted in the healing process.

**In summary, do what you *can* do a step at a time. Seek to understand the principles of healing from the scriptures and through prayer. Help others. Forgive. "Submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord."<sup>27</sup> Above all, *exercise faith in Jesus Christ.***

I testify that the surest, most effective, and shortest path to healing comes through application of the teachings of Jesus Christ in your life. It begins with an understanding of and appreciation for the principles of moral agency and the atonement of Jesus Christ. It leads to faith in Him and obedience to His commandments, and that brings healing.

If you are caught on a plateau of spiritual healing and don't seem to be making progress, if you seem to be constantly dependent on another mortal for support, look up in faith to Jesus Christ. I know that the Master loves you and will heal you according to your faith in Him. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

# Spiritual Gifts

By Elder Mervyn B. Arnold

Of the Seventy

The Apostle Paul teaches the importance of seeking the best gifts:

“Now concerning spiritual gifts ... **I would not have you ignorant.**

“Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. ...

“**But covet earnestly the best gifts:** and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way” ([1 Cor. 12:1–2, 31](#)).

The prophet **David O. McKay** (1873–1970) quoted Charles Jefferson, who wrote: “**The only thing which places a man above the beasts of the field is his possession of the spiritual gifts.** ... Man’s earthly existence is but a test as to whether he will concentrate his efforts, his mind, and his soul upon the things which contribute to the comfort and gratification of his physical instincts and passions, or whether he will make as his life’s end and purpose the acquisition of spiritual qualities.”<sup>1</sup>

As members of the Church, we are commanded to “**lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better**” ([D&C 25:10](#))—or, said another way, to “**seek ... earnestly the best gifts**” ([D&C 46:8](#)).

## What Are the “Best Gifts,” and Why Should We Seek Them?

The scriptures and modern-day prophets teach that there are many spiritual gifts (see [Moro. 10:8](#); [D&C 46:13–26](#)). Their purpose, among other things, is to give us strength, lead us to do good, help us resist temptation, encourage and edify us, increase our wisdom, help us judge righteously, and help us qualify for eternal life.

Think about the impact on this world if everyone would seek the sacred gift “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” ([D&C 46:13](#)). Or what if everyone sought the gift of forgiving?

Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1915–94) pointed out some less conspicuous but very important gifts:

- “the gift of asking;
- the gift of listening;
- the gift of hearing and using a still, small voice;
- the gift of being able to weep;
- the gift of avoiding contention;
- the gift of being agreeable;
- the gift of avoiding vain repetition;
- 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.”<sup>2</sup>

The Savior commanded us to become perfect (see [3 Ne. 12:48](#)). Although none of us will obtain perfection in this life, Heavenly Father will inspire us, as we ponder and pray, to seek those gifts that will best help us perfect ourselves. **President George Q. Cannon** (1827–1901) stated: “If any of us are imperfect, it is our duty to pray for the gift that will make us perfect. ... 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.”<sup>3</sup>

### How Can We Obtain Spiritual Gifts?

We are taught that in order to receive any spiritual gift, **we must be worthy of it. The Lord has said that spiritual gifts “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”** ([D&C 46:9](#)).

When we seek to obtain a spiritual gift, **we can study the examples and teachings of the Savior that pertain to that particular gift** and then try to incorporate those teachings into our life. For example, let’s suppose we are seeking the gift of charity. We could study [Moroni 7:45](#), where we would find that there are 13 separate qualities we will need to seek as part of the process of obtaining charity. Kindness is one of the first that is mentioned.

To receive a gift **we must “practise virtue and holiness before” the Lord continually** ([D&C 38:24](#)), and we “must grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth” ([D&C 50:40](#)). We must “ask of God, who giveth liberally; ... in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly ... , doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving” ([D&C 46:7](#)). **When we ask for a gift, our will must be aligned with God’s will** (see [D&C 46:30](#)).

**May we seek the best gifts so that we are not deceived. And may we always be worthy to receive the many gifts Heavenly Father has in store for us.**

# Gifts and Talents

by Elder Henry D. Taylor

of the First Quorum of the Seventy

It is possible for gifts to be bestowed, but not received. The Lord asks the question, **“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](#).) Joseph Smith’s scribe, Oliver Cowdery once became envious and desired to have the power of translation himself.

In answer to Joseph’s inquiry, the Lord promised Oliver many gifts, among them the gift of translating other ancient records that had been hidden up.

It seems that Oliver, though he had been promised the gift of translation, neglected to seek diligently to obtain it. He fearfully made a feeble attempt to translate, but without prayerful thought and study and without asking if his translations were correct. As a result of his fear, half-heartedness, and wavering, the Lord took away the privilege of translating at that time, saying, “Behold, it was expedient when you commenced, but you *feared*, and the time is past.” ([D&C 9:11](#), italics added.)

I wonder how often fear, envy, and procrastination prevent us from exercising the gifts and talents with which the Lord has blessed us.

Some of the spiritual gifts found in early Mormon-exclusive sources include:

- gifts of prophecy (including both testimony and prediction abilities)
- gifts of knowledge and wisdom,
- inspiration to praise and glorify God and rejoice,
- allowing the receiver to act as a conduit of the messages of God to humanity,
- receiving inspired, correct words in difficult circumstances,
- the power to create or restore life,
- receiving confirmation of identity and affiliation
- gifts of hope and perfect love (charity)
- ability to lead church meetings,
- ability to establish the church and faith of God, and identify those chosen by God to priesthoods and callings
- ability to receive general and specific inspiration about daily living,
- gifts of faith,
- ability to discern spirits (including physiognomy and clairvoyance),
- gifts of healing others and the ability to be healed,
- gifts of working miracles
- gifts of tongues
- ability to cast out devils and demons (exorcism),
- divine investiture of authority and priesthood
- remission of sins and purification,
- ability to receive general help (wishes),
- gifts of angelic ministrations,



- ability to receive and interpret dreams (sleeping visions),
- protection (rescue) from enemies, serpents, poisons, injury, devils, evil, and all trouble,
- safeguarding of the home,
- warnings of danger,
- ability to pass unnoticed or untouched
- gifts of waking visions and ascension,
- ability to remember things once known (memory),
- ability to control weather
- gifts of health, prosperity, and success
- gifts of posterity,
- gifts of peace and comfort,
- respect from the world leaders,
- gifts of divine glory and transfiguration
- ability to wither, consume, burn, shake, shock, or kill enemies;
- ability to bless (bind) and curse (loose | repel) an individual or group for keeping or defying the law of God,
- gift of eternal life (deification).

# How to Discover Your Gifts

Justina Lichner

Eight ideas to help you discover some of your not-so-obvious gifts.

It seems everybody always says, “If you only knew how great you are.” Well, the truth is, sometimes you just don’t know how great you are. When we don’t feel like the smartest, the nicest, the best looking, the funniest, or the most talented, our self-assurance seems to disappear.

But think about this: we are all sons and daughters of Heavenly Father. As such, He has given us unique gifts and talents to help us fulfill our divine potential. As we discover these gifts, we are reminded of our divine worth as His children, and we are able to draw closer to Him and help others do the same.

“I know our Heavenly Father has many gifts and talents that He wishes to bestow upon us, but they ‘are made conditional on our asking for them. Blessings require some work or effort on our part’ (Bible Dictionary, [‘Prayer’](#)).” —Elder Mervyn B. Arnold of the Seventy, “Where Am I? How to Discover and Develop Your Spiritual Gifts and Talents,” *New Era*, Dec. 2014, 37.

Discover Your Gifts

Here are eight ideas to help you discover some of your not-so-obvious gifts:

## **1. Ask others to let you know.**

Sometimes we don’t see in ourselves what others can see in us. Ask a friend, relative, or Church leader to write you a note about a gift or talent they see in you.

## **2. Look for gifts in adversity.**

During hard times we can choose between letting our best qualities or our worst qualities come out. When times are tough, focus on discovering and using your best qualities and gifts.

## **3. Pray for the help to recognize your gifts.**

Heavenly Father knows our divine potential. If we have a difficult time seeing that in ourselves, He can help. You can pray for help to recognize your gifts.

## **4. Don’t be afraid to branch out.**

Do we only develop the gifts that we already know we have because we’re too afraid to do something we haven’t done before? Now’s the time to try something new and discover unknown gifts.

## **5. Search the word of God.**

Heavenly Father helps us discover and develop our gifts through clues found in the scriptures—usually through invitations to act. Take this scripture for example: “Cease to contend one with another; cease to speak evil one of another” ([D&C 136:23](#)). What gifts could you develop from this invitation? The gift of speaking kind words, the gift to calm others, the gift of restraint, and more. And that’s just from one verse!

### **Help Others Discover Their Gifts**

We see things in others that they may not be able to see in themselves. This week, share those things with a friend or family member. Here are some questions to ask yourself that can help you discover the gifts of others:

1. What is something they’ve done to help you?
2. What do you like about them?
3. What are they good at?
4. What are they trying to get better at?

### **6. Look outside yourself.**

Sometimes our best qualities come out when we’re not focusing on ourselves but focusing instead on how we can work with and help others. When we do that, we’ll see that we have many Christlike gifts.

### **7. Think about people you look up to.**

Who are some of your role models? You can make a list of all of the gifts your role models have and, instead of focusing on which gifts you don’t have in common, celebrate discovering the ones you do.

### **8. Reflect on your family.**

What gifts do you have that your siblings, parents, or grandparents have too? Go further! Research family history, discover stories, and identify even more gifts you share with your family.

Be Perfected in Him

We don’t have to be the best at everything to know we’re worthwhile children of God. We just need to be dedicated to discovering and developing our gifts and talents—then, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can become perfect in Him (see [Moroni 10:32](#)).