
Gifts of the Spirit

D&C 46:13–26

The Lord bestows gifts of the Spirit upon the righteous. In Doctrine and Covenants 46, twelve gifts of the Spirit are named. The first is the gift to know “by the Holy Ghost . . . that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world” (D&C 46:13). The second gift is to believe in the testimony of others that Jesus is the Savior (v. 14). The third and fourth gifts are to know “the differences of administration” (v. 15) and to discern the “diversities of operations, whether they be of God” (v. 16). The remaining gifts are wisdom and knowledge (vv. 17–18), faith to be healed (v. 19), faith to heal (v. 20), and power to work miracles in the name of Jesus (v. 21). There are also the gifts to prophesy (v. 22), discern spirits (v. 23), speak in tongues (v. 24), and interpret tongues (v. 25).

The first two gifts of the Spirit named have everything to do with a testimony that Jesus is the Christ. President Thomas S. Monson told a story about the power of testimony at the April 2013 general conference:

When I served as a mission president in Canada more than 50 years ago, one young missionary who came from a small, rural community marveled at the size of Toronto. He was short in stature but tall in testimony. Not long after his arrival, together with his companion, he called at the home of Elmer Pollard in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. Feeling sorry for the young men who, during a blinding blizzard, were going house to house, Mr. Pollard invited the missionaries into his home. They presented to him their message. He did not catch the spirit. In due time he asked that they leave and not return. His last words to the elders as they departed his front porch were spoken in derision: “You can’t tell me you actually believe Joseph Smith was a prophet of God!”

The door was shut. The elders walked down the path. Our country boy spoke to his companion: “Elder, we didn’t respond to Mr. Pollard. He

said we didn't believe Joseph Smith was a true prophet. Let's return and bear our testimonies to him." At first the more experienced missionary hesitated but finally agreed to accompany his companion. Fear struck their hearts as they approached the door from which they had just been ejected. They knocked, confronted Mr. Pollard, spent an agonizing moment, and then with power borne of the Spirit, our inexperienced missionary spoke: "Mr. Pollard, you said we didn't really believe Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. I testify to you that Joseph was a prophet. He did translate the Book of Mormon. He saw God the Father and Jesus the Son. I know it."

Sometime later, Mr. Pollard, now Brother Pollard, stood in a priesthood meeting and declared, "That night I could not sleep. Resounding in my ears I heard the words 'Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. I know it. I know it. I know it.' The next day I telephoned the missionaries and asked them to return. Their message, coupled with their testimonies, changed my life and the lives of my family."¹

For those who think that not recognizing the gifts of the Spirit is nothing more than an omission, the Prophet Joseph Smith said,

Nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit when they think they have the Spirit of God. Thousands have felt the influence of its terrible power and baneful effects. Long pilgrimages have been undertaken, penances endured, and pain, misery and ruin have followed in their train; nations have been convulsed, kingdoms overthrown, provinces laid waste, and blood, carnage and desolation are [habiliments] in which it has been clothed.²

¹ Thomas S. Monson, "Come, All Ye Sons of God," *Ensign*, May 2013.

² History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842], 1305. Joseph Smith Papers.