

Section Two: Zeal Without Knowledge  
Chapter Two: The Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost, Honesty Etc.

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## Introduction

*“I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: **they cannot stand the fire at all**. How many will be able to abide a celestial law, and go through and receive their exaltation, I am unable to say, as many are called, but few are chosen.”*

**-Joseph Smith** (TPJS, p.331)

*“BAPTISM OF FIRE.*

*To gain salvation every accountable person must receive two baptisms. They are baptism of water **and of the Spirit**. (John 3:3-5.) The baptism of the Spirit is called the **baptism of fire** and of the **Holy Ghost**. (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; 2 Ne. 31:13-14; 3 Ne. 11:35; 12:1-2; Morm. 7:10; D. & C. 20:41; 33:11; 39:6.) By the power of the **Holy Ghost**-who is the Sanctifier (3 Ne. 27:19-21)-dross, iniquity, carnality, sensuality, and every evil thing is **burned out** of the repentant soul as if by **fire**; the cleansed person becomes literally a new creature of the **Holy Ghost**. (Mosiah 27:24-26.) He is born again. The **baptism of fire** is not something in addition to the receipt of the **Holy Ghost**; rather, it is the actual enjoyment of the gift which is offered by the laying on of hands at the time of baptism. "Remission of sins," the Lord says, comes "by baptism and **by fire**, yea, even the **Holy Ghost**." (D. & C. 19:31; 2 Ne. 31 :17.) Those who receive the baptism of fire are "**filled as if with fire**." (Hela. 5 :45.)”*

**-Bruce R. McConkie** (Mormon Doctrine, p. 73)

I know that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of God and what he said was true. What Joseph Smith is saying here was confirmed in Isaiah:

### **Isaiah 3/ 2 Nephi 13**

1 For behold, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole staff of bread, and the whole stay of water

#### **2 Nephi 13: 1 “The Stay and the Staff”**

*The necessities of bread and water will dwindle during the siege. “The stay and the staff” described in 2 Nephi 13:1 foreshadows a spiritual famine of those who reject the Lord, who is “the whole staff of bread”—the bread of life—and “the whole stay of water”—the living water.*

**-Book of Mormon Institute Student Manual** (Chapter 10: 2 Nephi 11-16)

Saints will reject the whole staff of bread, the whole stay of water- celestial law, and the hope of this chapter, as well as this entire section “Zeal Without Knowledge”, is to help people find truth. We learn from the Lord in Doctrine and Covenants that the wise virgins were not deceived because they took the Holy Spirit for their guide (D&C 45:57).

## Section II: Zeal Without Knowledge

In this chapter we will explain what the Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost and the Second Comforter are; we will also lay out how tribalism, honesty, and the “covenant path” work into this same topic. Members’ misconceptions about this topic gives way to many of their confusions and ultimate apostasies. There are members today claiming to have felt the Spirit when listening to things that were blatantly untrue, while other members claim to have felt the Spirit leave, or felt the spirit of the Devil or contention when presented with the truth. If one had a fundamental understanding of the Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost and the Second Comforter, etc. one would reason the folly in the hereto mentioned conclusions.

President Hunter warned of a trend that he saw developing, a trend that was caused or was a consequence of members no longer taking the time to understand fundamental definitions and doctrines taught in the Lord’s restored church.

*“Let me offer a word of caution...I think if we are not careful..., we may begin to try to counterfeit the true influence of the Spirit of the Lord by unworthy and manipulative means. I get concerned when it appears that strong emotion or free-flowing tears are equated with the presence of the Spirit. Certainly the Spirit of the Lord can bring strong emotional feelings, including tears, but that outward manifestation ought not to be confused with the presence of the Spirit itself.”* (The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter, 184)

Preach My Gospel tacks on this clarifier to the end of that quote, “The Spirit of the Lord always edifies” (PMG, p.99). May I be permitted by the angry masses to be here bold and proclaim matter-of-factly that President Hunter’s fears have become a reality in the Church. As I have said, members are hearing verifiable lies and outright apostasy and claiming to feel the “Holy Ghost” when they do it. You are not feeling the Holy Ghost, you are following after strange spirits and if you do not learn how to “Hear Him”, if you do not take the real Holy Ghost as your guide, you will be deceived.

Much like the earlier chapter dealing with *Zion, a City of Holiness, New Jerusalem*, a lot of members’ confusion arrives when members seek to combine multiple cities that are named similar into one lump and then try to make sense of it from there- the problem being there are vast differences between those cities. Likewise, people combine the Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost and the Second Comforter into one lump and then attempt to understand it. These three things are similar but yet have vast differences.

## **The Light of Christ**

Non-members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints would simply know this as a conscience. And in every language, there is a word that describes this unknown (to them) entity or ability for man to discern right from wrong.

### **Moroni 7:15-19**

15 For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.

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16 For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for 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.

17 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; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.

18 And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged.

19 Wherefore, I beseech of you, brethren, that ye should search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.

Prophets have taught that the Light of Christ is given unto every man and that the heed one pays to it will determine the size of that fire burning within the individual. One can reach a point in time in which this spirit or Light of Christ “ceases to strive within them.” So when the scriptures say, “the spirit of the Lord ceased to strive with the wicked” this is obviously not talking about the Holy Ghost or gift of the Holy Ghost for the wicked never had it- or as Bruce R. McConkie stated, “this is the Spirit which the Lord is withholding from wicked persons in the world (D&C 63:32), not the Holy Ghost which the world never had. (John 14:17) That is, the Light of Christ ceases to strive with the wicked in that it no longer guides and entices them to seek gospel light and walk in the course that will prepare them to receive the gospel and all its saving truths (D&C 84:45-48)” (Mormon Doctrine, p.753).

The Light of Christ in an individual is what enables them to recognize the messengers of Christ and is what is responsible for the feelings of goodwill, love, comfort, familiarity (i.e., “felt like family”) etc. The Light of Christ is very much in the heart of an individual, and it is a power that can enlighten the mind of man but does not act upon the intelligence of a man. There are many in the world who are extremely charitable in their actions who are not members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and thus do not have the gift of the Holy Ghost, but yet they feel the love of Christ “burning” within their bosom. There are many people in the world having “spiritual experiences”, in some cases truly profound, meaningful, and spiritual- but these experiences in themselves are not indications of anything more than the Light of Christ that is within them, or a temporary experience with the Holy Ghost.

The more an individual follows the path of Godly good, the brighter that flame or Light of Christ in that individual becomes and the contrary is true for the path of wickedness or the natural man. By this light shall all mankind be judged, for if one was unwilling to follow this light, they would be unwilling to follow the higher light, or intelligence of the Father. This light is a preparatory light, a light that when heeded will bring somebody from a teletial sphere to a terrestrial sphere, and remember, all spheres of glory are spheres of intelligence. (Doctrine and Covenants 93:36)

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Adam and Eve were in the garden not knowing good from evil (2 Nephi 2: 22-25), meaning they did not have the Light of Christ activated in them. Partaking of the fruit of the Knowledge of Good and Evil or the fruit which represented the love of God, i.e., the fruit of the Light of Christ, their eyes were opened and they knew good from evil (Moses 4: 28). Subsequently from that point on, Adam and Eve were enabled to have children, children being born with the Light of Christ, for we had the Light of Christ before we were born (Doctrine and Covenants 93:23, 29–30, President Boyd K. Packer, The Light of Christ, Ensign April 2005). Thus all the posterity of Adam can be held to account to a righteous judgement based on their adherence to that light.

## The “Feels”

### **Galatians 5:**

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,  
23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.  
24 And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.  
25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

This is where the importance related to the order at which the conclusion is arrived at becomes infinitely important. Does one feel good about something and then can safely arrive at the conclusion that said deed must have been from God *or* must one first do and then judge the effects of the fruit?

Person one hears something, it makes them feel good, and arrives at last- “ergo it must be of God!” Using the same logic as person one, I could have sex with my next-door neighbor, it feels good in the moment, and I could arrive at last- “ergo it must be of God!” Obviously that is not the way to use the Light of Christ.

Person two hears something, it makes them feel good so they then act on that knowledge-once the deed is done they reflect on the deed and find the good feelings are no longer there, but guilt and remorse and emptiness are found, and they arrive at last- “ergo, that was not of God!”

We don’t hear and judge on emotion, or Christ simply would have said so. Instead, we do what Christ counsels us to do:

### **John 7:**

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.  
17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Moroni adds an additional layer to this while warning the Saints on how to properly utilize the Light of Christ in judging.

### **Moroni 7:5-14**

5 For I remember the word of God which saith by their works ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also.

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6 For behold, God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good; for if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with real intent it profiteth him nothing.

7 For behold, it is not counted unto him for righteousness.

8 For behold, if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God.

9 And likewise also is it counted evil unto a man, if he shall pray and not with real intent of heart; yea, and it profiteth him nothing, for God receiveth none such.

10 Wherefore, a man being evil cannot do that which is good; neither will he give a good gift.

11 For behold, a bitter fountain cannot bring forth good water; neither can a good fountain bring forth bitter water; wherefore, a man being a servant of the devil cannot follow Christ; and if he follow Christ he cannot be a servant of the devil.

12 Wherefore, 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.

13 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.

14 Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

Moroni here teaches that the motivation for the act is just as important than the act itself. A Grandmother doing Meals on Wheels for no other reason than to help people is of God, whereas members of other faiths doing deeds of service with the intent to increase the number of their flock is counted unto them evil. For as Nephi said, "There are only two churches, the Church of the Lamb of God and the Church of the Devil" (1 Nephi 14: 10) or as Jesus Christ himself said, "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." (Matthew 12: 30) Meaning, if somebody in or outside the Church is attempting to circumvent the keys of God, it doesn't matter how "good you think you feel" you are heeding to the Spirit of the Devil. Moroni also gives another crucial point on how to discern in your life, "I remembered the word of God". Another example you can turn to for this is that of Alma:

### **Mosiah 26:33-34**

33 And it came to pass when Alma had heard these words he wrote them down that he might have them, and that he might judge the people of that church according to the commandments of God.

34 And it came to pass that Alma went and judged those that had been taken in iniquity, *according to the word of the Lord.*

So even with the Light of Christ it is important to recognize that it is not as simple as “following your gut”. You need to first seek truth to the best you are able to obtain it, then live according to the truth you’ve received, and finally judge the fruits of your labors to make sure that you are in fact following the right spirit.

## **Tribalism**

### **Tribalism**

trib•al•ism trīˈbə-līzˈəm ►

- n. The organization, culture, or beliefs of a tribe.
- n. A strong feeling of identity with and loyalty to one's tribe or group.
- n. The state of existing in separate tribes; tribal relation or feeling.

Synonym: ***Religionism***

So, we are born into this world, we have the Light of Christ within us... What next?

### **Abraham 3:**

24 And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell;

25 And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

26 And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.

*“I am privileged also to speak to many who are not members of our church and who may not be familiar with all of its doctrines and beliefs.*

*Today, I would like to address both groups, members of our church as well as others, about one of the most important tenets of our faith and one of the most precious of God’s gifts to mankind. It is our freedom, our agency, our inalienable and divine right to choose what we will believe and what we will not believe, and to choose what we want to be and what we want to do. I wish to speak of our responsibility and our opportunity to choose God, and the good, and eternal life; or to select evil, the destructive, and that which leads to painful misery and despair...*

*We came to our mortality, like Jeremiah, known by God as his literal spirit children, having the privilege to choose our personal path on matters of belief and religious conviction. With Christ’s*

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*triumph in heaven in overcoming Lucifer, and later his triumph on earth in overcoming the effects of Adam's fall and the death of all mankind, "the children of men" continue "free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not be acted upon. ...*

*"Wherefore, men are free ... to choose liberty and eternal life, through [Christ] 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. 2:26–27)"*

- **President Howard W. Hunter** (The Golden Thread of Choice, October 1989)

Even though the choice of "who we stand next to" is one of the very first choices of any consequence we make, and even though it seems like simply a matter of "personal preference", it does more to "prove us" than any other single choice. It determines where we are going as well as where we will end up.

Elder Bednar taught,

"How will I know where I'm going to go? I can answer that for you. You don't have to die to find out.

If living the gospel for you is hard, if it's a chore. *"Uh, if I just wasn't a Latter-day Saint I could have fun."*

If that's what you're like when you die, guess where you're going to go? With other people who feel the same way – because that's the law that you've learned to love.

If during the course of your life, a little bit at a time, you have learned to love living the gospel, guess where you're going when you die?

*With people who love living the gospel.*

The Lord is not going to have to tell you when you come into His presence, you won't think, "Gee, I hope he's in a good mood today. I hope he gives me some extra points. So my grade will be a little bit better."

When you come into His presence, you will go where you know you belong. Based on what we have desired to do and become while we have lived on the earth.

If you can look your Bishop in the eye because you're worthy and clean, you already know what the day of judgment will be like.

There's no awkwardness, no embarrassment, no shame. Living the gospel is not hard. Not living the gospel is what's hard. *And it is joyful to live it.*" (2016 Fireside, Chile, during Q&A)

President Nelson recently in a heartfelt pleading warned,

*"...choose to believe in Jesus Christ. If you have doubts about God the Father and His Beloved Son or the validity of the Restoration or the veracity of Joseph Smith's divine calling as a*

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*prophet, choose to believe and stay faithful. Take your questions to the Lord and to other faithful sources. Study with the desire to believe rather than with the hope that you can find a flaw in the fabric of a prophet's life or a discrepancy in the scriptures. **Stop increasing your doubts by rehearsing them with other doubters.** Allow the Lord to lead you on your journey of spiritual discovery.” (April 2021, Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains)*

So how is it that we “join God’s tribe” and stand with His people?

## Covenants

### **Covenant (True to the Faith)**

Sometimes denotes an agreement between persons (1 Sam. 23:18) or nations (1 Sam. 11:1); more often between God and man; but in this latter case it is important to notice that the two parties to the agreement do not stand in the relation of independent and equal contractors. God in His good pleasure fixes the terms, which man accepts. The same word is sometimes rendered “testament.”

The gospel is so arranged that principles and ordinances are received by covenant, placing the recipient under strong obligation and responsibility to honor the commitment. Thus the severe consequences to Ananias and Sapphira, who deliberately broke their covenant and lied unto God (Acts 5:1–11).

### **Exodus 19:**

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine

The Lord separates “His people” from “all people”, forming a “tribe” or “group” which becomes known as “the covenant people”, and he does this through covenants! Covenants are between families, and the Lord, and land.

### **Exodus 23:**

29 I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee.

30 By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.

31 And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the driver: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee.

32 Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.

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33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

### **Numbers 24:**

2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.

### **Ezekiel 45:**

8 In the land shall be his possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; and the rest of the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

### **Numbers 34:**

18 And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.

The Lord promises to wipe another group out as He increases “His group”. He then makes borders to separate these groups from each other. He then says that “His group” won’t “make covenants” or “promises” with the other group, and warns them of the consequences of doing so. He even says they shouldn’t allow them within their own borders. Tribalism.

### **Judges 2:**

1 And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

Once again, Lord makes covenants with groups for specific pieces of land and the Lord’s promises cannot ever be broken on His end.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 78:**

11 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, to prepare and organize yourselves by a bond or everlasting covenant that cannot be broken.

12 And he who breaketh it shall lose his office and standing in the church, and shall be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption.

13 Behold, this is the preparation wherewith I prepare you, and the foundation, and the ensample which I give unto you, whereby you may accomplish the commandments which are given you;

14 That through my providence, notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world;

### **Doctrine and Covenants 54:**

3 And if your brethren desire to escape their enemies, let them repent of all their sins, and become truly humble before me and contrite.

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4 And as the covenant which they made unto me has been broken, even so it has become void and of none effect.

5 And wo to him by whom this offense cometh, for it had been better for him that he had been drowned in the depth of the sea.

6 But blessed are they who have kept the covenant and observed the commandment, for they shall obtain mercy.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 84:**

40 Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved.

41 But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come.

42 And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 131:**

1 In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

2 And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

3 And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

4 He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.

### **Hebrews 7:**

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

Breaking covenants makes all the promises void. Receiving the priesthood is received by oath, or covenant, and like the covenant of marriage is required to obtain the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom. The law, or Word of the Lord, or LOGOS, is not enough- one must promise, take an oath, a covenant and then live it to become the Sons of God.

**Alma 53:**

11 And because of their oath they had been kept from taking up arms against their brethren; for they had taken an oath that they never would shed blood more; and according to their oath they would have perished; yea, they would have suffered themselves to have fallen into the hands of their brethren, had it not been for the pity and the exceeding love which Ammon and his brethren had had for them.

**Alma 24:**

21 Now when the people saw that they were coming against them they went out to meet them, and prostrated themselves before them to the earth, and began to call on the name of the Lord; and thus they were in this attitude when the Lamanites began to fall upon them, and began to slay them with the sword.

22 And thus without meeting any resistance, they did slay a thousand and five of them; and we know that they are blessed, for they have gone to dwell with their God.

23 Now when the Lamanites saw that their brethren would not flee from the sword, neither would they turn aside to the right hand or to the left, but that they would lie down and perish, and praised God even in the very act of perishing under the sword—

24 Now when the Lamanites saw this they did forbear from slaying them; and there were many whose hearts had swollen in them for those of their brethren who had fallen under the sword, for they repented of the things which they had done.

When we truly come unto God, we realize the importance of making and keeping covenants as being central to our salvation- these people would rather die than break a promise and thus will inherit mercy and forgiveness and the kingdom of glory, while those who are “oath breakers” and “liars” will be “thrust down to hell” (2 Nephi 9: 34)

## **Promises, Pledges, Bonds, etc.**

**1 Samuel 18:**

3 *Then Jonathan and David made a covenant*, because he loved him as his own soul.

**2 Corinthians 8:**

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, *but also in the sight of men.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:**

12 That *ye may walk honestly toward them that are without*, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

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### **Romans 12:**

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. *Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

It is important to note that making promises and covenants does not only apply to the Lord. People can covenant with each other and the Lord expects us to keep those promises. We can also covenant with the devil to obtain pieces of his power. Once again, we choose who to covenant with (tribalism), but we don't get to choose the consequences of our actions (hypocrisy- living one way but expecting to be treated as though you are living another way).

### **Numbers 30:**

2 If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 136:**

18 Zion shall be redeemed in mine own due time.

19 And if any man shall seek to build up himself, and seeketh not my counsel, he shall have no power, and his folly shall be made manifest.

20 Seek ye; *and keep all your pledges one with another*

### **1 Nephi 4:**

37 And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him.

A follower of God does what they say they will do- they make and keep their promises, pledges, and bonds to each other!

### **Matthew 14:**

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

Even evil men in the world understand the value of keeping your word/promises!

## **Walking the Covenant Path**

*Ever heard of the “covenant path”? (churchofjesuschrist.org)*

*You might have heard leaders talk about the “covenant path” before. Here’s what that means!*

- *A “covenant” is a sacred promise between us and God. He sets the terms of the agreement and blesses us if we are faithful.*
- *A “path” can mean a physical walkway, but that’s not what we’re talking about here. This path refers to the collection of ordinances that mark the way for us to return to Heavenly Father. These sacred acts are performed by the authority of the priesthood and are scattered throughout our lifetime.*

*So what does “covenant path” mean? It means that our promises, paired with priesthood power, bring us back to Heavenly Father. The path includes:*

- *Being baptized.*
- *Receiving the Holy Ghost.*
- *Going through the temple.*
- *Being sealed in marriage.*

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/inspiration/youve-probably-heard-the-phrase-covenant-path-before?lang=eng>

Ergo, “the covenant path” is simply a visual metaphor to describe the covenants that we make with the Lord that lead us back to His presence. So, if the actual path is “making covenants”, what would be “walking the covenant path”? Honesty. Making the covenants, saying the words, but then never actually “keeping” said covenants would make the covenant a lie, void! As we honestly keep our covenants, it is as though we are walking on a path that is leading back to Christ. If we walk on any path other than the “covenant path”, it will not lead back to Christ, and if we don’t actually walk on the path we won’t get anywhere.

It is important to note that every covenant, bond, pledge, promise, etc. is based entirely on honesty- even amongst the wicked. If those who made the pledges, bonds, etc. don't honestly keep and obey then the pledge, bonds, etc. will be void and that person's standing in the “tribe” will be called into question. Honesty, especially with the wicked, is still a trait highly sought after, with “secret combinations” punishing the dishonest with literal death. We should likewise

treat the “covenant path” with such honesty.

## **Honesty: More Important than We Realize**

### **Proverbs 12:**

- 12 The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.
- 13 The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.
- 14 A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompence of a man’s hands shall be rendered unto him.
- 15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.
- 16 A fool’s wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.
- 17 He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.
- 18 There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.
- 19 The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.
- 20 Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.
- 21 There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.
- 22 Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight.
- 23 A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

What comes out of your mouth is more important than how it comes out. A fool cares about his own opinions while the wise hearken to counsel, i.e., “they listen”. A fool’s face is easily seen, he makes no attempt at hiding his foolishness while the prudent keeps his shame in his own closet. Speaking truth shows one's righteousness, while speaking falsehoods and lies shows one's unrighteousness. Those who speak truths will be exalted and endure, while those of a lying tongue “are but for a moment”, i.e., as I have always said, “some are called to endure, others to be endured”. The wicked are full of mischief, or guile, etc. Lying lips are abominations to the Lord while those who speak truth are loved of the Lord.

Joseph Smith said, “I love that man better who swears a stream as long as my arm yet deals justice to his neighbors and mercifully deals his substance to the poor, than the long, smooth-faced hypocrite.” (TPJS, pg. 303).

What one speaks is more important than how one speaks it.

## Section II: Zeal Without Knowledge

### **Luke 8:**

11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground *are they, which in an honest and good heart*, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

Firstly, the Lord is breaking up His Church into Tribes, for all those who “received the seed”, which is “the Word”, receive it through baptism- this is one of many cases where the Lord himself separated sections of His church into groups or groupings. Was the Lord wrong or evil for doing this? God forbid. We are to look at the different groups, judge them, and then ask ourselves “which group do we want to be in?” and then do what is required to be in that group. The huge difference between the different “spots of ground” i.e., “members of the church” is here identified as having “an honest and good heart”. Honesty is key.

### **2 Corinthians 4:**

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the flight of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

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7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

God knows what it means to “handle the Word of God deceitfully” and so should we. When people do this they literally blind their own eyes, they deafen their own ears, and the truth, the gospel then becomes “hid to them that are lost”. You can know the difference because one side “preaches not of themselves, but of Christ and His doctrine”, i.e., “they preach no opinions but only Christ’s doctrine”. Those holding the truth of God in our hearts, not the opinions of men, will be troubled/perplexed/and persecuted/cast down but they are not distressed/in despair/forsaken/or destroyed.

### **2 Corinthians 13:**

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

If you are dishonest the Lord is not in you. Sharpness in the Word of God is the power of Christ given to men for edification and not destruction; it’s to prevent your destruction.

### **Philippians 4:**

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

### **Article of Faith 13:**

“13 We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all

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things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.”

### **Temple Recommend Question number 9:**

“Do you strive to be honest in all that you do?”

Being a dishonest person not only makes one unworthy of the Savior to be within us, but it also makes us unworthy to be within the Lord’s house. Period.

### **1 Peter 2:**

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Dishonesty is connected to “lusts of the flesh”, which is why you see it so often in adultery, priestcrafts, etc.

### **Proverbs 16:**

8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

Once again, better to speak less but honestly than more with dishonesty- what one speaks is more important than how or how much.

### **Jacob 4:**

13 Behold, my brethren, he that prophesieth, let him prophesy to the understanding of men; for the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls. But behold, we are not witnesses alone in these things; for God also spake them unto prophets of old.

14 But behold, the Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets, and sought for things that they could not understand. Wherefore, because of their blindness, which blindness came by looking beyond the mark, they must needs fall; for God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble.

The Spirit doesn’t and cannot lie. Those who “have felt the Spirit” in a lie were following strange spirits. The admonition that honesty is also tied to plain speaking is laid out. Those who would

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rather hear “evil/lies/falsehoods” spoken in a “soft tongue” have plainness removed from them and they are left with things they cannot understand.

### **Alma 7:**

20 I perceive that it has been made known unto you, by the testimony of his word, that he cannot walk in crooked paths; neither doth he vary from that which he hath said; neither hath he a shadow of turning from the right to the left, or from that which is right to that which is wrong; therefore, his course is one eternal round.

21 And he doth not dwell in unholy temples; neither can filthiness or anything which is unclean be received into the kingdom of God; therefore I say unto you the time shall come, yea, and it shall be at the last day, that he who is filthy shall remain in his filthiness.

The Lord is perfectly honest, he only goes and does exactly where and what he has said he would do. Those who believe He does/can/will/etc. do things differently than what he has promised, are filthy and the Lord cannot dwell in them. (This is taught by Joseph Smith in great detail in The Lectures on Faith.)

### **Alma 53:**

20 And they were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted.

21 Yea, they were men of truth and soberness, for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him.

All of the attributes listed first were overshadowed, lesser in value and importance to that of them being “men of truth”. *Let that sink it.*

### **Doctrine and Covenants 97:**

6 And to the residue of the school, I, the Lord, am willing to show mercy; nevertheless, there are those that must needs be chastened, and their works shall be made known.

7 The ax is laid at the root of the trees; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. I, the Lord, have spoken it.

8 Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me.

9 For I, the Lord, will cause them to bring forth as a very fruitful tree which is planted in a goodly land, by a pure stream, that yieldeth much precious fruit.

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10 Verily I say unto you, that it is my will that a house should be built unto me in the land of Zion, like unto the pattern which I have given you.

The Lord promises mercy but only after being chastened. If you don't produce good fruit during your chastening you will be hewn down. The honest are identified as a major key to understand who will be in the land of Zion, i.e., The New Jerusalem.

### **Honesty (Modern Witnesses)**

*"There is nothing more important than being true to the covenants we make with the Lord. Our eternal life depends on the principle of honesty."*

*"When we are honest with others we are keeping our covenants. When we keep our covenants we are being honest with the Lord. We cannot separate the two."*

**-Elder Richard J. Maynes** (The Eternal Importance of Honesty, Ensign April 2010)

*"The time is now to rededicate our lives to eternal ideals and values, to make those changes that we may need to make in our own lives and conduct to conform to the Savior's teachings."*

*From the beginning to the end of His ministry, Jesus asked His followers to adopt new, higher standards in contrast to their former ways. As believers, they were to live by a spiritual and moral code that would separate them not only from the rest of the world but also even from some of their traditions. He asks nothing less of those who follow Him today.*

***Do we really believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, and virtuous? On this test may hinge the survival of our society, our constitutional government, and our eternal salvation."***

**- Elder David B. Haight** (Ethics and Honesty, 1987 Semi-annual General Conference, emphasis added)

*"Some people deal honestly because they are watched and are obliged to; but a truly honest man will do right because he loves righteousness and honesty the best. These things indicate greater things. It is said a straw will show the way the wind blows. If a man is willing to be dishonest, or to do anything or permit anything that will bring mischief upon you in your absence, your interests would not be safe in his hands. That spirit will lead him to persuade your wives and children away from you, when you are dead, if he can, or to let someone else do it unrebuked; and upon the same principle the spread of good and great things are made to depend and to bring their consequences."*

**- Elder F. D. Richards** (Israel to Be Exalted By Righteousness—The Elders Should At All Times Rebuke Iniquity March 22, 1857)

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*"Honesty is as basic to true Christianity as baptism or the resurrection of the dead. It is the foundation of all character development. Just as no man can see the kingdom of heaven without baptism, as explained by the Savior (John 3:3-5) so it may be said with equal truth that no dishonest man, except he repents, can see the kingdom of heaven."*

- **Mark E. Petersen** (We Believe in Being Honest, Conference Report, October 1966, pp. 105-108)

*"If we are without guile, we are honest, true, and righteous. All of these are attributes of Deity and are required of the Saints. Those who are honest are fair and truthful in their speech, straightforward in their dealings, free of deceit, and above stealing, misrepresentation, or any other fraudulent action. Honesty is of God and dishonesty of the devil; the devil was a liar from the beginning. Righteousness is living a life that is in harmony with the laws, principles, and ordinances of the gospel.*

*Of far greater concern than the outward acts of guile are the inner feelings and the attitudes that motivate them. ...The objective often is to get gain or to profit, regardless of the injury, loss, or damage to others. This attitude is totally contrary to the principles of the gospel. It hinders or thwarts the spiritual progress of anyone afflicted by it. The practice of guile prevents the Holy Ghost from prompting, guiding, and instructing us, leaving us ever more susceptible to the buffetings of Satan. When we break the commandments, we close ourselves to God's influence and open ourselves to Satan's influence.*

*If we practice guile in small matters, we soon can find ourselves entangled in an ever-increasing, unending spiral, because each lie or other deception often requires a larger one to cover the first. Moreover, the practice of guile often leads to hypocrisy, which is the false pretense of virtue or righteousness and pretending to be something that we are not. If we know what is right and profess to live by that knowledge but, in fact, do not, we are hypocrites.*

*'There were no robbers, nor murderers, ... but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God.'*"

- **Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin** (Without Guile)

*"Honesty is a principle of salvation in the kingdom of God. Without it there can be no salvation...Dishonesty is directly related to selfishness, which is its origin and source. Selfishness is at the root of nearly all the disorders that afflict us, and man's inhumanity to man continues to make countless thousands mourn...Most of us claim to be Christians, bearing the name of Christ and worshiping in his holy name. But are we really Christians at heart? Is our worship truly acceptable to him? This we may determine by asking if we truly keep his commandments. If not, are we worthy to bear his name?...Christians must learn that there is nothing Christlike in deception. There is no righteousness in hypocrisy. There is nothing good*

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*about a lie... We must recognize that if we are not honest we are not clean, in the eyes of God, and that no unclean thing may enter his presence. To resort to dishonest practices is to apostatize from the Christian way of life. Apostasy from Christ becomes anti-Christ, and who among us can afford that? To be anti-Christ is to be against him, to fight against him, even in silent disobedience. To fight against Christ is to put God out of our lives, and that above all things invites self-destruction."*

- **Elder Mark E. Peterson** (Honesty, a Principle of Salvation)

*"We need to learn, practice, study, know, and understand how angels live with each other. When this community comes to the point to be perfectly honest and upright, you will never find a poor person: none will lack; all will have sufficient. Every man, woman, and child will have all they need just as soon as they all become honest. When the majority of a community are dishonest, it maketh the honest portion poor, for the dishonest serve and enrich themselves at their expense. You know that I think that this people are the best people that there are; yet we need to train ourselves, to study ourselves, and study the principles of truth and righteousness, until we can discern that which is right from that which is wrong in the least particular within ourselves; and you will find that to answer every purpose, without judging our neighbors as much as many do."*

- **Brigham Young** (JD 6:76)

*"Let us live honest, sincere lives. Let us be honest with ourselves, honest with our brethren, honest with our families, honest with men with whom we deal—always honest; for eyes are upon us, and the foundation of all character rests upon the principles of honesty and sincerity."*

-**David O. McKay** (Priesthood Inherent in God—From Him It Must Emanate, October 1967, emphasis added)

*"How rare a gem, how precious a jewel is the man or woman in whom there is neither guile nor deception nor falsehood! ...*

*"... Where there is honesty, other virtues will follow"*

-**Gordon B. Hinckley** (in Conference Report, Apr. 1976, 93; or Ensign, May 1976, 62)

*"Complete honesty is necessary for our salvation. President Brigham Young said, "If we accept salvation on the terms it is offered to us, we have got to be honest in every thought, in our reflections, in our meditations, in our private circles, in our deals, in our declarations, and in every act of our lives" (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young [1997], 293)."*

-**Gospel Principles, Chapter 31: Honesty**

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*"The Savior constantly rebuked those who professed one thing publicly but lived differently in their hearts (see Matthew 23:27). He praised those who lived without deception (see D&C 124:15). Can you see the contrasting difference? On one hand there is lying, deceiving, hypocrisy, and darkness. On the other hand there is truth, light, honesty, and integrity. The Lord draws a sharp distinction....**To constantly receive the Spirit of Truth—the Holy Ghost—we must fill our lives with truth and honesty.** As we become completely honest, our spiritual eyes are opened to increased enlightenment."*

-**Neil L. Andersen** ("Honesty—The Heart of Spirituality," BYU devotional, September 13, 2011, emphasis added)

***"D&C 97:21. "Verily, . . . for This Is Zion—the Pure in Heart"***

*Zion is not only a location but a condition as well. The Lord declares that a person worthy of Zion is one who is "pure in heart" (D&C 97:21). Hyrum Smith described Zion as "the honest and pure in heart that will harken to the everlasting covenant" (in History of the Church, 6:320)."*

-**Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual**, Section 97

## **Hypocrites, Liars, and Cheats**

### **Hypocrite (True to the Faith)**

The word generally denotes one who pretends to be religious when he is not (though it is sometimes used to mean simply a bad man; see Job 8:13; 13:16; Isa. 9:17; 33:14). Hypocrisy was the besetting sin of the Pharisees and was severely condemned by the Lord (Matt. 23:13–33; Mark 12:38–40; Luke 11:37–44; 20:46–47).

### **2 Nephi 9**

34 Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell.

### **3 Nephi 21**

14 Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father...

19 ... that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.

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20 For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;

21 And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

### **Revelation 3**

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

A hypocrite at their core is a liar. There are sets of rules for others that don't apply to yourself; there are standards that apply to others but not yourself. A hypocrite is someone who doesn't live the "golden rule"- they are a respecter of persons, almost always putting themselves and their family above others.

### **Matthew 24**

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

## **The Holy Ghost (Presence)**

First, let's start with the presence of the Holy Ghost before we get into the gift of the Holy Ghost. And let's start with Joseph Smith,

*"There is a difference between the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, but he could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man, and it obey him; for the spirits might say unto him, as they did to the sons of Sceva: "Paul we know and Jesus we know, but who are ye?" It mattereth not whether we live long or short on the earth after we come to a knowledge of these principles and obey them unto the end. I know that all men will be damned if they do not come in the way which He hath opened, and this is the way marked out by the word of the Lord."*

**-Joseph Smith** (TPJS, p.199)

The Holy Ghost has many purposes/functions, the first purpose however, non-members of the Church can experience in their lives, as Joseph Smith described above (and will become more apparent as we continue).

*"The Holy Ghost is manifested to men on the earth both as the power of the Holy Ghost and as the gift of the Holy Ghost. The power can come upon one before baptism and is the convincing witness that the gospel is true. By the power of the Holy Ghost a person receives a testimony of Jesus Christ and of His work and the work of His servants upon the earth. The gift can come only after proper and authorized baptism and is conferred by the laying on of hands, as in Acts 8:12–25 and Moroni 2."*

**-Bible Dictionary** (Holy Ghost)

*"By means of this Spirit every man is enlightened, the wicked as well as the good, the intelligent and the ignorant, the high and the low, each in accordance with his capacity to receive the light; and this Spirit or influence which emanates from God may be said to constitute man's consciousness, and will never cease to strive with man, until man is brought to the possession of the higher intelligence which can only come through faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift or the presentation of the Holy Ghost by one having authority."*

**-Joseph F. Smith** (Gospel Doctrine, p.62 or Improvement Era, Vol.12, p.389, March 1909)

## **Holy Ghost (Convincing Power)**

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The Holy Ghost is not a chemical response, it is a power of convincing to a higher intelligence (terrestrial to celestial). If man had to be baptized and confirmed before they experience this then no man could be convinced. One using the Light of Christ properly will be led to further truth (celestial to terrestrial) and thus to the messengers of truth, the messengers of truth's power to convince is wielded through the Holy Ghost. Preach My Gospel counsels,

*“Learn to rely on the Spirit to give you what you should say and do. By studying, developing, and using the teachings skills in this chapter, you will become a more capable instrument in the hands of the Lord. The Spirit will draw upon the knowledge and skills you have developed to help you teach more powerfully. The quality and power of your teaching will help others understand and feel the importance the restored gospel has for them. Their understanding will be influenced by your personal worthiness. Their understanding will also be influenced by how well you focus your attention on them, by how well you explain the gospel, use the scriptures, share your testimony, ask questions, and invite them to make and keep commitments.”* (PMG, p. 176)

And it says in **D&C 11:21**

21 Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men.

There are a lot of members who will say things such as, “The Holy Ghost did all the work, I did nothing!” This couldn't be further from the truth- also, take note, once again of the word “convincing”. Your ability as a messenger of Christ to produce fruit, i.e., baptisms and converts, is just as important for the Lord to allow to play out so that the righteous can discern between what is right and what is wrong as it is for the Lord to allow the foolish man to build on the sand and have his house be washed away. If the Lord rewarded everyone the same regardless of our actions, how could we judge by the fruits of said actions? If the Lord rewarded all missionaries equally regardless of study, dedication, worthiness, diligence, etc., how would we be able to judge and discern? We would not!

The Holy Ghost is a convincer with the end goal always being that of understanding and bringing you to, as President Joseph F. Smith said, “the higher intelligence” (Gospel Doctrine, 5<sup>th</sup> ed, p.61-62). The Light of Christ can and will be used as a preparatory witness or a second witness to cause your heart to burn- how does it convince the mind?

**D&C 9:9**

9 But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; ...”

“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.” (D&C 8:1-3, 46:7, Matt. 7:7-8, Jas. 1:5)

## Holy Ghost (Gift of)

## Section II: Zeal Without Knowledge

*“By using the Light of Christ to discern and choose what is right, we can be led to an even greater light: the gift of the Holy Ghost. I testify that through the Restoration of the gospel and the holy priesthood of God, disciples of Jesus Christ in these latter days have the power to give the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is bestowed by the laying on of hands by those who have the authority of the priesthood, and it is received by those who have followed the principles of faith and repentance and have received the ordinance of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins...*

*The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead, a personage of spirit. He is the Comforter, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit of Promise. He testifies of Jesus Christ, His work, and the work of His servants upon the earth. He acts as a cleansing agent to purify and sanctify us from sin. He comforts us and brings peace to our soul. The right to His constant companionship is among the greatest gifts we can receive in mortality, for by the light of His promptings and His cleansing power, we can be led back into the presence of God.”*

**-Elder Robert D. Hales** (Out of Darkness into His Marvelous Light, April 2002)

*“The Light of Christ should not be confused with the personage of the Holy Ghost, for the Light of Christ is not a personage at all. Its influence is preliminary to and preparatory to one’s receiving the Holy Ghost. The Light of Christ will lead the honest soul to “hearkeneth to the voice” to find the true gospel and the true Church and thereby receive the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is a personage of Spirit, a separate and distinct member of the Godhead. He is a witness or testifier of the power of God, the divinity of Christ, and the truth of the restored gospel. Many throughout history in all nations have sought diligently to commune with the heavens and gain the light of gospel truth. They have felt the influence of the Holy Ghost confirm the truth of the gospel.”*

**-Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin** (The Unspeakable Gift, April 2003)

## **Holy Ghost (Spirit of Promise)**

The Holy Ghost seals ordinances, also known as the Holy Spirit of Promise. Elder Bruce R. McConkie summarized this perfectly:

*“The Holy Spirit of Promise is the Holy Spirit promised the saints, or in other words the Holy Ghost. This name-title is used in connection with the sealing and ratifying power of the Holy Ghost, that is, the power given him to ratify and approve the righteous acts of men so that those acts will be binding on earth and in heaven. “All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations,” must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, if they are to have “efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead.” (D&C 132:7). To seal is to ratify, to justify, or to approve. Thus an act which is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise is one which is ratified by the Holy Ghost; it is one which is approved by the Lord; and the person who has taken the obligation upon himself is justified by the Spirit in the thing he has done. The ratifying seal of approval is put upon an act only if those entering the*

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*contract are worthy as a result of personal righteousness to receive the divine approbation. They “are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true.” (D&C 76:53) If they are not just and true and worthy the ratifying seal is withheld. When any ordinance or contract is sealed by the Spirit, it is approved with a promise of reward, provided unrighteousness does not thereafter break the seal, remove the ratifying approval, and cause loss of the promised blessing. (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 1 p. 55; vol. 2 p. 94-99). Seals are placed on contracts through righteousness. The operation and power of the Holy Spirit of Promise is best illustrated by the ordinance and contract of baptism. An unworthy candidate for baptism might deceive the elders and get the ordinance performed, but no one can lie to the Holy Ghost and get by undetected. Accordingly, the baptism of an unworthy and unrepentant person would not be sealed by the Spirit; it would not be ratified by the Holy Ghost; the unworthy person would not be justified by the Spirit in his actions. If thereafter he became worthy through personal repentance and obedience, the seal would then be put in force. Similarly, if a worthy person is baptized, with the ratifying approval of the Holy Ghost attending the performance, yet the seal may be broken by subsequent sin. These principles also apply to every other ordinance and performance in the Church. Thus if both parties are “just and true”, if they are worthy, a ratifying seal is placed on their temple marriage; if they are unworthy, they are not justified by the Spirit and the ratification of the Holy Ghost is withheld. Subsequent worthiness will put the seal in force, and unrighteousness will break any seal. Even if a person progresses to that state of near-perfection in which his calling and election is made sure, in which he is “sealed up unto eternal life” (D&C 131:5, 132:18-26), in which he receives “the promise...of eternal life” (D&C 88:3-4) in which he is “sealed up unto the day of redemption” (D&C 124:124, Eph. 1:13)-yet with it all, these great promises are secured only if the “performances” are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. (Mormon Doctrine, p.361-362)*

## **The Holy Ghost (Purifier/Sanctifier)**

*“... the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence.”*

**-Joseph Smith** (TPJS, p.150)

*“For those who receive this gift, the Holy Ghost acts as a cleansing agent to purify them and sanctify them from all sin. Thus it is often spoken of as “fire” (Matt. 3:11; 2 Ne. 31:17; D&C 19:31).”*

**-Bible Dictionary** (Holy Ghost)

*“The Holy Ghost Is a Sanctifier*

*I have always found great strength and understanding in the following quote by Elder Orson Pratt (1811–81) as it relates to the role of the Holy Ghost as our sanctifier:*

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*“Water Baptism is only a preparatory cleansing of the believing penitent; it is only a condition of a cleansing from sin; whereas, the Baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost cleanses more thoroughly, by renewing the inner man, and by purifying the affections, desires, and thoughts which have long been habituated in the impure ways of sin. Without the aid of the Holy Ghost, a person ... would have but very little power to change his mind ... and to walk in newness of life. Though his sins may have been cleansed away, yet so great is the force of habit, that he would, without being renewed by the Holy Ghost, be easily overcome, and contaminated again by sin. Hence, it is infinitely important that the affections and desires should be, in a measure, changed and renewed, so as to cause him to hate that which he before loved, and to love that which he before hated: to thus renew the mind of man is the work of the Holy Ghost.”*

**-Elder Kevin R. Duncan** (The Sacred Roles of the Holy Ghost, October 2014)

*“In all the ordinances, especially those of the temple, we are endowed with power from on high. This “power of godliness” comes in the person and by the influence of the Holy Ghost. The gift of the Holy Ghost is part of the new and everlasting covenant. It is an essential part of our baptism, the baptism of the Spirit. It is the messenger of grace by which the blood of Christ is applied to take away our sins and sanctify us (see 2 Nephi 31:17).”*

**- Elder D. Todd Christofferson** (The Power of Covenants, April 2009)

### **3 Nephi 27:20**

20 Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

*“Baptism is in water and of the Spirit and is preceded by repentance. The actual cleansing of the soul comes when the Holy Ghost is received. The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier whose divine commission is to burn dross and evil out of a human soul as though by fire, thus giving rise to the expression baptism of fire, which is the baptism of the Spirit. Forgiveness is assured when the contrite soul receives the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle.”*

**-Bruce R. McConkie** (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p. 239)

*“How can men become clean and pure? How can they be sanctified? What power can burn dross and evil out of a human soul as though by fire? To be saved men must be born again; they must be sanctified by the Spirit; they must receive the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; they must become clean and spotless by obedience to law. The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier; no man can be saved unless he receives the gift of the Holy Ghost.”*

**-Bruce R. McConkie** (The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 4: 383)

How many times did Joseph Smith use the word “feelings” to describe this process? How many times was it described as a “feel good, happy emotion”? How many times was this process taught as “a warm blanket, full of love”? Zero. Because that is not the purifying and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost.

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Joseph Smith describes it as “purging.” What does your body do when it is purging? It is vomiting and diarrhea and fevers etc.- not pleasant or comfortable experiences. We purge poison out of a body with an anti-venom and it is also an extremely painful process. People who allow the Holy Ghost to work on them know that it can be a very uncomfortable experience, as the Holy Ghost reveals to you your weaknesses and faults etc. The act of learning, line upon line, precept upon precept and thus increasing your intellect is also for many people an uncomfortable experience. When I hear members describe their experiences, not with the Light of Christ, but rather the Holy Ghost purifying them, as being rainbows, sparkles and butterflies, to me it is like looking at an individual who is morbidly obese sharing their wonderful experiences at the gym. “I love to go to the gym, I have been going for years! I just feel so warm and welcome and accepted there.” I just look at the individual and think, you got the invitation, you got the Light of Christ, you have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost but you have not received it, you don’t even know what it is, any more than individuals standing around completely out of shape in a gym understand the function of a gym.

### **Holy Ghost (Light of Christ Igniter)**

The Holy Ghost as a convincer, comforter, as well as teacher, has the power to ignite the Light of Christ in your heart and cause your bosom to burn. This is *not* a guarantee and the effect will be directly proportionate to the degree that the Light of Christ dwells in that individual. Meaning those drenched in sin will have less of an effect vs those who have fostered the Light of Christ within them.

*“That is precisely the great promise of discipleship. If you are true and faithful to your covenants, the Holy Ghost will ignite the Light of Christ within you. And then comes this marvelous promise: “. . . he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.”*

**-President Kim B. Clark** (A Light to the World, BYU Commencement December 2006)

*“Then the Light of Christ can be ignited by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. We are told that then “the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).”*

**-President Boyd K. Packer** (The Light of Christ, Ensign April 2005)

*“The Holy Ghost makes use of the Light of Christ to perform his work. “The Spirit of Christ (or Light of Christ) is the agency through which the Holy Ghost operates,” Elder McConkie explained. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p. 258) Moroni wrote that all spiritual gifts come through the Spirit of Christ, meaning that when the Holy Ghost works with us, he transmits his gifts by the agency of the light of Christ. ..Since the Holy Ghost uses the Spirit of Christ or Light of Christ to minister to the Saints of God, the term “Spirit of Christ” is sometimes used to refer to the Holy Ghost’s ministration through that Spirit.”*

**-Brent Bulloch** (What is the difference between the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, and the Light of Christ? Ensign June 1989)

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Going back to the quote shared at the start of this chapter from President Hunter:

*“Let me offer a word of caution...I think if we are not careful..., we may begin to try to counterfeit the true influence of the Spirit of the Lord by unworthy and manipulative means. I get concerned when it appears that strong emotion or free-flowing tears are equated with the presence of the Spirit. Certainly the Spirit of the Lord can bring strong emotional feelings, including tears, but that outward manifestation ought not to be confused with the presence of the Spirit itself.”* (The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter, 184)

The Holy Ghost “can bring strong emotional feelings”, meaning the Holy Ghost has the capacity to ignite the Light of Christ or act upon it within an individual, but those emotions all by themselves should not be confused with “the presence of the Spirit itself”. The Holy Ghost can act upon the Light of Christ within us, which will yield the fruits of the Spirit, for specific purposes, and those purposes are always “edification”, for “the spirit always edifies”. So, if we have strong emotions and are also edified- have been taught by the Spirit- we may know we have had the Holy Ghost act upon the Light of Christ within us; if however we have not been taught, we have not been edified, etc. and we have experienced these emotions we may know it was not the presence of the Spirit which caused it. The overwhelming majority of experiences with the Holy Ghost will not involve the Light of Christ being activated; the overflowing of emotion that is common amongst the Saints is simply an abundance of passion, or frankly, emotional incontinence.

### **The Holy Ghost (Pure Intelligence)**

*“There are two Comforters spoken of. One is the Holy Ghost, the same as given on the day of Pentecost, and that all Saints receive after faith, repentance, and baptism. This first Comforter or Holy Ghost **has no other effect than pure intelligence**. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm ...”*

**-Joseph Smith** (TPJS, p.149-150)

The Holy Ghost acts upon the intelligence. The Light of Christ does not do this. If the thought is not of God, then you will have a stupor of thought (Doctrine and Covenants 9: 9), it will be removed from your mind. Sometimes you will even forget the question before you ask it. If the thought is of God, your mind will catch hold to it and the more one thinks about it, the more enlightening it becomes to the mind. This allows non-members and members to confirm truth, or in the words of Moroni, “By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.” Without the gift of the Holy Ghost, the influence of the Holy Ghost will depart.

So what is the influence of the Holy Ghost that is obtained after the gift of the Holy Ghost? Is it a feeling? Is it an emotion? The answer to these is no. Members have confused the power of the Holy Ghost to activate the Light of Christ in an individual which caused their bosom to burn

with that of the influence/effects of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost or the influence or power of the Holy Ghost is used to edify and convince us, but the gift of the Holy Ghost is to have an actual effect upon the intelligence of an individual. If you are heeding the Holy Ghost and following it, if you truly are “hearing Him”, you should be getting smarter.

## **The Holy Ghost (Hear Him)**

*“The Spirit of Revelation is in connection with these blessings. A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel **pure intelligence** flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.,) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.”*

**-Joseph Smith** (TPJS, p.151)

Joseph Smith taught that as you catch hold of these inspirations in your mind, thoughts that have appeared in your mind that you know weren't your own thoughts, as you record and follow through on those thoughts, you will then be able to see the fruit and the more you do the better you will get at receiving the revelation from the Holy Ghost, learning line upon line, purging the old blood out from you, increasing your intellect etc.

Now, when we hear something and our mind catches hold to it and something tells us, “This is true and it applies to you,” and that thought is a very unpleasant thought, we can either A) get defensive and reject the Holy Ghost or B) we can humble ourselves and allow the Holy Ghost to purge off pieces of ourselves that are holding us back.

We read from Nephi “...shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or the other-either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the **blindness of their minds** unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil” (1 Nephi 14:7). Our ability to “Hear Him” will determine everything. My belief, which I believe is backed up with all these scriptures, is that members are failing to “Hear Him” because of their ignorance. They don't know what the Light of Christ is, what the Holy Ghost is, etc. so how can they recognize it let alone know where to search for it? The angel once again used the word “convincing” to get people to peace and life eternal. You don't feel “feelings” that lead you to peace and life eternal. If your understanding of that is backwards then your viewpoint is no different than that of pleasure seekers in the world who say, “how could something that feels so good, feels so right, not be of God?” The righteous of every age hear that all the time. Their problem and our problem as members is that we haven't taken the time to learn.

### **Hebrews 4:**

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing

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even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The Holy Ghost, the convincing power and intelligence of God is like that of the sun. The effects of the sun on wax would be to melt the wax. The effects of the sun on mud would be to dry it out and harden it. It is the same sun. It has the same effects. It is not the sun's fault that the mud hardened and became brittle, while the wax melted. It is our choice whether or not we will become wax or become mud, but what we don't get to do is after the words of God, after the Holy Ghost, after the effects of the sun dry us out and make us brittle and angry, blame the sun, blame the word of God or the messengers of God, etc.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 84:**

48 And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.

49 And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin.

50 And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me.

51 For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin.

52 And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.

53 ***And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked***, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.

54 And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

55 Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

56 And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

57 And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

58 That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

59 For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay.

60 Verily, verily, **I say unto you who now hear my words, which are my voice**, blessed are ye inasmuch as you receive these things;

61 For I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain steadfast in your minds in solemnity and the spirit of prayer, in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you.

77 And again I say unto you, my friends, for from henceforth I shall call you friends, it is expedient that I give unto you this commandment, that ye become even as my friends in days when I was with them, traveling to preach the gospel in my power;

79 Behold, I send you out to prove the world, and the laborer is worthy of his hire.

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80 And any man that shall go and preach this gospel of the kingdom, and fail not to continue faithful in all things, shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb, nor joint; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed. And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst.

“By this you may know they are under sin... they come not unto me...” What does it mean to come unto the Lord? It is to let God prevail, it is to be “Israel”, which is what it means to “hear Him”. To “hear Him” is to understand His doctrine, the doctrine taught in the Lord’s restored church and cling to it. If one does this, they “let God prevail” in their lives, if they “lean unto their own understanding”, if they lean unto their own “opinions”, they do not “let God prevail” and have not “come unto Christ” and thus are “under sin”. The Lord also says crystal clear, that those who “are not acquainted with His voice” are not “acquainted with Him”, but what is “the Lord’s voice?” This is **crucial** for us to understand, the Lord says here “I say unto you who now hear my **words**, which are my **voice**”.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 35:**

20 And a commandment I give unto thee—that ***thou shalt write*** for him; and ***the scriptures*** shall be given, ***even as they are in mine own bosom, to the salvation of mine own elect***;

21 ***For they will hear my voice***, and shall see me, and shall not be asleep, and shall abide the day of my coming; for they shall be purified, even as I am pure.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 18:**

33 And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it.

34 ***These words*** are not of men nor of man, but of me; wherefore, you shall testify they are of me and not of man;

35 For it is ***my voice*** which speaketh them unto you; for they are given by my Spirit unto you, and by my power ***you can read them one to another***; and save it were by my power you could not have them;

36 Wherefore, ***you can testify that you have heard my voice***, and know my words.

*“Our Father in Heaven has given us tools to help us come unto Christ and [hear Him] ... [One such] tool is to study the word of God in the scriptures and the words of the living prophets. We talk to God through prayer. He most often communicates back to us through His written word. To know what the voice of the Divine sounds and feels like, read His words, study the scriptures, and ponder them. Make them an integral part of everyday life. If you want your children to recognize, understand, and act on the promptings of the Spirit, you must study the scriptures with them.*

*Don’t yield to Satan’s lie that you don’t have time to study the scriptures. Choose to take time to study them. Feasting on the word of God each day is more important than sleep, school, work, television shows, video games, or social media. You may need to reorganize your priorities to provide time for the study of the word of God. If so, do it!”*

**-Elder Richard G. Scott** (Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority, October 2014)

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*“For when we want to speak to God, we pray. And when we want Him to speak to us, we search the scriptures; for His words are spoken through His prophets. He will then teach us as we listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.*

*If you have not heard His voice speaking to you lately, return with new eyes and new ears to the scriptures. They are our spiritual lifeline.”*

**-Elder Robert D. Hales** (Holy Scriptures: The Power of God unto Our Salvation, October 2006)

### **2 Nephi 32**

2 Do ye not remember that I said unto you that after ye had received the Holy Ghost ye could speak with the tongue of angels? And now, how could ye speak with the tongue of angels save it were by the Holy Ghost?

3 Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.

The voice of the Savior is found in the scriptures. Those who are not familiar with the “voice of the Savior” are those *not* familiar with the scriptures. Those who “lean unto their own understanding/opinions” are those who base their teaching/understanding/opinions off of themselves and not off of the Word of God, the Scriptures. The Lord then stated, crystal clear, “And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked”. This singular fact is enough, according to the Lord, to “*know* the righteous from the wicked”, it is the difference between those that have “taken the Holy Spirit for their guide” and those who have leaned unto their own understanding. Is our understanding, faith, teachings, etc. grounded in the scriptures (revealing keys, i.e., “Joseph Smith”) or in unto “ourselves”, our opinions, etc.? God’s elect will turn to the scriptures for they hear the voice of the Savior in them. Period.

The Lord continues, telling the Saints that their minds have become darkened *because* they have not read the scriptures as they should have. So, the lack of reading the scriptures, hearing the voice of the Savior, etc. not only is a sign of “the wicked” but it is also a sign of those “with darkened minds.” The Lord then laser focuses our attention in and points directly to The Book of Mormon and says, “this book specifically”, the neglect of reading it and truly understanding it *is the reason* the Saints will be scourged, will have their minds darkened and the Holy Ghost grieved, etc. We should be focused on The Book of Mormon (and Isaiah which is *in* the Book of Mormon), hear the voice, and build Zion. The Lord then calls the elect, those who hear the voice, those who read the scriptures, to go forth boldly and with power and prove themselves to be the elect with the scriptures and their preaching. If they stay grounded in “the voice” they will be able to endure all- which is a dead tie into, once again, the wise not being deceived for they had with them The Holy Ghost.

## **The Holy Ghost (Our Right to)**

*“We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to*

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*guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually. Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men.”*

**-President Joseph Fielding Smith** (Doctrines of Salvation, p.43)

## The Second Comforter

*“The other Comforter spoken of is a subject of great interest, and perhaps understood by few of this generation. After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost, (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shalt be exalted.*

*When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure, then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the Saints, as is recorded in the testimony of St. John, in the 14th chapter, from the 12th to the 27th verses.*

*Note the 16, 17, 18, 21, 23 verses:*

*"16. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;*

*"17. Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

*"18. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.\* \**

*"21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

*"23. If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."*

*Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions-- Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn.”*

**-Joseph Smith** (TPJS, p.150-151)

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*“We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker and is caught up to dwell with Him.”*

**-Joseph Smith** (TPJS, p.51)

As one heeds the Holy Ghost and allows it to purge the old blood out from him, etc. that individual will have the Holy Spirit of Promise seal their ordinances to them, making their calling and election sure. Those individuals, if they continue to press forward and prove themselves, once they have been “thoroughly proved” by the Lord, when the time arrives it will then be that individuals' privilege of being brought back into the presence of the Son- that is the blessing of “the Second Comforter”.

Having one's calling and election made sure is not synonymous with being translated, and is not synonymous with being a member of the 144,000 etc. This is gone over in subsequent chapters.

## **Commitment to the Saints**

We, brothers and sisters, have done a fairly good job as Saints to cultivate the Light of Christ in our lives and attempted to foster charitable acts of goodwill, peace, brotherly kindness etc. with our other brothers and sisters on this globe. But may I be so bold to suggest that we have neglected the greater intelligence. We have found ourselves comfortably in the terrestrial kingdom and have decided that we don't have to be valiant in our testimony of the Savior and yet will be saved in the kingdom of God (D&C 76:79). We have convinced ourselves despite the clear warning in the scriptures that all is well in Zion and that if we are guilty God will merely beat us with a few stripes and we will be saved in the kingdom of God (2 Nephi 28:8). We have convinced ourselves that evil is good and good is evil (Isaiah 5:20). We have convinced ourselves that truth that will exalt individuals spoken in a subjectively inappropriate manner, in a subjectively displeasing tone, in a subjectively louder voice, is somehow contentious and not of God, despite the fact that the bearer is without fault and without guile and is speaking the truth (TPJS, p.26). We have convinced ourselves that an individual spewing lies, where the believing of his doctrine is actually damning, let alone grounds for excommunication, but because it is spoken in a subjectively approved manner, in a subjectively approved pleasing tone, in a subjectively approved decimal of volume, it is of God, despite the fact that these individuals are full of guile, spewing apostasy, and circumventing the keys of God by claiming to have received revelations of Jesus Christ and God the Father, and to have been ordained to do certain tasks. Brothers and Sisters, we need to wake up and learn how to “Hear Him” and take the Holy Ghost for our guide. Otherwise we will be deceived and fall by the wayside. Celestial Law is coming, Joseph Smith did not know how many people would be able to abide it, for many are called and few are chosen. There is yet daylight- we can perform our labors while it is yet day. There is still time to learn how to “Hear Him”.

Brothers and Sisters, I know that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is true and it still holds all the keys necessary for salvation. I know that we as members have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost but many of us have refused to receive it, refused to let it purify us. There

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is coming a point in time in the near future, a period of great tribulation, that will be what purifies and gets us ready to see Jesus. If you take no preparations today, you will fall tomorrow, by the wayside during the tribulation. You don't have to perfect yourself today, but you have to at least build yourself a foundation and "Hearing Him" is integral to that foundation. And in the words of our prophet, President Nelson, "Please do it now. Time is running out" (Come, Follow Me, April 2019).

### **Doctrine and Covenants 98:**

8 I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free.

9 Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.

10 Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil.

11 And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.

12 For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.

13 And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal.

14 Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy.

15 For if ye will not abide in my covenant ye are not worthy of me.

### **Doctrine and Covenants 64**

34 Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.

35 And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.

36 For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.

37 Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.

38 For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.

39 And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.

40 And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.

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**2 Nephi 31**

13 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism—yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word, behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel.