



The Gospel Doctrine Class



Doctrine & Covenants - Lesson 15

Seek Ye Earnestly the Best Gifts

“Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given.” (2 Nephi 25:4)

D&C 46

A study of this lesson will help us identify gifts of the Spirit, seek to obtain them, and use them to serve others.

James R. Christianson on D&C 46: "Admonished to petition God in all things and respond to the resultant influence of the Spirit with holiness of heart, upright conduct, prayer, and thanks-giving, the Saints were informed that in this way they could overcome the seductions of evil spirits and the deceptions of men who were agents of the adversary. To further avoid such calamities they were counseled to seek the best gifts and to know why they were doing so." (Studies In Scripture, 1:206)

Joseph Smith: "We believe in the gift of the Holy Ghost being enjoyed now, as much as it was in the Apostles' days; we believe that it [the gift of the Holy Ghost] is necessary to make and to organize the Priesthood, that no man can be called to fill any office in the ministry without it; we also believe in prophecy, in tongues, in visions, and in revelations, in gifts, and in healings; and that these things cannot be enjoyed without the gift of the Holy Ghost. We believe that the holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and that holy men in these days speak by the same principle; we believe in its being a comforter and a witness bearer, that it brings things past to our remembrance, leads us into all truth, and shows us of things to come; we believe that 'no man can know that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost.' We believe in it [this gift of the Holy Ghost] in all its fulness, and power, and greatness, and glory; but whilst we do this, we believe in it rationally, consistently, and scripturally, and not according to the wild vagaries, foolish notions and traditions of men." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p99)

Elder Orson Pratt on gifts of the Spirit: "...whenever the Holy Ghost takes up its residence in a person, it not only cleanses, sanctifies, and purifies him, in proportion as he yields himself to its influence, but also imparts to him some gift, intended for the benefit of himself and others. No one who has been born of the Spirit and who remains sufficiently faithful, is left destitute of a spiritual gift. A person who is without a spiritual gift has not the Spirit of God dwelling in him, in a sufficient degree, to save him; he cannot be called a Saint, or a child of God; for all Saints who constitute the Church of Christ, are baptized into the same Spirit; and each one, without any exception, is made a partaker of some spiritual gift....
"Each member does not receive all of these gifts; but they are

distributed through the whole body [of the Church], according to the will and wisdom of the Spirit.... Some may have all these gifts bestowed upon them, so as to understand them all, and be prepared to detect any spurious gifts, and to preside over the whole body of the Church, that all may be benefited. These spiritual gifts are distributed among the members of the Church, according to their faithfulness, circumstances, natural abilities, duties, callings; that the whole may be properly instructed, confirmed, perfected, and saved." (Masterful Discourses of Orson Pratt, pp539-541)

President Joseph Fielding Smith: "We all have a right to know the truth. It is a requirement the Lord makes of every member of the Church that he know for himself and have a testimony of the truth in his own heart and not be under the necessity of depending upon anyone else to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God or that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God." (CR, Oct 1952, p60)

President Stephen L. Richards: "Wisdom is sometimes defined as sound judgment and a high degree of knowledge. I define wisdom as being the beneficent application of knowledge in decision. I think of wisdom not in the abstract but as functional. Life is largely made up of choices and determinations, and I can think of no wisdom that does not contemplate the good of man and society....

"I do not believe that true wisdom can be acquired or exercised in living without a sound fundamental knowledge of the truth about life and living. The cry of the world is for wisdom and wise men. This is so particularly in the field of human relations. Why are they not found? It is because men are so blinded to the truth." (CR, Apr 1950, pp163-164).

President George Q. Cannon taught: "If any of us are imperfect, it is our duty to pray for the gift that will make us perfect. Have I imperfections? I am full of them. What is my duty? To pray to God to give me the gifts that will correct these imperfections. If I am an angry man, it is my duty to pray for charity, which suffereth long and is kind. Am I an envious man? It is my duty to seek for charity, which envieth not. So with all the gifts of the Gospel. They are intended for this purpose. No man ought to say, 'Oh, I cannot help this; it is my nature.' He is not justified in it, for the reason that God has promised to give strength to correct these things, and to give gifts that will eradicate them." (Millennial Star, 23 Apr 1894, p260)

Next Week's Reading Assignment

Doctrine and Covenants 59;
Bible Dictionary, "Sabbath," pages 764-65