

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

How To Open Your Spiritual Eyes

Anonymous

*Hope is believing, faith is asking,
knowledge is receiving, and priesthood is becoming.*

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Introduction

The Lord is a giver of Gifts. He delights to bless those who serve Him, and this book is a gift to those who are on the path to awakening; learning this process of opening your spiritual eyes and coming into His presence.

All of us are special and of great worth to the Lord, but that doesn't mean we are equal in every way. Consider Matthew 25:

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

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.¹

The servants are to whom this book is written, who travel far from their heavenly home, to condescend among the children of men to save souls. (Jacob 5:61) Not all are the same, as some have more talents or “gifts” than others. There are those who seem to quickly, with little effort, develop a spiritual awakening and see into the spirit realm around them; entertaining angels and experiencing many of the spiritual gifts. Perhaps they have a brush with death, a near death experience, or are born with a thin veil?

I was not one of these, although some would think that was the case. It took me about twenty-five years from when I began this journey before I began to open my eyes. It takes a level of risk to

¹ Ether 12:35

let go and as the scripture says, “trade your talents.”² What does that mean? It means to invest them, to see them grow, to experiment with something you have not done before. I spoke of this in detail in the first book, but all that I have received as of now is mostly in the last few years. Each servant is born into this world with at least one gift,³ however, we must seek all the gifts. “And again I would exhort you that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing.” Moroni 10:30

I wonder if sometimes we mistake the good gifts for that which is unclean because we do not understand. Why do some never develop their spiritual gifts?

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

² “Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise, he that had received two, he also gained other two.” Matthew 5:16-17

³ D&C 46:11

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

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

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

(Matthew 25)

This servant hid their gift, because of fear. They did not seek to expand and use their gift to help the kingdom; therefore, it was taken from them. Many of us are too afraid to venture into the realm of what we describe as the “gifts of the spirit.” Why is that? In this book, I will discuss how to overcome the unbelief or false traditions that must be resolved in order to develop our talents and become a servant of the Lord, to rend the veil of unbelief and walk with God.

I will share in this book many principles and exercises you can do to develop these gifts and open your spiritual senses. Much of this information will require you to go beyond your comfort zone, to release the talent the Lord has given you. You may feel awkward, unworthy, ridiculous, and uncomfortable. Like the first time you spoke in public, or like the little child having the courage to climb the long, tall ladder to take their first jump off the high-dive into the deep pool. But, you can do this—it is who you are.

What Prevents People from Opening Their Spiritual Eyes?

Each of us enter this world helpless. We rely on a loving mother to nurse us, often a father to provide for our needs. These loving parents and people nurture us; and we can do nothing for ourselves in our early development. Within a short period, our little bodies begin to adapt to a new environment. We start to see more clearly with our vision, as we begin to distinguish shapes, smells, and sensations. We cry when we are hungry, or uncomfortable, or just because we want attention.

Time goes on and we begin to distinguish different sounds as words and shapes to see people and things. We discern distances between objects and begin to crawl, then to stand, and then to run. Our bodies go through a period of adaptation. We test our limits as we fall, hurt ourselves, then get back up and keep going.

Some children take longer in this process. Our neighbor's kids were talking in full sentences shortly after their first birthday, but some children don't speak well until the age of three or later. Each come with different capacities for growth and excellence.

For some, the physical body is a constant challenge. Whether it is related to their health, a debilitating disease, or an accident that created a difficult challenge for them. How have these trials affected their views of the physical world?

As we mature we tend to crystalize and form a solid belief system of how this physical world works. For many, if we can't see it, touch it, smell it, or define it under a lab, it is not worth considering. The

world scoffs at the unseen world of the spirit. But Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world.”⁴

In a strikingly similar way we develop our spiritual sensitivities; learning to see, touch, hear, and comprehend. Finally, after a time of awakening we begin to see a world which is every bit as real as the physical one we have become accustomed to.

What is the spirit world? That unseen dimension spoken of by those who have lived through near death experiences, or cryptically written about by some of the prophets? Many have felt the presence of loved ones who have passed on, as if they were with them, yet unseen.

How can something exist that we cannot see with our own two eyes? Why can't scientists prove the existence of another realm where spirits abide?

Until the last hundred years the belief in spirits was more common among the average person. Not until psychology and the study of the human brain, have scientists attempted to explain such phenomenon as hallucinations, caused by various hormones and stimuli. The human brain is the wild frontier for many scientists. How much is truly understood?

In recent years scientists have begun to study quantum physics, which opens up the exploration and possibilities of multi dimensions. Is the unseen spirit world really that far-fetched?

Why does it have to be this way? Couldn't the Lord have just opened this realm to us so that we could more easily discern? Why would a loving God make it so difficult? Why all the starving children in Africa, and why is there such horrific violence in the world? Why doesn't the Lord just stop it all?

⁴ John 18:36

This life provides what is the perfect battlefield of souls. A place where we can choose what we will worship, where we want to lay our affections and desires. The tribulation of the flesh is a refiner's fire. But, people say, "How can one possibly make such decisions when they are suffering?" Most of the biggest decisions are made before we ever enter this world. Some choose to partake of the Everlasting Covenant, a promise to come unto Christ and become like Him. Others partake of a continuation of that covenant, as they condescend to save souls as a minister of the Lord. Others come with the intent of becoming a servant of the Adversary. But, the vast majority of those here are not interested in following the light of Christ or even the devil; they wish to remain in the same state they have been for eons of time. They relish everything mortality offers, both the good and bad; and their cycle continues for eternity, unless they choose to harken to the voice of the Spirit, for God's "hand is outstretched still."⁵

Now, here you are, one of many souls that is living on this earth at this time in history. Who are you really? What is your mission? Have you partaken of the Everlasting Covenant? I would suggest to you that if a deep desire to know the Lord burns within your heart, that YES, you have partaken of the Everlasting Covenant, for as it is written, "mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts."⁶

Whether your task is to advance from your second to third estate, or you are already foreordained to perform a mission; this is not important until you stand in the presence of God and He declares it to you. Regardless what you have been told in blessings, focus on opening your spiritual senses, learning to receive revelation, receiving the baptism of fire and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Then,

⁵ Isaiah 9:12,21

⁶ D&C 29:7

the Lord will bring you to where you need to be as swiftly as possible. As it is written, “stand ye in holy places.”⁷

This book was prepared to help those who despite their greatest efforts cannot seem to pierce the veil. You may feel that you are doing everything you can and still no progress. Here is a detailed list of reasons you may be struggling. After we identify them, let’s talk about how to overcome.

List of reasons why you may struggle to open your spiritual senses:

1. Unbelief
2. Fear
3. Discouragement
4. Too much stress
5. Serious Sin
6. Illness
7. Group Think
8. Familiar spirits
9. Light mindedness
10. Babylon
11. Culture
12. Laziness
13. Physiology

Unbelief

This may be the most common for many people. It means to believe incorrectly the true principles behind the reality of spiritual gifts. It doesn’t necessarily place blame upon you, for much of such sins lie upon the traditions of our fathers. It is your duty to break these

⁷ D&C 45:32, D&C 87:8, D&C 101:22

chains of unbelief and learn the truth regarding what the Lord would give you.⁸

There are plenty of examples of unbelief, even in our modern society. Think of dietary rules that for years we thought were truth. For example: Do not add salt to your food. Fat is bad for you, and breads and grains should be eaten in abundance. Foods that are sold in the grocery store that we assume are healthy may be high in processed sugar or preservatives. There is a lot of distortion and untruth which we have been given for many years. As Joseph Smith warned, “because of conspiring men that will exist in the last days.”⁹

There is also much falsity in doctrine which has crept in amongst the Lord’s people that have confused the reality of many of the Gifts of the Spirit, which He desires to bestow upon us. Many theologians and scholars have attempted to explain and dissect what the Lord will and will not do. The true gifts of the Spirit have been watered down to the degree that most people view miraculous experiences as only for a select few, or those of high standing in the church. Even then, the experiences are often minimal and less than Biblical in their proportions.

Joseph Smith said, “I say to all those who are disposed to set up stakes for the Almighty, you will come short of the glory of God. To become a joint heir of the heirship of the Son, one must put away all his false traditions.”¹⁰

“When men open their lips against [the truth] they do not injure me, but injure themselves. ... When

⁸ Mormon 1:14

⁹ D&C 89:4

¹⁰ History of the Church, 5:554; paragraph divisions altered; from a discourse given by Joseph Smith on Aug. 27, 1843, in Nauvoo, Illinois; reported by Willard Richards and William Clayton.

things that are of the greatest importance are passed over by weak-minded men without even a thought, I want to see truth in all its bearings and hug it to my bosom. I believe all that God ever revealed, and I never hear of a man being damned for believing too much; but they are damned for unbelief.”¹¹

Solution:

You must decide here and now that you will approach the Lord as a child; meek, with no inhibitions. Believe what is written in the scriptures at face value. Simply follow the Spirit of the Lord as you contemplate the scriptures you read.

Fear

Many of us suffer from fears of the unknown. Fear of failure alone prevents many from even trying. How about fear of deception?

Fear is often the antithesis of faith, which is required to open the windows of heaven. How do you know if fear is preventing you from moving forward?

Do you ask the following questions to yourself?

- What will people think?
- What if I am deceived?
- What if I can't do it?
- What if the Lord doesn't answer my prayer?
- What if I make a mistake?

¹¹ *History of the Church*, 6:477; from a discourse given by Joseph Smith on June 16, 1844, in Nauvoo, Illinois; reported by Thomas Bullock; see also appendix, page 562, item 3

How do you suppose the Lord felt when Peter jumped out of the boat after asking permission to walk on the water, and then fell as he was overcome by fear? Who was the Lord more pleased with, the Apostles who stayed in the supposed safety of the boat, or Peter who risked it to come to His Lord? It was a learning experience for Peter. He learned not to fear, but to trust in the Lord. I believe the Lord was very pleased. Each of us must be bold like Peter, until we learn to exercise the gifts of the Spirit correctly.

Solution:

Commit yourself that once you start down this path you will not give up. You will know by the fruit of your efforts how you are doing. Remember Alma's parable of the seed? After much care and nourishment, the seed grew until it finally brought forth fruit. Do not give up out of impatience. Be fearless! You will not have the faith necessary unless you are bold and overcome your fears.

Discouragement

There are relatively few who ever find their way to the Throne of Heaven, because they lack faith. They become easily discouraged and give up. They listen to the whispers of the Adversary telling them they are not worthy, who are they to think such a blessing was for them. Have you ever had such thoughts? I know I have. These temptations are common among the servants of the Lord and come from lying familiar spirits. Even the Lord Himself had such thoughts cross His mind frequently.

I went to my altar in the mountains for many years until the Lord finally answered me with two words: "Be believing." Shortly thereafter my spiritual eyes began to see the scales fall off and I began to understand the principle of revelation. I admit, there were many days I was discouraged. Why isn't the Lord answering the prayer of my heart? We must remember not to put a calendar on such things. We trust in Him, knowing that He will bring us to Him

as fast as possible. It is not about us fulfilling a time requirement. It is about learning to properly exercise faith and to open our spiritual sensitivities, so that we can be a profitable servant to the Lord.

Solution:

Expect the seed of faith to grow and develop, not to suddenly bear fruit. If it grows quickly, wonderful. Otherwise, be patient and trust in Him. The most common advice I have received when speaking with significant spirits on the other side of the veil is always the same: "Trust in the Lord." Part of exercising faith is knowing that the Lord is the giver of all good gifts. He will not let you down.

Too Much Stress

In our modern day, stress is a familiar obstacle for many of us. We stress about finances, health, family issues, church callings, civic duties, jobs, etc. On top of that, many stress over relationships, including our social network relationships and keeping up with our online interactions. Are we too busy with life?

How can our busy life impact our ability to receive the gifts of the Spirit? The Lord Himself, as the man of Galilee, often would remove Himself from everyone to go and pray. A servant of the Lord needs to do this. How can you focus on the Lord with all these distractions? Some of these we may have to no choice, but how much is not necessary? Most of us don't hesitate scheduling time to see movies, go to concerts, or do vacation; but how often do we schedule blocks of time to make ourselves holy to the Lord? "Where your heart is, there shall your treasure be also."

Solution:

Sometimes the solution is very simple---REPENT! True repentance is simply placing the Lord first in your life in every respect. If you can honestly ask yourself, "What is the thing I think about most in my idle time?" and your answer is the Lord, perhaps you are

repenting. If you focus on other things you may have reason to repent. To make the Lord first in your life will help you to remove much of the stress that may be plaguing you. Ask Him to help you.

Make a list of all the duties you have. Prioritize them, putting the most important first. See what you can eliminate or cut back. Block out time for holiness.

Serious Sin / Addiction

What makes a sin serious? Of course, all sin is serious, but I'm talking about the main ones that are preventing you from coming to the Lord.

We like to try and classify sins into categories from less to more, but what is easy to overcome for one, may be an anvil around the neck for another. Often serious sins are in the category of difficult addictions, which pull our attention away from coming to Christ. Those who are spiritually sick will struggle much in having a consistent relationship with the Lord, because they cannot focus. The Lord hears their prayers, loves them, and will bless them according to their obedience and the prayers of others, but until they completely turn themselves over to Him it will be difficult to obtain the "Gifts."

Solution:

Focus on a full repentance. Once you have laid all upon the altar, including the addiction or sin, then the Lord can help you in this process. An important part of repentance is the trust we place in the Lord to take our sins from us, and then to forgive others and ourselves. It is a full release of everything, including guilt and desires. We will always remember, but we will become a new person. If we stumble, we go through the process as many times as it takes. If our intent is pure, the Lord will make us clean.

Illness

This deterrent may, or may not impede your ability to approach the Lord. There are many whose experience with illness and pain were a catalyst for them to cry out to the Lord and have marvelous experiences. The Lord is very merciful. But today, in a world where prescription drugs and other body altering medications are the norm, often these clouds our sensitivity to the Spirit.

Solution:

Someone suffering from physical pain or bodily harm can go through the very same steps as those in perfect health, it may require more discipline and faith. The Lord will help you as you pray for wisdom and revelation as to what you should do. Each person will have a unique solution from the Lord. I have known those who because of chronic pain and from taking medications found it almost impossible to open their spiritual eyes, but were often amazed at how the Lord compensated by giving them sacred dreams and impressions from those close to them to help in their journey. All things are possible to them that love the Lord.

Group Think

It is human nature to want to be a part of a group, a church, a belief system where we can share with like-minded people. It bolsters our faith and gives us hope. The Lord Himself advises us to be a part of “His Church.” But, can a group association be a deterrent for coming to Him?

The problem is that we often desire to find a person that is infallible, “the true prophet that can never lead us astray.” Wouldn’t that be amazing! But, there is no place in scripture where the Lord makes such a promise. Always he reminds his prophets and servants to remain faithful that they do not succumb to the

power of the Adversary. What the Lord expects from us is to look to Him. We are to have no other Gods or idols before Him.

Having said all that, there is a value to associating with a group. The Lord wants us to share what light we have with others, without imposing ourselves through unrighteousness dominion, we lead by example, and teach by the Spirit; always pointing to Christ as our inspiration.

Behold, this is my doctrine—whosoever repenteth and cometh unto me, the same is my church. Whosoever declareth more or less than this, the same is not of me, but is against me; therefore he is not of my church. And now, behold, whosoever is of my church, and endureth of my church to the end, him will I establish upon my rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. D&C 10:67-69

The Lord distinguishes His church depending upon those who repent and come to Him. The Lord only classes churches into two categories:

And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth. 1 Nephi 1:14

The Solution:

Focus first on the Doctrine of Christ: repentance, baptism, and the Holy Ghost.¹² Learn to discern revelation for yourself and your family, at all cost, seek to make this connection with the Lord. Then,

¹² 3 Nephi 11:31-40

you can navigate the many groups that will seek your participation. Most of you may be members of the LDS Church, as I am. But, you must seek this personal connection with the Lord above all things.

Familiar Spirits

I have talked about these in previous books, and they are the most subtle and debilitating of Satan's tempters. Why? Because they know us so intimately; they sound like our own self speaking to us; they sound like the voice of reason.

They will speak mostly truth to you, and then twist something just enough to send you in the wrong direction. Things like:

- "It's good to pray and know the Lord, but you can't expect to actually hear His voice or see Him."
- "God has given you a brain and reason, you shouldn't allow your imagination to deceive you."
- "Do you really think you are smarter than those people you highly respect? They know far more than you."
- "Don't get caught up in crazy thinking. You are an educated person."
- "What would your family and friends think. You have a duty to be an example in every way."

Can you see how these thoughts are designed to lessen your faith? Do they encourage you to seek the Lord in faith, with courage and determination? The closer you come to finding the Lord, the more you will contend with this.

Solutions:

Remind yourself where these thoughts come from so you can identify them. Decide beforehand how you will handle it. Be brave and determined. A great way to identify such deceptions is to ask

yourself whether these thoughts point towards your comfort, pride, and inadequacies. If so, dismiss them quickly.

Light-mindedness

This term means to treat sacred things with frivolity or scorn. That may sound harsh, but it is common among many to laugh and tease about things that are not understood or culturally unacceptable. Perhaps out of embarrassment, or to cover our own weakness we shy away from the spiritual. Usually, such a person is immature in spiritual things, but it is a trait to be recognized and removed if you wish to progress spiritually, “for God will not be mocked.”

Solution:

It is advised to be sober in your thoughts and motives. Today’s entertainment is filled with frivolity and light-mindedness. Most any TV sitcom or comedy, although not always sinful, may cause one to become desensitized to the sacred. Comedy can be addictive, as we seek to find humor in everything using sarcasm and scorn. This is not helpful in developing our spiritual sensitivities. Jesus has a great sense of humor, but don’t expect Him to laugh at all your jokes. There is a difference between a laugh of joy and a laugh of mockery.

Babylon

It truly is hard to live in the world, but not be of the world. Most all of us have to deal with our crazy busy lives where we have to watch the clock, pay the bills, deal with people who annoy us, or the constant barrage of attention grabbing advertisements and propaganda. Babylon is the great whore of the earth, which will attempt to fill your mind with as much unholiness as possible.

If we allow our thoughts and desires to build a foundation around the lusts of the flesh we will leave no room for the Lord, and we will never come to know Him. It has been a constant warning since the beginning. “Repent, come ye out from Babylon!”¹³

Solution:

Set aside time to make yourself holy. The Lord has commanded us to keep the Sabbath Day holy. On this day, we escape everything “Babylon” and come to Him. Those who are seeking more intimacy with the Lord may choose to come to Him even more often than that. Pray and ask Him how to do this. Take time to be holy, to fill your thoughts with virtue, and watch the scales fall from your eyes and ears. You will find Babylon as an annoyance that is small and trivial compared to your true treasure.

Culture

Sometimes our upbringing can have a strong influence on what we are willing to do or believe. If you had been taught your entire life that God doesn’t exist, or that Christ is a fraud, it would create a heavy chain that would have to be broken to move forward. Family cords are very strong and influential. I tend to feel sympathy for those who struggle in life; that can’t find the Lord, because of the cords of their familial culture. To overcome they must lay everything upon the altar; to repent and come unto the Lord unhindered. This can happen, as in the case of King Lamoni and his people. The degree of the sacrifice often reflects the degree of the Lord’s blessing to the recipient.

Solution:

The only solution for one stuck in a cultural, family-centered relationship is to simply lay it all on the altar of the Lord and

¹³ In my own words: Jeremiah 51:44-45, Revelation 18:4

covenant with Him that you will give up all for Him. It's a painful sacrifice, but has a beautiful ending.

Laziness

It is much easier to just stay where you are than to work for something. What do you want in life? Is there anything of value which requires no effort on our part? The Lord has counseled His disciples much regarding faith and diligence in coming to Him.

I have found that the pursuit of the Lord is the most exciting adventure. It is a proactive activity, where we act in faith, receive revelation, and do it again. It doesn't mean being the hamster in a cage running the treadmill. Don't waste your time doing busy tasks someone else assigns to you. Ask the Lord, "What do I do now? What next? Here are my ideas – what do You think?" and then move!

Solution:

Write your goals frequently: long term, intermediate, and short term. Do something, instead of nothing. Plan your time carefully, especially when you will seek holiness. Spend your idle time, not as idol time; but as time to seek answers from Him. Fill your mind with virtue and the words of the Lord to you. Don't allow yourself to get bored. There is nothing boring about opening your spiritual senses and being ministered to by angels. There is no form of entertainment or movies that can compare to what can be seen in the Heavenly Realm.

Physiology

There are some people who, despite following all the suggestions listed above, may actually have a disadvantage because of their

physiology. It requires great focus, as well as the ability to see with our mind's eye to open the spiritual senses.

Scientists have discovered a small gland in the brain that is activated when we dream, or use our imaginations. It is called the pineal gland. Shaped much like a small pine cone (thus the name). It has been well known for thousands of years that this is the source of our deeper spiritual thoughts, as both the Egyptians and far eastern religions think of it as a sacred place of the body. You may have noticed the red painted dot on the forehead, between the eyes of many Hindus who practice this religion.

I'm not sharing this information because I'm a new age spiritualist. In fact, I have not studied much of their philosophies and only marvel when people point out similarities in the spiritual realm. But, it has been found that those whose pineal glands are not functioning properly, that they struggle to have proper sleep and seeing with their mind's eye; to dream and to imagine. This gland has even been referred to as the "third eye." There is evidence that some people whose pineal gland has become dormant or calcified, because of exposure to fluoride or other chemicals, makes it difficult for them to activate the gland.

I had an experience with the Lord where He shared the following:

"I asked about the purpose of the pineal gland in our brains and how it affects our ability to see in the Spirit. He said that every organ and mechanism in our body is for a purpose to help us achieve what we need in this life. This gland helps us to imagine and to see what we cannot on our own. Some people struggle to see in the Spirit because their gland is hardened and unused. Sometimes, by healing, we can unloose this gland and begin to see. We must

exercise faith to make this gland work more fluidly. When we dream the gland helps us to open our spiritual eyes. The Lord said there are exercises and ways to help this process and He would help me.”¹⁴

The exercises which I was given are detailed in the coming chapter, “Exercises and Visualizations.” There are those whose pineal gland may be damaged due to chemical contamination such as fluoride or other toxins. We must seek a particular spiritual gift to purify and heal this part of the body if necessary.¹⁵

Another physiological aspect of this may be whether you are left brain or right brain in your cognitive functions. Left brain people usually are someone who thinks very formulaic, and structured; whereas, the right brain person sees many concepts in the abstract. They are very imaginative in their thinking. If you lean too heavily one verses the other it may be difficult for you. The Lord can help you in this regard by pointing you in a direction to help with the balance.

Solution: The exercises in the forthcoming chapters can help, and seeking revelation from the Lord regarding health choices will also make a big difference. We are designed to be a spiritual being, as much as we are designed to be a physical one. Have faith and believe.

Perhaps you were able to identify in yourself some of these reasons for struggling to open your spiritual sensitivities, and I hope you

¹⁴ *A Witness of the End of Times*, pg. 37

¹⁵ *A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit*, pg. 53

have an idea what you can do to prepare to move forward. The Lord always opens a door for those willing to be honest with themselves as they seek Him. This is what it is to be considered meek. When we are meek - miracles begin to happen.

Planting a seed in the ground and patiently watching it grow requires faith. But, if we don't plant it properly and nourish correctly it will not bear the results we hope for. If your ground is barren, it will not take root. This previous list of issues may have prohibited your spiritual sensitivities from blossoming. Now, exercise faith and prepare your ground for the seed to grow.

The Steps of Revelatory Progression

1. Feel the Spirit.
2. Hear a word in your mind.
3. Hear a phrase in your mind.
4. Have a conversation with the Lord.
5. Speak with messengers. (Angels, passed family, notable past spirits)
6. Learn to fight the adversary (during all of the above.)
7. See with eyes number 5 and 6.
8. Experience the Savior
9. Experience the Father
10. Experience Heavenly Mother

Many of these steps I have written about in my first book, “How to Have Your Second Comforter,” but I will attempt to elaborate a little further, to create a snapshot of how these experiences may unfold for you. Each of us are different and unique, so it may vary from person to person. Your experience may come quick or slower: but this is generally how we grow in our revelatory progression.

Feel the Spirit

This is the first step in our progression of coming to the Lord. Some never firmly grasp this communication; often because they are anchored down with the different issues as mentioned in the previous chapter. These can be overcome by your desire until you plant the seed of faith, and it begins to sprout, to witness evidence of something happening.

At first it will seem awkward and strange. Like performing an exercise or dance move for the first time.¹⁶ It's unfortunate we can't remember what it felt like as a new infant as we listened to sounds for the first time. If we could, we would probably think,

- "Ooh, that's weird! What was that? I don't know if I like the sound of that.
- Hmm, that sounded nice. Did I make that noise?
- That's scary! Get me back in that womb where it is nice and safe; I know that place is much more real for me."

There is a difference between communication from the Holy Spirit and feeling the fruits of the Spirit. Sometimes the two can be confused.

The communication is usually in the form of clear thoughts that settle in the mind. Sometimes they are received with words, and sometimes in an abstract form. They usually lead to action (faith) when we are in tune with Lord; or we may dismiss them. Those who fill their minds with virtue and seek the Lord's will, begin to easily discern when it's the Lord.

The fruits of the Spirit are the side effects or end results. For example, the emotions that swell within us, the sense of energy, or warmth. The results are the manifestations or follow-through of events that came from exercising faith in the revelations received.

¹⁶ A lot of people treat revelation like the kid who goes to the dance for the first time. They stand by the others, watch, critique how people are dancing; too afraid to give it a go. It's not until they let go of their inhibitions and really feel the music that they begin to dance. Revelation is a spiritual dance that is a synchronizing of the mind, heart, and spirit. It comes awkwardly at first until we have pure faith, then with perfect clarity. The heavens do not open until we learn to receive revelation, for only by this will God show you what you need to do.

Sometimes they can be explained away as circumstantial, or luck; but often they are a clear answer to prayer. It will depend on your level of spiritual sensitivity how you choose to interpret it.

For someone who has resisted the Spirit for many years, it is extremely difficult; because we have become accustomed to rationalizing or dismissing these thoughts, choosing to logically sift through everything we receive. One must release all their previous paradigms about hearing the Spirit and allow their thoughts to be examined. Especially when something comes into your mind randomly. Where did that come from?

When the Lord says to carry a prayer in your heart all day it means to be in a constant state of hearing the Spirit, and communicating with the Lord.¹⁷ Imagine that, listening to every thought, as something holy. Holy means that it is wrapped in the Spirit, not that it can't be mundane. It is not expedient to ask the Lord what to do at every move. Simply praise Him, express gratitude, and allow your thoughts to flow.

Within a short time, you will feel a closeness to the Lord that you have not felt before, and your ascension through the steps of revelatory progress will move very quickly.

Hear a Word in Your Mind

The transition to this step from feeling the Spirit can come very quickly. Its easiest to learn as we pray and ask simple yes and no questions. The key is to ask the kind of question which can be easily answered; close-ended questions. When we don't get an answer, it is often because of the way we ask them. If you are struggling here, simply rephrase the question.

¹⁷ 2 Nephi 32:9, Alma 34:27, 3 Nephi 18:18, D&C 19:38, D&C 25:12

What does it sound like when you hear a word in your mind? It sounds like YOU! When the Spirit speaks to us we are tapping into the glory of the Lord. It is pure divine energy or light. You cannot see it with your physical eyes, but your brain is capable of receiving it. The first thing that happens is that it is translated into words that you can understand. Again, seek the clear thoughts. Sometimes these are compared to a whisper in that they are still, quiet, and reserved. But they can just as easily shout with power and great force in your mind. But they are always clear and understood.

What is a “stupor of thought?” When our thoughts are scrambled and confused; and we struggle to focus, often this is a sign that it is not from the Lord. In answer to a prayer, it may be a sign that we are trying to force the revelation, or even that the Adversary is present. Often you may find yourself going back and forth between a stupor and clear revelation. This requires us to calm our thoughts and focus on the Lord.

To receive revelation, we must place our trust in the Lord and in this process. If you doubt yourself, or have trouble focusing your mind from outside distractions, you may want to practice taking time to be holy; filling your mind with virtue, and godly thoughts.

Hear a Phrase in Your Mind

The first time you hear the Spirit speak to you it is a puzzling experience for most. “Where did that come from?” is usually the reaction. Have you experienced that before? A short phrase to make a point; a reminder; a warning; or even a succinct council. Usually it bears great power upon you to seriously consider something, or to take action. Often people will chalk it up as a sixth sense, or an epiphany. Am I talking to myself? Maybe, but probably not.

When we hear a voice like this and it is from the Lord, it doesn't mean that we will necessarily have a good feeling. The Spirit has a way of making us feel uncomfortable. Don't assume its ungodly if we are shaking in our boots. If it is from an unholy source we will often find it exciting and enticing.

Examples of the Spirit speaking a phrase:

- Kill Laban - Nephi
- Walk on water – Peter
- Go pray in the grove for an answer – Joseph Smith
- Slay Goliath - David
- Go and pray - Enos
- Go and climb the mountain to check on the burning bush - Moses
- Go molten 16 stones – Brother of Jared
- Tell the King you wish to be his servant – Ammon
- Go to the temple – People of Bountiful
- Touch the hem of Jesus' robe – Women healed
- Go and find the Christ child – Magi when seeing the star

Examples of the Adversary telling us something:

- Give that person a piece of your mind.
- You can't afford to help that person right now.
- That's just you, not revelation.
- You will never succeed.
- God isn't going to help you.
- All that work isn't necessary.
- These plates can make your family well off – Joseph Smith
- Nephi is seeking power over you - Laman
- The idea of Christ is a way to usurp power over you – Korihor
- You shall not surely die, for It shall make you wise - Eve

- You should force Jesus to show His power - Judas

We are reminded, “A slothful servant is commanded in all things.” The word “slothful” implies that you have to be nudged to get to work. It doesn’t mean we have to be a genius. The most inspired ideas you will have will come by the power of the Spirit. That is a good thing! All our thoughts come from somewhere. Usually from the vast accumulation of experiences and reasoning we have experienced during our life. But, if we try to strategize everything we do, we may miss the opportunity to allow the Lord to guide us. Pay close attention to the simple phrases of clear and precise inspiration that come upon you. Trust in the Lord.

Have a Conversation with the Lord

The next natural sequence to this process is to begin to have a conversation with the Lord. This is like a prayer, but we hear the voice of the Lord in our minds coming back to us. It almost feels like we are having a conversation with ourselves, yet it is filled with holiness, virtue, and light. It doesn’t come about easily, but when it happens you clearly recognize it’s not the normal way things happen for you.

I remember the first time I experienced this. Up until that point I had heard a phrase or a word maybe a few times that I could clearly discern. But, this time I heard Him speaking to me in full sentences. It was a day where I was deeply depressed, having many hardships with my work and finances. I wondered if the Lord was truly with me, and my heart was filled with despair.

I heard a phrase in my mind out of the clear blue, “Get a pencil and paper.” I knew that I was supposed to give myself a blessing. That was an odd thing to me, against everything I had been taught about the proper etiquette of priesthood blessings. Because it was such a

random thought and I was so discouraged I thought, “What do I have to lose?” I obeyed the Voice and sat down to write.

The thoughts came to me to not think of what I would say, but simply write, word for word what came into my mind. I did as I was commanded and wrote very precisely a blessing that was more intimate and more powerful than any I had yet received; including my patriarchal blessing. It was prophetic in its promises, and I dated it and kept it safe; often reading it and marveling how the Lord did that for me. I now knew what it was like to hear the voice of the Lord speaking to me.

How did I know for certain it was the Lord and not the result of imagination? Well, I couldn't know that for sure at the time. I considered how it came to me with great force, a random thought, and how I felt as I heard the words and wrote them. I also marveled at what was said. Later, I saw the miraculous fulfillment of many of the promises of the blessing. It was not the same level of “proof” as standing in the presence of the Lord and feeling the marks in His hands; but it was a witness to me. I chose to believe and continue pushing forward. My knowledge at that time was equal to the seed which had sprouted and begun to grow, but I couldn't know for certain what the end result would be. I chose to believe, and to embrace this new experience. Little did I know what was yet to come.

Speak with Angelic Messengers

With my new confidence in hearing the voice of the Lord I became more sensitive to my thoughts, especially when I was asking questions. I began to ask a lot of questions. When I would feel the Spirit, or an unknown presence I would ask who, what, why, etc.

I had experienced a couple of things in the temple that strengthened my testimony of the reality of the Spirit World.¹⁸ Those experiences had come about in such a natural way that I found myself questioning their validity. Once, after a powerful experience I began to question whether it was real. The Spirit rebuked me in such a way that I literally felt myself shaken to my bones. That spiritual witness helped me to be more believing in the validity of these experiences.

One of my first experiences with this was after I was newly married. I didn't understand revelation very well at this point, but I would notice things out of the normal. I was reading a book alone in my grandmother's house; it was quiet; my mind was calm. Out of nowhere I felt a presence approach me and I heard clearly what sounded like someone rebuking me. The words were spoken in my mind, but it wasn't me. I was very shaken and decided I needed to follow the direct council of this angel and refocus my heart upon the Lord. I knew it was a messenger from the Lord, although I didn't see him. It was a call to repentance. I will never forget that experience.

I later found that when I would ponder or think about a particular angel or person I would sometimes feel their presence or hear a voice in my mind. I would check with the Lord to know what was going on and unless I had a solid confirmation I would excuse it. I really focused during this time in understanding the principle of revelation.¹⁹

These interactions with the spiritual realm are often for the purpose of teaching you something. This is what is referred to as the ministering of angels. If your spiritual eyes have not yet opened; but you are seeking the Lord, this is a frequent experience

¹⁸ I used to think that these things were likely to only happen in the temple. They can happen anywhere we make holy by our faith.

¹⁹ A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit," pg.24

you may have. These angels may offer you direction, comfort, or rebuke. But they always do this in the name of the Lord as His servants.

Angels are beautiful, loving, serious, articulate, and very close to us. They relish the opportunity to serve us, to come to our rescue, to bring what we need, and to have a part in our lives. But, they are also easily offended. The Heavenly Realm isn't something to mess around with. Always seek the Lord's permission when conversing or asking for help from the angels of the Lord.

Learn to fight the Adversary

About the time I wrote that blessing, I also had many of the experiences I wrote about in my first book. This started as a heavy dose of the Adversary, but the Lord was intimately involved from the beginning. It wasn't something my wife and I chose to research or investigate. We would hear the voice of the Lord speaking to us, and then we would pray and receive instructions for how to handle different situations with the Adversary.

At first the communications were mostly auditory, both from the Lord and from the Adversary; but it became a quick procession into the other revelatory steps from here.

We were frequently visited by angels from the heavenly realm who would teach us certain things, followed by various encounters with dark spirits. It would have been too much if it hadn't been for the comforting love of the Lord and the encouragement of the angelic ministers.

There are many good people who receive the baptism of fire and the Gift of the Holy Ghost which never make it this far. They hear the voice of the Lord; perhaps experience holy dreams and visions, and some of the Gifts of the Spirit; but they never really have to

deal with the Adversary. I know many people like this. God bless them, they are saved in the Kingdom! Yes, they are now sons and daughters of God, born again in Jesus Christ and will rise in the First Resurrection. If that is all they desire it shall be fine for now; but, there is more. I'm not saying this to suggest you seek out an encounter with the Adversary; but that you don't run away. The best way to handle this would be to ask the Lord to help you to understand and trust that He will give you the experiences you need.

To become a servant of the Most High, we must learn to defeat the enemy. The Lord will not give you more than you can bear. He is the armor of your salvation. He sets the terms of your calling and how you can be a servant in these last days.²⁰ You can choose the degree of your faithfulness, but if you are fearless and obedient; you will see and do things that are beyond your comprehension.

See with Eyes the Angels and the Adversary

It didn't take long after my spiritual ears and senses began to open that the eyes soon followed. It wasn't a splash of open-vision at first. It was more like fleeting glimpses. Usually, my eyelids were open as I would see, look, and move around. It was certainly strange and a little confusing. It all felt very organized to me as the Lord's voice would announce what was coming and what to do next. Everything seemed far too detailed and logical to be a random hallucination or dream. And it happened every day and night for three months. After a while what were short glimpses became clear open vision where I would see the natural surroundings with the spirit world interacting around me.

²⁰ Referring to the mission given to us before the foundation of the world. We still have our agency to be faithful or not.

Usually the day was calmer, but every night at 3:00AM “school” would begin. My wife and I knew the seriousness of what we were experiencing, but would look at each other and say, “Can you believe all this?” We would see the same things, which was also a witness to us that our experiences were real. Two of our children were also seeing much and we felt to ask the Lord to close their eyes because it was becoming too distracting in their lives; which He promptly did.

For those who are reading this and feeling uncomfortable ask yourselves, “Why am I uneasy with this topic?” For many it is a tradition, or unbelief that to talk of the Adversary is to only invite him, to bring evil upon ourselves. Evil is all around and you will never shake it as long as you are a child of the light in mortality. You must ask the Lord to help you learn to protect yourself and your family. You will not learn how to do this properly any other way than from the Lord directly. I have kept my advice minimal for this purpose. Don’t expect any book to adequately prepare you. Seek to understand revelation and you will do well. Learn to hear the voice of the Lord and you will learn all you need to protect yourself. Battling the adversary can be unnerving, but it will likely be one of the most beautiful experiences in your life because you will be introduced to angels and the powers of God as you learn the process.

Experience the Savior

The term “Second Comforter” is an LDS description we use to explain a visit with the Lord. It implies a closeness or intimacy with Him that is a culmination of our faith and the Lord’s desire to share something with us. We can call it what we wish, but an interaction with the Lord is not always the same for each person; and there are different degrees or levels that can be experienced.

About this time in your revelatory progression, you may begin to have sacred dreams which include the Savior. It is not uncommon to be with Him in these dreams, to see his body and hands, but struggle to see His face. This can be very frustrating for those desperately seeking Him. Be patient, the Lord is preparing you for the event.

When the time is right, not because you reached some point of perfect righteousness; but because it is time for you to begin your mission, the Lord will reveal Himself to you. Some have been confused by my last book, "How To Have Your Second Comforter," that all you had to do is go through a checklist and the Lord would come---it doesn't work that way. The purpose of the book was to show how it happened for me; but for each of you it will happen in a unique way.

Those who exercise great faith (seeking revelation and acting upon it), they will develop an intimate relationship with the Lord that will eventually bear the full fruit of the knowledge of God. You cannot set a time limit on it; but you can press forward, knocking on the doors of heaven loudly until you have your day. The Lord loves you and desires it as much as you do; however, it will come at the best and most appropriate time. The Lord knows when that will be, so trust in Him.

Experience the Father

There is a reason for every step of our revelatory progression. One rarely occurs without experiencing the previous steps. The Father always witnesses of the Son, and the Son of the Father. It is the typical sequence, when entering the Throne of Heaven, to first meet the Son, and then to be introduced to the Father. There are occasions where the Holy Family will condescend within the pillar of fire and attend to a holy event, but it is not the proper way for anyone to meet the Father before the Son.

Experience the Mother

I was introduced to Mother after the Father. I had seen her before in the pillar of fire at a gathering of a group of people when the pillar of fire descended. The spirit bore witness to me who she was, but it was not an introduction. Her grace and beauty was also unearthly. To meet her is to experience the wisdom, love, and nurturing that only a Holy Mother could exude. It is breathtaking. I have been criticized for my descriptions of my experiences as unimpressive because I don't describe the power and glory of God adequately. I'm sorry, but I admit it. I can't.

When you reach the point where you have come to the top of the "Steps of Revelatory Progression" how will you feel? I hope your life will be filled with heavenly experiences. I will tell you that as long as you are subject to the flesh it will be difficult. Read the words of Nephi:

16 Behold, my soul delighteth in the things of the Lord; and my heart pondereth continually upon the things which I have seen and heard.

17 Nevertheless, notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in showing me his great and marvelous works, my heart exclaimeth: O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities.

18 I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me.

19 And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.

20 My God hath been my support; he hath led me through mine afflictions in the wilderness; and he hath preserved me upon the waters of the great deep.

21 He hath filled me with his love, even unto the consuming of my flesh.

22 He hath confounded mine enemies, unto the causing of them to quake before me.

23 Behold, he hath heard my cry by day, and he hath given me knowledge by visions in the night-time.

24 And by day have I waxed bold in mighty prayer before him; yea, my voice have I sent up on high; and angels came down and ministered unto me.

25 And upon the wings of his Spirit hath my body been carried away upon exceedingly high mountains. And mine eyes have beheld great things, yea, even too great for man; therefore I was bidden that I should not write them.

26 O then, if I have seen so great things, if the Lord in his condescension unto the children of men hath visited men in so much mercy, why should my heart weep and my soul linger in the valley of sorrow, and my flesh waste away, and my strength slacken, because of mine afflictions?

27 And why should I yield to sin, because of my flesh? Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy?

28 Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul.

29 Do not anger again because of mine enemies. Do not slacken my strength because of mine afflictions.

30 Rejoice, O my heart, and cry unto the Lord, and say: O Lord, I will praise thee forever; yea, my soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

31 O Lord, wilt thou redeem my soul? Wilt thou deliver me out of the hands of mine enemies? Wilt thou make me that I may shake at the appearance of sin?

32 May the gates of hell be shut continually before me, because that my heart is broken and my spirit is contrite! O Lord, wilt thou not shut the gates of thy righteousness before me, that I may walk in the path of the low valley, that I may be strict in the plain road!

33 O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness! O Lord, wilt thou make a way for mine escape before mine enemies! Wilt thou make my path straight before me! Wilt thou not place a stumbling block in my way—but that thou wouldst clear my way before me, and hedge not up my way, but the ways of mine enemy. [Adversary]

34 O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man or maketh flesh his arm.

35 Yea, I know that God will give liberally to him that asketh. Yea, my God will give me, if I ask not amiss; therefore I will lift up my voice unto thee; yea, I will cry unto thee, my God, the rock of my righteousness. Behold, my voice shall forever ascend up unto thee, my rock and mine everlasting God. Amen. (2 Nephi 4:15-26)

Someday you will be able to speak similarly to Nephi, as you experience many of the same things. Don't be discouraged, but remember that the Lord is merciful and knows you better than you know yourself. He believes in you!

Where do you see yourself on the Steps of Revelatory Progression now? Do you feel stuck or wonder why it's taking so long? Although my journey really started over 25 years ago, I found that my development went from the second to the last step within a three-year's time frame. I think much of this had to do with three things.

- Letting go of excess baggage; the sins and unbeliefs that are oppressive.

- Having faith, following the revelations the Lord gives, as closely as possible.
- The timing: When the moment of your mission is to begin.

The process of revelatory progression is learned through what is referred to as “the gifts of the Spirit.” The Lord has carefully made a path for each of us if we will turn to Him and simply believe. Too often we will not partake of the gifts that are ours if we would only ask, look, and partake.

Developing the Gifts of the Spirit

The Lord desires us to know Him. How do we do that best; to have an intimate relationship with the divine? If you read your scriptures, pray diligently, go to church and the temple, live a life of peace, kindness, and love, is it sufficient? The degree in which you experience the gifts of the Spirit may be determined by the faith which you exercise to know Him.

How many exercise the gift of prophesy, tongues, administering of angels, and miracles; as described by Moroni? Shouldn't we be experiencing these things for ourselves and others if we are to be the Lord's servants? The reason these things are not occurring, except on rare occasions, is that many of the followers of Christ do not know how to come unto Christ. This is what Moroni invited each of us to do in his last words of the Book of Mormon.

“Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength,²¹ then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.” Moroni 10:32

The purpose of the Gifts of the Spirit is to become perfected in Christ. They are the means by which we exercise the “power of God,” or the gifts of the Spirit. “And now I speak unto all the ends of the earth—that if the day cometh that the power and gifts of God shall be done away among you, it shall

²¹ The word “mind” refers to our thoughts.

be because of unbelief.”²² Moroni tells us to “arise from the dust!”²³

These “unbeliefs” or false traditions stem from a misunderstanding of how the Lord’s Gospel is given. Where do we turn for help? The Lord clearly laid out His blueprint when He came to the people of Bountiful after His resurrection. These were the more righteous remnant of the Nephites that had survived the destruction. They were prepared to meet the Lord. What did He teach them? First, He taught what is called the “Doctrine of Christ;” which is repentance, baptism of water, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

The Lord didn’t dive into the mysteries or the fringe doctrines of the church. These people knew the ten commandments and finer points of the Jewish law. But, the Lord chose to focus on His doctrine. Why are these three parts of the doctrine so important?

Repentance is turning one’s heart over to the Lord. It requires us to exercise faith, seeking the Lord’s word as received by His Spirit through the voice of His servants, holy scripture, and personal prayer. During this stage of our spiritual development we learn to discern good from evil, to see the difference between the voice of the Spirit and the Adversary. We plant the seed of faith and reach out to God for mercy; and we begin to recognize the Gifts of the Spirit, as we receive revelation and further instruction. The gifts of the Spirit are what move us forward to receiving the full blessings.

As we progress we receive the Baptism of Water to make a covenant with the Father as a witness to Him that we will take the name of Jesus Christ upon us. We accept Him as our Savior and Redeemer. It is an earthly ordinance, performed before witnesses

²² Moroni 10:24

²³ To “arise from the dust” is to overcome the flesh.

that we may join a group of fellow believers to sustain each other as we seek the Lord.²⁴

The Gift of the Holy Ghost is the crowning event, as we are baptized with fire, bringing forth a remission of sins, making us holy to stand in the presence of the Lord. If we are sufficiently humble, with a broken heart and contrite Spirit, we will receive the Holy Ghost gift, which is different than what the Holy Ghost gave before. Now, you are changed, born again, spiritually begotten of Jesus Christ. Your spirit is not the same, you are counted among the spirits of the Just, claimed by Jesus Christ, a son or daughter of God. Your spirit is made perfect. This grand gift is possible because of the many of the gifts of the Spirit, particularly the gift of charity.²⁵

These three pillars of the Doctrine of Christ make it all possible. Anything more or less than this cometh of evil, does it not? This is how we “come unto Christ.”²⁶

Imagine if you had been one of the people who were there when Christ came to America. Each were able to touch the marks on His body and be a witness of His divinity. One by one they came forth and had an individual experience with the Lord. There were about 2500 men, women, and children who did; there is more to that than is apparent. They all received what we call the Second Comforter.

Receiving the Gifts of the Spirit is closely tied to our salvation and exaltation; therefore, we must learn to open our spiritual senses, to experience these gifts, so that we too can know the Lord and be a witness of Him to others.

²⁴ Mosiah 18:8-9, Mosiah 25:23-24, Alma 6:6

²⁵ A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit, pg. 78

²⁶ 3 Nephi 11:39-40

The Book, “A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit,” is a reference for the various gifts the Lord would have us use. Become familiar with its content and pray for a personal witness for yourself.

Sacred Imagination

The natural gift of imagination is often nurtured among children, but harnessed and suppressed as they grow into adulthood, replaced with conformity, propriety, and responsibility. Children can see a world filled with unseen possibilities; objects of frivolity can be toys for the imagination. Are children weaker spiritually because they see and think outside of the physical? As we mature such things become tales of fantasy and entertainment.

“And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”
Matthew 18:3-4

What does it mean to humble oneself as a little child? Little children have great faith. To them all things are possible. Do you have the faith to believe, to try something that is against all adult rational reasoning? What will you do? Only if you become as a child can you enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

We live in a world of physical tangibility. All things are experienced through the senses of sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. If it falls outside those parameters it cannot be measured or justified by the carnal mind. Most can only “imagine” how the realm of heaven would be. I wish I could adequately describe these things, but it must be experienced to truly understand. Our physical bodies are made of the dust of the earth, and like dust, are here now and gone tomorrow. The spirit endures and our imaginations, through

dream²⁷ and vision, connect us to a realm the carnal mind cannot endure.

“And again, verily I say unto you that it is your privilege, and a promise I give unto you that have been ordained unto this ministry, **[Pray to know what this means for you]** that inasmuch as you strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, **[don’t compare yourself to others]** and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble, **[full submission, as a child]** the veil shall be rent and you shall see me and know that I am—not with the carnal neither natural mind, but with the spiritual. For no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit of God. Neither can any natural man abide the presence of God, neither after the carnal mind. Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected. (D&C 67:10-13)

The “carnal” and natural mind is of the flesh; whereas, the spiritual mind allows us to bear the presence of angels, and of God.

I use the words “sacred imagination” to describe the mechanism for opening the spiritual senses. How does God view the mind of man? Does God favor the imagination? The carnal mind is a hard nut to crack.²⁸ “Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal.”²⁹ What is the carnal mind?³⁰ The apostle Paul said:

²⁷ Dreams are our spirit mind hungering for expression.

²⁸ Alma 36:4

²⁹ 2 Nephi 9:39

³⁰ “Carnal” is related to physical needs of the body. Often associated with things lustful.

“That the righteousness of the law [**the purpose of God’s works**] might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. [**according to realm of the Spirit**] For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; [**the carnal mind**] but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. [**the spiritual mind and senses**] For to be carnally minded is death; [**temporal only**] but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. [**Eternal Life**] Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: [**Does not understand God and closes the door between us and Him.**] for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. [**The carnal mind cannot open the spiritual senses.**] But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. [**Your spiritual senses are awakened, because the Holy Ghost is in you.**] Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Romans 8:4-9

Are these verses teaching us to have our physical actions be spiritual instead of physical? Paul clearly says to “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” This is not a physical experience. We are told to be “spiritually minded,” which is something inside of us, not of the physical senses.

“There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes; We cannot see it; but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter.” D&C 131:7-8

How does one develop “purer eyes?” The spirit is matter, as real and tangible as physical, but more refined. Joseph says our bodies must be purified to see. Is he speaking of our physical bodies or spiritual bodies? What would be an example of one who is spiritually minded?

“It is my meditation all the day, and more than my meat and drink, to know how I shall make the Saints of God comprehend the visions that roll like an overflowing surge before my mind. Oh! how I would delight to bring before you things which you never thought of! But poverty and the cares of the world prevent. But I am glad I have the privilege of communicating to you some things which, if grasped closely, will be a help to you when earthquakes bellow, the clouds gather, the lightnings flash, and the storms are ready to burst upon you like peals of thunder. Lay hold of these things and let not your knees or joints tremble, nor your hearts faint; and then what can earthquakes, wars and tornadoes do? Nothing.”³¹

The Lord once told me, “every organ and mechanism in our body is for a purpose to help us achieve what we need in this life and the next.” Why do we dream? Why do we imagine? Here are some definitions I have been given of the Lord:

The Heart – seat of our desires³²

The Mind – the place of our imagination and memory³³

³¹ *History of the Church*, 5:362

³² 2 Chronicles 15:15, Psalm 37:4, Proverbs 23:7, Mosiah 18:10-11, Alma 19:33, Alma 33:23

³³ Luke 10:27

The Soul – the place within us where our spirit and mind grow in knowledge and understanding. The testing ground for eternal progression.³⁴

The Spirit – the true identity of ourselves, our glory and light.

“And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart [**with meekness and humility**] and with a willing mind: [**willingness to believe and to seek for revelation**] for the Lord searcheth all hearts [**knows your desires**] and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: [**sees the images of your creation**] if thou seek him, [**Seek the Lord in the Spirit**] he will be found of thee; [**Second Comforter**] but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.”
[**Perdition**] 1 Chronicles 28:9

The desires of our hearts and imaginations of our thoughts are what will determine whether the Lord reveals Himself to us. “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.”³⁵

When I first began to experience the Heavenly Realm I was overwhelmed with the freedom and vastness of that dimension. Everything I thought was a physical law was dissolved immediately. In fact, the only physical limitations there are those we impede upon ourselves. Anything the mind can conceive is capable of becoming a reality for it. When one is connected to the Holy Spirit, or divine light and energy of God, all things are before them. The amount of light we carry determines how much knowledge and glory we can exercise. In other words—what we can create. The

³⁴ Deuteronomy 6:5, 2 Kings 23:25, Joseph Smith replaces the word “soul” with “mind” in these scriptures: 2 Nephi 25:29, Mosiah 2:11, Alma 39:13, Moroni 10:32, D&C 4:2, D&C 11:20, D&C 20:31, D&C 33:7, D&C 59:5, D&C 98:47

³⁵ Proverbs 23:7 To “think” is to make decisions.

Lord will not share His light with those who are incapable of exercising sufficient faith. What does that mean? To righteously (according to God's will) create a reality that builds the Kingdom of God. In other words: to be one with the Father and Son in purpose, and have a fullness of joy. Where does that joy come from?

All creation begins with a thought. Thoughts come from experience. What have you seen before? Where have you been? What have you been taught? Have you learned about it? Have you touched it, smelled it, tasted it, heard its sound, felt its vibration? What is Eternal Life? It is to know the Eternal Father and His Son, to walk with Him and know what He knows, because we too have experienced it.

Often, we hear the question, "What is the purpose of mortality?" Usually, the answer is to experience the flesh so we can know the good from the bad. It doesn't take long for someone to know the difference between pleasure and pain. Why would a spirit seek for pain? Did not the Lord cast the evil spirits into the swine from the possessed man at their request to only see them race over a cliff to their death?³⁶ Why would a spirit seek experiences of a negative kind?

11 For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. **[The good and bad must grow together in a temporal existence.]** If not so, my firstborn in the wilderness, righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad. Wherefore, all things must needs be a compound in one; **[Without knowledge.]** wherefore, if it should be one body it must needs remain as dead, having no life neither death, nor corruption nor

³⁶ Matthew 8:30-32

incorruption, happiness nor misery, neither sense nor insensibility. **[State of existence of an unglorified intelligence, first estate.]**

12 Wherefore, it must needs have been created for a thing of naught; wherefore there would have been no purpose in the end of its creation. Wherefore, this thing must needs destroy the wisdom of God and his eternal purposes, and also the power, and the mercy, and the justice of God. **[This temporal world brings to pass God's purposes to help us reach the full measure of our creation.]**

13 And if ye shall say there is no law, ye shall also say there is no sin. If ye shall say there is no sin, ye shall also say there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these things are not there is no God. And if there is no God we are not, neither the earth; for there could have been no creation of things, neither to act nor to be acted upon; wherefore, all things must have vanished away. **[Remained in their unorganized state forever.]**

14 And now, my sons, I speak unto you these things for your profit and learning; for there is a God, and he hath created all things, both the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are, both things to act and things to be acted upon. **[The ability to create and organize the element (intelligence) according to the measure of its capacity.]**

15 And to bring about his eternal purposes in the end of man, after he had created our first parents, and the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and in fine, all things which are created, it must needs be that there was an opposition; even

the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life; the one being sweet and the other bitter. **[All things were given for the use of man for their experience.]**

16 Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other. **[We chose what we will do, think, act, say, touch, smell, feel, and create.]**

2 Nephi 2:11-16

Without experiencing the good and the evil of all things we cannot comprehend the power of creation.³⁷ To see it is to make it so, according to the divine will of the Father.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Hebrews 11:1-3

What is hope? Hope is to look forward to an event; to see it and make it so. Paul said “that things which are seen [in the mind] were not made of things which do appear [to the physical eyes].” We cannot expect to put the cart before the horse, because you “receive no witness until after the trial of your faith.”³⁸ This kind of “trial” is the same as a test or experiment, the act of creating by the Spirit and seeing the reality of its witness.

³⁷ Evil spirits desperately desire physical experiences. It is the only platform for creation they will have in the realm of outer darkness. Because they do not develop their faith much in mortality, their ability to create is limited.

³⁸ Ether 12:6

I have written this definition of faith: “to seek after revelation and to act upon it.” What is revelation? It is divine communication from the Lord. How is it received? Both by word, vision, and all things spiritual. What is the “faith” principle that is the power of God in the heavenly realm? The Lord has said,

- “He who hath faith to see shall see.”³⁹
- “. . . by faith all things are fulfilled.”⁴⁰
- “Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind.”⁴¹
- “. . . open your ears that ye may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view.”⁴²

As we grow in faith, the gifts of the Spirit, and knowledge, our ability to experience in the heavenly realm expands. We learn to use our sacred imagination to plant the seed of faith until it bears fruit.

“And now, behold, is your knowledge perfect? Yea, your knowledge is perfect in that thing, and your faith is dormant; and this because you know, for ye know that the word hath swelled your souls, and ye also know that it hath sprouted up, that your understanding doth begin to be enlightened, and your mind doth begin to expand.” Alma 32:34

What starts as a “word” begins to enlighten your “understanding” and the “mind” begins to expand. How does a mind expand? Does

³⁹ D&C 42:49

⁴⁰ Ether 12:3 All thoughts received by the Spirit are made manifest.

⁴¹ D&C 64:34 He didn’t ask for a strong body, great oratory skills, or intellectual superiority. He wants your desires and thoughts.

⁴² Mosiah 2:9

it mean we have more IQ and brain function? Or, does it mean we expand our ability to have faith?

Moroni said regarding angelic ministers, “For behold, they are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness.”⁴³

Angels will show themselves to those with a “firm mind in every form of godliness.” That’s a loaded verse.⁴⁴ What makes a mind firm? It is one which is not easily distracted by the things of the flesh; that is focused upon faith and revelation. The term “every form of godliness” refers to the gifts of the Spirit. In them are all the powers of godliness manifest.

“And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.” D&C 84:19-22

To experience a fullness of the Father requires the greater relationship or “priesthood.” The ordinances received, both the physical in the temporal body (lesser priesthood), and the spiritual ordinances in the heavenly realm (higher priesthood), require a witness of your faith. The temporal world helps us to grow our faith, to develop our divine imagination, to prepare us to be like the

⁴³ Moroni 7:30

⁴⁴ An angel of God is any anointed being sent from the presence of the Father.

Father and the Son; to exercise that higher priesthood. Joseph Smith said:

“... All the gifts of the Spirit are not visible to the natural vision, or understanding of man; indeed very few of them are. ... Few of them could be known by the generality of men.”⁴⁵

The gifts of the Spirit are the sacred imaginations being exercised, the power of godliness in action. You have it within you even now the power to open the windows of heaven, but the unbelief which afflict the carnal man creates a barrier between us and God. How can we pull down that wall?

“Behold, that which you hear is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness—in the wilderness, because you cannot see him—my voice, because my voice is Spirit; my Spirit is truth; truth abideth and hath no end; and if it be in you it shall abound. And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things. Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.” D&C 88:66-68

⁴⁵ *History of the Church*, 5:26–31; bracketed words in second paragraph in original; punctuation and grammar modernized; paragraph divisions altered; from “Gift of the Holy Ghost,” an editorial published in *Times and Seasons*, June 15, 1842, pp. 823–25; Joseph Smith was the editor of the periodical.

What does it mean that our “eye be single” to His glory? It means to be focused upon Him; not just our actions, but our thoughts. To use the word “eye” as singular, instead of “eyes,” is to imply the mind and sacred imagination. As our bodies are filled with His light and glory we “comprehendeth all things,” as the Lord guides these thoughts. To “sanctify” is to make something holy to the Lord. This comes by receiving the baptism of fire and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Then the Lord will reveal His face to you at the proper time. Much of the process of opening our sacred imagination will occur as we ponder the words of the Lord in private. Here, our imagination can allow the visual imagery in our mind to open up to visions and revelatory information. When the Lord was with the Nephites he perceived that their minds were closed and could not comprehend all His words.

“Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again.”⁴⁶

Allowing your sacred imagination to flow as the Spirit of the Lord is with you, will open the veil of your mind that you can see, hear, and understand.⁴⁷ To think like a child, to believe all things, to trust in your Father, to come to Him only. This will open up a fullness of the Heavenly Realm and you will know Him; because you will have experienced what He has, and have Eternal Life.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, [carnal man] the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. **[The endless mysteries of Heaven]**

⁴⁶ 3 Nephi 17:3, D&C 30:1-3 commanded to ponder

⁴⁷ D&C 110:1

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. **[The gifts of the Spirit reveal all things.]**

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. **[Only in and through the Spirit can these be revealed.]**

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. **[There spiritual senses were opened.]**

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11)

Paul says that the “eye, ear, and heart” are the spiritual receptors that will open us to the Kingdom of Heaven. According to Paul’s word, the Lord will reveal this realm to us in four ways:

Searching: “the Spirit searcheth all things.” We must search by the Spirit into the deep things of God. (vs.10-11)

Receiving: “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” (vs. 12-14) The Lord freely gives unto us.

Teaching: “... Holy Ghost teacheth;” We are taught by the Spirit by what we see and experience, the meaning and purposes behind His works. (this is wisdom)

Judging: “...he that is spiritual judgeth all things;” to judge is to separate and to organize according to the Lord. The righteous can discern the truth, because He will have the mind of Christ. (vs. 15-16)

I hope that you can clearly see the pattern the Lord uses to help us see with an eye of faith. Will you experiment, to plant a seed of faith, the seed of your imagination, that you may begin to experience the gifts of the Spirit of the Lord? The first word I ever heard from the Lord was “YES.”⁴⁸ The first phrase I ever heard from Him was, “Be believing.” Everything else I have received has come to me because I was willing to exercise this faith.

⁴⁸ The first audible word I ever heard as a young boy came upon asking in prayer, “Was Joseph Smith a prophet?”

Exercises and Visualizations

This section will present some exercises and visualizations that will help you begin to see in the Spirit. To get started, I want to share an analogy:

I have a son who loves martial arts. Recently he tested for his black-belt and advanced in his school. The joy and satisfaction on his face was thrilling for me to witness. It took him five years of consistent exercise and study to reach his goal.

I remember his first week in the class as a white-belt rank. At the age of twelve he stood among kids as young as six. He was a little embarrassed and was intimidated by the higher belts that “knew everything.” Their physical movements seemed effortless, and I remember him saying to me, “I don’t know if I want to do this.” He was awkward in those early months as he struggled to learn the forms and discipline of martial arts. In time, he began to see great improvements as he grew in knowledge.

Some of you are like the lower belt student trying to get your bearings on a new discipline. Each of us come to the Lord at a different level. You cannot compare yourself and allow the Adversary to tell you it is hopeless. You cannot run faster than you have strength. There is a process of maturity as you grow from one level to the next. How quickly can a new martial arts student become a black-belt? It takes time. Similarly, with those who desire to use the gifts of the Spirit, you must be patient and learn the forms.

When organizing a workout routine, you usually get out of it what you put into it. If you only exercise once a week don’t expect huge results. But if it is a daily, carefully planned routine, pushing yourself to the limits, you will progress rapidly and reach great

heights. You may experience a period of time with muscle aches, as your body (spiritual body) adapts to the new load. The process of breaking down the old muscle to build up the new is required for it to strengthen. This is when the most growth occurs.

Stage One: Create a platform

Your platform is the state of your soul, mind and spirit. It must be fertile soil to grow your spiritual senses. If you are suffering from any of the attributes that prevent you from experiencing the gifts of the Spirit, as listed in the first section, that is where you should start. Be sure you have identified any deterrents. The Lord said that if our soil is rocky, the seed may not grow.

“And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Matthew 13:3-9

Your platform begins with the sincerity of your desire, intent, and passion. No casual pursuit of the Lord will yield the desired results to part the veil and experience the power of godliness. There is a moment in every person’s life where they must choose to take action and do something unconventional. Joseph Smith had a life

altering moment when the Spirit of the Lord spoke to him with great power as he was reading James 1:5:

“Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God, I did; for how to act I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom than I then had, I would never know; for the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible.’

“At length, I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, ask of God. I at length came to the determination to “ask of God,” concluding that if he gave wisdom to them that lacked wisdom, and would give liberally, and not upbraid, I might venture.” Joseph Smith History 1:12-13

Taking the first step of asking God for help, seeking wisdom to know what you should do is the beginning of your platform. You may not get an answer right away. Perhaps you will need to evaluate, think it over, ponder your situation, and the Lord will answer you in His own way.

The next important step, which will help to lay your foundation to begin this journey, is to learn how to fill your mind with virtue. “. . . let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine

of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.”⁴⁹

That is beautiful imagery. Imagine the inspired thoughts and doctrines of the heavenly realm, like the morning dew, appearing softly, without effort upon your mind. As you come to know the Lord more intimately your “confidence” becomes strong in the Lord’s presence. What does that mean? You will know when He is truly there when He is speaking to you. You will discern truth. You will be unafraid to ask questions. The brother of Jared was unafraid to ask questions. He had great confidence, and the Lord showed Him great things; more than He was permitted to write.

Virtue is all things good and godly. To garnish your thoughts with this kind of good is to seek all things beautiful, inspiring, Christ-centered, and truthful. It is to gather and nurture imagery, experiences, words, music, and art which brings you closer to the Lord. Avoiding all things which inspire the carnal mind is a good place to start. What might that be? Most modern forms of entertainment are not uplifting to the spiritual mind. Things that are unholy, sarcastic, vulgar, or lead the mind to think, ponder, and “imagen” a sinful thought should be nauseating to the soul.

“And why should I yield to sin, because of my flesh? Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy? Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul.” 2 Nephi 4:27-28

⁴⁹ D&C 121:45

Here are some exercises or tasks I would recommend beginning, to build the platform of having a pure heart. You may feel you already are past this beginning phase, but like a nutritious diet is the fundamental starting point for a great athlete. You too must feed your spirit with what it needs to grow.

Exercises:

- Start your day with the *Four Step Prayer*, and really focus on each step. Allow your mind to ponder.⁵⁰ This prayer method helps you to daily self-evaluate yourself and your relationship with the Lord. Prayer is a powerful starting point.
- Use your moments driving, resting, and leisure time, praying or meditating on things of the Spirit. Contemplate what you want to know from the Lord. What questions do you have for Him about yourself? Write down your ideas beforehand so you will remember.
- Consider your desires, make a list of what kind of things you think about the most. Be reflective and honest. Try and rate these from most common subjects you think of to the least.
- Think of a list of things you can do to garnish your thoughts that are virtuous? Consider uplifting music, visiting nature, art, subjects of study, history, books, movies, scripture stories, theatre, etc. Be very picky. Think of your mind like a delicious healthy meal. Do not cut corners on the ingredients. Do not put anything rotten in the mix. Even a pinch of poison in a large bowl can make you sick.
- Consider your environment. Does your work, home, car, places you visit, and office add virtue to your lifestyle. What can you do to make them more holy and conducive to the Spirit? The purpose is to point your thoughts toward God.

⁵⁰ <https://pure Revelations.wordpress.com/2014/12/01/four-steps-to-powerful-prayer/>

- Consider your triggers with the ones you love. Are there certain situations or people that continually induce negative emotions or thoughts? How can you resolve these situations? Pray for guidance.
- If you are married, be particularly sensitive to your spouse. Speak kindly, do service for them; especially the ones they like you to do that you hate doing!
- What do you usually have conversations about with others? Are they trivial and unholy? How can you change that to gather virtue around you? Is there a way you can steer the conversations toward inspiring subjects? Do a careful self-evaluation.
- Consider your tastes in music, art, media, and friends. Do you need to make a change? If you think you are too old for change, you may suffer from a faith deficiency.
- Read the scriptures more. Do you find the scriptures boring? If so, why? Usually it is because we do not understand what we are reading. You don't have to pick up the scriptures and read from page one to the end. God doesn't keep a score of how many pages you read. He looks upon your heart. The purpose of scripture is to fill your mind with virtuous thoughts; to cause you to ponder the truths of eternity; to help you formulate the questions to ask the Lord. The scriptures are a launching point to revelation. Like your own "Urim and Thummim."

A good way to use scripture is to pick an interesting word and look up all the verses that contain that word and read them, ponder them, and see what the Lord speaks to your mind. The virtue of godliness will explode within you.

I have just listed a recipe for repentance. To turn your heart and desires to the Lord is to repent. The fruit of repentance is baptism and the Holy Ghost. The Lord knew how to set the stage for us when He gave the Doctrine of Christ. Repentance doesn't mean we

are perfect. You will never be perfect in a physical sense. Spiritually, yes, when you are cleansed with a baptism of fire; but until then seek to come unto Christ by making yourself holy and sanctified from the world. Any serious sins will have less power over us as we cleanse the foundation of our thoughts, and build the platform to receive the gifts of the Spirit.

Stage Two: How Do You Feel?

As your virtue increases, your sensitivity to the Spirit will also increase. You will be able to discern the Adversary more easily.

Not too long ago I undertook a long water fast which lasted eleven days. It was the first time I had ever done any water fasting beyond 36 hours. Honestly, I didn't know if I could do it. What if I get sick? I did some research before beginning and most websites advised using different supplements and strategies. The Lord personally instructed me to do this fast and said to only drink water. It was certainly a leap of faith for me.

When the fast was finished I had learned many valuable lessons and benefited both physically and spiritually. One thing I noticed was how my sensitivity to what I ate and what I looked at became more acute.

As I broke my fast I ate small portions of chicken broth the first day. It was the most delicious soup I had ever had, although I might have found it unpalatable just two weeks before. I had become very sensitive to my sense of taste. I also noticed that my desire for sugar decreased. A few days after breaking my fast I ate something that had a small amount of sugar in it and I could easily taste its pungent flavor in the food. It didn't taste good to me, because I was far more sensitive.

Spiritually, I noticed during the fast that I was very sensitive to spiritual promptings. I was more emotionally in tune to things around me. Although I hardly had the energy to do my normal routine I was often lost in my thoughts, and my mind was focused upon virtuous things. It was a wonderful experience, and I would have continued another week, but the Lord said it was enough for now. Next year I will attempt to double it to twenty days. I know fasting this length of time seems unhealthy, but you would be surprised. Things are not always as you think, and what the world teaches us as factual is often false. I trusted in the Lord and my prayers were answered.

How can fasting help you? First, you would need to pray and ask the Lord what He would have you to do. Just follow your gut at this point. Remember, fasting comes in various kinds. A fast is beneficial in any area where your senses are dulled or overloaded. This can be with food, media, criticism or self and/or others, excessive sleep, selfishness, the list is endless and the Spirit can help you know what to fast from.

In Stage One you made a long list and analysis of where you are on the platform of your spiritual beginnings. Perhaps a “fast” from certain things or environments that prevent you from having virtue would be a good place to start. As you clean away the temptation and practice temperance, you will be given added strength and sensitivity toward opening your spiritual self.

Exercises:

- Take a day to write how you felt with each daily encounter. Carry a notebook with you everywhere you go. When you spoke with someone or went somewhere, how did you feel both physically and spiritually? Could it be discerned visually, or was it just a feeling? Was it darkness or light?

- The subjects we ponder the most influence our thoughts and actions. Go for a walk alone. What kind of thoughts come to your mind? How do you feel?
- Go into your closet or private place and sit down comfortably on the ground. Begin a prayer using the *Four Step Prayer* and then allow yourself to ponder. How long can you go before virtue is intruded by an inappropriate thought? If it is almost immediately interrupted, continue to pray through it until virtue returns and see how long you can go. Like an out of shape runner trying to build up the stamina to run long distance, you may need to jog and walk for a while before you can run. Remember, you cannot have fullness of the gifts of the Spirit unless you are clean. Work at this until you can go a full hour without an unvirtuous thought entering your mind. If you resist the Adversary in the Lord's name you will be strengthened.
- Go by yourself to the local shopping mall. As you walk past the stores and people, how do you feel? What thoughts cross your mind? Crowded places are usually a hotbed for the Adversary. Can you sense a change in your thoughts? Do you feel uncomfortable at times, and even repulsed? If you do not feel anything, you may need to increase the virtue in yourself. Someone who has the light of Christ in them abundantly will sense the Adversary, be repulsed by the wickedness, yet feel compassion and love toward each person. Your light within you will feel palpable among all the darkness. People will sense it as you are near them.

I'm not writing this to inspire a sense of self-importance, but to help you see what it means to be a servant of the Lord. You are His servant, and a healer to the world. Let your light so shine: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before

men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”⁵¹

- Try a long-term water fast. Each person experiences this different. If you have problems with blood sugar or other serious health issues be careful how or whether to do this.
- When you are alone, try this: make a list of a wide variety of words, some provocative. Words such as: child, old man, woman, Italy, United States, grocery store, temple, mountain, field, government, pornography, flowers, candy, clouds, etc. Then, you speak a word out loud what is the follow-up thought in your mind? Is it possible to have a virtuous thought when you speak the word “pornography?” Can you train your mind to replace ugly with virtue? What if the word pornography brought to mind a young woman saved from sex slavery. Her desperate eyes thanking the Lord as He mercifully bestows the power of healing in her behalf. Remember, the Lord spent much time amongst the sinners when He was the Man of Galilee.⁵² He spoke to harlots and the disrepute; and virtue followed Him. See if you can train your mind to associate virtuous imagery and thoughts with every word—a good exercise.
- Picture Challenge: faces, places, colors, etc. Try the above exercise with picture imagery. (Don’t include anything

⁵¹ Matthew 5:14-16, Luke 11:33-36, Philippians 2:15, 3 Nephi 12:14-16, 3 Nephi 18:24, D&C 115:5

⁵² The word “sin” means to be out of harmony with the Lord. People can be in a sinful state with no fault of their own. The healing power of “forgiveness” is required to make one whole again. Forgiveness not only is God’s grace (restoration and renewal, lifting), but also our ability to forgive ourselves and others as we overcome these sins. This is why we are commanded not to judge others spiritually. It is well to judge situations, but not to condemn the sinner, for only God can do this. In the world, we must judge according to our laws and customs. To “judge” is to separate and organize according to what society will tolerate. When God judges he also separates and organizes according to the light and glory we possess, either to a resurrection of the just, or a resurrection of the damned.

unvirtuous.) Include faces that are angry or places that you do not like. Perhaps organizations that you hate; political, terrorists, historical villains. How you can see them with virtue?

- Proactively look for people you can serve and help. Whether they be family, neighbors, or even strangers. Never, ever judge them by their circumstances. Think kind thoughts about drivers on the road, the panhandler, the ornery store clerk, pray for all of them. Be their advocate to the Father; meaning, pray for mercy in their behalf.⁵³ Provide charitable assistance if you can, always seeking the Lord's confirmation in prayer. If you don't feel you are good at discerning revelation yet, just do your best.

As the virtue in you increases and you can feel the difference between the light and darkness, your ability to discern and grow in the Spirit will increase exponentially. Don't be discouraged if you slip, make a mistake, or have unvirtuous thoughts return. Living in mortality requires us to contend with the flesh.

“And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.” Ether 12:27

Our “weakness” is the flesh of our physical bodies. If we humble ourselves and lean on the Lord for help (have faith in Him), the Lord

⁵³ This is sometimes referred to as “dripping.” This is where we are constantly dripping prayers in behalf of those we come in contact with, either up close or from a distance. “Lord, bless his soul with love, and peace. Help him to be able to...” When we can we offer service according to our ability. Consider Mosiah 4:26-27

will strengthen you. With increased virtue filling your soul with light, and the Lord's Spirit, you are ready to see the gifts of the Spirit grow inside you to a greater degree.

Stage Three: What Do You Hear?

During the previous two stages, you may already be hearing the words of the Spirit. This Voice is what communicates the language of the Lord and His angels. The interesting thing is that this communication is heard in our minds as familiar thoughts; meaning, it sounds like us. Why is that?

Think of it as the universal translator of heaven. It's like when a person gives a priesthood blessing. If they are in tune with the Spirit they will say words as they come into their minds, usually articulating them in a vocabulary they are familiar with. As you become accustomed to this process you will begin to see a difference in who is speaking to you, whether it is the Lord, an angelic messenger, or even a spirit of darkness.

There is a confusion regarding the Holy Ghost and who it is, how it communicates with us. I will be covering this in detail in a future chapter. Just know that the communication between us and these holy messengers is often made possible by the Holy Ghost. It is indeed a whisper for most of us, barely discernable, as our thoughts blend with the words of the Spirit. Sometimes the Spirit will speak to us more forcibly; but even then, the carnal mind will say, "Stop talking to yourself? You're crazy!" Here is a good place to begin having faith like a child. The mature adult in us will tell you to avoid that kind of thinking; but the Spirit will tell you to believe, to open yourself to this possibility, that you might watch the seed begin to grow within you.

Exercises:

- Pray and request that the Lord help you to write a list of questions you would like to know the answers. Get a piece of paper and begin to confidently write your questions as they come to your mind. Go through each question, one by one, and write the answer as it flows into your mind. Believe that it is coming from the Spirit. Don't create the answer, let it flow out of you like you were giving a blessing, word for word. They can be short or long answers. Trust in what is given to your mind, don't try to think it through too much. When it is finished, go back and read what is written. If you feel the Spirit, accept it as personal revelation. If a part feels right, but a part does not, cross it out. If your experience feels false, try again later. If you feel the virtue around you it will be easier to do and you will more easily discern it is from the Lord.

Ask yourself if you did this exercise with a believing heart, or did you doubt? Keep these revelations private. They may not be perfect. Like the basketball player learning to take shots, you may miss quite a few as a beginner, but you will improve. Be patient with yourself and do not discourage. Trust in the Lord.

- Practice focused prayer or pondering. Pick three people to focus your thoughts upon while you pray. You can formally pray for them in private or just think of them during the day. What kind of thoughts come to your mind?
- It always helps to write. Writing is a fantastic way to focus your thoughts, to hear the word of the Lord and receive personal revelation. If you get a thought, write it down. Have the habit of keeping a pencil and paper nearby, or use the notebook on your phone.
- Ask the Lord for permission to give yourself a blessing. If the answer is yes, do it! It is a beautiful experience. Like the first exercise, but here you simply write in the manner similar to

giving yourself a blessing in one continual letter to yourself. It may seem strange at first, but believe me, the Lord delights in doing this for you. In fact, every personal revelation is like getting a blessing from the Lord, however writing is an easier way for someone new to the Spirit to focus their thoughts and to receive.

- Make a determination to make yourself holy. This requires you to map out a block of time to dedicate to the Lord. The Sabbath day is an obvious choice, but each day could have a time set aside. How willing are we to set aside time for the gym or watching our favorite show; but giving it to the Lord? The heavenly realm is much more exciting than anything this world has to offer. You will be investing in that future reality as you do this. Your purpose now is to hear the voice of the Lord, to be taught, and to reach up to Him. Carefully plan how you will use this time. Be creative.
- Consider having “Holy Moments” if you can’t have a holy time. This means instead of blocking out a half hour here or an hour there, however much you can. Consider what you are doing at the moment. Waiting for your daughter to be picked up from school, sitting at the doctor’s office, etc. Instead of playing with your phone, listening to music, or doing something frivolous, start listening. Start praying in your mind and heart to the Lord. Ask Him questions and ponder until you hear answers. You may start to even see answers.
- Practice asking questions. The answers will sound like a conversation with yourself, but if spoken with love, desire, and intent, the Lord will joyfully respond. For example: “Lord, do you...?” Say, “Lord, do you love me? Do you listen to music?” Just ask any question as frivolous as it may seem, always with respect, knowing that there is no question the Lord will not answer.; but remember, we are commanded to avoid light-mindedness. Allow the thoughts to come in your own voice. How do the answers make you feel? Give

yourself an obviously wrong answer and see how you feel when you think it. “Lord do you love me?” If you allow yourself to think, “No.” you will feel the difference. This is part of discernment and getting to know the Lord. Allow the first thought which settles in your mind to stay, unless it feels wrong, then reject it.

All of this is to help you develop a relationship with the Lord. He delights in sharing Himself with us. Asking questions is part of how we do this. He wants to be your friend, talk with Him. If you carry a prayer in your heart all day long, as we are commanded, your relationship with Him will flourish and the gifts of the Spirit will unfold to you.

- Study your scriptures as if they were your own Urim and Thummim. Read them with the Spirit, without a companion guide, and ask the Lord their meaning. Pray and ask the Lord where you should read each day. Write questions as you read and ask, “What is that? What does that mean?” and then listen. Don’t discount the thoughts that come to you. Write them down and ponder them. If it doesn’t make sense come back to it later. Revelation has a way of surprising you.
- Have a roleplay exercise with yourself and the Lord. You say... He says...do it in your mind and not vocally. Relax, imagine it is real. Was it?

Example: “Lord, I’m really having a hard day.” The Lord in your mind responds, “Why is that?” You then continue a conversation, like talking to yourself.

Here’s a tip: there can be times where you will exercise belief and the Spirit takes over, this can lead you to a viable experience communicating with the Lord. Do you think He doesn’t have time for you? That is one of the cardinal unbeliefs that are out there. The Lord is omnipresent, which

means He is capable of infinite presence. It is as if you were His only creation, with full attention and love focused upon you. You must understand this to move forward. You are infinitely important to Him. Will He ignore you when you are seeking to know Him? No way! Talk to Him and develop your relationship.

- Wake up at 3:00 AM in the morning and pray. Why would you do that? When we are doing something really difficult, as a sacrifice for the Lord, the blessings always come. If you are too sleepy, do it anyway. You don't have to do it every night, but now and then get up and tell the Lord you love Him. Sit and ponder in the dark. Don't be afraid of the dark, pray for angels to gather around you. What do you hear in your mind? Do you have any visual epiphanies or glimpses? Maybe your spiritual eyes will begin to open.
- Choose a day when you would normally do something for entertainment and make yourself holy. Again, the law of sacrifice—it works!
- If you feel safe, go and pray in the mountains alone. Talk out loud to God. Focus on how you feel in your heart and your every thought. Don't dismiss anything. Learn to be still and ponder. Are you maintaining your virtuous thoughts? If you get side struck by an ugly thought tell the Adversary what you think. Bear testimony to him as your heart swells with love for the Lord, and then resume your prayer. Feel the space around you, breathe it in and express your gratitude and praise for the Lord. Write in your journal about the experience.
- Find a private place in the mountains and build an altar. Ponder and pray as to how you should do this. Spend the day praying and fasting, talking to God. This is an opportunity to create physically what you will create spiritually.
- Go out one night when the sky is clear, leave the city if you must, be alone to gaze into the night sky. Talk to God and

pray. He will communicate to you both in words and imagery in your mind.

- Expand your prayer:

In the book *How To Have Your Second Comforter* I shared the *Four Step Prayer* that I used to come closer to the Lord. Praying and pondering is where you will learn to hear the Lord's voice. Don't feel that you can't sit on the ground while you are praying. Don't feel you need to limit your private prayers to a short period. Don't feel that if you stop talking your prayer is over. Don't feel that you can't open your eyes, write, or even read something during your prayer. It's like if you're in a room with someone, you don't have to sit like a robot the whole time. Prayer is a state of mind where you are focused on communicating with the most important person in your life.

While you pray it is helpful to write thoughts that come to you. You may get a download and think, "I can never remember all that." The Lord has always helped me. It's not a "you missed it, too-bad scenario." The Lord always allows you to receive the revelation at your own pace, and even to write the words afterward. He is so merciful to us in our weakness.

I hope that the exercises in this section will help you to hear the voice of the Lord. When you have gained this confidence in receiving revelation and discernment, the other gifts of the Spirit will begin to flourish and expand. I had been personally focusing on Stage One through Three for about two years before I began to see and hear on a more intense level. Before that occurred, I had sacred dreams and an occasional vision. Of course, like everyone else, it would be easy to discard such things as just the mind doing funny things. "Too much pizza!" as my friend would say. I have learned different. I can tell when it is from the Lord or inspired by the Adversary.

Our minds build upon the memory and experience that we have from birth. That is the platform by which our dreams and visions occur. The words we think in our mind issue forth from the desires of our heart and the influence of the spiritual realm. Don't take a single word for granted that passes your mind. It comes from somewhere, whether it is the written word, memory, the voice of the Spirit, or from an outside adversarial source. Believe in the Spirit and don't allow the carnal mind to dictate to you what is truth. "...to be carnally-minded is death, to be spiritually-minded is life eternal."⁵⁴

Stage Four: What Do You See?

The Lord communicates with us through His Spirit. I have learned that words are a smaller percentage of that communication compared to visual imagery and comprehension. When one stands in the presence of the Lord, face to face, you will have vision and images play before your mind as a part of that conversation. Your thoughts are easily displayed for anyone directing their focus toward you. This is why you must have virtue garnish your thoughts to have confidence in the presence of God.

If for example you ask about the cosmos, a vision will open up where you will see and discern by the Spirit. As you ask questions you will hear the word of the Lord speaking to you, or from His servant in an audible voice. This comes as a vision of the subject at hand, or you will see the person with whom you are speaking.

This is perfect communication, without boundary or scope, unless we place a boundary upon ourselves. I have learned that the most access to the Lord comes by asking for permission and patiently waiting for it. Once one receives their Calling and Election Made

⁵⁴ 2 Nephi 9:39

Sure the access is amplified. Before then, you must patiently develop your faith and spiritual senses; first, learning to hear by the Spirit the ministering of angels, and the Lord's voice. Then you will see your visionary gifts begin to expand rapidly.

Stage Four can feel complex. It is common to feel frustrated because you may feel you are not making progress in opening your spiritual eyes. Often it is because we attempt to run faster than we have strength, or we carry some form of unbelief. The first part of this book lists different things that could prevent us from progressing. If you take time to honestly assess your spiritual health and have followed everything up until this point of the book, you will be prepared to more fully open your spiritual eyes.

Just like we need to develop a platform for the Spirit to dwell in us by filling our hearts with virtue and godliness; we also must seek to fill our minds with virtue in the form of acute visual stimulation to prepare ourselves to exercise "sacred imagination." This is where the sceptic will suggest this is only a self-hypnotic form of vision seeking, using forms of conjuring to open our brains to tantalizing stimuli. This is the carnal mind speaking. You must learn to visualize to take the first step of faith. If you think you can sit comfortably and the Lord will appear to you, you will be disappointed. There are some who struggle with unbelief who may be blessed with a dream or get into an unfortunate accident and have an out of body experience where they experience an interaction with the Lord. Those experiences can be sacred and we must remember that we are spirit beings in a carnal body. We must also work to rend the veil of the flesh and know the kingdom of Heaven by further putting off the natural man.

The process I will now teach you will help you to expand your visual senses. Its purpose is to open your mind, your creative powers, as I described in the section "sacred imagination." This is the purpose of life, to choose God and gather virtue around yourself, that you

may become a creator of all things good. Do this in spades, not in dew drops. Dive into this process of expanding your visualization abilities. It will add a beautiful dimension to your life, especially your spiritual life.

Exercises to Build a Foundation of Memory:

- Look up beautiful landscape images on your computer. Study a favorite image for a minute; as you do, consider the shapes, tones, colors and details. Close your eyes and try and remember as much, as clearly as you can. The more you practice this with different images they will leave an impression and stay in your mind.
- Look at family pictures of individuals. Do the same exercise as above.
- Look at your front door. Study and examine it, the color, detail, the handle, the surface texture. Close your eyes and see how much you can visualize. Try and see the door as clearly as possible.
- Go for a walk in the park. Absorb your surroundings, stopping occasionally to build a visual in your mind. Close your eyes and see how much you remember. Try and remember after returning home, the sensations of smell, feet on the path, the breeze and air temperature. The more you do this the easier it becomes.
- Go for a hike in the mountains. Do the same as the above exercises. You are building a visual memory foundation that will help you with your sacred imagination. Take your time and even pray for assistance. The same mind that stores a vocabulary of words also stores the visual imagery that is used for communication.
- Stand on a mountain top. Absorb the experience. Close your eyes and try and see with your mind as the breeze, smells, and other stimulus surround you. When you return home do your very best to see and feel it again.

- Go to the beach.
- Stand on the top of a building.
- Go to a busy activity with many people.
- Look at the stars at night.
- Walk in the desert.
- Sit alone in a field.
- Turn your face toward the warm sun.
- Eat a delicious meal. Focus on the details with the knowledge that you will try and remember this experience. Relish everything, the visual, the smells, the texture, the people.
- Think of a place you can go, or things you can study that will enhance your visual acuteness. Nature is especially good. Really study your subjects, the light on them, their texture and feel. If you can close your eyes and see it, you are developing that part of your God given abilities, and expanding the virtue within you.
- See a movie which is spiritually inspiring. Try and replay the scenes in your mind with as much visual accuracy as possible. Like trying to develop a photographic memory, but more fluid. A “videographic” memory is a better word. Some of you may have experienced this kind of visual memory just by rehearsing to someone a movie you saw. Do you see the scenes in your mind as you describe them? This is the beginning of visual memory that will help you to see with an eye of faith.

The Power of faith in creation and the Heavenly Realm

Now that you have actively filled your mind with visual imagery and experiences you must **practice using your imagination to recreate those moments as clearly as you can.** Communicating with your mind’s visual ability is as important as using your mind to learn words and a spoken language. Practice often. This will prepare you

to more fully open your spiritual senses and have the Spirit of the Lord control the vision.

Do the following:

- Imagine eating a meal without being there.
- Imagine a place without being there.
- Imagine a person without being there.
- Imagine the night sky without being there.
- Imagine an animal without being there.
- Imagine a scene from a movie without being there.
- Imagine a Youtube video of a location you saw, and imagine being there.
- Imagine a sunset without being there.
- Imagine being on the surface of the moon, without being there.
- Imagine being inside a furnace of fire, without being there.
- Imagine being on the surface of the ocean without being there.
- Imagine walking through your old school without being there.
- Imagine being at work without being there.

Do these exercises often and see how tactile they can become for your senses. Stretch yourself. Stretching the imagination is the seed of faith. Always proceed with prayer as you dedicate this exercise to the Lord. You will be astonished what will occur.

Seeing the Light:

None of the exercises above did I do before my experience with the Lord. If I had, I think things may have progressed much faster for opening my spiritual senses. I simply pondered a lot, and believed

nothing was an accident. I took everything serious; every thought, vision, and experience was meaningful to me.

Immediately after I received the baptism of fire and the Gift of the Holy Ghost I wondered, "What next?" I prayed and asked the Lord to guide me to know what to do. There came a variety of instructions, but one curious revelation had to do with light. With no explanation for its purpose, I was told to practice seeing an aura around my hand. That was kind of strange. Why would He want me to do that?

I held my hand in front of my face at arm's length and studied it; I didn't notice anything. I lightly relaxed my eyes and began to see a hint of a soft white glow, an aura of energy around my fingers. I then held my hand closer to my face, about eighteen inches away, and looked at it against a white background and then a dark background. The more I practiced, the easier it was to see and the more the glow would extend from my hand. I think my spiritual eyes were seeing it as I would relax my natural eyes. Eventually, it was hard to tell the difference between my physical eyes and natural. I practiced this regularly for about a month.

I know this seems very unorthodox, but I trusted in the Lord and from here He had me begin to see this light more fully. As I would pray in my closet I would look at my hand in the dimly lit closet and see the light emanating from it. I would look at my hand and arm, then softly close my eyes, seeing the hand and arm in my mind and see it light up like a dim light bulb. I would practice this each time I prayed in private and see how much brighter I could see it in my mind.

It was subtle, but real to me. From here, the Lord told me to see my entire body as it was emanating with this light. I would look at myself in the bathroom mirror and do the same exercise seeing my body with a soft white aura around it. It didn't extend far, maybe

an inch or two. I didn't really understand the purpose, except that I knew that "light" was important. The angels abide in that light and I knew it was in me, so I would keep doing this.

I would sit on the floor in my closet and close my eyes. I could visualize my body glowing with this light. The soft glow would become brighter in my mind, as I would attempt to extend it. I would pray to the Lord and I would say, "Lord, help me to become brighter, pour thy light upon me!" I saw the light increase. Every time I prayed in the privacy of my closet I would attempt to extend my light further than the time before. I would see the brightness get lighter and lighter. Although I sat in a dark closet with a small light above me I could see myself in my mind, as if looking in a mirror, either sitting as I was, or even standing, engulfed in light.

I would often physically move my hands, as if I were pushing the light away from me. I could hear the sound in my head, like energy expanding. At first, I would push enough of the light out that it would fill the room. On another day, I went so far as to fill the house. After practicing this for a month I created something like a burst of light that filled the entire neighborhood.

During this time, the Lord told me to bless my food and water, seeing the light gather around the glass or food as it was blessed. I would look at it and then close my eyes softly as the light would fill it. I could see a soft glow as I did this. I didn't announce it to anyone, just practiced it to myself to see what would happen. It gave a new meaning for me to what it meant to bless something.

One day I saw and spoke the following: "Lord, fill me with thy light and glory, help me to be as bright as the sun at noon day." I saw myself light up to an incredible intensity of light. It felt like it had consumed my entire spirit. I was standing and could hear the sound of an intense rushing wind. The light's intensity reminded me of looking at a welder's blow torch, but larger. It was incredible! I

began to expand the light and pushed it out with great force. The light increased both above and below me and kept expanding until it seemed to explode in great velocity in all directions. I felt a rush of power and glory come through me that reminded me of the baptism of fire I had experienced about six months previously. The faith I had exercised had helped me to create a channel between me and the Heavenly Realm.

Today, every time I go to the Lord I bathe in the light of His glory. It both cleanses and prepares me to stand in His presence. It is a literal baptism of fire; which purifies, washes away sins, and help me to focus as the space is cleansed from any adversarial spirits. It has been an enormous blessing that the Lord taught me beginning immediately after my receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

Here is how I practice this today:

- As I sit in my private place to pray, after taking the Sacrament, and asking for forgiveness for my sins, I ask the Lord, “May I bathe in thy glory and holiness, dear Lord? Wilt thou pour thy light upon me that I may be made clean?”
- I focus on seeing myself sitting or standing as the Lord fills me with His light. I see it as clearly as I can, as if I am looking at myself, in a mirror, in a dark room; as my body lightens up and radiates His glory.
- The light is like a blow torch of intensity. Sometimes I will say to myself, “Lord, make me as bright as the sun!” I will feel the power of this light as it even has a sound of rushing waters. It helps to raise my head up and hold up my arms a little.
- Sometimes I see what I can only describe as white lava being poured over my body in clumps. I say, “Lord, fill my body from the top of my head to my toes with this light, even to the consuming of my flesh, my cells, and my DNA, that my entire body be cleansed and filled with this light.”

As I say this I hold out my arms and see my body in my mind's eye rubbing the light over my arms and legs.

- I ask in prayer, "Lord, am I clean now, am I clean?" I hear the words, "Yes, you are clean." Often, I hear more than this and will have a conversation as the Lord teaches me something.

I can't emphasize how important it is to become proficient in using your divine visualization to see in your mind. It is normal to feel awkward when you begin, like empty imaginative thoughts. Consider these like stretching exercises for an athletic event. It prepares your body for the performance so it can be at its best. Our spiritual muscles are dormant most of the time. Not until we use them, exercise them, and learn to control them to we perform to our highest level. Our minds are divided into both an analytical and creative functionality. Both of these work together to progress in the spiritual realm. Exercise your faith, plant the seed, and believe.

Stage Five: What Do You Touch and Smell?

In addition to the above exercises, practice visualizing your other senses to enhance each experience. The more you add to the vision, the more you will learn to open your spiritual senses. Often the Lord is reminding me to "Slow down!" In the spiritual realm, it is normal to go too fast, running from one thing to the next. It helps to try and use all the senses in every situation. What do you see, hear, smell, feel, touch, and more? Remind yourself to do this; it expands what the Lord would have you learn about.

Exercises:

- Touch different textures: trees, grass, rocks, dirt, gravel, leather, skin, animals, water, air, fur, objects, bricks, stone, hands, cloth, and try and remember how they feel in a

vision. See if you can feel in your mind your hand or skin touching these things.

- Smell: pine needles, dirt, grass, chocolate, roses, herbs, snow, car, different foods, leather, animals, children, spouse, places, houses, everything, and try and remember them well enough to envision the smells. Make a list of many other things you can do this with. Discover as many variety of smells as possible.

All these exercises are a sensory upload. Not only will your visualization skills increase, but your dreams will become more vivid. Your spiritual sensitivities will be enhanced!

Stage Six: What Do You Do?

In this section I will offer some visualizations that have helped others in opening their spiritual eyes and have profound spiritual experiences with the Heavenly Realm. For those who have had success in this, it was dependent upon their faith, determination, state of health, and many of the same issues from the first section of this book. Some have struggled, only to have a brief visual come to mind and their thoughts began to wander. Others experienced a full outpouring of the Spirit and communed with the Lord and angels.

I remember the first time the Lord had me do a visualization. This was before I had received my Second Comforter experience. I was alone in my home on a summer evening. I went into the front room and sat on the sofa. It was peaceful and quiet. The Lord instructed me to prepare to see. I relaxed my mind and began to have a vision. I relaxed and allowed my mind to see according to the Lord's directive as the vision opened. I saw a door in a dark room with just enough light to see. I reached for the door handle and slowly opened it not knowing what to expect. It felt very real in my hand

as I opened the door to a cool mountain landscape. It was winter and overcast. I walked through the door and began to walk. Here is what I recorded in my journal:

I had a vision the other night as I sat alone after everyone was asleep. I was walking through a snowy landscape surrounded by winter trees. It was unpleasant, but the sun was shining. I began to walk with the snow up to my knees. Suddenly, to my surprise I saw a path open up in front of me. It was dry and was the color of red earth. I began to walk the path and was grateful that it made my walking easier. As I walked I smelled a beautiful fragrance. I looked over to my right and saw a small patch of grass surrounded by snow a short distance from the path. It was only a few feet wide and had a small bouquet of flowers growing in it. I thought how strange that it would grow there. I stepped off the path to get a better look and after I knelt down by the bouquet I noticed that all around me was green and filled with flowers. Everything had changed. When I stood up and looked back in the direction of the path I was shocked to see a raging forest fire consuming everything on the other side of the path. I knew I was safe where I was and yet the flames were only twenty feet away.

I wondered about the vision and asked the Lord for an interpretation. I was told the winter landscape was my experience in life, but that I had found the Gospel and it cleared the way for me to find God. The small patch of flowers was the Lord calling out to me. And when I chose to listen to God and not the arm of flesh, the Lord was willing to reveal more to me. And when I exercised faith the Lord, He opened

up the truth of eternity and revelations were all around me. The flames represented His wrath, which is about to be poured out upon the earth.

I feel strongly that without a close relationship with the Lord, the kind where we can receive personal revelation, we will be left without the guidance we need to withstand what is coming. We need to search for God and reach out to Him with all our hearts.

This particular vision was extremely vivid. Often, I don't understand their full meaning until afterward and I ask the Lord for help. Notice how I felt the cold and experienced the many details of the vision. I wrote this down shortly after it occurred so that I would remember as much as possible. I didn't try to make the vision go somewhere or become something. I allowed the Lord to steer its purpose.

I always ask the Lord first for permission before preparing to receive a vision. Usually, I feel the Lord inspiring me to do this. I think it is preferable to have a vision than a dream, because at times dreams can be so lucid that they are hard to focus. Not always, but often that is the case. Dreams can be one of the Lord's way of opening the spiritual eyes for those who may not have the faith to see Him any other way.

I will now offer you some visualizations you can use to help you receive instruction from the Lord. As you move forward begin by doing the following:

1. Pray to seek the Lord's blessing and instruction. Ask if it is His will that you do this. If the Spirit confirms, you will have a beautifully guided vision.

2. Decided which guided vision you will attempt. Roughly memorize the steps so you can follow it in your mind.
3. Make yourself comfortable in a private place where you won't be interrupted. Make arrangements for this if needed.
4. Don't kneel unless you are comfortable doing that for an extended time. Usually it is good to sit on the floor, not leaning back against anything. I like to sit and lean forward slightly as I sit on a comfortable pad or pillow. What you don't want to do is get so comfortable that you fall asleep. If you are sitting back in a chair or laying down that may be a real possibility. You need to be able to concentrate without having to focus on your body.
5. Be sure you won't be distracted by needing to use the restroom, or any other physical discomfort.
6. Softly close your eyes and exhale slowly several times.
7. Focus on the space around your body, not your body itself.
8. Say a prayer to the Lord expressing your love for Him and desire to be taught through a vision. You should have already prayed for permission before beginning this process.
9. Follow the outline for the suggested meditation.

Each of the following Visualizations have the purpose of becoming a launching point into an actual vision; one which is led by the Spirit of the Lord. At some point in the vision, if you are prepared, the Spirit will take control and it will become something profound. When it is finished, pray for a confirmation if necessary and write as many details as you can remember. Be sure to be slow, focus intently, take your time, and rejoice; the Lord will be with you!

The Door

You are standing in a dark room. There are some steps leading up to a door. Look at the door, see it clearly in your mind. Approach

the door and see the handle or knob. Open the door slowly and peer into what is beyond the door. Do not react quickly. Move through the door and enter what is beyond the door. Study your surroundings. Take it all in and don't discount any detail you see, whether it is an object, smell, sound, or person. If there is a person, ask them a question.

When you open the door if you don't see anything, begin calling out to the Lord in your mind to show you what you need to see. If you have seen everything there, continue to call out to the Lord in prayer asking Him to lead you. Take your time and ask questions. Try not to look at too much too quickly. This may cause you to lose focus and the vision may leave you. Focus on the place where you are and anything and anybody who comes. The more you ask questions and remain patient the more success you will have. Be prepared to be surprised by your experience. You can revisit the this vision if you need to later. Often, you may go to the same place, but sometimes have a completely different experience. The door is a symbol to opening the vision.⁵⁵

The Light Above

You are sitting in a dark room. A door opens above you and a shaft of light comes into the room filling the space around your body. You feel the warm light envelop you. You see a mirror facing you where you can see yourself lit up brightly by the light. A staircase appears and you make your way up each step feeling the stairs beneath your feet. When you reach the top, you are standing in an open field. Examine the grass. Are there trees, mountains, water, animals, birds, or a person? What do you see? Slowly examine your surroundings and begin praying to the Lord to help you understand. Is there a message you need to learn?

⁵⁵ 1 Nephi 8:2-36 Lehi and Nephi experienced a similar kind of vision when they beheld the Tree of Life.

The Man Walking Toward You

You are standing in a dark room. See the light in your body beginning to glow. Extend your light until it fills all the space around you. In the distance, you see a small spot of light. It continues to grow as it approaches you. As you peer into the approaching light you notice it is a figure of a person. The person steadily comes toward you until they are in your presence; you feel at ease. This person has come to give you a message. Focus on as many details as you can: their hands, feet, clothing. What do they look like? Can you see the color of their hair? Are they carrying anything in their hands? If they don't speak to you ask them a question. Who is it? Don't rush, be patient as you interact with them. If you begin a conversation ask as many questions as you can. Allow the vision to go wherever it will. You will feel the Spirit if the vision is truthful. If you feel a sense of trickery call out to God and ask Him if it is from Him. You will strongly feel one way or the other. It will likely be an angel of light, but if it is a deception don't close the vision. Ask for the Lord to deliver you and wait, the Lord will not leave you comfortless. This visualization has led many to have profoundly spiritual experiences with angels and the Lord.

The Path

You are walking along a path. What does the path look like? What kind of surface does it have. Can you see yourself? Perhaps you only see through your first-person eyes. In your vision look at your surroundings closely. Are there trees? What do you see, smell, feel? Begin to walk around slowly observing the different things, vegetation, objects, etc. Are there any birds, animals or people? Are there any structures? Allow your mind and vision to go wherever it is directed and take your time. If you sense your own physical body and room environment or get distracted by a sound, don't worry. Continue to pray to the Lord, push through, and allow him to lead you at each turn. If nothing is coming ask questions like,

“What is this? Why am I here? Lord, will you teach me?” Be patient and allow the vision to unfold.

The Top of the Mountain

Visualize yourself at the top of a mountain. You are standing, overlooking a great vista. The wind is blowing lightly a warm breeze upon your face. Do you smell the mountain air? What do you hear? Can you feel the rock or dirt under your feet? Ask the Lord something you have been wanting to ask Him. Express your heart’s desire. Look up to the sky. Can you see beyond the clouds? Do you see the stars? Ask more questions. Allow the vision to go where it may. Experience this as real and expect nothing less.

Where Do You Want to Go?

Ask the Lord for permission to do this before attempting. Think of a place that is special to you. See it in your mind and experience the visualization. The more of your senses you can incorporate into the vision the better. Be sure to make the vision holy, as you seek the Lord’s direction. Ask for a guide to be with you. Often an angel of light will accompany such a request. Experience every detail of the vision. What is that? What does it mean? Why does it do that? Move slowly and inquisitively to each turn of where you go. Don’t be afraid to ask questions, and be believing. At some point, usually fairly quickly, the vision will be directed by the Spirit of the Lord. You will be taught by angels and given exactly what you need to prepare you for all things.

Revisit Dreams and Visions

With the Lord’s permission, you can revisit any dream or vision to learn more. This is where you have an opportunity to learn more than you can imagine. Never settle on what you think is a final

understanding. All experiences in the spiritual realm are like peeling back the layers of an onion. The key is to ask questions, be believing, and to fill your heart and desires with virtue. The Lord and His angelic servants will eagerly help you in your quest to develop your faith and spiritual senses.

Best Advice in a Nutshell:

- Take your time. Don't rush a visionary experience, or any experience with the Lord. It may seem obvious, but you may become nervous, excited, or anxious in the process.
- Pushing through to more detail. Study what you see. The Lord doesn't get bored or impatient with your use of time in that realm. If your heart is sincere and you want to understand all things are available. The angels are eager to help.
- Always asking questions. It's better to ask a stupid question than to ask no questions at all. My advice is to write a list of questions beforehand that you really want to know and seek answers.
- Staying focused. Don't allow your mind to wander. Focus on what you see and what is spoken. The more your spiritual senses become acute to their surroundings the easier this becomes.
- Garnishing thoughts with virtue. If you have trouble focusing and random thoughts continually plague your mind, you may need to carry more virtue with you. Virtue attracts virtue and repels the Adversary. You will stand in the presence of angels and the Lord when you do this.
- Don't be afraid or doubt, trust in the Lord. "Perfect "love" casteth out all fear." Uneasiness and nervousness, yes; that can still occur. But, you will have great confidence as you spend more time experiencing angels and the Lord.
- Group experiences. There is great power in experiencing these things as a group. You are only as strong as the faith

of the weakest members. Seek like-minded people you can associate for such things and behold the heavens open. For example, if you do a guided meditation together and then discuss your experience afterward. Always begin such things beginning in prayer and by permission.

- Avoiding the environment of Babylon. Fasting is how we eliminate everything that would distract us from coming to the Lord. If you mark out some time to be holy, fill your mind with virtue by getting away from the world. Put down your phone for the day, the computer, work, and all busy work. Tell your family you are going to take time to be holy. You can fast from food and water if you like. Don't attempt if you are sick or physically not well. You must be in a state where you can ignore your body and the things of the world and seek the Lord.
- Remember, learning to open your spiritual senses takes time and effort. Like building the stamina to run a marathon, it takes sometimes years of endurance training and hard exercise. Our spiritual muscles require work, but with the Lord's help we progress very quickly. Don't be discouraged. You will see incredible results if you push forward in faith!

Gift of Tongues

In my book *A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit* I go into great detail regarding the gift of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues. This section is to offer some suggestions and exercises for those who will use these gifts. As with all gifts, they require faith and effort on the part of the one exercising them.

After I received my baptism of fire and the gift of the Holy Ghost I felt that I needed to experience this gift, but didn't know how to do it. I had heard of such things among modern Pentecostal Christians and in early LDS Church History, but not among anyone I knew. I

asked the Lord to help me with faith that it would happen as He promised. Here is a list of exercises I would suggest to help you open your mind and heart to speaking in tongues. These are going to seem strange, but being conventional is not part of the procedure.

Begin by practicing these simple exercises:

- Humming random tones – During your private prayer hum some tones that express your love and feelings for the Lord. Instead of words, just hum a sound.
- Humming Hymns – Hum the melodies of your favorite hymns during a prayer. Focus on how you feel and your love for the Lord while doing it.
- Making your own sounds to a hymn. Sing the same hymns, but this time create your own sounds and consonants to go with the melody. This is not the gift of Tongues, but preparing you to speak like it so that you begin to feel comfortable. It is possible that it could turn into tongues if the Spirit takes over. Try to get past the feeling of being foolish. Just focus on how you feel in your heart.
- Pick a hymn and interject the sounds for the phrase “Hah Le Lu Jah” repeatedly. The Hebrew words mean “praise to God” and will invoke the Spirit as you sing in a foreign tongue. It is fine to use phrases or sounds repeatedly when praying or singing in tongues.
- Breathing out with consonants as you speak. I find that when speaking in tongues it is better to breathe out the sounds instead of breathing in when I speak them. I can feel the words more this way. Try this as you do the exercises.

Now you are ready to begin the process of praying in tongues. The first time I experienced this I asked the Lord to help me, and the Spirit said to simply open my mouth. There will be a time of awkwardness as you do this; but persevere and don't worry about

how you sound or whether it is from above. Just let the sounds come to you.

- Repeat something in your mind as you pray, a phrase of praise in an unknown sequence of sounds. Let it roll off your tongue and repeat it until it feels right.
- Try rocking and raising your hands as you pray. You don't need to be crazy about it, but a little will help you to forget yourself and focus on the prayer to the Lord. I noticed once how Orthodox Jews will do this while standing and praying. That's not why I do it, but it sure helps. I'm usually sitting when I experience this.
- Try praying in tongues for 5, 10, 20 minutes. See how long you can do it.
- Pray in tongues, just feel it, as if you are really doing it. Don't think hard, just speak. Like a baby babbling what it wants to its parent. Just like how a vision is taken over by the Spirit and the real event occurs, so it is with the gift of Tongues.
- Practice the gift of Tongues with every prayer you do in your holy time. I usually do this at the end of each prayer or when I attempt to offer praise to the Lord. All the angels in heaven pray to the Father in tongues. It is the language of the spirit, a type for what we call the "tongue of angels."
- Have a cadence when you speak. It helps to speak with a rhythm. Keep it simple like to the beat of the drum. You don't need to be loud. I often don't speak above a whisper.
- Try singing in tongues. I often find myself singing simple melodies of praise in tongues. The Spirit is so strong!
- Don't worry if you repeat something many times. Just like how hymns will repeat phrases, so can tongues. In fact, you will feel great power when doing this.
- See your prayer ascending. Visualize the light and glory from your prayers ascending and the Lord reciprocating His love to you as you pray in tongues. It is powerful.

- Breathe out as you speak. I always try to have my sounds come out with an exhale. I feel it more this way. Not to say it won't work the other way.
- Interrupt every now and then to speak in English a desire or phrase. No rule says you can't do this. For example, an occasional, "I love you. I need you. May I come to you!"

As you become accustomed to speaking in tongues you may feel impressed to do so in a public gathering. Follow the suggestions from the Gift of the Spirit book and allow the Lord to always lead out on such things. Praying in Tongues is a beautiful blessing to help you to come to the Lord. Exercise faith and speak the tongue of angels.

When you become comfortable praying in tongues if the Spirit directs you can bless, speak, or prophesy in tongues according to the Lord's will. Refer to the book *A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit* to learn more about this.⁵⁶

How to Heal

Most of us feel unprepared when asked to help with a healing blessing. I would rather take my time to be prepared more fully than to rush into something. There are emergency situations, but even then, we must always proceed according to the Spirit.

After you have read the section on healing in the reference book, consider some of the exercises to have a better understanding of the gift of healing and how to use it.

Whenever you are asked to heal or bless a person it is best to seek the Lord's will in the matter. I will usually go to a private place to kneel and ask the Lord what He wants me to do. I would rather

⁵⁶ *A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit*, pg.91-106

arrive later if it means that I can properly prepare myself. If you can afford the time and the Spirit instructs you to wait, spend some time fasting and seeking the Lord's revelation. I will ask the Lord the following questions:

- Are there dark spirits attached to the person? The Lord has taught me that the vast majority of the time there is a need for a healing blessing, the person has some kind of spirit attached to them. This is not necessarily because they have done something sinful, but because spirits are attracted to negative emotions which can be a result of pain and suffering. They usually will exacerbate the problem more, so it is good to cast them off when the blessing begins.
- Is it the Lord's will that they be healed? Seek clear revelation on the matter. I try to clear my mind of any emotion when doing this so that my feelings don't interfere with the revelation. Seeking a "yes" or "no" answer to the question is good.
- If the answer is "no," ask the Lord if you can know why or what you should do.
- If the answer is "yes" ask the Lord how He wants you to heal them? Are you to do anything to help them to increase their faith? Should they be anointed with oil, touched a particular way? Often you will see images in your mind as you ask these questions revealing to you a proper way to administer the blessing. Where you touch them can be important; it may not always be on the crown of the head.
- You may be inspired to have a particular person help with the blessing. Sometimes multiple people offering a blessing is appropriate if the Lord directs it.
- Many of the exercises in the previous sections regarding how to hear the voice of the Lord and visionary experiences will assist you in this process.

Be sure that the Spirit is fully with you as you proceed to offer a healing blessing. This means to know that you are clean and approved of the Lord before you begin. You do not want to take the Lord's name in vain.

As you enter the location where the blessing will be offered do a spiritual assessment of the space. Do you need to cast out the Adversary? If you do, ask permission of the owner of the home, or the person in charge. You don't necessarily need to clean the entire house. Just the space where you are. Invite the person in charge if you or someone else could offer a prayer to invite the Spirit. Ask the people in the room if they believe in the power of healing through Jesus Christ. If the timing is appropriate teach them a little about what you are about to do. There will be some who may not agree with your approach, as it doesn't follow the typical LDS protocol for priesthood blessings. If that is the case, ask the person in charge what they would like to do. If you have their permission, proceed in offering the blessing. Say a private prayer asking that angels be present to remove the bad spirits and prevent them from harming anyone in the company. Begin by doing what you were commanded previously by the Lord. You may ask the person if they believe that Jesus Christ has the power to heal them. You may ask them to do something in which you were inspired by the Spirit. Don't be alarmed if things don't go as planned. Each person is required to exercise faith, and people will not always have the faith to receive.

When you give the blessing remember that you are a servant of the Lord. Only do and say what you feel you should. Don't feel that you have to be dramatic, loud, impressive, or anything other than humble, meek, and confident. It would be like an emergency medical technician (EMT) prepping and giving aid to a person in need. Just do your job and let things happen as they will.

During the blessing, you should try and hear the voice of the Lord and see in vision things that you should say or do. When the blessing is finished, ask the person a question or two to see how their faith is doing. You might feel to ask them, “What thoughts did you have during the blessing?” Sometimes, if the Spirit inspires, it is good to give them a task to test their faith. Be very careful that it is very specific and by revelation.

If the person is not healed or continues to have the same problem, encourage them to have faith. You cannot force a person to be healed. If it is the Lord’s will and they have sufficient faith it will manifest itself as was spoken.

Be careful not to try and pontificate what you think the words of the blessing might have meant. Do not offer your interpretation unless the Spirit strongly instructs you to do so. Often the blessing will offer instructions to the recipient of what they need to do to be healed. Perhaps remind them of parts that were spoken, offer encouragement, and ask them what they think it meant.

There are times that without even touching the person, or officially offering a blessing, that you can give a legitimate blessing unbeknown to those who are present. If you are among people who lack faith, or that would not approve, you could ask the recipient if it would be all right to pray for them as you hold their hand. If you can only pray you can treat it as a blessing as you pray and evoke the priesthood upon them in the form of a healing blessing. Touching is a powerful way to increase faith, this is why we do it. It is the same purpose for using olive oil. Anything which requires touching, cleansing, or doing can increase the faith of those involved and create a spiritual healing environment.

You can heal without touching by raising your arm with your hand outward, or to the square if the Lord directs you to do it this way. Even then, you may direct them to do something to require a

measure of faith. There is not an official method, other than to follow the instructions the Lord gives you explicitly. This is what will give you confidence in performing healing blessings.

The beauty of being a part of a family is that you can practice the gift of healing upon those to whom you are close. Do not be discouraged if your healing blessings do not always create the results you expected. There are many factors involved. As with any gift of the Spirit, it takes faith and practice. The Lord Himself attempted to teach His disciples during His ministry so that they could do this. At first, they were very disappointed and had difficulty. The Lord was patient and they eventually had great success. You must practice blessing and receiving revelation. When the day comes that you possess the sealing power, blessings the sick will be as natural as helping someone put their shoes on.

What do you do if a person needs a healing blessing and you cannot go to them because they are too far to travel, or something prevents this from occurring? There is a way, by your faith, that this can be manifested. It is called a proxy blessing. I have given such blessings on occasion and they are as powerful and effective as if the person was present.

The way a proxy blessing is given is to first ask the person who needs the blessing if they would allow you to do this for them. Explain the process and like any other blessing seek the Lord's instruction beforehand to know what you will do and ask in behalf of the recipient of the blessing. The person doesn't need to hear the blessing, but you can call later to tell them what was said or even record it if you can.

Place your hands upon the person sitting in as proxy. Say the following: "I (Your Name), In the Name of Jesus Christ, by His authority, I offer a proxy blessing in behalf of (Their Name). Then offer the blessing as you normally would do it. It is possible to bless

someone without using a proxy, but often it helps when adding the faith of others if they are involved.

You can also write a blessing as you are inspired by revelation and send it to the recipient. Always asking permission beforehand from the Lord and then the recipient. Do not attempt to do this without permission unless the Lord expressly commands it. You never want to impose yourself upon another person. If they do not have the faith it may do more harm than good.

There is much that you can do to help heal others as you grow in the gifts of the Spirit and open your spiritual sensitivities. Those who are aware of the light of the Lord, with His permission can do much to help heal others. Often praying in their behalf and sending light to them can do remarkable things toward their healing. Usually, in order to have a full healing it requires, by permission, a baptism of fire to completely cleanse their spirit and then the body to make it so. This is how the Savior healed. To do this you must interact with the recipient and have an open channel between you and the Father (Sealing Power). Otherwise, we rely completely on aligning our faith, and the faith of the one being healed to bring down the powers of heaven. It can be done, it just takes more effort and work.

As you grow in your ability to see and hear in the Spirit, you will know how to heal, where to go, when to cast out the Adversary, and more. To heal by the power of God is to be a servant of the Lord.⁵⁷ But, do not run faster than you have strength. Only heal or accept an invitation to heal if the Lord approves. If we are not spiritually prepared we will struggle to use the gift of healing.

Miracles

⁵⁷ A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit, pg. 53-65

Once you are capable of receiving revelation and your spiritual senses are open you will be able to do all things which the Lord commands you more efficiently. The Gifts of the Spirit are the “miracles” that the Lord gives us to help us to know Him and help others.⁵⁸ All things are possible to those who believe.

Here are some basic principles to remember to help you exercise these gifts:

- Seek revelation, inspiration, and be creative. If you are looking for opportunities to serve the Lord and are seeking His will in all things you will experience many miracles.
- Focus on Jesus Christ. Do not ever do anything in the Lord’s name that brings you attention, financial gain, personal glory, or adulation. If you can honestly say to the Lord that your motives are pure, that your intent is to be His servant you will see the flood gates open for you.
- Don’t discard the first impression. Rarely do you have to labor strenuously to receive a revelation. The labor is often in discerning the source, because of our own weakness. When a revelation comes it is usually a very subtle thought that pops in our mind from nowhere it seems. Be particularly attentive to these.
- Small and simple things, not the carefully strategized, are often how the Lord works with us. The simple means and efforts may lead to more elaborate projects, but don’t expect that at the start. Follow the bread crumbs.
- All depends upon your relationship with the Lord. Your relationship with Him is everything. It is always the first priority. If you feel distant from Him you will struggle with the gifts of the Spirit.

⁵⁸ A Witness of the Gifts of the Spirit, pg. 149

- Glory to Him. Whenever anyone gives praise upon you are something you did, immediately pass the glory to the Lord and praise Him openly.
- Bless a plant. Yes, it sounds strange; but practice with the Lord's approval, blessing things like trees, plants, your food, water, home, everything. Do it thoughtfully as you seek revelation in the matter. It doesn't need to be a long blessing, but the light you are given, shared with you by the Lord will give you the potential to bless many creations. This is good practice to help you to share your virtue with many. See it and make it come to pass. This is the epitome of revelation. If you get a thought to do something, do it now and see it come to pass.
- Look for miracles. Those who look for miracles will witness miracles more often. Especially among those who are suffering with sin or affliction. Through Christ many are made whole.
- What we see will manifest itself. As you seek to know the Lord's will for you may see a vision in your mind from time to time. If you do, act in faith and you will begin to see the physical manifestation. This is related to our sacred imagination. Learn to ask. See it in your mind first, then act in faith and see the physical manifestation. As you seek to know the Lord's will for you there will be visions that will come. Take action to make them occur.
- Practice imagining, make it sacred, believe everything with prudence. Learn to evaluate every situation.
- Remember, you are just beginning. Keep a positive attitude and be persistent."
- Keep a journal where you list every miracle you observe in your life. These can be personal experiences, simple events; or they can be things which you see or hear from those with whom you are close. Write how you feel about the miracles. Remember, a miracle is anything where the Lord intervenes in our life. Often, we cannot explain why or how. The Lord

is in the details. Often we learn the reasons behind events at a later time and our faith is strengthened.

What if I Still Can't Open My Eyes?

Someone once wrote me this question: "I have repeatedly tried all the steps you have mentioned and still get nothing. When I try the 'yes' and 'no' questions, just nothing. As I try to settle on an answer, just nothing. Now what!?"

It would be wonderful if there was a single answer for each person who despite all their efforts still cannot open their spiritual eyes. I have gone to great lengths in this book to expound upon the reason why we might struggle and how to overcome these things. I have also listed many exercises to help practice this process. There is not an immediate success trigger for most people. For me, it came in stages and at times I felt I was not having any progress, but I persevered and the Lord blessed me. Try the following:

- Ask the Lord, "What lack I yet?" Asking Him where we need to start and what needs to happen next can be the most important key. One of the hardest questions to ask the Lord is what we need to do to make our repentance complete. Often what we are worried about is not so big, but something else is the true roadblock.
- Begin a fast. Abstain from food, or you can try different fasts where you drink only water, broth, or herbal teas. If you need to eat, pray about what the Lord wants you to eat. It may be vegetables or mild foods. Go without computer and phone, or other distractions for the time of your fast.
- Pray and make your intentions known to the Lord. What are you fasting for? If your desire is to have a spiritual experience that may not be the best reason. If your desire is to get close to the Lord, to establish a relationship with Him so you can be His servant, you are on the right track. Be sure not to try and force the answer you may want. This will inhibit the revelation.

- When you are alone and your mind is clear, ask the Lord if you can write your questions and receive a revelation. Get a pencil and paper. Write down the questions. Ask the Lord about giving yourself a blessing, write the answers that come to your mind, one word at a time. Don't second guess or doubt—just write. Feel the words coming to your mind. They will sound like your own voice, but will feel holy.
- When you are done ask the Lord if it was from Him. If you feel good about it, be believing.

I have asked the Lord in behalf of others and He provided the best council of all. Here are three examples from my journal:

“I have friends that cannot see in the spirit and are discouraged. The Lord said, “They cannot run before they learn to stand. When they are searching and trying to rend the veil they will begin by seeing glimpses. If all they see is a second of an image they must grasp it fully. They must allow images to come and if their minds are filled with virtue they will come freely. This means not just desires, but imagery of holy things, they will do well. Fasting helps with this when done in the right spirit of meekness. As they learn to be still and garnish their thoughts they will see the scales slipping away until the cloud disperses and they see my face.”

“She has been fasting to be able to see better with her spiritual eyes. The Lord gave me some good council for this. He said that she isn't doing anything wrong. That she has been blessed very much, but that she needs to patiently look, and see, and examine everything. Sometimes it will just be more difficult to see as our mortal bodies prevent us from seeing clearly. But, as she learns to focus and quiet

herself the visions will be more clear. “Be not discouraged.” He said. I think this applies to all of us. To see without restraint is like being able to dance on a rope. It is not something that comes easily, but with focus, it can be done.”

“I was shown that the Apostles were sent two by two to the surrounding towns during the last year of His ministry to assist in healing and sharing the Word with others. They were often discouraged and lacked faith, and Jesus would teach them. Peter was very emotional about it. Jesus spent much time trying to teach them to hear the voice of the Spirit.”

Only you and the Lord can reveal what is hindering you. It may be something very simple that needs resolving. The Lord is the best one to help you figure this out. Don't give up, the Lord will guide you through this process.

The journey of learning to open your spiritual eyes is one of the most difficult and exciting things you will experience in this life. For many it is too heavy a price for their time, efforts, and faith; but you know the way. The entire purpose of my books and posts is to help you to prepare to become who the Lord wants you to be. Focus upon Him and seek His face with all your heart and he will not leave you comfortless.