

Spiritual Power
Adult Fireside
Mike Baird, April 18, 2003

Still about the Spirit

- Still feel as I did when I first became Bishop and then as I verbalized it in Sacrament meeting:
 - "We as members of the Cooper Mountain Ward need to have a greater reliance upon the Holy Ghost in our lives. And that need is going to grow greater"
- Spoken and taught about the Holy Ghost and The Spirit.
- Like to take a little different look tonight

Spiritual Power

What do I mean by spiritual power?

- D&C 88:7-13
 - "The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God"
- Bruce R McConkie:

" There is a spirit—the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of Christ, the light of truth, the light of Christ—that defies description and is beyond mortal comprehension. It is in us and in all things; it is around us and around all things; it fills the earth and the heavens and the universe. It is everywhere, in all immensity, without exception; it is an indwelling, immanent, ever-present, never-absent spirit. It has neither shape nor form nor personality. It is not an entity nor a person nor a personage. It has no agency, does not act independently, and exists not to act but to be acted upon. As far as we know, it has no substance and is not material, at least as we measure these things. It is variously described as light and life and law and truth and power. It is the light of Christ; it is the life that is in all things; it is the law by which all things are governed; it is truth shining forth in darkness; **it is the power of God** who sitteth upon his throne. **It may be that it is also priesthood and faith and omnipotence**, for these too are the power of God." (New Witness for the Articles of Faith, pg 57)

 - Priesthood, faith tied to The Spirit

- Elder Bradford
 - "The glory of God is his Spirit"
 - The Father has full access and use of The Spirit
 - "All access to the Spirit comes through the Holy Ghost"
 - Our access is "regulated" by the Holy Ghost - He is the "guard"
- Let's look at how we can have spiritual power in our lives ie how we can have access to the power of The Spirit

Lives of convenience

- Too often our lives are governed by convenience
 - Not always convenient to:
 - Live gospel standards
 - pay our tithing
 - Share the gospel
 - Go to the Temple
 - Go home or visiting teaching
 - provide service for someone else
 - We feel we are "too busy"
 - Or "not now, later"
- **"No spiritual power in living lives of convenience"**

5 things or ways that we may have spiritual power in our lives

- Pure lives (obedience & repentance)
- Fasting, prayer, scripture study
- Keeping sacred covenants
- Sacrifice
- Service

Pure lives (obedience)

- We must live pure lives to have the Spirit with us
- Helaman 4:24
 - "it had withdrawn from them because the Spirit of the Lord doth not dwell in unholy temples"
- Joseph Fielding Smith:
"We have a great many members of this Church who have never received a manifestation through the Holy Ghost. Why? Because they have not made their lives conform to the truth. And the Holy Ghost will not dwell in unclean tabernacles or disobedient tabernacles." (We Are Here to be Tried, Tested, Proved, BYU Speeches of the Year [Provo, 25 Oct 1961], pg. 4)
- Can we "not sin and yet have no spiritual power?"
- "We must be clean or the Holy Ghost will not be with us"
- Elder Bradford
 - We must be obedient to have access to the Spirit
- D&C 121:36
 - ". . . the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness"

Are you clean – can the Spirit of the Lord dwell in your temple?

Fasting, Prayer, Scripture study

- Alma 17:2-3
 - “for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God. But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God.”
- Matt 17:14:21
 - “Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting”
- Melvin J Ballard:
"We are also charged to seek the Lord daily in prayer, secret prayer and family prayer. What happens then? We close our eyes and shut out the physical world, we open the windows of our souls and draw unto ourselves spiritual blessings, spiritual powers" (Delivered in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, May 5, 1928, Melvin J. Ballard, "The Struggle for the Soul," Tambuli, Sept. 1984, 30)

Is your fast one that generates spiritual power?

Are you given to "much prayer"?

Do you "search the scriptures diligently"?

Keeping Sacred Covenants

- How & Why do covenants bring power?
- Review promises for each covenant
 - Baptismal covenant
 - Us:
 - Always remember him
 - Take upon us the name of Christ
 - Keep his commandments
 - In return:
 - D&C 33:11
 - “Yea, repent and be baptized, every one of you, for a remission of your sins; yea, be baptized even by water, and then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost.”

- Sacrament covenant
 - D&C 20:77
 - “. . . that they may always have his Spirit to be with them”
 - Bruce R McConkie:

“Thus those who partake worthily of the sacrament—and the same repentance and contrition and desires for righteousness should precede the partaking of the sacrament as precede baptism—all such receive the companionship of the Holy Spirit. Because the Spirit will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle, they thus receive a remission of their sins through the sacramental ordinance. Through this ordinance the Lord puts a seal of approval upon them; they are renewed in spirit and become new creatures of the Holy Ghost, even as they did at baptism; they put off the old man of sin and put on Christ whose children they then are.” (A New Witness to the Articles of Faith, pg 240)
- Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood
 - D&C 84:33-44
 - Us:
 - “obtaining these two priesthoods”
 - “magnifying their calling”
 - “live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God”
 - In return:
 - “sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies”
 - “all that my Father hath shall be given unto him”
- Temple Covenants
 - Multiple sacred covenants
 - Us: Serious commitments
 - In return: Marvelous blessings
- David E Sorensen:

" One reason for the power of covenants may be due to the capability they have for effecting changes in our lives, especially sacred covenants. This capacity comes in part because when we make a covenant with God, we are making a promise to our Heavenly Father who knows us best, who knows exactly what we feel and think and intend in our heart of hearts—and this provides unique motivation to keep our promises. Additionally, sacred covenants are even more powerful than regular covenants or promises because by entering a covenant that is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise (the Holy Ghost), we gain special access to the grace of God to

help us keep the promises we have made." ("The Doctrine of Temple Work," Liahona, Aug. 2002, 30)

- David E Sorensen:
"The purpose of temple work is to make more effective the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and since covenants can be such an effective tool for change, covenants feature prominently in the temple and particularly are a key component of the endowment. Consider how the covenants of baptism, the sacrament, and the laying on of hands are all centered upon the Savior and His atoning sacrifice and how they lead us to change our lives. In a similar way, the covenants we make when we receive the endowment can propel us to even greater changes and greater Christ-like behavior. Put another way, we might ask, "How do we gain access to the fullness of the Atonement, this additional dispensation of grace?" Only by covenants, which are entered into only through ordinances, which can be performed only through priesthood keys. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "Being born again, comes by the Spirit of God through ordinances. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected by Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 162.)" ("The Doctrine of Temple Work," Liahona, Aug. 2002, 30)
- Brigham Young to the men at Winter Quarters on rescuing those leaving Nauvoo
"The poor brethren and sisters, widows and orphans, sick and destitute, are now lying on the west bank of the Mississippi, waiting for teams and wagons and means to remove them. Now is the time for labor. *Let the fire of the covenant, which you made in the house of the Lord burn in your hearts like flame unquenchable.*" (Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 28 Sept. 1846, 5)
- Love that phrase "fire of the covenant" – that is what drove the pioneers
 - The early Saints had the "fire of the covenant" in their hearts
 - That fire helped them demonstrate faith, and out of faith came great power

How bright does the fire of the covenants you have made burn in your heart?

Sacrifice

- Sacrifice of all things – generate necessary faith
 - *"Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things. It was through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life; and it is through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things that men do actually know that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. When a man has offered in sacrifice all that he has for the truth's sake, not even withholding his life, and believing before God that he has been called to make this sacrifice because he seeks to do his will, he does know, most assuredly, that God does and will accept his sacrifice and offering, and that he has not, nor will not seek his face in vain. Under these circumstances, then, he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on eternal life."* (Lectures on Faith, 6:7)
 - *"It is in vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those, or can be heirs with them, who have offered their all in sacrifice, and by this means obtained faith in God and favor with him so as to obtain eternal life, unless they, in like manner, offer unto him the same sacrifice, and through that offering obtain the knowledge that they are accepted of him."* (Lectures on Faith, 6:8)
- Think of the Pioneers – they sacrificed "all things" and look at the legacy of faith they left
- Remember McConkie's words on the Spirit:
"It may be that it is also priesthood and faith and omnipotence, for these too are the power of God." (New Witness for the Articles of Faith, pg 57)
- D&C Moroni 10:7
 - ". . . by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore I would exhort you that ye deny not the power of God; for he worketh by power, according to the faith of the children of men"
- Elder Bradford
 - "faith...drives the usage of this great Spirit"
 - "God "hears prayers, and hears the words of ordinations and blessings and many other things, and then subjects matter to law and causes things to happen"

- Summary – how does faith generate Spiritual Power:
 - Sacrifice generates faith
 - Faith drives the usage of the Spirit
 - The Spirit is the power of God

What are you willing to sacrifice?

Service

- What is it we do with Spiritual power?
 - Use it to have the power to make righteous choices
 - We use it to serve others
- "It is through service to others that we use Spiritual power"
- Idea of "spiritual exercise"
 - Similar to muscles – develop spiritual power through exercise (service)
 - "Use it or lose it"
 - Melvin J Ballard:
"spiritual exercise comes through service in behalf of our fellowmen"
(Delivered in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, May 5, 1928, Melvin J. Ballard, "The Struggle for the Soul," Tambuli, Sept. 1984, 30)
- John A Widstoe:
"For those who enter into the temple service in faith, in full surrender to the will of the Lord, the day will be a glorious experience. Light and power will come to them." (John A. Widstoe, "Looking Toward the Temple," Ensign, Jan. 1972, 56)
- If you isolated yourself on a mountain top for a year you might gain great insight but your spiritual muscles will be flabby

Are you exercising your spiritual power through service to others?

Summary

- No Power in living lives of convenience
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- 5 things we can do to receive Spiritual power
 - Temple work
 - Youth Baptismal trip
 - Are you doing the 5 areas?
 - Are you clean? – can the Spirit of the Lord dwell in your temple?
 - Is your fast one that generates spiritual power?
 - Are you given to "much prayer"?
 - Do you "search the scriptures diligently"?
 - How bright does the fire of the covenants you have made burn in your heart?
 - What are you willing to sacrifice?
 - Are you using your spiritual power in service to others?
- Bear Testimony