

The Holy Ghost

By Mike Baird

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Introduction

Speaking on the members of the Godhead today

The Godhead

Godhead is comprised of three Separate individuals.

- Each possesses the same divine nature, knows all things, and has all power.
- Each possesses the same character, perfections and attributes.
- Their work is to “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39)
 - Eternal Life is the greatest of all God’s gifts (D&C 14:7).
- In this work and other things they are as one.
- It is important that we know the place and functions of each member of the Godhead

Nancy – Our Heavenly Father

--Review what she said--

Scott – Jesus Christ

Mike - Holy Ghost

- What is his role in our lives?
- What should be his role in our lives?
- Relate **(if time)** experience in Deacons quorum
 - As a result have studied & prayed
 - Better appreciate and understand

The Importance of the Holy Ghost

What Modern day Prophets and Apostles have said about the importance of the Holy Ghost:

- President Joseph Fielding Smith:
“There is nothing more important in the lives of members of the Church than to have the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Answers to Gospel Questions, Vol. 2, pg. 113)
- President Wilford Woodruff:
“You may have the administration of angels, you may see many miracles; you may see many wonders in the earth; but I claim that the gift of the Holy Ghost is the greatest gift that can be bestowed upon man.” (Discourses of Wilford Woodruff, pg. 5).
- President Harold B Lee:
“And every baptized member of the Church, who lives worthy of it, may have the greatest of all gifts that can come to mankind, the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which the

Lord reveals all that is necessary to make in completeness a dispensation of the gospel”
(Teachings of Harold B Lee, Chapter 1).

- President Brigham Young:
“I want to see men and women breathe the Holy Ghost in every breath of their lives, living constantly in the light of God's countenance.” (Discourses of Brigham Young, pg. 31)
- Elder Bruce R McConkie:
“Men ought -- above all things in this world -- to seek for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There is nothing as important as having the companionship of the Holy Ghost. Those who first receive this endowment and who then remain in tune with this member of the Eternal Godhead will receive a peace and a comfort that passeth all understanding; they will be guided and preserved in ways that are miraculous; they will be instructed until they receive all truth; they will sanctify their souls so as to dwell spotless before the Sinless One in his everlasting kingdom. **There is no price too high, no labor too onerous, no struggle too severe, no sacrifice too great, if out of it all we receive and enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost.**” (A new witness for the articles of faith, pg. 253).
- When I hear a Prophet say “This is the most important thing in this life” Ding, Ding, Ding, Ding, Mike, TAKE NOTICE
- To understand why President Joseph Fielding Smith, President Woodruff, President Brigham Young, President Harold B Lee and Elder McConkie make these statements we must understand:
 - Who the Holy Ghost is (personality, attributes)
 - What is His office (responsibilities, functions)
 - What it is that He does for us.

If Time:

A Summary as to *whom* He is:

- 3rd Member of Godhead. As such is one with God and Jesus.
- Personage of Spirit
- Referred to in the scriptures by several different names (The Spirit, Spirit of the Lord, Comforter etc.)
- One place at one time yet influence may be everywhere
 - Is not the Light of Christ but uses the Light of Christ
- Gift of the Holy Ghost is different from the Holy Ghost himself

A List as to Responsibilities and functions:

- A Witness
 - Christ, Truth
 - Father & Son
- A Revelator and teacher
- The Comforter
- The Holy Spirit of Promise
- A Sanctifier

I don't have time to discuss today all of whom the Holy Ghost is and what he does.

I will focus instead on what I have felt by the guidance of the Spirit I should speak on.

- I've read several quotes where in modern day prophets have said the Holy Ghost is the greatest gift we can receive in this life.
- If we expand the viewpoint beyond this earth life to a viewpoint of eternity the greatest of all gift is Eternal Life (D&C 14:7).
- What do we have to do to get it?
 - As we know, conditions placed upon receiving this gift. Not just given to anyone.
 - The Lord has stated that no unclean thing can enter into his presence (1 Nephi 10:21)
 - To become clean we must put off the natural man (Mosiah 3:19) and be spiritually born of God (Alma 5:13-14, 21).
 - To do this requires that:
 - We gain a testimony of Christ (Faith).
 - Enter in the straight and narrow path of repentance (apply Atonement) and baptism (ordinance) (2 Nephi 31:17-18).
 - Once upon that path we must press forward feasting upon the words of Christ and endure to the end (2 Nephi 31:20-21, 32:3), purifying ourselves so we might gain the presence of our Father and dwell where he dwells.
 - To do this by our self is impossible.
 - The Savior, I think we would all agree, is not only important by necessary. He has shown us the way and his Atoning sacrifice makes things possible for us.
 - The Holy Ghost too is not only important, but He too is also necessary:
 - He is essential in the development of a testimony
 - He is essential in the conversion we must go through to gain eternal life.
 - Definition of conversion - a burning or cleansing which we must go through to be clean enabling us to enter our Heavenly Father's presence

Testimony

- A testimony comes from the Holy Ghost.
- What is a testimony? A testimony is to know by personal revelation from the Holy Spirit that Jesus is the Son of God. (Teachings & Sermons of Bruce R McConkie. Pg. 130)
- When Christ asked the Apostles "But whom say ye that I am" Peter answered "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus then said "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed [it] unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt 16:15-17)
- Why was he "blessed"? Because he knew by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Lord.
- *****---Relate:**
 - *My testimony* comes not from seeing what my parents did, nor from what my Bishop has said or done but from the Holy Spirit speaking to my spirit.

Witness of Christ

- Joseph F. Smith:
“The office of the Holy Ghost is to bear record of Christ, or to testify of him, and confirm the believer in the truth” (Gospel Doctrine Pg. 101)
- At the baptism of Jesus, the Holy Ghost bore witness to his divinity by "descending like a dove, and lighting upon him." (Matt. 3:16.)
- Every person who knows or has ever known that Jesus is the Christ has received that witness from the Holy Ghost. "Wherefore I give you to understand," wrote Paul to the Corinthians, "that no man speaking by the Spirit of God . . . can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12:3.)

Witnesses to our Spirit

- How do we get this testimony or knowledge of Christ?
- We can learn things through many different ways. We learn through experiences, our senses and by reason. But when we learn this way there is the possibility we may be deceived.
- **If Time:** Digital Camera
- Brigham Young:
“I have proven to my satisfaction, according to the best knowledge I can gather, that man can be deceived by the sight of the natural eye, he can be deceived by the hearing of the ear, and by the touch of the hand; that he can be deceived in all of what is called the natural senses. But there is one thing in which he cannot be deceived. What is that? It is the operations of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit and power of God upon the creature.”
(Discourses of Brigham Young, pg. 31)
- Joseph Fielding Smith:
“The Spirit of God speaking to the spirit of man has power to impart truth with greater effect and understanding than the truth can be imparted by personal contact even with heavenly beings. Through the Holy Ghost the truth is woven into the very fiber and sinews of the body so that it cannot be forgotten.” (Doctrines of Salvation Vol. 1, pg. 47-8)
- Through the process of **Spirit speaking to spirit** there is never any deception or uncertainty.
- We don't need to see Angels or hear a voice (Refer back to Presidents Smith and Young).

***---Relate:

- Saw all ranges of reaction to the witness of the Holy Ghost as a missionary in Sweden:
 - Total rejection. I knew Spirit was present but not felt
 - Sister Turki – Felt spirit but failed to act
 - Leif Gronstedt – Felt the burning and acted on it

***---Relate having “felt” the voice:

- Heard as a youth praying about the Book of Mormon
- Learned to hear by feeling as a Missionary
- Heard(felt) many times as an adult and parent

- Scott and “knowing” more than once the only reason I could give him was because of feelings.
- **If Time:** Things don’t “feel” right.

A Sanctifier

- There is a difference between having a testimony and being converted. A testimony is the witness we receive from the Spirit.
- Remember what I said at the beginning of this talk. A testimony is not enough. We must be converted.
 - Conversion - a burning or cleansing which we must go through to be clean enabling us to enter our Heavenly Father’s presence.
- Bruce R McConkie:

“..the Holy Spirit is a sanctifier, and he has the power to cleanse and perfect the human soul, to wash evil and iniquity out, and to replace it with righteousness. And that is the occasion when we are converted.” (Writings and Sermons of Bruce R McConkie, pg. 135).
- So what does it mean to be sanctified?
- Bruce R McConkie:

“To be sanctified is to be saved; to fall short of sanctification is to fail to gain full salvation. Only the sanctified gain eternal life. To be sanctified is to be clean; it is a state of purity and spotlessness in which no taint of sin is found.

If Time:

Only those who die as to sin and are born again to righteousness, becoming thus new creatures of the Holy Ghost, are numbered with the sanctified. It is the work and mission and ministry of the Holy Spirit of God to sanctify the souls of men. This is his assigned labor in the Eternal Godhead. How he does it we do not know, except that it is a work that can only be performed by a spirit being, and hence the need for one of his personality, status, and standing in the Supreme Presidency of the universe.

Baptism of the Spirit is the way and the means whereby sanctification is made available. Thus, Jesus commands all the "ends of the earth" to be baptized in water "that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day." (3 Nephi 27:20.) Truly, the Holy Ghost is a sanctifier, and the extent to which men receive and enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost is the extent to which they are sanctified. In the lives of most of us, sanctification is an ongoing process, and we obtain that glorious status by degrees as we overcome the world and become saints in deed as well as in name.” (New Witness for Articles of Faith. pg. 265-6)

- Alma speaks of those who are sanctified (Alma 13:11-12):
 - 1) Therefore they were called after this holy order, and were sanctified, and their garments were washed white through the blood of the Lamb.
 - 12) Now they, after being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence; and there were many, exceedingly great many, who were made pure and entered into the rest of the Lord their God.

***---Relate:

- I'd like to ask each of us: Can we picture what Alma said in what I just read in yours or my life?
- We all probably can to some degree:
 - I think there is degree's or levels of this as we become "cleansed" and "purified" we are filled with more and more light. And that light abhors darkness:
 - Depraved things in this life certainly
 - Another "level" – Foul language - I certainly hope so
 - Another "level" – offended such we wouldn't watch R rated movie and even some PG type?
 - Isn't there probably another level each one of us can go to?
 - I have certainly felt this is true as I have studied the Holy Ghost and have striven to be "cleaner" I know I have become more sensitive to things I do and say that would offend the Spirit and cause it to leave.

Qualifying for the companionship of the Holy Ghost

- All or most of us present today have been baptized.
- We received the gift of the Holy Ghost which confers upon us the right to the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost.
- And it is his companionship, it is his presence we need in our lives if we are to be purified.
- 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. The Holy Ghost will not dwell with that person who is unwilling to obey and keep the commandments of God or who violates those commandments willfully. In such a soul the spirit of the Holy Ghost cannot enter. That great gift comes to us only through humility and faith and obedience. When we are disobedient, when our minds are set upon the things of this world rather than on the things of the kingdom of God, we cannot have the manifestations of the Holy Ghost.

Did you ever stop to think what a great privilege it is for us to have the companionship of one of the members of the Godhead? Have you thought of it that way? That is our privilege, if we keep the commandments the Lord has given us.” (We Are Here to be Tried, Tested, Proved, BYU Speeches of the Year [Provo, 25 Oct 1961], pg. 4)

*****---Relate:**

- Have you thought of it that way? That it *is* our privilege to have the companionship of a member of the Godhead?
 - I *feel strongly* that we need to change the role of the Holy Ghost in our lives.
 - We need to bring the Holy Ghost to the forefront in our lives and out of what is too often a background, sometimes obscure, sometimes “only in time of need” type role in our lives.
 - We need to change it to a role where He stands as the member of the Godhead who is most accessible to us.
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- He can be our **constant companion**.
 - He can be a **witness and testator to our souls**. One who speaks to our spirit
 - He can be a **revealer of truth** in a world clamoring with conflicting messages
 - He can be **comforter**, when our souls need peace.
 - He can be **sanctifier of our souls**, purging us of sin so we may be filled with light.
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- For all this we should be willing to agree with Elder McConkie that: “There is no price too high, no labor too onerous, no struggle too severe, no sacrifice too great, if out of it all we receive and enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (A new witness for the articles of faith, pg. 253).

Close with Testimony