

Jesus Christ Is the Truth—The Gift of the Holy Ghost

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“Stand Forever” Episode 24

What is the best of all human conditions, and the greatest gift God can bestow on His children in this life? Hello, my name is Larry Corbridge, and this is Episode 24 of the *Stand Forever Series*.

In past episodes, we concluded that a purposeful life leading to the realization of your divine potential requires knowing where you are going (Point B), where and who you are now (Point A), and then plotting/charting the course in between. We determined the course is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, also known as the doctrine of Christ, including faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, ordinances and covenants beginning with baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end engaged in God’s work.

The focus of this episode is the Gift of the Holy Ghost which is not only a waypoint along the path to eternal life but a destination in and of itself.

The Gift of the Holy Ghost

In the grand scheme of things, eternal life is the greatest of the gifts of God, but in this life, His greatest gift is the gift of the Holy Ghost made possible by the gift of His Son. It is monumentally important to remember that. As Paul said, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee ... with the laying on of hands.”¹ To get and keep the Spirit of God in your life should be among your highest and front-of-mind ambitions. Everything depends on it.

Look at the repetition of the word “all” in connection with the Holy Spirit:

- But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall **teach you all things**, and **bring all things to your remembrance**, whatsoever I have said unto you.²
- The Spirit of truth ... will **guide you into all truth**.³
- And **blessed are all** they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for **they shall be filled** with the Holy Ghost.⁴

¹ 1 Timothy 4:14

² John 14:26, *emphasis added*

³ John 16:13, *emphasis added*

⁴ 3 Nephi 12:6, *emphasis added*

- The Spirit **searcheth all things**, yea, the deep things of God.⁵
- **For by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets.**⁶
- Now the Spirit **knoweth all things.**⁷
- For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to **every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God.**⁸
- The Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father **sheds forth upon all those who are just and true.**⁹
- Receive of my Spirit, even the Comforter, which shall manifest unto him the **truth of all things.**¹⁰
- For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will **show unto you all things what ye should do.**¹¹
- And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know **the truth of all things.**¹²
- Ask the Father in my name, in faith believing that you shall receive, and you shall have the Holy Ghost, which **manifesteth all things** which are expedient unto the children of men.¹³
- Wherefore, watch over him [Joseph Smith] that his faith fail not, and it shall be given by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, that **knoweth all things.**¹⁴
- And this is my gospel—repentance and baptism by water, and then cometh the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, **which showeth all things**, and teacheth the peaceable things of the kingdom.¹⁵
- But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things. And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in **bearing record unto all things** whatsoever ye shall say.¹⁶
- Believe and repent of your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as our fathers, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost, that ye may have **all things made manifest.**¹⁷

⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, *emphasis added*

⁶ 1 Nephi 22:2, *emphasis added*

⁷ Alma 7:13, *emphasis added*

⁸ Doctrine and Covenants 46:11, *emphasis added*

⁹ Doctrine and Covenants 76:53, *emphasis added*

¹⁰ Doctrine and Covenants 124:97, *emphasis added*

¹¹ 2 Nephi 32:5, *emphasis added*

¹² Moroni 10:5, *emphasis added*

¹³ Doctrine and Covenants 18:18, *emphasis added*

¹⁴ Doctrine and Covenants 35:19, *emphasis added*

¹⁵ Doctrine and Covenants 39:6, *emphasis added*

¹⁶ Doctrine and Covenants 100:7-8, *emphasis added*

¹⁷ Moses 8:24, *emphasis added*

Nothing is as all-encompassing, all-inclusive as the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Comforter is the truth of all things, quickens all things, makes alive all things, knows all things, and has all power.

Speaking of the First Vision, President Russell M. Nelson said: “During that singular vision, God the Father pointed to Jesus Christ and said: ‘This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!’ That admonition given to Joseph is for each of us. We are to seek, in every way we can, to hear Jesus Christ, who speaks to us through the power and ministering of the Holy Ghost.”¹⁸

Christ began and concluded His mortal ministry teaching about the gift of the Holy Ghost. At the outset he taught about being born again by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. The heart of Nicodemus was pumping. He was alive, or so he thought, and yet Jesus said, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”¹⁹ He concluded His mortal ministry the same way, with the promise that Heavenly Father would send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, the Holy Ghost.²⁰

When He appeared on the American continent, He followed the same pattern. He began with the same promise to the faithful Nephites that Heavenly Father would visit them with fire and the Holy Ghost.²¹ He “gave them power to baptize”²² and “he gave them power to give the Holy Ghost.”²³ His disciples “did pray for that which they most desired; and they desired that the Holy Ghost should be given unto them.”²⁴

Christ then prayed, saying, “Father, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words.”²⁵ He concluded that ministry with the commandment to repent and be baptized for the purpose of becoming sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost.²⁶ His very last words tied the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost together as one, saying, “the Father giveth the Holy Ghost unto the children of men, because of me.”²⁷

¹⁸ Russell M. Nelson, “Opening Message,” *General Conference*, April 2020

¹⁹ John 3:5-7

²⁰ John 14:16, 17, 25-27; 15:26; 16:7, 13

²¹ 3 Nephi 11:32, 33, 35

²² 3 Nephi 11:21-22

²³ 3 Nephi 18:37

²⁴ 3 Nephi 19:9

²⁵ 3 Nephi 19:20-21

²⁶ 3 Nephi 27:20

²⁷ 3 Nephi 28:11

The fact that the Lord commenced and concluded both ministries teaching about the gift of the Holy Ghost is evidence of its primary importance.

President Russell M. Nelson quoted another president of the Church, Lorenzo Snow, saying, “This is the grand privilege of every Latter-day Saint ... that it is our right to have the manifestations of the Spirit every day of our lives.” President Nelson went on to warn, however, saying, “In the coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost.”²⁸

Mormon concluded the record of Christ’s ministry among the Nephites with these words: “Hearken, O ye Gentiles, and hear the words of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, which he hath commanded me that I should speak concerning you, for, behold he commandeth me that I should write, saying: Turn, all ye Gentiles, from your wicked ways; and repent of your evil doings ... and from all your wickedness and abominations, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, **that ye may receive a remission of your sins, and be filled with the Holy Ghost**, that ye may be numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel.”²⁹

That is the end objective in this life, to receive a remission of sins and be filled with the Holy Ghost which is the source of love, joy, and peace, and the power to be fruitful. Partake of the fruit of the tree of life and help others do the same.

God’s Design Is for His Children to be Endowed with His Power

If you read and pray about the Book of Mormon and learn it is true, what more will you know?

“Well, I’ll know that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true Church.”

Okay, but if you’re not interested in “organized religion,” if you generally distrust institutions anyway, how will your life be better knowing Joseph Smith was a prophet and the Church is true? How will your life be better if you are baptized?

Ask anyone, including members of the Church, those questions, and you will get many different answers, but rarely the right one. People will talk about knowing the truth, or

²⁸ Russell M. Nelson, “Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives,” *General Conference*, April 2018

²⁹ 3 Nephi 30:1-2

the blessings of living prophets, happiness and eternal families, additional scripture, all of which are important but rarely will anyone say: “If the Book of Mormon is true, then Joseph Smith was a prophet and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true Church, and therefore I can be forgiven of my sins and endowed with heavenly power to engage in God’s work and ultimately return to the presence of God.” That’s the answer!

If the Book of Mormon is true, it means not only God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith, but others came as well. Among others, John the Baptist restored authority to baptize for the remission of sins, Peter, James and John restored authority to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Alma asked, “what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, **that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?**”³⁰

The essential problem in life is separation from God Our Father. The purpose of the restoration is to bridge the gap, extending the blessings of the gifts of God’s Son, His Spirit and His life.

In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, Jesus vividly describes the indispensability of oil in your lamp, the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. The five foolish virgins who did not have oil, knocked on the door saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.”³¹

Jesus uses the metaphor of virgins only in this parable—why? They might have been servants or sisters or handmaidens—why virgins? Virginity connotes purity. All ten were pure and yet five were not admitted despite their purity! How surprising! How can that be?

We frequently think of purity as the ultimate and sole objective, the key to enter the presence of the Lord, but He did not say, “Except a man be pure he cannot enter the kingdom of God,” rather “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom [or presence] of God.” True enough, no unclean thing can enter the kingdom of God.³² Yes, worthiness is essential, but purity is not everything. Worthiness alone is not sufficient.

³⁰ Mosiah 18:10, *emphasis added*

³¹ Matthew 25:11-12

³² 3 Nephi 27:19

Alma summed up all he had been called to preach by simply saying, “repent and be born again.”³³ It isn’t just repentance, it isn’t only improving your behavior. Rather, repent that you may receive the Holy Ghost. Remember where you are going.

To be endowed with the power of God also requires covenants and ordinances. In Matthew’s account, the Lord says to the five foolish virgins, “I know you not.” The Joseph Smith Translation turns it around with “Ye knew me not.”³⁴ Either way, contracts and covenants place the parties in a relationship with each other; they are not strangers but know each other. If you sign a contract, you at least know who the other party is. Neither one can fairly say, “I don’t know you” or “You don’t know me.”

The oil in the lamps of the five wise virgins represents the truth and the Spirit of the Holy Ghost enabling one to avoid deception. “And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins. For they that are wise and have **received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide**, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.”³⁵

In our day, the Lord said: “For the preparation wherewith I design to prepare mine apostles to prune my vineyard for the last time, that I may bring to pass my strange act [uncommon act], that I may pour out my Spirit upon all flesh—But behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called but few of them are chosen. They who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noon-day.”³⁶ Without oil there is no light, even if you have lamps.

It is difficult to envision oneself like Christ or look forward through the broad expanse of time to eternal life. The Holy Ghost, however, makes life’s purpose more immediate, relatable, simpler, and within reach. To fully realize our divine potential and receive eternal life is the ultimate consequence of receiving the truth and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit from day to day. The gift of God’s life is the ultimate consequence of receiving the gifts of God’s Son and God’s Spirit which quickens *all things*, makes alive *all things*, knows *all things*, has *all power* and call tell you *all things* you should do.³⁷

³³ Alma 5:49

³⁴ JST, Matthew 25:11

³⁵ Doctrine and Covenants 45:56-57, *emphasis added*

³⁶ Doctrine and Covenants 95:4-6, *emphasis added*

³⁷ See 2 Nephi 32:5; Moses 6:61

There is no better example of the profound change the Holy Spirit works in a person than Peter and the apostles. They walked with Christ and were personally taught by Him day to day for three years. They personally witnessed the lame made to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dead to live again. They saw Him walk on water, calm the wind and the angry sea. And yet at the end, when the angry night was full of threat and harm, they stepped away. They abandoned Him. One denied Him, and another betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver.

But the story does not end there; in a way it was just beginning. Except for Judas who took his own life, the other eleven disciples would suffer cruel death because of their courageous teaching, preaching, and testimony of Christ, the One they abandoned and denied before.

What made the difference? What accounts for the profound change, not in a few, but universally in all of them? It was the gift of the Holy Ghost. They had knowledge before the Day of Pentecost, but after, they also had power and it is the combination of the two—knowledge and power—that results in becoming converted unto Christ and “never fall away.”³⁸

When the resurrected Christ commanded His disciples to preach the gospel among all nations, He instructed them to first tarry in Jerusalem “until (they) be endued with power from on high.” The Lord repeated the same admonition for His servants in this dispensation, saying: “Therefore, in consequence of the transgressions of my people, it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion—That they themselves may be prepared, and that my people may be taught more perfectly, and have experience, and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands. And this cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high.”³⁹

Jesus said to Peter, “and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.”⁴⁰ Peter could not strengthen others until he was converted, and the essence of conversion is to be born again, to receive the Holy Ghost.

In the last chapter of the Book of Mormon, Moroni gives a solemn warning “unto all the ends of the earth.” He says, “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 be

³⁸ Alma 23:6

³⁹ Doctrine and Covenants 105:9-11

⁴⁰ Luke 22:32

because of unbelief. And wo be unto the children of men if this be the case; for there shall be none that doeth good among you, no not one. For if there be one among that doeth good he shall work by the power and gifts of God.”⁴¹

Neither Peter, or anyone else for that matter, could or can “strengthen thy brethren” or do any other eternal, redemptive good without the power and gifts of God. The power of the Holy Ghost is essential to becoming fruitful, to make a difference. Partake of the fruit of the tree of life to be fruitful and help others do the same.

There Are Many Called, but Few Are Chosen.

The Lord said, “There are many called, but few are chosen. And, why are they not chosen?”⁴²

Why ten virgins? Why not two, one who was wise and another foolish? *Many* are called or invited, but not everyone is chosen or enters in—why? That is a question of questions, and the Lord gives the answer.

The question and the answer should capture the attention of anyone who can fog a mirror. He explains, “they do not learn, this one lesson.” And what is that lesson? “The powers of heaven” can only be received “upon the principles of righteousness.”⁴³ That’s it—the one lesson!

Many are called, but few chosen, and why is that? Because they lack the oil. They lack the powers of heaven because they do not learn one thing—how those powers are received. The reason they do not learn that central lesson is because they become distracted with “the things of this world” and “the honors of men.”⁴⁴ They are blinded by the tinsel of the world which shall pass away⁴⁵ and overlook the treasures of heaven which will last forever.⁴⁶

Describing the condition of those for whom the Spirit of the Lord had “ceased to strive,” Mormon gave a dismal description: “they are without Christ and God in the world; and they are driven about as chaff before the wind ... led about by Satan, even as chaff is

⁴¹ Moroni 10:24-25

⁴² Matthew 20:16; 22:14; Doctrine and Covenants 95:5; 121:34, 40

⁴³ Doctrine and Covenants 121:34-36

⁴⁴ Doctrine and Covenants 121:34-35

⁴⁵ John 2:17

⁴⁶ Matthew 6:19-21

driven before the wind, or as a vessel is tossed about upon the waves, without sail or anchor, or without anything wherewith to steer her."⁴⁷

A woman married and divorced multiple times to men who were unfaithful and abusive. She turned to a boyfriend for fulfillment and love. She reasoned she had tried to do the right things in her life, but nothing turned out as she expected. So, she "tried another way, the way of the world." Although she felt loved, wanted, and valued for a short time, soon misery, shame and embarrassment settled in.

She said, "I knew it was wrong. I felt, as did Alma, the pains of a sin-tormented soul. Instead of bringing me the love that I so longed for, I felt just the opposite. My anger toward myself, as well as the injustices of life, turned inward and I became more depressed. I felt momentarily I had lost the one thing that had brought me peace and love in the past—real peace and love—rather than any attempt at substitution. So, the relationship ended, and I began my journey back to Father. I have learned how extremely important it is to invite the spirit continually—to study and pray every day before anything else. Without that constant nourishment, it's too easy to be overwhelmed when trials don't subside without the spirit to guide you through them. There is nothing compared to the quiet, calming assurance that you are not alone and that He is helping you through it all. ... By comparison, the peace that comes through knowing that your actions are pleasing to Father and that you are clean and worthy to serve him cannot be overstated. *Nothing is worth the loss of the spirit. This world is too difficult to traverse alone.*"

Another woman said, "When I was baptized again and given the Holy Ghost once more, something changed inside of me. The spirit spoke to my soul and told me I was exactly where I needed to be. I've never been the same since. I feel his presence daily and am so grateful I have him to help guide me home."

Ask almost anyone what they most want in life and love, joy and peace in some combination will surface in the discussion. Paul taught the "fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."⁴⁸ He also said, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."⁴⁹

Jesus Christ is unmistakably revealed by the power of the Holy Ghost. Nephi said, "And as I spake concerning the convincing of the Jews, that Jesus is the very Christ, it must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ,

⁴⁷ Mormon 5:16, 18

⁴⁸ Galatians 5:22

⁴⁹ Romans 15:13

the Eternal God; And that *he manifesteth himself unto all those who believe in him, by the power of the Holy Ghost; yea, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, working mighty miracles, signs, and wonders, among the children of men according to their faith.*"⁵⁰

Jesus said: "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost ... shall teach you all things."⁵¹ It is the power by which you may know the truth of all things.⁵² It will show us all things you should do.⁵³ It is the fountain of living water that springs up unto eternal life.⁵⁴

The best of all human conditions in this life is to be endowed with heavenly power, to be born again, to have the gift and companionship of the Holy Ghost.

The Still, Small Voice

Robert Schick, a young man from Midway Utah, said about his mission experience: "One of the great blessings of my mission was to learn to recognize the Spirit. It was hard for me to feel the Spirit before my mission because I was so involved in other things, school, friends, and sports. (I was not listening). The Spirit will not hit you like a rock. It is a little feeling right here in my chest that pierces me to the very soul that makes feel happy, makes me feel joy. One of the strongest reasons we are here is to feel the Spirit. ... I learned to love the scriptures on my mission. They answer every question. ... In the temple we can feel the Spirit better than anywhere else on earth."⁵⁵

The voice of the Spirit is perplexing; although it is usually a still, small voice, it is also sure, penetrating, pervasive, edifying, sustaining and certain.

Joseph Smith taught, "The Lord cannot always be known by the thunder of His voice, by the display of His glory or by the manifestation of His power, and those that are most anxious to see these things, are the least prepared to meet them, and were the Lord to manifest His powers as He did to the children of Israel, such characters would be the first to say, 'Let not the Lord speak any more, lest we His people die.'"⁵⁶

We naturally look to find God in the dramatic but almost always He is in the still, the small, the gentle and undramatic. The Lord said to Elijah, "Go forth, and stand upon the

⁵⁰ 2 Nephi 26:12-13

⁵¹ John 14:26

⁵² Moroni 10:5

⁵³ 2 Nephi 32:5

⁵⁴ John 4:14

⁵⁵ Robert Schick, mission report, sacrament meeting, Homestead Ward, Midway Utah West Stake, date 2020

⁵⁶ Joseph Smith *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 247

mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.”

There are strong winds that rend the mountains. There are also earthquakes and fire. God’s hand may be in some of it, but all of it together does not reach the heart and soul of man as God’s still, small voice—not nearly.

The Spirit of the Holy Ghost is so sure, penetrating, pervasive, edifying, sustaining and certain, it cannot be inadvertently denied, so much so that the Lord said, “And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.”⁵⁷

Notwithstanding how penetrating the voice of the Lord is, *we must choose to hear it*. Because it is still and small, it can easily be lost in the clamor of ambient noise and silenced by the roar of sin.

As Amulek said, “Contend no more against the Holy Ghost, but ... receive it and take upon you the name of Christ.”⁵⁸ Pay whatever price must be paid, bear whatever burden must be borne and make whatever sacrifice must be made to get and keep in your life the Spirit and power of the Holy Ghost. Every good thing depends on getting and keeping the power of the Holy Ghost in your life. Everything depends on that.

In the next episode, we will explore the next coordinate along the covenant path, enduring to the end. I hope you will join me for that because it doesn’t matter how far you go if you don’t get to the end.

⁵⁷ Matthew 12:32

⁵⁸ Alma 34:38