

Gospel Doctrine Lesson 24: "This Is Life Eternal"

(John 16-17)

LESSON GOAL: To be receptive to the influence of the Holy Ghost and draw nearer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

STATEMENTS ABOUT ETERNAL LIFE:

"**Eternal life** is the name of the life that our Eternal Father lives. The word *eternal* is one of the formal names of Deity.

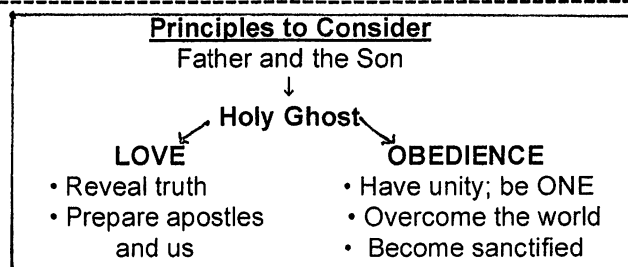
Moses 7:35: Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; . . . and Endless and **Eternal is my name**, also.

Immortality is to live forever and all men will gain this unending continuance of life. **BUT** only those **who obey the fullness of the gospel law will inherit eternal life**. It is "**the greatest of all the gifts of God**" (D&C 14:7), for it is the kind, status type and quality of life that God himself enjoys" (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 237).

Bruce R. McConkie: "To know God in that full sense which will enable us to gain **eternal salvation** means that we **must know** what he knows, **enjoy** what he enjoys, **experience** what he experiences. **But before we can become like him, we must obey those laws that will enable us to acquire the character and attributes he possesses.**

"And before we can obey these laws, **we must learn what they are**; we must learn of **Christ and his gospel**. We must learn 'that **salvation** was, and is, and is to come, in and **through the atoning blood of Christ**, the Lord Omnipotent.' (Mosiah 3:18). We must learn that **baptism** under the hands of a legal administrator is essential to salvation and that after baptism **we must keep the commandments** and 'press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a **perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men**' (2 Ne. 31:20)" (CR, Apr. 1966, 79).

Bruce R. McConkie: "**Eternal life** thus comes only to those who **know the Father and the Son**, and who know them in the sense of **doing** and **experiencing** what it is their eternal lot to do and experience. Since **eternal life** is the name of the kind of life God lives, **no man can possess it unless and until he becomes like his Eternal Father** and has the same eternal powers that are resident in the Eternal One" (*The Mortal Messiah*, Vol. 4:109).



1. Jesus promises His Apostles that they will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Holy Ghost: Third member of the Godhead a personage of Spirit, not possessing a body of flesh and bones.

The Holy Ghost is manifested to men on earth both as the **power** of the Holy Ghost and as the **gift** of the Holy Ghost.

- The **power** can come upon one before baptism and is the convincing witness that the gospel is true. By the power of the Holy Ghost a person receives a testimony of Jesus Christ and of His work on the earth.
- The **gift** can come only after proper, authorized baptism is conferred by the laying on of hands (Acts 8:12-25). The **gift** of the Holy Ghost is the right to have, whenever one is worthy, the companionship of the Holy Ghost, which acts as a cleansing agent to **purify** them and **sanctify** them from all sin. (*LDS Bible Dictionary*, 704).

John 14:26: 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.

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

The mission of the Holy Ghost is to:

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| a. Comfort (John 14:26). | e. Guide us into all truth (John 16:13). |
| b. Teach (John 14:26). | f. Show us things to come (John 16:13). |
| c. Bring truths to our remembrance (John 14:26). | g. Glorify the Savior (John 16:14). |
| d. Testify of the Savior (John 15:26). | |

Elder Boyd K. Packer: "The Holy Ghost speaks with a voice that you **feel** more than you hear. It is described as a 'still small voice.' And while we speak of 'listening' to the whisperings of the Spirit, most often one describes a spiritual prompting by saying, 'I had a feeling.'...Revelation comes as words we feel more than hear" (Ensign, Nov 1994, 60).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks: "**Manifestations of the Holy Ghost** are given to lead sincere seekers to gospel truths that will persuade them to repentance and baptism. **The gift of the Holy Ghost** is more comprehensive. ... [It] includes the right to **constant companionship**, that we may 'always have his Spirit to be with [us]' (D&C 20:77). A newly baptized member told me **what she felt** when she received that gift. She knew and loved the Lord, and she had felt the manifestations of His Spirit. When she received the added light of the restored gospel, she was baptized and the elders placed their hands upon her head and gave her the gift of the Holy Ghost. **She recalled, 'I felt the influence of the Holy Ghost settle upon me with greater intensity than I had ever felt before. He was like an old friend who had guided me in the past but now had come to stay'"** (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1996, 80).

Parley P. Pratt: "**The gift of the Holy Ghost...quickens** all the intellectual faculties, increases, **enlarges, expands and purifies** all the natural passions and affections; and adapts them, by the gift of wisdom, to their lawful use. It **inspires, develops, cultivates** and matures all the fine-toned sympathies, joys, tastes, kindred feelings and affections of our nature. It **inspires** virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation and social feeling. It invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It **strengthens**, and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being" (*Key to the Science of Theology*, 100-101).

Bruce R. McConkie: While Jesus ministered among men, the gift [of the Holy Ghost] itself was temporarily withheld; one member of the Godhead dwelling with mortals sufficed. During that period, however, the Holy Ghost frequently spoke to righteous persons, as he did to Peter in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi. Just a few hours before Jesus went to Gethsemane and from there to the cross he told his disciples: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 16:7). This promise--that the constant companionship of the Holy Spirit would be available--was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, 280 -281).

Dallin H. Oaks: "In highlighting the gift of the Holy Ghost as a distinguishing characteristic of our faith, we need to understand the important differences between (1) the Light of Christ, (2) a manifestation of the Holy Ghost, and (3) the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The Light of Christ, which is sometimes called the Spirit of Christ or the Spirit of God, "**giveth light to every man that cometh into the world**" (D&C 84:46). This is the light "which is in all things, which giveth life to all things" (D&C 88:13). The prophet Mormon taught that "the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil" (Moro. 7:16). Elder Lorenzo Snow spoke of this light when he said, "Everybody has the Spirit of God" (*Journal of Discourses*, 14:304). **The Light of Christ enlightens and gives understanding to all men** (D&C 88:11).

In contrast, a **manifestation of the Holy Ghost** is more focused. This **manifestation** is given to acquaint sincere seekers with the truth about the Lord and his gospel. For example, the prophet Moroni promises that when we study the Book of Mormon and seek to know whether it is true, sincerely and with real intent, God will "manifest" the truth of it unto us, "by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moro. 10:4). Moroni also records this promise from the Risen Lord: "He that believeth these things which I have spoken, him will I visit with the **manifestations of my Spirit**, and he shall know and bear record. For because of my Spirit he shall know that these things are true" (Ether 4:11).

These **manifestations are available to everyone**. The Book of Mormon declares that the Savior "**manifesteth** himself unto all those who believe in him, by the power of the Holy Ghost; yea, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people" (2 Ne. 26:13).

To repeat, **the Light of Christ is given to all men and women** that they may know good from evil; **manifestations of the Holy Ghost are given to lead sincere seekers to gospel truths** that will persuade them to repentance and baptism.

The gift of the Holy Ghost is more comprehensive. The Prophet Joseph Smith explained: "There is a difference between the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, but he **could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized**. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him" (*TPJS*, 199). The gift of the Holy Ghost includes **the right to constant companionship**, that we may "always have his Spirit to be with [us]" (D&C 20:77). (*CR* October 1996).

APPLICATION: How can we be worthy of the Holy Ghost's companionship and recognize his influence in our lives?

2. Jesus foretells his death and resurrection.

John 16:1: "These things I have spoken unto you that ye should not be offended."

John 16:4: "But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you."

Notice the warnings in John 16:

v. 2: They shall put you out of the synagogue v.20: Ye shall be sorrowful v. 32: Ye shall be scattered
v. 2: Who killeth you thinks he does God a service v.20: Ye shall weep and lament v. 33: Ye shall have tribulation

But Savior counteracts these troubles with promises to his disciples in John 16:

v. 7: I will send [the Holy Spirit] unto you v. 23: Whatsoever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it you
v. 20: Your sorrow shall be turned into joy v. 27: The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me
v. 22: I will see you again v. 33: Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world

Marvin J. Ashton: "Being of good cheer makes it possible for us to turn all of our sunsets into sunrises. With good cheer, carrying our cross can be our ladder to happiness. **When Jesus comes into our lives, cheer lights the way.** How powerful and comforting is the Savior's declaration. 'In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world' (John 16:33). **He promises to stand by us. He invites us to bear record and witness of Him.** What a joy and honor it is for me to declare in good cheer and without fear that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God...I thank God for the Savior's life, His cheerful love, and His example" (*Be of Good Cheer*, 7).

Elder Delbert L. Stapley: "Revelation is God's plan of instructing his people and guiding his work and kingdom upon earth. **The Holy Ghost**, as a personage of spirit, **has the power and capacity of touching the spirit of man** (spirit to spirit) and influencing him for good and righteousness if he is tuned to its spiritual wave length. The Holy Ghost has the **power to quicken one's mind and increase one's understanding and comprehension of divine and temporal things.** Without it there can be no faith, hope, nor personal assurance of eternal life.

"**The Holy Ghost inspires, uplifts, and motivates a sincere person to love truth and pursue righteousness. This feeling and power does not come without effort.** One must ask of God after study and meditation if a thing is right. If true, one's bosom shall burn within him; but if it is not right, an individual will have no such feelings but a stupor of thought shall prevail his being. (D&C 9:7-9)" (*Conference Report*, October 1966).

David O. McKay: "Jesus said, ' . . . In the world ye shall have tribulation: but **be of good cheer**; I have overcome the world.' (John 16:33) On the same occasion, he said, '**Peace I leave with you**, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. . . .' (John 14:27) All through his life peace was on his lips and in his heart, and when he came forth from the tomb and appeared unto his disciples, his first greeting was, 'Peace be unto you. . . .' (John 20:21)

"**That man is not at peace who is untrue to the whisperings of Christ**—the promptings of his conscience. **Peace comes by obedience to law**, and it is that message which Jesus would have us establish among men—peace to the individual that he may be at peace with his God; perfect harmony existing between his Creator and himself, perfect harmony existing between himself and law, the righteous laws to which he is subject and from which he never can escape peace in the home, families living at peace with each other and with their neighbors" (*CR*, October 1965).

Bruce R. McConkie: "**The struggle which we face is whether we will overcome the world or whether we will be overcome by the world.** All men forsake the world when they come into the Church; they then overcome the world if they continue in righteousness and in diligence in keeping the commandments of God. **No one has overcome the world, the world of carnality and corruption, until he has given his heart to Christ**, until he uses all his talents, abilities, and strength in keeping the commandments of God, and in causing this great work to roll forth. He sent his Son into the world to be the great Exemplar, to be a Pattern, to mark the way whereby we, like him, might attain glory and eternal reward.

"It was Christ who said: '**I have overcome the world**,' (John 16:33) and it was also Christ who promised, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne' (Revelation 3:21)" (*Conference Report*, April 1955).

APPLICATION: How can Jesus' teachings help us have peace in Him? Help us be of good cheer in our tribulations?

3. Jesus offers the great intercessory prayer (High Priestly Prayer)

Definitions:

Intercede—V: (1) to plead or make a request in behalf of another/others (2) to intervene to produce agreement; mediate

Intercessory—A: A prayer in behalf of another or others

Intercessor—N: A person who intercedes

Vaughn J. Featherstone: "This great truth about **unity** was of such consequence that it was one of the major things for which Christ prayed in His intercessory prayer. We do not yet comprehend the power and the spiritual strength that will come to the Church when we are totally **united in truth and have become sanctified.** A power surge would come from this Church that would startle the world and reach into every nation, state, community, village, and home, as it did in the days of Enoch and as it will yet happen during the millennial reign." (*The Incomparable Christ*, 28).

Harold B. Lee: "Eternal life is God's life, or life with God. In other words, it seems to me, they are trying to tell us that **the worthiness to abide in his holy presence can be obtained only by knowing God and by knowing Jesus Christ whom he has sent**" (*Conference Report*, October 1956).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie: "To know God in that full sense which will enable us to gain eternal salvation means that we must know what he knows, enjoy what he enjoys, experience what he experiences. In New Testament language, we must 'be like Him.' But before we can become like Him, we must obey those laws that will enable us to acquire the character, perfections, and attributes that he possesses" (CR, Apr 1966, 79).

Henry B. Eyring: "[Jesus] made clear how the gospel of Jesus Christ can allow hearts to be made one. Those who would believe the truth He taught could accept the ordinances and the covenants offered by His authorized servants. Then, through obedience to those ordinances and covenants, their natures would be changed. The Savior's Atonement in that way makes it possible for us to be sanctified. We can then live in unity, as we must to have peace in this life and to dwell with the Father and His Son in eternity." ("That We May Be One," *Ensign*, May 1998, 66).

John 17:15-19: They [Christ's apostles] are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Sanctification: To "sanctify" means to make holy and pure. Jesus Christ lived a sinless, holy life and then took upon Himself the sins of the human family so that we could be sanctified if we follow Him. Our sanctification is "the process of becoming free from sin, pure, clean, and holy through the atonement of Jesus Christ" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Sanctification" scriptures.lds.org).

Sanctify: To be sanctified is to be cleansed from all sin; it is to stand pure and spotless before the Lord; it is to overcome the world and be a fit candidate for a celestial inheritance. The "sanctified" are "them of the celestial world." (D&C 88:2). The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier. His baptism of fire burns dross and evil out of repentant souls as though by fire. Sanctification comes only to the obedient; it is the very word of God, his everlasting gospel--which sanctifies the souls of men. As the Father sent Jesus to proclaim his gospel, so Jesus sent the Twelve to proclaim the same word of truth; and as Jesus sanctified himself by obedience to the words of the Father, so the Twelve may sanctify themselves through the truth Jesus has given them" (*The Mortal Messiah*, Vol. 4:114).

Vaughn J. Featherstone: "Sanctification means to be made pure and spotless and holy. Truth can sanctify us if we abide in it. Truth purges falsehoods, misconceptions, errors, lies, evil, lusting, truth emanates from God. Truth is eternal and absolute, and it sanctifies those who receive it." (*The Incomparable Christ: Our Master and Model*, 28.)

Marion G. Romney: "The way to unity is for us to learn the will of the Lord and then to do it. Until this basic principle is understood and observed, there will be no unity and peace on the earth. The power of the Church for good in the world depends upon the extent to which we, the members thereof, observe this principle. The major reason for the world's troubles today is that men are not seeking to know the will of the Lord and then to do it. Rather do they seek to solve their problems in their own wisdom and in their own way" ("Unity," *Ensign*, May 1983, 17-18).

Another Intercessory Prayer of Christ's in the Book of Mormon

3 Nephi 19:19-22: And it came to pass that Jesus departed out of the midst of them, and went a little way off from them and bowed himself to the earth, and he said: **Father, I thank thee** that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen; and it is because of their belief in me that I have chosen them out of the world. **Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words. Father, thou hast given them the Holy Ghost** because they believe in me; and thou seest that they believe in me because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them. And now **Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words**, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one.

APPLICATION: How can we increase our unity with Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, Church members, our families?

Elder John H. Groberg: "When filled with God's love, we can do and see and understand things that we could not otherwise do or see or understand. Filled with His love, we can endure pain, quell fear, forgive freely, avoid contention, renew strength, and bless and help others in ways surprising even to us.

"Jesus Christ was filled with unfathomable love as He endured incomprehensible pain, cruelty, and injustice for us. Through His love for us, He rose above otherwise insurmountable barriers. **His love knows no barriers. He invites us to follow Him and partake of His unlimited love so we too may rise above the pain and cruelty and injustice of this world and help and forgive and bless**" ("The Power of God's Love," *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 11).

Neal A. Maxwell: "The submission of one's will is placing on God's altar the only uniquely personal thing one has to place there. The many other things we 'give' are actually the things He has already given or loaned to us. However, when we finally submit ourselves by letting our individual wills be swallowed up in God's will, we will really be giving something to Him! It is the only possession which is truly ours to give. Consecration thus constitutes the only unconditional surrender which is also a total victory." (*If Thou Endure It Well*, 54.)