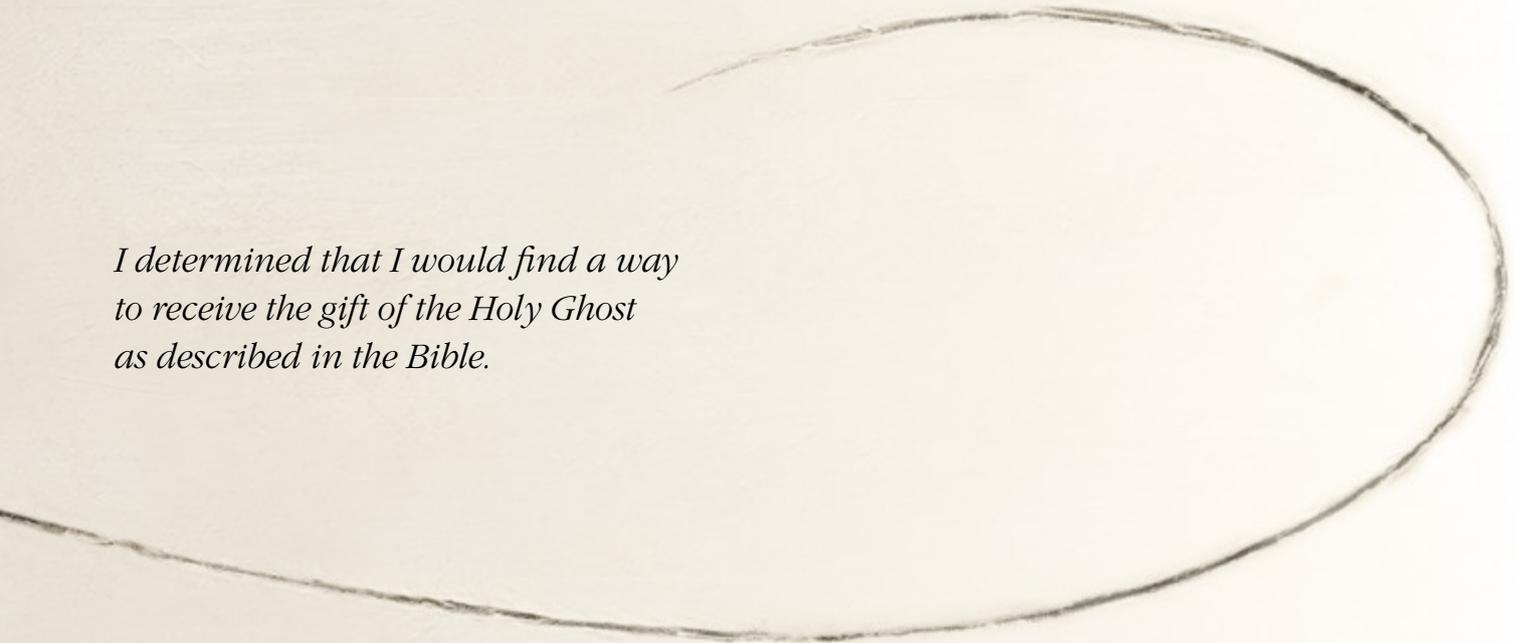


FILLED WITH THE HOLY
GHOST





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to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost
as described in the Bible.*

By Carol M. Truscott

I grew up in upstate New York, USA, as a member of another faith. I was baptized as an infant and confirmed at age 12. I remember eagerly preparing for my confirmation. I anticipated a memorable occasion that would bring an energizing closeness to the Lord. Yet at the end of my confirmation I felt a pit in my stomach, almost as though something had been vacuumed out of me. Devastated by the emptiness, I determined that I would find a way to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost as described in the Bible.

A Long-Term Search

Over two decades later, I was married and living in Plano, Texas. When our fifth son was born, the nurse asked if I was Mormon. I was horrified. I thought Mormons were a cult. I asked her why she would think such a thing, and she told me it was because Mormons placed high value on family and many had large families. I felt insulted by her question but thought to myself that if Mormons valued solid family relationships, they had at least one thing right.

Life went on. I continued in the church of my youth, but I felt a drive to find which religions taught about the gift of the Holy Ghost. This opportunity came as various local congregations hired me to play the organ. When I did, I would become involved with their worship services, hoping I would recognize truth if I encountered it.

I followed this pattern for some time but couldn't find what I was seeking. I tried traditional and nontraditional worship groups. I remember wanting to give up, but I prayed to Heavenly Father, asking Him that if His Church was on the earth, would He please help me find it?

A Knock at the Door

Days later, I heard a knock at the door and found two Latter-day Saint missionaries standing on our doorstep. I opened the door partway and told them I wasn't interested. They had a response for that. I said something else so that they would leave. They had a response for that too. Then I had a thought: "This could be what you've been praying for." I immediately countered that thought with another: "Nah."

But as they continued to tell me about the Church, I couldn't help feeling interested. They asked if they could come in, and I agreed. They gave me the first discussion and asked me to study what they were teaching me. They also asked whether I would be baptized if I discovered their church was true.

"Absolutely not."

"Maybe you misunderstood the question," they said. "If you *knew* it was true, would you be baptized?"

I knew the Mormons couldn't have the truth, but it seemed that the missionaries wouldn't leave until I agreed



to at least consider their message. So I agreed and committed to read a copy of the Book of Mormon. I was confident that I would see inconsistencies between it and the Bible and that if the Book of Mormon had satanic influences, I would be able to discern them immediately. I could then tell the missionaries that I had read it and that I simply wasn't interested.

A New but Familiar Book

I started reading out of sheer curiosity, and the book grabbed my attention because the introductory matter mentioned events taking place in New York State, near my birthplace. It fascinated me to find out that so much had happened in the area I called home—and I'd never heard about any of it!

The Book of Mormon's history grabbed my attention, but its teachings kept it. So much of what I read rang true with things I'd always felt, or it answered my questions. My testimony of the gospel grew as I prayed, and the Spirit witnessed to me the truth of the book and the Church.

For instance, many churches taught that Adam, Eve, and others in the Bible weren't real people; they were merely the subjects of myths that taught valuable principles. But I believed that Adam and Eve *were* real people who had actually lived on the earth. It was comforting that the Book of Mormon referred to them, to the Tower of Babel, and to other people and places in the Bible.

I also remember thinking about the Joseph Smith story. I had long thought it odd that God would give prophets to people in one age but not another, and I longed to follow a

prophet who taught about relevant things. To discover that the Lord had raised up such a prophet—and that we continued to have prophets on the earth—was wonderful!

I also identified with Book of Mormon teachings on the actuality of a premortal existence. Many religions taught that our existence started at conception. Yet as a mother, I had observed the distinct personalities of my children at an early age—surely those things had developed long before! It excited me to have so many pieces of the puzzle come together.

More than anything, though, the Book of Mormon taught me to have faith in Jesus Christ and His teachings. Whatever else I didn't know, I did know that I wanted to be a follower of Jesus Christ, and this book clearly taught about Him. It had to be true. This was what I had been seeking my entire life. I read the Book of Mormon voraciously. I couldn't get enough.

Friendship with Our Family

When the missionaries returned, I apologized for not yet having finished the book—I was only halfway through Ether, I explained. But they were ecstatic.

By the time they returned four days later, I had finished the Book of Mormon. I wanted to keep going, so they returned with a copy of the Doctrine and Covenants. When I finished that a week later, they gave me a copy of *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*. I finished that in two weeks—I was devouring everything they gave me. They taught me the discussions and challenged me to get baptized.

When the elders laid their hands on my head to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost, I felt great joy.



When I told my husband about my desire to join the Church, he told me, “I don’t know what you’re looking for, but it can’t be found with the Mormons.” So I postponed my baptismal date. Meanwhile, my husband encouraged my involvement with another church, but I quickly became convinced that it was not what I needed. During a discussion with several members of my congregation, I suggested that we pray about a decision facing the group. They were taken aback. “Why would we ever do that?” one person said. That was the end of my time with that church.

Meanwhile, the missionaries continued to reach out to our family. They brought us a cake for Valentine’s Day. My cakes were notoriously bad, and theirs was *really* good. My husband suggested that I respond to their kindness by returning their pan full of my “famous” lasagna. This exchange happened a few more times, and when my husband saw their sincere efforts to befriend our family, his heart was touched. He even agreed to take our entire family to church.

The Sunday we first attended was the first Sunday of the consolidated meeting schedule. Because no one was used to the three-hour block, things were a bit hectic. The missionaries apologized profusely, but it ended up being a great thing. My husband had heard that Mormons were slick and smooth, and on that particular Sunday, anyway, that was not the case. It eased my husband’s suspicions. What we *did* find were kind, down-to-earth people in a family-friendly environment.

A Series of Surprises

The missionaries continued to teach me, usually during the day on Wednesdays. Mysteriously, each Wednesday one of our four oldest sons, who at that point ranged in age from 5 to 12, would get “sick” and stay home from school. I didn’t notice this pattern for weeks, but ultimately I realized that they were taking turns sitting in on the lessons so they could share with each other what the missionaries were teaching. The gospel excited them too.

My husband wasn’t yet persuaded, but he agreed to take the discussions. One day he returned from work early and said, “The missionaries are coming over tonight, and I haven’t yet read the materials they left. I came home early to catch up for our appointment.”

That surprised me, but what shocked me later that night was his response to the missionaries when they asked if he would be baptized: he said yes. He’d gone with me to the various churches I’d attended over the years but had never committed to join any of them. It was monumental for him to decide the Church was true.

Those of our family who were old enough were baptized May 31, 1980. Being confirmed and receiving the Holy Ghost was a sacred experience. When the elders laid their hands on my head to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost, I felt great joy.

The gospel really does offer everything I sought. Many years and three generations later, the joy continues. ■

The author lived in Massachusetts, USA, but passed away before this issue was completed.