

ADDING GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT TO YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST

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I've always made an impressive grilled cheese sandwich. Between that delectable dish and a handful of other recipes, I kept myself alive and functioning throughout my mission and well into adulthood. But then I got married and had kids, all of whom have different tastes. I needed to expand my menu!

However, on nights when it was my turn to cook, attempting new meals proved to be a challenge. For

starters, my evening time was usually limited. Even though I wanted to cook a variety of meals, I kept hitting snags. I couldn't find ingredients fast enough, or we'd be missing some. More often than not, I'd scrap my planned dinner and instead go for quick and easy.

And yet I kept wanting to improve in this area. So I decided to do something I had never done. I prayed for a spiritual gift by name.

One Gift, Many Uses

Specifically, I prayed for the gift of organization. Yes, organization! We already had a spice cupboard. We also had cooking utensils drawers. Yet even with those in place, I seemed to spend more time looking for supplies than cooking.

As I consistently prayed for this gift, I began receiving specific ideas. A wall-mounted spice rack would organize spices and keep them handy. A magnetic kitchen bar (also wall-mounted) could store knives and other metal cooking utensils. These and other ideas, once put in motion, made a big difference in my cooking efforts. Need some thyme? Garlic salt? Garlic *powder*? I'm your guy!

But then a funny thing happened. Little ideas continued popping into my mind for small ways to better organize other areas of my life. For example, my three-level home-made laundry tower won't carry my family to the promised land, but even Nephi would've appreciated the way in which I built it—by following promptings that came to me one piece at a time.

The spiritual gift of organization has improved my life and the lives of my family more than I would've ever guessed.

And it all came because I asked for it.

Many Gifts, Few Askers

The Apostle Paul taught the Corinthians about some of the many different spiritual gifts available, such as faith or healing (see 1 Corinthians 12:5–11). And then he instructed them to “covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31).

It might be hard to wrap your brain around the idea that coveting can be a *good* thing, but in this case it can be.

We're instructed to look at some of the spiritual gifts we see in others and then ask God to bless us with that same gift. Our hope in doing so should be to better serve others and build God's kingdom (see D&C 46:26–29).

There are so many gifts—many more than you'll find in the scriptures. Patience is a spiritual gift. So is optimism. And courage. And being a peacemaker. Elder Larry R. Lawrence of the Seventy taught: “I sometimes visualize a large storehouse up in heaven, completely filled with spiritual gifts, available to all Saints who have the faith to ask for them. Unfortunately, not too many are asking, so the storehouse is always overstocked.”¹

Elder Lawrence described a friend who decided to pray for the gift of charity. He related her experience: “She wrote: ‘I have been praying specifically for an increase of charity for several months. . . . Gradually my perception of others has changed. . . . I have begun to not just love the people around me but to enjoy them. Before, I may have kept my distance, but now I am genuinely interested in everyone.’”²

Your Gifts, Ready and Waiting

Spiritual gifts are so much more valuable than physical ones! They are, in fact, the *best* gifts. We're commanded in scripture, “Seek ye earnestly the best gifts” (D&C 46:8).

Whatever else you hope to open Christmas morning, try and imagine a few of the “best gifts” waiting for you as well. They're already “wrapped” and ready to bless you and those around you.

So go ahead and ask. ■

NOTES

1. Larry R. Lawrence, “Why Not Ask?” (Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional, June 13, 2017), byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches.
2. Larry R. Lawrence, “Why Not Ask?”