

Listen to the Spirit

I have had a couple experiences in life that have been good lessons for me about the importance of listening to the Spirit. One happened while I was a student at BYU and the other, a few years later while serving as a bishop in Racine, Wisconsin.

At BYU, my home teaching companion, Drew Row, and I had as one of our assignments a young lady that was having some serious abdominal pains. After several tests and visits to doctors and specialists, they discovered large gall stones. The extent of the problem was serious enough that a surgery was scheduled to have her gall bladder removed. She was concerned about the operation and requested that myself and Drew come to administer to her.

Drew anointed her and I gave the blessing. I can remember the impression coming to me that she was not going to need to an operation, that all was going to be well with her. I thought to myself, "this can't be, it is just my own thinking." Failing to heed the prompting of the Spirit, I blessed her that the operation would be a success and that she would recuperate quickly. On our way back to our apartment I told Drew my feelings of "blowing it" and how I felt impressed that she would not need an operation.

A few days later I saw Drew on campus. He related to me that he had called our home teaching person to see how she was doing. She was in great shape...because, she never had the operation. She went to the hospital for the operation and had some last minute testing. The x-rays showed absolutely no signs of any gall stones.

On another occasion I was the bishop in Racine, Wisconsin and was asked by a member of my ward to give her a blessing. She was a very large person and was about to have surgery for weight reduction. I can remember laying my hands on her head and receiving the distinct impression that she should not have this surgery. In the blessing I counselled her to cancel her plans and to consider other measures to deal with her weight problem.

When I finished the blessing, she was very emotional. She had been planning this operation for quite sometime. Crying, she thanked me and then left. She went through with the operation and not only were there complications during the surgery that jeopardized her life, but, the post-surgery recovery for her was one of the toughest ordeals of her life. She had a very difficult time healing from the incisions they made during surgery and she experienced other medical problems that were possibly linked to her operation. She later told me that she was so sorry she ever had the operation.

I was sorry she did too, but, also very happy I listened to the spirit and had the courage to say the right thing. The more we listen and obey, the more comfortable we get with the Spirit.