

MY OLD AM RADIO: AN ANALOGY FOR THE HOLY GHOST

I grew up in Price, Utah. It is about 120 miles from Salt Lake City. Price is a coal mining town. People came from all over the world to Price because of the coal mines. This influx of Greek, Italian, Eastern European, Mexican, Japanese and other ethnic groups made Price one of Utah's most culturally complex and diverse communities. As I was growing up, Price was the only town in Utah that was not predominantly Mormon. We felt this made Price very unique.

Price is high in the mountains, over a mile high, and somewhat isolated.

During the 1960's, as I was growing up, Price was only about 6,000 people. Even though Price was small, it was the biggest town for miles around. Provo was the closest town of any size and it was about 70 miles away. The road from Price to Provo was a narrow, winding, mountain canyon road. The summit was often closed in the winter due to snow and winds. It was a treacherous drive even in the best of weather. That mountain road is no longer used but even the newer one is still considered one of the most dangerous roads in the country.

This all made Price, especially at times, a pretty isolated place.

We had one radio station in Price. The station's call letters were KOAL (naturally since it was a coal mining town). It was the only station in that part of the state.

Because it was the only radio station, KOAL would try and please its diverse listening audience with a wide mix of programs and music. Paul Harvey came on every day at noon. Western music and rock 'n roll music would play co-mingled, in no special order. And then a news broadcast would be sprinkled here and there. It had a little bit of everything.

Every teenager in the 60's had a radio, a small transistor one, with very limited capabilities. And if you were lucky, you had a bigger better radio you could listen to at home. I had one. It was an AM radio. The large dial on the radio was the tuning dial. The dial was turned very slowly and carefully to tune to the radio station. You had to get it just right or you would get a lot of static. But once you hit that exact spot it came in loud and clear.

Normally an AM signal, which is an amplitude signal, can travel perhaps up to 200 miles if there is no interference or noise. But just about everything interferes with an AM signal; power lines, auto ignition, fluorescent lights, motors, electronic equipment, even a thunderstorm. If you are old enough to remember listening to AM radio, you remember how easily a station would become full of static.

This was the era when rock and roll was king. And as unbelievable as it might seem, due to the strangest fluke of science and nature, all the teenagers of Price could tune in every night to rock and roll. And it was ALL Rock and Roll, no western music, no Paul Harvey, no news, just the latest Rock and Roll hits. It was not by listening to our one and only radio station, KOAL in Price Utah. We were listening to a radio station being broadcast from, of all places, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma! That radio station was KOMA, 1520 on your radio

dial. We could tune in every night no matter the season and no matter the weather. However, the signal only reached us in the evening and at night.

Oklahoma City was over a 1000 miles away and at an elevation thousands of feet lower than Price, Utah. Somehow the radio signals from KOMA bounced and skipped around and ricocheted through the Rocky Mountains in precisely a way which allowed a radio signal from Oklahoma City to come in loud and clear in Price. As teenagers in Price, we didn't question this miraculous fluke of radio signals and nature.

For the teenagers of Price, it was our gift, we felt as if we had our own personal radio station.

We would send our high school announcements to KOMA. Those announcements were about our high school's upcoming events; i.e. homecoming, or prom etc. We were absolutely thrilled when we heard our high school's name and our announcements! It never occurred to us most people would have to pay for their advertising time on the airways. The executives at KOMA must have been so astounded to have a listening audience tucked far away in the Utah mountains that they put the announcements on the air at no charge. Maybe they considered us a public service announcement? But, it was instant communication with all the teenagers in Price, Utah.

Now if you think about it, this is kind of how the Holy Ghost works. It is a gift given to us at confirmation, we receive the "gift" of the Holy Ghost. This gift acts much like that signal from Oklahoma, it is a signal that we can tune into. It is our gift given to us by a loving Heavenly Father. And IF we follow this signal it is our beacon that will lead us back to him.

We just have to make sure we tune into exactly the right spot. We have to make sure our internal dials are set so that we can listen to the whisperings of the Holy Ghost loud and clear.

As a teenager, I could only listen to KOMA at night. However, with the Holy Ghost we can have a constant "signal" (the constant companionship) of the Holy Ghost. We can have the promptings of the Holy Ghost any time night or day. This is our little miracle, given to us when we are confirmed.

Just as there are many things that create static while listening to an AM radio, if we are not careful we can create static in our lives which makes it difficult to listen to the Holy Ghost. It is up to us to make sure we make the right choices to stay close to the spirit so that we will be able to tune in and listen to those messages from the Holy Ghost free and clear of all static.

It is seemingly impossible for a radio signal to reach Price, Utah from Oklahoma City. It also might seem impossible for the Holy Ghost to reach us at all times. But the Holy Ghost has the ability to bounce and skip around all the worldly interferences. It can come to us in seemingly impossible circumstances. It can be there for us at all times. The Holy Ghost will help us, comfort us, guide us and testify to us.

As high schoolers, we felt we received personal announcements from KOMA regarding our High School events, even though the radio station was broadcasting to thousands of listeners. The Holy Ghost can give us personal “announcements”. The Holy Ghost will help us personally.

Everyone’s life is full of challenges. We will face all kinds of storms in life. The road of life is not an easy road to travel in fact it may be very treacherous like the narrow, winding canyon road from Price to Provo. We need the guidance of the Holy Ghost to be with us on the road of life.

Sometimes we may feel isolated and alone, but with the Holy Ghost as our constant companion we will not be alone.

The Holy Ghost is there for us if will tune our dials to listen to its message. If we so choose, it will be our personal constant companion that will guide us back to our Heavenly Father. We just need to tune in.