



*The peace I felt in the font
gave me the courage to continue
making good decisions.*

I Chose BAPTISM

By Alexis Ence

Stepping gingerly into the baptismal font, I felt a surge of peace flood my mind and heart. My bishop smiled and took my hand. At the threshold of baptism, I stood comfortably and intently awaiting my purpose.

My parents had raised me as a strict member of a different church. I attended every Sunday and sometimes went twice in one day all on my own. I had taken careful discretion in choosing friends so that I would be surrounded by good examples. During high school I observed the law of chastity and avoided alcohol, drugs, and anything else that my parents considered immoral.

Even the boys I dated had to uphold the same standards and values that I had. That is how I became friends with Jeremy, who introduced me to the Church and gave me a Book of Mormon. I took it home, and my parents quickly replaced it with several “anti-Mormon” books. I was deeply intrigued and read them all. I kept waiting for the moment to prove that my church was right. Eventually Jeremy left for a mission, and I lost interest, deciding that my parents were right even though I had not proved it to myself.

Jeremy’s family forwarded his regular e-mails, in which he told of the people he was helping. On one occasion, he sent me a tape. I sat on the floor with my college roommate and listened. He talked about his faith and bore testimony of his beliefs. Inwardly, I had been searching for such conviction. My roommate was in tears at the sound of something so powerful. She asked me if I had read the Book of Mormon, and her question ate at my conscience. Could I actually know a church without having studied its scripture? I decided to read the Book of Mormon.

Two weeks later missionaries began to teach me. I prayed that God would help me make the right decision

so that my conscience would be at ease. By the end of the lessons, my eyes had been opened to something I knew to be right.

My mother asked me to meet with a leader in our church. I knew him to be a very bright scholar and was somewhat intimidated. But the man I thought would confound me and have all the answers had none. All he could tell me was that many believed these matters, so who was I to question? He told me how disappointed my parents would be, and my heart ached. I had never outright disobeyed my parents. But how could I continue to be a part of something I knew was wrong? I had to stand up.

In the font, I knew the rest of my life would be different. It would be a lot harder, but I realized that part of growing up is making choices that are right. As I leaned back into the water, I felt peace! I could hardly believe the joy. I had decided what I believed and took courage in my own conviction.

My parents took back my credit card, my cell phone, and my car. They ignored me for a few months and would not let me speak to my brothers. My sister also found it difficult to accept me for a while. I moved to Utah for college, where I met a wonderful man and fell in love. My parents would not meet my husband when we were married, but now those tensions are slowly resolving, and I am in hopeful pursuit of my eternal family.

Growing up, trusting my decisions, and receiving consequences was not easy. But such joy has entered my life because I made the right decision. That moment of peace at my baptism has guided my life. Every big decision I make must have that peace, or I cannot live with it. I believe that if we choose what is right, we can get through anything. **NE**