

Confirmation (See Holy Ghost; Laying On of Hands)

Conscience

All people are born with the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong. This ability, called conscience, is a manifestation of the Light of Christ (see Moroni 7:15–19).

Your conscience is a defense to help you stay away from situations that are spiritually harmful. When you obey the commandments and make righteous decisions, you experience peace of conscience.

When you sin, you feel remorse or guilt, just as you feel physical pain when you are wounded. This is the natural response of your conscience to sin, and it can lead you to repent.

Repentance and forgiveness renew your peace of conscience. On the other hand, if you ignore your conscience and do not repent, your conscience will be impaired as if it has been “seared with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:2).

Learn to follow your conscience. This is an important part of exercising your agency. The more you follow your conscience, the stronger it will become. A sensitive conscience is a sign of a healthy spirit.

Additional references: Mosiah 4:1–3; D&C 84:45–47

See also Agency; Light of Christ; Obedience; Temptation

Contributions (See Fasting and Fast Offerings; Tithing)

Conversion

“To be carnally minded is death,” declared the Apostle Paul, “but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8:6; see also 2 Nephi 9:39). In our fallen state, we often struggle with temptation, and we sometimes give in to “the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein” (2 Nephi 2:29; see also “Fall,” pages 56–59 in this book). To be able to receive the

blessing of eternal life, we need to be “spiritually minded” and conquer our unrighteous desires. We need to change. More accurately, we need to *be changed*, or converted, through the power of the Savior’s Atonement and through the power of the Holy Ghost. This process is called conversion.

Conversion includes a change in behavior, but it goes beyond behavior; it is a change in our very nature. It is such a significant change that the Lord and His prophets refer to it as a rebirth, a change of heart, and a baptism of fire. The Lord said:

“Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters;

“And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God” (Mosiah 27:25–26).

The Process of Conversion

Conversion is a process, not an event. You become converted as a result of your righteous efforts to follow the Savior. These efforts include exercising faith in Jesus Christ, repenting of sin, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end in faith.

Although conversion is miraculous and life changing, it is a quiet miracle. Angelic visitations and other spectacular occurrences do not bring conversion. Even Alma, who saw an angel, became converted only after he “fasted and prayed many days” for a witness of the truth (Alma 5:46). And Paul, who saw the resurrected Savior, taught that “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 12:3).

Because conversion is a quiet, constant process, you may be converted now and not realize it. You could be like the Lamanites who, “because of their faith in [Christ] at the time

of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not" (3 Nephi 9:20). Your continuing efforts to exercise faith and follow the Savior will lead to greater conversion.

Characteristics of People Who Are Converted

The Book of Mormon provides descriptions of people who are converted to the Lord:

They desire to do good. King Benjamin's people declared, "The Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, . . . has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2). Alma spoke of people who "could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence" (Alma 13:12).

They do not rebel against the Lord. Mormon told of a group of Lamanites who had been wicked and bloodthirsty but who were "converted unto the Lord" (Alma 23:6). These people changed their name to the Anti-Nephi-Lehies and "became a righteous people; they did lay down the weapons of their rebellion, that they did not fight against God any more, neither against any of their brethren" (Alma 23:7).

They share the gospel. Enos, Alma the Elder, Alma the Younger, the sons of Mosiah, Amulek, and Zeezrom dedicated themselves to preaching the gospel after they became converted to the Lord (see Enos 1:26; Mosiah 18:1; Mosiah 27:32–37; Alma 10:1–12; 15:12).

They are filled with love. After the resurrected Savior visited the people in the Americas, "the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another. . . .

"And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.

“And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.

“There were no robbers, nor murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor any manner of -ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God” (4 Nephi 1:2, 15–17).

Striving for Greater Conversion

You have primary responsibility for your own conversion. No one can be converted for you, and no one can force you to be converted. However, others can help you in the process of conversion. Learn from the righteous examples of family members, Church leaders and teachers, and men and women in the scriptures.

Your capacity to experience a mighty change of heart will increase as you strive to follow the Savior’s perfect example. Study the scriptures, pray in faith, keep the commandments, and seek the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. As you continue in the conversion process, you will receive “exceedingly great joy,” as King Benjamin’s people did when the Spirit “wrought a mighty change in [their] hearts” (see Mosiah 5:2, 4). You will be able to follow King Benjamin’s counsel to “be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works, that Christ, the Lord God Omnipotent, may seal you his, that you may be brought to heaven, that ye may have everlasting salvation and eternal life” (Mosiah 5:15).

Additional references: Matthew 18:3; Luke 22:32; Alma 5:7–14

See also Atonement of Jesus Christ; Baptism; Holy Ghost; Salvation

Council in Heaven (*See* Plan of Salvation)