

Eternal Life

The Lord declared, “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). Immortality is to live forever as a resurrected being. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, everyone will receive this gift. Eternal life, or exaltation, is to inherit a place in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom, where we will live in God’s presence and continue as families (see D&C 131:1–4). Like immortality, this gift is made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. However, it requires our “obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel” (Articles of Faith 1:3).

Staying on the Path to Life Eternal

When you were baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, you entered the path that leads to eternal life. The prophet Nephi taught:

“The gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost.

“And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son; and ye have received the Holy Ghost, which witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye entered in by the way ye should receive” (2 Nephi 31:17–18).

Nephi emphasized that after we have entered this “strait and narrow path,” we must endure to the end in faith:

“After ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far save it were by the word of Christ with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save.

“Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life” (2 Nephi 31:19–20).

Now that you have been baptized and confirmed, much of your progress toward eternal life depends on your receiving other ordinances of salvation: for men, ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood; for men and women, the temple endowment and marriage sealing. When you receive these ordinances and keep the covenants that accompany them, you prepare yourself to inherit the highest degree of celestial glory.

Within Your Reach

As you ponder your progress on the “strait and narrow path,” be assured that eternal life is within your reach. The Lord wants you to return to Him, and He will never require anything of you that you cannot fulfill. All His commandments are calculated to promote your happiness. When you exercise faith and serve Him with all your might, He gives you strength and provides a way for you to do whatever He commands you (see 1 Nephi 3:7). Remember that as you give your greatest effort and repent of your sins, the Atonement of Jesus Christ will compensate for your weakness and for the inequities, injuries, and pains you experience in this life: “We know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23).

Additional references: John 3:16; 17:3; 2 Nephi 9:39; Moroni 7:41; D&C 14:7; 50:5

See also Atonement of Jesus Christ; Grace; Kingdoms of Glory

Exaltation (*See* Eternal Life)