



**H**ave you ever gone through your checklist of *do nots*?

- Don't drink alcohol.
- Don't lie.
- Don't swear.
- Don't listen to bad music.

Many people in the world seem to believe that as long as they *don't* do the "bad things," then they will receive automatic admission into heaven. When you review the Ten Commandments, this may seem like a reasonable idea: "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Most of these commandments tell you what you should *not* do.

Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord has given additional guidance:

"Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do

# DON'T FORGET TO DO

LIVING THE GOSPEL IS ABOUT MORE THAN WHAT YOU CAN'T DO. IT'S ALSO ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO.

By Sarah Petersen





STRENGTHEN YOUR Testimony

many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

“For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves.”<sup>2</sup>

Although it’s important to know and follow what *not* to do, the Lord explains in those verses that we also show how committed we are to following His example by the good things we *choose to do* (for instance, serving others, showing kindness, and sharing the gospel). When we use our agency to do good, we not only help others but also deepen our own conversion.

## THE PROCESS OF REAL CONVERSION

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has explained, “Our spiritual journey is the process of a lifetime. We do not know everything in the beginning or even along the way. Our conversion comes step-by-step, line upon line. . . . But we are not alone.”<sup>3</sup>

The word “converted” is often used when someone has decided to become a member of the Church, but real conversion also means much more. Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has linked true conversion to when “you make the gospel of Jesus Christ not just an influence in your life but the controlling influence and, indeed, the very core of what you are.”<sup>4</sup> This is not just a change of behavior—it is a change of your very nature.<sup>5</sup> Brigham Young counseled, “Wherever you see an opportunity to do good, do it, for that is the way to increase and grow in the knowledge of the truth.”<sup>6</sup>

And you do good because of your love for Heavenly Father and the Savior. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has said God’s love “directs and encourages us to become more pure and holy. It inspires us to walk in righteousness—not out of fear or obligation but out of an earnest desire to become even more like Him because we love Him.”<sup>7</sup>

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PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG



## THE DEGREE OF YOUR CONVERSION

So, do you show your true conversion by the way you live? If you’re not sure, consider these situations:

- You don’t gossip, but do you compliment others?
- Do you find ways to make someone’s day brighter?
- As you sit in sacrament meeting, do you find yourself thinking about your homework, or are you “anxiously engaged” in strengthening your testimony?

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“PLEAD WITH GOD IN THE NAME OF CHRIST TO WRITE THE GOSPEL IN YOUR MIND THAT YOU MAY HAVE UNDERSTANDING AND IN YOUR HEART THAT YOU MAY LOVE TO DO HIS WILL.”

ELDER D. TODD CHRISTOFFERSON



• Most important, do you strive to make your actions reflect those of the Savior?

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, “Your happiness now and forever is conditioned on your degree of conversion and the transformation that it brings to your life.”<sup>8</sup>

Gospel living is not just about everything we don’t do. It’s even more focused on the good things we choose to do because we love God and His children and we want to be like Him. **NE**

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**NOTES**

1. Exodus 20:13–15.
2. D&C 58:27–28.
3. “You Know Enough,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 13–14.
4. “When Thou Art Converted,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 11.
5. See *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 41.
6. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1954), 335.
7. “The Love of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 23.
8. “Full Conversion Brings Happiness,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 25.

## 5 STEPS OF CONVERSION



“Do you want conversion for yourself? I can tell you how that can happen, but it must be something you want. The gospel cannot be written in your heart unless your heart is open. But if your heart is open and willing, like the heart of a child (see Matthew 18:3–4), let me tell you what you can do to be converted.

“1. **Lay aside any feeling of pride** that is so common in the world today. By this I mean the attitude that rejects the authority of God to rule in our lives. Willingly submitting to God’s authority is the first step in conversion.

“2. **Know the gospel and grow to understand it more fully.** That means you will study it. When I say ‘study,’ I mean something more than reading. For conversion, you should care more about the amount of time you spend in the scriptures than about the amount you read in that time.

“3. **Pray about everything in your life.** Your Heavenly Father wants you to pray about your hopes and fears, your friends and family, your school and work, and the needs of those around you. Most of all, you should pray to be filled with the love of Christ (see Moroni 7:48).

“4. **Serve others.** Jesus said that He came to serve, not to be served (see Mark 10:45). So it must be with you. You must look outward and care about others.

“5. **Offer the Lord the gift of your broken, or repentant, heart and your contrite, or obedient, spirit.** In reality, it is the gift of yourself—what you are and what you are becoming.

“Plead with God in the name of Christ to write the gospel in your mind that you may have understanding and in your heart that you may love to do His will.”

**Adapted from Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “When Thou Art Converted,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 11–13.**