

Mosiah 5:2

1

Heart

The word *heart* is used in scripture as the core of life and strength; hence it includes mind, spirit, and soul, and one's entire emotional nature and understanding. One of the dictionary definitions states: "Heart is the center of the total personality with reference to intuition, feeling, or emotion: the center of emotion, in contrast to the head as the center of the intellect."

In many statements it is regarded as the central source of one's mental faculties or capacities. We read in Proverbs: "For as he [man] thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7.)

It is also the seat of one's affections, moral life, and character. In addition, heart is defined as having spirit, courage, and enthusiasm. Thus, when we love the Lord with all our heart and soul, we love him in spirit, with courage, enthusiasm, and profound earnestness of purpose.

Delbert L. Stapley in *CR*, Oct. 1968, pp. 27-28

Mosiah 5:2-7

2

Mighty Change

What a glorious condition was this! A Condition in which the Lord God Omnipotent, by the power of His Spirit, had wrought a mighty change in the hearts of that people, that they no longer had any desire to do evil, but were filled only with a fervent desire to do that which was good. This was indeed a great change, and yet it is precisely that change that comes today to every son and daughter of God who repents of his or her sins, who humble themselves before the Lord, and who seek forgiveness and remission of sin by baptism by immersion, by one having authority to administer this sacred ordinance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ....I speak of the influence and power of the Holy Spirit that I experienced when I had been baptized for the remission of my sins. The feeling that came upon me was that of pure peace, of love and of light. I felt in my soul that if I had sinned—and surely I was not without sin—that it had been forgiven me; that I was indeed cleansed from sin; my heart was touched and I felt that I would not injure the smallest insect beneath my feet. I felt as though I wanted to do good everywhere to everybody and to everything. I felt a newness of life, a newness of desire to do that which was right. There was not one particle of desire for evil left in my soul. I was but a little boy, it is true, when I was baptized; but this was the influence that came upon me, and I know that it was from God, and was and ever has been a living witness to me of my acceptance of the Lord.

Joseph F. Smith, *CR*, Apr. 1898, pp. 65-66

3

That change comes today to every son and daughter of God who repents of his or her sins, who humble themselves before the Lord, and who seek forgiveness and remission of sin by baptism....Yet many of us who have received that witness, that new birth, that change of heart, while we may have erred in judgment or have made many mistakes, and often perhaps come short of the true standard in our lives, we have repented of the evil, and we have sought from time to time forgiveness at the hand of the Lord; so that until this day the same desire and purpose which pervaded our souls when we were baptized and received a remission of our sins, still holds possession of our hearts, and is still the ruling sentiment and passion of our souls. Though at times we may be stirred to anger, and our wrath move us to say and do things which are not pleasing in the sight of God, yet instantly on regaining our sober senses and recovering from our lapse into the power of darkness, we feel humble repentant, and to ask forgiveness for the wrong that we have done to ourselves, and per-chance to others.

Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975], 96-97

4

Being born again, comes by the Spirit of God through ordinances.
Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Comp. by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976], 162

5 Mere compliance with the formality of the ordinance of baptism does not mean that a person has been born again. No one can be born again without baptism, but the immersion of water and the laying on of hands to confer the Holy Ghost do not of themselves guarantee that a person has been or will be born again. The new birth takes place only for those who actually enjoy the Gift or companionship of the Holy Ghost, only for those who are fully converted, who have given themselves without restraint to the Lord.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1966], 100-101

6 (For most of us) this process is usually slow. The unusually quick ones make their way into scripture.

Bruce R. McConkie, *BYU Speeches of the Year, 1976* [Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1997]

7 Conversion does not normally come all at once, even though the scriptures give us dramatic accounts. It comes in stages, until a person becomes at heart a new person. Being “born again” is the scriptural term. It is a change of both how we think and how we feel....

You will notice their words are very similar to the commitments you make in the baptismal covenant (see D&C 20:37).

The blessings and promises of conversion are received by covenant through baptism and confirmation and all the ordinances of the temple and the priesthood. Then by continued repentance and obedience and faithful keeping of the covenants made, the fruits of conversion grow and develop in one’s life....

It is through this total conversion experience that we truly come to personally know and feel the character and greatness of God. It is the means whereby we become not only servants of the Lord but His friends as well. To the Saints of the early restoration period, the Lord defined His relationship with them: “And again I say unto you, my friends, for from henceforth I shall call you friends” (D&C 84:77)....

Knowing God and becoming His friend comes with the conversion process. Enos found it. King Benjamin’s subjects found it. Alma found it. It is available to all who will repent and obey the commandments. This conversion is an intimate and intensely personal experience. It is about relationships. It involves awakening the Spirit of Christ, which is in all men and women (see D&C 84:45-46; 88:11).

Dale E. Miller, in *Conference Report*, Oct. 2004 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2004], 12-14

8 Membership in the church and conversion are not necessarily synonymous. Being converted...and having a testimony are not necessarily the same thing....A testimony comes when the Holy Ghost gives the earnest seeker a witness of the truth. A moving testimony vitalizes faith; that is, it induces repentance and obedience to the commandments. Conversion, on the other hand, is the fruit of, or the reward for, repentance and obedience....Conversion is effected by divine forgiveness, which remits sins....Thus he is converted to a newness of life. His spirit is healed.

Marion G. Romney, *CR*, October 1963, p. 24

9 Conversion must mean more than just being a “card carrying” member of the Church with a tithing receipt, a membership card, a temple recommend, etc. It means to overcome the tendencies to criticize, and to strive continually to improve inward weaknesses and not merely the outward appearances.

President Harold B. Lee, *CN*, May 25, 1974, p. 2

10 Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “A person may get converted in a moment, miraculously. That is what happened to Alma the younger. He had been baptized in his youth, he had been promised the Holy Ghost, but he had never received it. He was too worldly-wise; he went off with the sons of Mosiah to destroy the church....Alma was in this state, and then this occasion occurred when a new light came into his soul, when he was changed from his fallen and carnal state to a state of righteousness. In his instance the conversion was miraculous, in the snap of a finger,

almost...But conversion is a process; and it goes step by step, degree by degree, level by level, from a lower state to a higher, from grace to grace, until the time that the individual is wholly turned to the cause of righteousness. Now this means that an individual overcomes one sin today and another sin tomorrow. He perfects his life in one field now, and in another field later on. And the conversion process goes on, until it is completed, until we become, literally, as the Book of Mormon says, saints of God instead of natural men."

From an address at BYU First Stake Conference, 11 February 1968

- 11 God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect....The nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin.

Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:8

- 12 Christ says, Give me All. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half measures are any good. I don't want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down....Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked, the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours.

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 167

- 13 The only way that we may overcome the world is by coming unto Christ. And coming unto Christ means placing Christ and Christ only at the center of our lives so that the vanities and philosophies of men lose their addictive appeal. Satan is the god of Babylon, or this world. Christ is the God of Israel, and His Atonement gives us power to overcome the world....We no longer have the luxury of spending our energy on anything that does not lead us and our families to Christ.

Sheri L. Dew, "We Are Women of God," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999

Mosiah 5:7

- 14 *Sons and Daughters, Children of God*

Those of the household of faith never lose their relationship with Elohim, the Eternal Father. He was and is the Father of the spirits of all men and will forever be the ultimate object of their worship and devotion. Because Jehovah became the chief advocate and proponent of the plan of the Father, because he offered himself as a ransom for the souls of his spirit brothers and sisters, and because he makes the terms and conditions of the Father's plan operative and thus available to mankind, he becomes the Father of their spiritual rebirth, the Father of their resurrection, the Father of their salvation. Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant, and men and women become sons and daughters of Jesus Christ by covenant. Entrance (adoption) into his family kingdom is accomplished through a solemn agreement to take the family name, live in harmony with the standards of that covenant family, and thus adhere to family obligations. Those who do so make permanent their place in the family; they are sealed to that God who loves them and thereby inherit and possess, as heirs, a fullness of the glory of their Lord.

Milliet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the BOM*, Vol 2, p. 176

- 15 What is a father? *One who begets or gives life*. What did our Savior do? He begot us, or gave us life from death, as clearly set forth by Jacob, the brother of Nephi. If it had not been for the death of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the spirit and body would never have been united again. As Jacob states: [Second Nephi 9:9-13 is then quoted.]

If there had been no redemption from death our spirits would have been taken captive by Satan and we would have become subject to Satan's will forever.

What did our Savior do? He begot us in that sense. He became a father to us because he gave us immortality or eternal life through his death and sacrifice upon the cross. I think we have a perfect right to speak of him as Father.
Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 4:177-79

16 It would appear that all the people in our lives are there for important reasons. We stand in a sacred relationship to them because we and they cannot be made perfect without each other (D&C 128:18—the Prophet speaks of a *welding link* that must be established). Nevertheless, we remember that seldom are they given to us to satisfy us. Rather, they are given to us to make possible a much greater love than we would have been capable of in a situation where everybody agreed with us, everybody loved us, everybody saw everything the way we do. These abrasive people in our lives are friends in disguise. They are there to teach us to perfect love in ourselves, not to perfect them. We don't need ideal relationships in order to be happy; we can live happily with less than the ideal because each precious relationship can be made more tender and sweet and can be enriched with that spirit of at-one-ment that changes everything around us.

M. Catherine Thomas, *Selected Writings of M. Catherine Thomas*, p. 198

17 President Joseph Fielding Smith spoke on how Jesus Christ could be called our Father:
"If we speak of Jesus Christ as being our Father, we are not making any mistake because, spiritually, he begot us. No question about it—he united spirit and body, providing a resurrection for every living thing. We do not make any mistake in speaking of the Savior as our God, as our Father, and also as the Son of God because he received all authority. Jesus declared the Father conferred all authority upon him, and so he becomes to us a Father. Moreover, he begot us spiritually in the resurrection....

"...We are his sons and daughters. He is a Father to us because he begot us and saved us from death, uniting spirit and body. What is a father but one who gives life?"

The Fatherhood of Christ [address to seminary and institute of religion personnel, Brigham Young University, 17 July 1962], pp. 5-6

18 Christ...is the Father of redeemed, restored, spiritual life....The faithful are born again—of Christ and by Christ and through Christ—when this mighty change wrought by him comes into their hearts.

Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant*, 102-3

19 You may enjoy music, athletics, or be mechanically inclined, and someday you may work in a trade or a profession or in the arts. As important as such activities and occupations can be, they do not define who we are. First and foremost, we are spiritual beings. We are sons of God.

David A. Bednar, *Ensign*, Nov. 2005 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2005], 47

Mosiah 5:5, 8

20 *Covenant—Three Covenants of Baptism*

"That they may...witness...that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments" (Moroni 4:3).

1. "Take upon you the name of Christ."

"We are willing to take upon ourselves the name of the Son. In so doing we choose him as our leader and our ideal; and he is the one perfect character in all the world" (David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, 146).

2. "Remember to retain the name [of Christ] written always in your hearts."

"How we treat our family members, our neighbors, business associates, and all we meet will reveal if we have taken His name upon us and do always remember Him. How we conduct our lives, all we do and all we say, reflects on how we remember Him" (Robert D. Hales, *Ensign*, November 1997, 250).

3. "Be obedient to his commandments."

"Through baptism we...promise to do the things that He would do, including obeying God's commandments"

(M. Russell Ballard, *Our Search for Happiness*, 90).

Brian S. Garner, *Search These Things Diligently*, pp. 137-138

Mosiah 5:8

21 *No other name*

...Jesus is uniquely our "advocate with the Father," that He pleads for us, and that He makes intercession for us (see 1 John 2:1; 2 Nephi 2:9; Mosiah 5:8; D&C 32:3, 45:3; 62:1; 110:4)....

Jesus' personal role is unique in yet another way: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). "Jesus, our Redeemer," has earned this special standing, entitling Him not only to plead for us but also to judge us, which His unique suffering made possible by virtue of His agonies during the Atonement (see Mosiah 15:8; D&C 45:3-5). Thus, by His suffering and by divine investiture, in one sense Jesus is both advocate and judge!

Only an omniscient, all-loving God could have both roles of advocate (pleading for the petitioner) and judge (deciding the ultimate fate of the petitioner).

Neal A. Maxwell, *One More Strain of Praise* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999], 33

Mosiah 5:8-12

22 *Name of Christ*

We see that we take upon us the name of Christ when we are baptized in his name, when we belong to his Church and profess our belief in him, and when we do the work of his kingdom....

There are other meanings as well, deeper meanings that the more mature members of the Church should understand and ponder as he or she partakes of the sacrament.

It is significant that when we partake of the sacrament we do not witness that we *take upon us* the name of Jesus Christ. We witness that we are *willing* to do so. (See D&C 20:77.) The fact that we only witness to our willingness suggests that something else must happen before we actually take that sacred name upon us in the most important sense.

What future event or events could this covenant contemplate? The scriptures suggest two sacred possibilities, one concerning the authority of God, especially as exercised in the temples, and the other—closely related—concerning exaltation in the celestial kingdom....

Willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ can therefore be understood as willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ. According to this meaning, by partaking of the sacrament we witness our willingness to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and to receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Savior when he chooses to confer them upon us....

...Our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ affirms our commitment to do all that we can to be counted among those whom he will choose to stand at his right hand and be called by his name at the last day. In this sacred sense, our witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ constitutes our declaration of candidacy for exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Exaltation is eternal life, "the greatest of all the gifts of God" (D&C 14:7).

Dallin H. Oaks, in *CR*, Apr. 1985, pp. 102-3, 105; or *Ensign*, May 1985, pp. 80-81, 83

23 But what does it mean to receive the name of Christ? We remember that when we take the sacrament, we signify not that we have fully taken the name, but that we are willing to take the name (see D&C 20:77). Elder Dallin Oaks emphasizes the word *willingness* to take on the name of Christ, pointing to a future consummation:

The Lord and his servants referred to the...*temple* as a house for “the name” of the Lord God of Israel....In the inspired dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith asked the Lord for a blessing upon “thy people upon whom they name shall be put in this house.” (D&C 109:26.)

...By partaking of the sacrament we witness our willingness to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and to receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Savior when he chooses to confer them upon us.¹

Elder Bruce R. McConkie writes: “God’s name is God. To have his name written on a person is to identify that person as a god. How can it be said more plainly? Those who gain eternal life become gods!”² He says, in another place: “The ordinances that are preformed in the temples are the ordinances of exaltation; they open the door to us to an inheritance of sonship; they open the door to us so that we may become sons and daughters, members of the household of God in eternity....They open the door to becoming kings and priests and inheriting all things.”³

King Benjamin’s people received an endowment of spiritual knowledge and power that took them from being a good people to being a Christ-like people—all in a temple setting. In fact, what they experienced through the ordinances and power of the priesthood was a revelation of Christ himself and the power to be assimilated to his image. The Prophet Joseph teaches that “being born again comes by the Spirit of God through ordinances.”⁴ Benjamin’s last words pertained to being “sealed” to Christ and brought to heaven and eternal life (see Mosiah 5:15). *King Benjamin’s Speech*, edited by John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks, “King Benjamin and the Mysteries of God,” by M. Catherine Thomas, pp. 291-292

Mosiah 5:9

24 *Right hand, left hand*

The right hand or side is called the dexter and the left the sinister. Dexter connotes something favorable; sinister, something unfavorable or unfortunate.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 1:158

Mosiah 5:12

25 *Hear and know the voice by which ye shall be called*

Jesus taught that his sheep know his voice (John 10:4, 270). That is, those who have “believing blood”—those who developed the capacity and talent for spirituality in the premortal world—these recognize the voice of Christ in this life, the testimony of the true servants of God spoken by the power of the Holy Ghost. The elect hear the voice of the Lord; they harden not their hearts (D&C 29:7). Further, they hear the voice of Christ calling from deep within the recesses of their own soul—they listen to and respond to the voice of conscience, the Light of Christ.

“Our knowledge of persons and things before we came here,” explained President Joseph F. Smith, “combined with the divinity awakened within our souls through obedience to the gospel, powerfully affects, in my opinion, all our likes and dislikes, and guides our preferences in the course of this life, provided we give careful heed to the admonitions of the Spirit.

“All those salient truths which come home so forcibly to the head and heart seem but the awakening of the memories of the spirit. Can we know anything here that we did not know before we came here?...If Christ knew beforehand, so did we. But in coming here, we forgot all, that our agency might be free indeed, to choose good or evil, that we might merit the reward of our own choice and conduct. By the power of the Spirit, in the redemption of

¹ Dallin H. Oaks, “Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign* (May 1985): 81

² Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), 3:458; see also *Rvelation* 3:12; 14:1

³ Bruce R. McConkie, CR, (October 1955):12-3

⁴ *Ehat and Cook*, Words of Joseph Smith, 12; see also D&C 84:19-25 and JST Exodus 34:1-2

Christ, through obedience, we often catch a spark from the awakened memories of the immortal soul, which lights up our whole being as with the glory of our former home.

Gospel Doctrine, pp. 12-14

Mosiah 5:13

26

Master whom he has not served

The minute a man stops supplicating God for his spirit and directions just so soon he starts out to become a stranger to him and his work. When men stop praying for God's spirit, they place confidence in their own unaided reason, and they gradually lose the spirit of God, just the same as near and dear friends, by never writing to or visiting with each other, will become strangers.

Teachings of the Presidents of the Church—Heber J. Grant [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2002], 174

27

If we do not know the doctrines, do not honestly count our blessings, and do not serve and think about the Lord, then we become estranged from Him (Mosiah 5:11-13). It is our decision—entirely.

There is yet another pervasive cause of such distancing: "Despair cometh because of iniquity" (Moroni 10:22)....If His love is unfelt by us, it is because we have taken our phone off the hook, having in one way or another let ourselves become "past feeling" (Ephesians 4:19; 1 Nephi 17:45; Moroni 9:20).

If *unfelt* by us, it is not because God's love is *unoffered*.

Neal A. Maxwell, *Whom The Lord Loveth* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], 43-44

28

An inspired prophet saw service as the way we come to want what the Lord wants. He wrote, "For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?" (Mosiah 5:13)....

You may be assured that He knows you and your capacity to grow. He has prepared you. Calls will stretch you, often at the start and always over their course, but He will give you the Holy Ghost to be your companion. The Holy Ghost will tell you what to do when your own abilities and efforts are not enough (see John 14:26)....The call is an invitation to become like Him (see 3 Nephi 27:27).

You might well ask, "How will seeing my call that way make me more confident of success?" The answer is that seeing it in that lofty way will make it more likely that you will go for help to the only source that is never-failing.

Henry B. Eyring, in *CR*, April 2000 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2000], 81-82

Mosiah 5:15

29

Being steadfast and immovable on the Lord's side of the line is the only strategy that works long-term against Lucifer. If the adversary can't get us to succumb to blatant evil, he tries to wear us down, weaken our resolve, and dim our memory of who we are. He promotes the Sin Now, Pay Later Plan. He feeds our vanity with promises of popularity and power. He tells us that life is supposed to be easy and that if we experience undeserved pain the gospel must not be true. He always promises shortcuts, though there are no shortcuts to anywhere worth going. But he cannot duplicate joy or peace. That is why there is such safety on the Lord's side of the line, where the power of the priesthood and the Holy Ghost protect us.

Sheri Dew, *Saying It Like It Is*, p. 14

Mosiah 5 Conclusion

30

Let us then labor for an inward stillness, an inward stillness and an inward healing, that perfect silence when the lips and heart are still, and we no longer entertain our own imperfect thoughts and vain opinions, but God alone speaks in us and we wait in singleness of heart, that we may know His will, and in the silence of our spirits that we may do His will and do that only.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Take Time To Be Holy

W. D. Longstaff

31

Take time to be holy, speak oft with the Lord
 Abide in Him always, And feed on His word;
 Make friends of God's children,
 Help those who are weak,
 Forgetting in nothing, His blessing to seek.

Take time to be holy, The world rushes on;
 Spend much time in secret with Jesus Alone;
 By looking to Jesus, Like Him thou shalt be;
 Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.
 Take time to be holy, Let Him be thy guide,
 And run not before Him, whatever betide;
 In joy or in sorrow, still follow thy Lord,
 And looking to Jesus, still trust in His word.

Take time to be holy, Be calm in thy soul,
 Each thought and each motive, Beneath thy control;
 Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love,
 Thou soon shall be fitted for service above.