

Conversion vs. Testimony

What is a testimony?

A *testimony* is the statement or declaration of a witness under oath or affirmation, usually in court. It is evidence given in support of a fact or statement. Testimony is an open declaration or profession, as of faith.

How can a person have a testimony and not be converted?

“Conversion is more—far more—than merely changing one’s belief from that which is false to that which is true; it is more than the acceptance of the verity of gospel truths, than the acquirement of a testimony. To *convert* is to change from one status to another, and gospel conversion consists in the transformation of man from his fallen and carnal state to a state of saintliness.

“A convert is one who has put off the natural man, yielded to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and become ‘a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.’ Such a person has become ‘as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.’ (Mosiah 3:19.) He has become a new creature of the Holy Ghost: the old creature has been converted or changed into a new one. He has been born again: where once he was spiritually dead, he has been regenerated to a state of spiritual life. (Mosiah 27:24–29.) In real conversion, which is essential to salvation (Matt. 18:3), the convert not only changes his beliefs, casting off the false traditions of the past and accepting the beauties of revealed religion, but he changes his whole way of life, and the nature and structure of his very being is quickened and changed by the power of the Holy Ghost.

“Peter is the classic example of how the power of

conversion works on receptive souls. During our Lord’s mortal ministry, Peter had a testimony, born of the Spirit, of the divinity of Christ and of the great plan of salvation which was in Christ. ‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,’ he said, as the Holy Ghost gave him utterance. (Matt. 16:13–19.) When others fell away, Peter stood forth with the apostolic assurance, ‘We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.’ (John 6:69.) Peter knew, and his knowledge came by revelation.

“But Peter was not converted, because he had not become a new creature of the Holy Ghost. Rather, long after Peter had gained a testimony, and on the very night Jesus was arrested, he said to Peter: ‘When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.’ (Luke 22:32.) Immediately thereafter, and regardless of his testimony, Peter denied that he knew Christ. (Luke 22:54–62.) After the crucifixion, Peter went fishing, only to be called back to the ministry by the risen Lord. (John 21:1–17.) Finally on the day of Pentecost the promised spiritual endowment was received; Peter and all the faithful disciples became new creatures of the Holy Ghost; they were truly converted; and their subsequent achievements manifest the fixity of their conversions. (Acts 3; 4.)” (Bruce R McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 162–63).

Write the difference between conversion and testimony in the space below:

Read the following scriptures and describe in the space below how Peter grew from testimony to conversion during his lifetime: Luke 22:34–38, Luke 22:54–62, Acts 2:14, 37–40, and Acts 3:1–7: