

Alma 39.⁸⁻⁹

⁸But behold, ye cannot hide your crimes from God; and except ye repent they will stand as a testimony against you at the last day. ⁹Now my son, I would that ye should repent and forsake your sins, and go no more after the lusts of your eyes, but cross yourself in all these things; for except ye do this ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God. Oh, remember, and take it upon you, and cross yourself in these things.

This questionnaire is the 1st for lent 2025

1. One of Lent's objectives is to encourage the mortification of the flesh and a deeper self-denial.
? How does today's reading relate to and encourage the spirit of self-denial?
2. Alma warns his son, Corianton, concerning the dangers of going "after the lusts of your eyes." In the case of Corianton, the lust for women seems at the forefront of Alma's mind. However, there is no end to the number of people and things toward which we can direct our "lusts."
? What sorts of things do you find yourself drawn to that might cross over into "lust"?

"Lust" is a driving force in our materialistic culture. Advertisers work to drive and exploit our lusts.

- ? What do you do to control such lust that our society seems to approve of and even encourage?
- ? How does the following warning of the New Testament writer, James, relate to today's reading with its warning concerning lust?
"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" (Jam. 1.¹⁴).
3. Alma encourages his son to "cross yourself" in relation to his lusts.
? What, do you think, is Alma envisioning when he speaks of crossing oneself?

Consider the following dictionary definitions of "cross" as a verb.

To run counter to: OPPOSE
To deny the validity of: CONTRADICT
To confront in a troublesome manner: OBSTRUCT, DISRUPT
To turn against: BETRAY

- ? How do these definitions of the verb impact your thinking on what Alma meant by "cross yourself"?
4. There is no evidence that Nephite religion possessed any rites or forms like that of the Christian making of the sign of the cross. Nevertheless, Alma knew of Jesus' crucifixion. He could have viewed it as an example to us of self-sacrifice and the rejection of self-indulgent lusts. Jesus himself viewed the cross in this way. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it (Mt. 16.²⁴⁻²⁵).'"
? How does Jesus' willingness to suffer the cruelty of the cross impact your own desire to control your self-indulgent lusts?
? How often do you think of Jesus suffering on the cross? What is the impact of such thoughts?

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