

## What Does It Mean To Be Converted?

Acts 3:19

### What is Conversion?

- ▶ To change into another form.
- ▶ Biblically, to revert or return. Indicating a genuine change in one's life. Psalms 51:13 – "... sinners will return to you."
- ▶ Spiritually, it is always about turning/returning to God. Matthew 13:15 – "... turn, and I would heal them."
- ▶ We are born sinless. When we sin, we are separated from God – Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 3:23; 6:23.
- ▶ Therefore, conversion is turning back to God.

### What is Conversion?

- ▶ It is about changing direction.
- ▶ Several Greek words are used to speak about conversion (and/or turning around)
- ▶ For example:
  - ▶ στρέφω: Matthew 5:39; 9:22; 18:3 – "convert, turn again"
  - ▶ ἐπιστρέφω: Luke 8:55; Acts 3:19; 15:36 – "come again, convert, turn about"
  - ▶ ἐπιστροφή: Acts 15:3 – "reversion, revolution"
  - ▶ ὑποστρέφω: Luke 2:20 – "return, turn back"

### What is Conversion?

- ▶ Spiritually, a change in direction that leads to a changed life.
- ▶ Matthew 13:15 – "... heart has grown dull"
- ▶ Acts 9:35, 11:21, many "turned to the Lord"
- ▶ Acts 26:20 – "... repent and turn to God"
- ▶ I Thessalonians 1:9 – "turned to God from idols"
- ▶ James 5:19-20 – "... someone brings him back ..."

### What is Conversion?

- ▶ The word is tied to obeying the gospel
  - ▶ Acts 3:19 (2:38) – "Repent therefore, and turn again ..."
- ▶ James 5:19-20, it can apply to a believer – "... wanders from the truth ..." (cf. 1 John 1:7-9; Acts 8:22)

### What is Conversion?

- ▶ The point:
  - ▶ Real conversion is about real change in one's life.
  - ▶ In the same way one might convert a house to an office, or US currency to Mexican pesos, so our spiritual conversion is a real change from following the ways of the world to becoming a follower of Jesus.

### What is Involved in Conversion?

- ▶ A changed mind
- ▶ When you are converted, you think differently
  - ▶ II Corinthians 10:3-5, "... take every thought into captivity to obey Christ"
  - ▶ The worldly set their minds on "the things of the flesh," Romans 8:5-8; Philippians 3:18-19
  - ▶ When we are converted, we set our mind on "the things that are above" – Colossians 3:1-2, Romans 12:1-2

### What is Involved in Conversion?

- ▶ A changed mind
- ▶ The Christian asks:
  - ▶ How can I please God and Christ?
  - ▶ What would Jesus do in this situation?
  - ▶ Is this drawing me closer to Him or further away from Him?
- ▶ This thinking is governed by His word – II Timothy 3:16-17; Colossians 3:16-17; Psalms 119:104-105

### What is Involved in Conversion?

- ▶ A changed heart
  - ▶ True conversion is about conviction. It is deep seated and will define who you really are.
  - ▶ The "heart" of a Christian is not the blood pumping organ, but the inner soul.
    - ▶ Proverbs 4:23 – "Keep your heart ..."
    - ▶ Matthew 12:34-35 – "... out of the abundance of the heart ..."
    - ▶ Matthew 5:8 – "Blessed are the pure in heart"

### What is Involved in Conversion?

- ▶ A changed heart
- ▶ The converted heart will impact:
  - ▶ the way we think
  - ▶ what we say
  - ▶ who we associate with
  - ▶ where we go
  - ▶ what we do
  - ▶ how we spend our time
  - ▶ how we interact with others

### What is Involved in Conversion?

- ▶ A changed relationship
  - ▶ Galatians 3:26-28 – "... put on Christ"
  - ▶ I John 3:1 – we are called "children of God"
  - ▶ I Corinthians 6:19-20 – "You are not your own ..."
  - ▶ Galatians 2:20 – "It is no longer I who live ..."
  - ▶ Romans 8:17 – "... fellow heirs with Christ"

### What is Involved in Conversion?

- ▶ A changed relationship
  - ▶ Hebrews 2:11 – "... he is not ashamed to call them brothers"
  - ▶ Romans 6:17-18 – "... slaves of sin have become ... slaves of righteousness"
- ▶ As we consider this new relationship, it gives us comfort and hope

## The Converted Life

- ▶ Conversion is an action
- ▶ Matthew 18:3 – “... unless you turn [“are converted” (NKJV)] ...”
- ▶ Acts 3:19 – “Repent therefore, and turn again”
- ▶ NOTE: Conversion is not repentance.
  - ▶ Repentance leads to true conversion
  - ▶ cf. Acts 26:20, II Corinthians 7:9-11

## The Converted Life

- ▶ You are now a different person
- ▶ II Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”
- ▶ Romans 12:1-2 – “... present your bodies as a living sacrifice ... be transformed ...”

## The Converted Life

- ▶ You are now a different person
- ▶ I Corinthians 6:9-11 – “And such were some of you”
- ▶ II Corinthians 5:9 – “... we make it our aim to please him.”
- ▶ Colossians 1:9-10 – “... walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.”

## The Converted Life

- ▶ You are now a different person
- ▶ People can see that you are different
- ▶ Conversion is not a one-time act, it is a new way of life. People who know you will know that you have changed.
  - ▶ I Peter 4:3-4 – “... they are surprised when you do not join them ...”
  - ▶ cf. Acts 9:18b-21 – “And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues ... They saw the change in Saul immediately”

## The Converted Life

- ▶ You will continue steadfastly
- ▶ The truly converted soul will press on. No matter what he/she faces, quitting is not an option
  - ▶ Hebrews 12:1-2 – “... let us run with endurance ...”
  - ▶ Acts 2:42 – “... they devoted themselves ...”
  - ▶ Colossians 1:21-23 – “... continue in the faith, stable and steadfast ...”

## What Does It Mean to Be Converted?

- ▶ A changed mind
- ▶ A changed heart
- ▶ A changed relationship
- ▶ Conversion is an action
- ▶ You are a different person
- ▶ You will continue steadfastly

### “What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

- Hear the Word of God
  - Romans 10:8 – “But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim)”
- Believe that Jesus is the Savior
  - Romans 10:11 – “For the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.’”

### “What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

- Repent of your sins
  - Acts 3:19 – “Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out”
- Confess that Jesus is the Son of God
  - I John 4:15 – “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.”

### “What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

- Be immersed in water (baptized)
  - Acts 2:38 – “And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
- Remain faithful
  - Hebrews 3:14 – “For we share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.”