

Outlines for Country Preachers by a Country Preacher Sermon

Outlines by Milburn Cockrell

CONVERSION

Text: Acts 3:19

The word "convert" is synonymous with "turn," and "conversion" with "turning." "Convert" means "to turn," "to turn around," "to change about." The Greek word translated convert means "to turn around." The word is sometime translated "convert" and in other places "to turn."

I. WHAT CONVERSION IS NOT AND IS.

1. What it is not—

- (1) It is not mere outward reformation (II Tim. 3:5; II Pet. 2:20-22) or a temporary conversion (Matt. 13:20-21; I John 2:19).
- (2) It is not returning from backsliding. A backslider is already converted.
- (3) It is not being converted from one doctrine to another (Luke 22:32).

(4) It is not what some call a physiological conversion—the change from adolescent to adulthood. Spiritual conversion is not a natural process, but a divine work of the Holy Spirit.

2. What is really is—

- (1) It is a turning of thoughts, desires and affections of the heart from sinful lusts and pleasures toward holy things—God, Christ, and salvation.
- (2) It is a man turning actively under the power of divine grace (Acts 11:21; II Cor. 3:15-16).
- (3) It is a turning from idols to God (I Thess. 1:9-10).
- (4) It is a turning from darkness to light, the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18).
- (5) It is a turning from your own righteousness to Christ's righteousness (Dan. 12:3; Phil. 3:9).

II. REGENERATION AND CONVERSION.

- 1. Some confuse the two, but they are not one and the same. Regeneration is God moving on the heart of the sinner; conversion is the heart of the sinner moving toward God.
- 2. Conversion is the results of regeneration. It is the human side of regeneration.
- 3. The new heart is prepared to turn to God and does actually so turn (Jer. 31:18-19; Lam. 5:21; S. of S. 1:4).
- 4. God is the Giver of the new heart and spirit (Ps. 51:10; Ezek. 11:19-20; 36:26-27).
- 5. Man is commanded to make himself a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek. 18:31).
- 6. God turns men to Himself (I Kings 18:37; Ps. 80:3; 85:4; Jer. 30:21; John 6:44).

- 7. Yet men are exhorted to turn to God (Prov. 1:23; Isa. 55:7; 59:20; Ezek. 14:6; 33:11; Hos. 12:6; Joel 2:13).
- 8. Without regeneration men will keep away from God (Ps. 10:4; Rom. 1:30; 8:7; Jas. 4:4).
 - (1) By nature man loves pleasures more than God (II Tim. 3:4).
 - (2) "Who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:19).
 - (3) Man is dead set against being converted (Matt. 13:14-15).

III. HOW CONVERSION IS CONNECTED WITH REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

- 1. Conversion is the voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns from sin to Christ.
- 2. This turning from sin we call repentance. This is the negative element.
- 3. The turning to Christ we call faith. This is the positive element.
- 4. Verses which join these two things together (Rom. 6:11; Acts 3:26; 11:21).

IV. THE MEANS OF CONVERSION.

- 1. The law of God (Ps. 19:7).
- 2. The minister of God (Dan. 12:3; I Cor. 3:5) and the person who witnesses for Christ (Ps. 51:13; Jas. 5:19-20).
- 3. The gospel (Acts 26:16-18; 16:14).

V. THE SUBJECTS OF CONVERSION.

- 1. Sinners (Ps. 51:13; Jas. 5:19-20).
- 2. Christ died for sinners (Rom. 5:8). He came to save sinners (I Tim. 1:15).
- 3. He calls sinners to repentance (Mark 2:17). "This man receiveth sinners" (Luke 15:2).
- 4. A sinner is one who realizes his lost and ruined condition—his guilty state—sees the depravity of his own heart, the damnableness of sin—the justness of divine for deliverance. He turns to Christ for the whole of his salvation.
- 5. The sinner cannot convert himself, but he can come to hear the law and gospel, the means of grace.

CONCLUSION.

- 1. A converted man is a Christian believer, a man who has true religion, one who has experienced regeneration. In Christian experience repentance comes before conversion (Acts 3:19).
- 2. Conversion is something which can be seen and declared (Acts 15:3).
- 3. There is absolutely no Heaven without conversion (Matt. 18:3).
- 4. There is no forgiveness of sins without repentance and conversion (Acts 3:19).