

# The Why And How Of Conversion

Why doesn't the church grow? Why don't people stay faithful after baptism? Why are some members who attend so lethargic?

In the final analysis the answer to all these questions is the same: People are not completely, total and without reservation converted to the Lord.

"What we need is a people converted to the Lord"

Definition:

root word means "a turning or a rotation"

1 a.) "to turn one's self from ones course of conduct, ie. to change ones mind"

1 b.) turn, change, inwardly, be converted

2 a.) to turn to, b.) to cause to return, to bring back...metaphorically - to reform."

2 b.) figuratively, of a change of mind or of a course of action, for the better or the worse"

## I. Need & Importance

### A. First We Turned From God

#### 1.) We Turn To Other Gods

**Lev. 19:4,31** "Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves molten gods; I am the LORD your God."

**31** "Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek them out to be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God."

#### 2.) We Turn Away From God's Instructions

We do this even when we have the instruction book.

**Deut. 17:10,11** "And you shall do according to the terms of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which the LORD chooses; and you shall be careful to observe according to all that they teach you.

**11** According to the terms of the law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, to the right or the left."

Moses warned the people what they would do after his death.

**Deut. 31:29** "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands."

Joshua warned the people about turning away from God's word.

**Josh. 3:6-8** "Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left,

**7** in order that you may not associate with these nations, these which remain among you, or mention the name of their gods, or make *anyone* swear *by them*, or serve them, or bow down to them.

**8** But you are to cling to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day."

The King of Israel was to make himself a copy of the law so that he could read it and not turn his heart away from God.

**Deut. 17:18-20** "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.

**19** And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,

**20** that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left; in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in

the midst of Israel.”

Like the king of Israel should have had, we all have a readily accessible Bible.

### 3.) We've All Strayed

Every last one of us has turned away from God.

**Rom. 3:12,23** “ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”

**23** “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

This is what gets in the way of the life with God that we all should want.

**Isa. 59:1,2** “Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.

**2** But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden *His* face from you, so that He does not hear.”

So all sinners must turn back to God to be saved.

## B. Coming Back To God

### 1.) Needed In O.T. Times

Isaiah told them.

**Isa. 55:6,7** “Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

**7** Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.”

Every prophet told them.

**2 Kings 17:13** “Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah, through all His prophets *and* every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments, My statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through My servants the prophets.”

### 2.) The Work of John The Baptist

John came to convert the Jews back to God to prepare the way for Christ.

**Luke 1:14-17** “And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

**15** For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother's womb.

**16** And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God.

**17** And it is he who will go *as a forerunner* before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

### 3.) The Teaching of Jesus

This shows how complete a turning is to take place.

**Matt. 18:3** “Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

### 4.) The Preaching of the Apostles

This parallel with **Acts 2:38** returning to God. Baptism is how you turn to God.

**Acts 3:19** “Repent therefore and return [and be converted - KJV], that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”

Paul was called to go and convert the Gentiles, and he did

**Acts 26:16-20** “But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;

**17** delivering you from the *Jewish* people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you,

**18** to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

**19** Consequently, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision,

**20** but *kept* declaring both to those of Damascus first, and *also* at Jerusalem and *then* throughout all the region of Judea, and *even* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.”

Here we see just how central repentance is to the proclamation of the gospel.

## 5.) Done By Christians

at Antioch

**Acts 11:21** “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord”

at Rome

**Rom. 16:5** “also *greet* the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.”

## II. Process of Conversion

Faith

**Jn. 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Repentance

**Acts 2:38** “And Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Confession

**Rom. 10:13** “for “WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”

Baptism

**Acts 22:16** “And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.”

and Continuing Obedience

**Heb. 5:9** “And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation”

When one completely turns to Christ these things are no longer points to quarrel over, but are accepted on the strength of the word of God. When one have a “saving” faith, the others follow.

Consider the record of the book of Acts.

See “[Acts Conversions Chart](#)”

## Conversions In Acts

	<b>Pentecost Ch. 2</b>	<b>Samaritans Ch. 8</b>	<b>Eunuch Ch. 8</b>	<b>Saul Ch. 9, 22</b>	<b>Cornelius Ch. 10</b>	<b>Lydia Ch.16</b>	<b>Jailor Ch. 16</b>
<b>Heard Rom. 10:17</b>	vss. 14-36, 38-40	vss. 5,6	vss. 32-37		vss. 36-44	vs. 13	vs. 32
<b>Faith Jn. 3:16</b>		vss. 12,13	vs. 36	9:5 22:10		vs. 14	
<b>Repented Luke 13:3,5</b>	vs. 38			9:9 fasted			vs. 33 washed wounds
<b>Confessed Rom. 10:13</b>			vs. 37				
<b>Baptized Jn. 3:5</b>	vs. 38 that day	vss. 12,13	vs. 38 along the road	22:16 why delay?	vs. 48 Peter ordered	vs. 15	vs. 33 same hour
<b>Saved Jn. 3:17</b>	vs. 41 added	vs. 14 recieved word of God	vs. 39 rejoicing	22:16 wash away sins	11:14 saving words	vs. 15 judged faithful	vs. 34 rejoiced greatly