

“GENUINE CONVERSIONS”

Acts 3:19

Going to look at the absolute foundation of building a work for God: Genuine conversions.

Acts 3:19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

I. FOUNDATIONS OF CONVERSION

A. Great Bible word: Converted. To turn/to turn around

1. This was a complete turning from your old life – and beginning a new life

a. Jewish conversion b. John the Baptist applied this idea to the KOG: Repent! Change your actions...

2. Conversion begins with a change of mind

a. **Acts 3:19** Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

1. Repent: To change your mind; I see my sin differently – like God sees it

3. Conversion involves a transformation of lifestyle

a. Not perfection: *But our relationship to sin fundamentally changes – and we are changed*

b. There will be evidence if there is genuine repentance/genuine conversion

1. **Matthew 3:8** Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God.

4. Conversion results in a surrender to Jesus Christ

a. **Acts 9:6** So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

1. On some level: There is a hunger for the things of God & we begin to aim our lives at Jesus Christ/God’s will

B. Conversion is the absolute bedrock of building a work for God

1. **You can only build a church on converts:** The majority of the people in our church must be converts!

a. You will never get more growth/ministry/money unless we have genuine converts

2. **You can only make disciples of genuine converts:** *They are teachable/grateful*

a. **Matthew 28:19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

II. ENEMIES OF CONVERSION

A. There are enemies of conversion

1. **Supernatural enemies:** OT battles over fruit – b/c the enemy fights fruitfulness/conversion

a. Parable of the sower: Birds snatch the seed – to prevent it from producing fruit

b. **2 Corinthians 4:4** Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

2. **Enemies from without:** Peter is preaching to religious Jews in the temple

a. Religious people will come & join the church to distract you: Putting their spirit in your church!

b. Religious people will resist conversion preaching/outreach: *It’s not necessary/don’t offend people*

3. **Enemies within us:** There can be things inside of us that hinder conversion

a. Fear/intimidation: *Afraid to boldly preach on sin/ask for conversions*

b. Settling for less than conversion: *People who attend/those who don’t get it*

c. Laziness/selfishness: *Unwilling to labor or give of ourselves in order to get genuine conversions*

III. CONVERSION FACTORS

A. You get what you believe for: **Matthew 9:29** Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

1. If you believe everyone’s heard/they’re hard – you’re right 2. You must base your faith on God’s word, not human experience

B. You get what you labor for: Peter & John were in the Temple – doing God’s work; Conversions take work!

1. **Matthew 9:37** ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

C. You get what you preach: Peter is preaching what he wants to happen -- what he insists must happen!

1. If you present the Gospel as fun/self-help/mere rules – you will not get conversions

a. You preach repentance b. You explain what will happen so people can examine their hearts/lives

D. You get what you settle for: *The enemy will send substitutes/counterfeits*

1. Church people 2. Slightly odd/welfare people 3. People w/out revelation/life-change

a. If you can live with them: *That’s all you will ever get!*

E. You get what you fight for: Much of Bible promises involve warfare/fighting

1. **Genesis 15:11** And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

a. Internal resistance – NO! b. Prayer for dominion c. Prayer for revelation d. Specific prayers: What you want to happen