

The Story of Jesus: Conversion

(Lesson 79)

Introduction:

1. Growing in the knowledge of Christ is an important responsibility (2 Peter 3:18).
2. Jesus gave the key to achieving this growth in John 5:39 when He said, "*Search the Scriptures.*"
3. In Matthew 18:3, as Jesus was speaking to His disciples, He mentioned "conversion," the subject we are concentrating on in this lesson.
4. As we study this subject the first point we need to make is that . . .

Discussion:

I. CONVERSION IS A COMMAND OF CHRIST

- A. According to Jesus, a person will not enter the kingdom unless he is converted.
 1. This indicates that conversion is a requirement for entering the Lord's kingdom.
 2. Specifically, the Lord requires:
 - a. those who are not Christians to be converted (Acts 3:19)
 - b. those who have become unfaithful to be converted (James 5:19-20).
- B. Since conversion is such an important matter, we must understand what it is.
 1. Convert: to turn or to change, to turn to God from sin
 2. Now that we understand that conversion is a command of Christ, the second point we need to make is that . . .

II. CONVERSION IS PRODUCED BY GOD'S WORD

- A. David said in Psalm 19:7a, "*The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.*"
 1. In order for God's Word to produce conversion, it must be heard properly.
 2. The proper way to hear is described in James 1:21 -- we must "*receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save our souls.*"
- B. When we realize that God's Word produces conversion when it is properly heard, we can understand why some people will not be converted.
 1. Some people who heard Jesus teach did not respond by being converted.
 2. Jesus revealed the problem with such people as He explained why He taught with parables (Matthew 13:13-15).
- C. God's Word produces conversion.
 1. However, in order for conversion to take place, God's Word must be heard properly.
 2. For the third point of our lesson we need to show that . . .

III. CONVERSION AND JOY ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED (4 ways)

- A. First, God rejoices when a sinner is converted (Luke 15:10).
- B. Second, sinners who are converted have reason to rejoice -- following his baptism, the eunuch "*went on his way rejoicing*" (Acts 8:39).
- C. Third, the conversion of sinners should cause Christians to experience great joy -- when Paul and Barnabas declared how Gentiles had been converted, "*they caused great joy unto all the brethren*" (Acts 15:3).
- D. Fourth, those who truly know the joy of the Lord's salvation will want to be involved in converting sinners to God (Psalm 51:12-13).

Conclusion:

1. (Matthew 18:11) Jesus came "*to save that which is lost.*"
2. To be saved, we must be converted.