

your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). In this passage, “*baptism*” of Acts 2:38 is replaced with the word “*converted*”, and “*the gift of the Holy Spirit*” is said to be “*the times of refreshing*”. But in both of these verses, *conversion* is the subject being discussed.

Eleven cases of conversion are recorded in the book of Acts. In every case, the gospel — the good news that Christ had come to save man from his sin — was preached, the people heard and became believers, they repented — turned *away from sin* and turned to *God* — , they confessed their faith in Christ as the Son of God, and they were baptized in water for the remission of their sins. *This was true conversion.*

In being converted,

- ✿ they changed their **minds** from not believing in Christ to believing that He is the Son of God;
- ✿ they changed their **lives** from living in sin to following the goodness and purity of Christ;
- ✿ they changed their **state** from being lost in Satan’s kingdom of darkness, to being saved in Christ’s kingdom of light. This change of state was accomplished as they

were born again spiritually (John 3:3,5) through baptism (Mark 16:16). In doing this, they entered Christ, being baptized into His death and being raised to walk that new life with Him (Romans 6:3,4). This birth through baptism put them into Christ’s Family, His church, so that they could live the remainder of their lives as the children of God (Revelation 2:10).

This is true conversion to Christ. It is done sincerely, from the heart, and it is a lifetime commitment to worship and serve the Lord daily, according to all that He instructed in the New Testament.

Have you been converted to Christ?

“The churches of Christ salute you”
(Romans 16:16).

WORLD EVANGELISM TRACTS

Phone: 662-283-1192

Choate@WorldEvangelism.org

www.WorldEvangelism.org

Request a free Bible Correspondence Course

Presented by the Church of Christ

What Is “Conversion”?

J.C. Choate



What Is ‘Conversion’?

J.C. Choate

According to Webster’s Dictionary, ‘convert’ means “to turn around, to transform, to change from one belief to another.” Vine’s Dictionary of New Testament Words defines ‘convert’ as “to turn about; the word implies repentance, a turning from and a turning to, as in turning *away* from a life of sin and turning *to* God.”

There are three phases of conversion: a change of **heart**, a change of **life**, and a change of **state**.

We are talking, of course, about conversion to Christ: what it means to become a believer in Him, to submit to Him, to change to conform to His teaching, and to turn from sin and evil to live the kind of life Christ wants us to live.

We are not talking about pretending to be following Christ, or taking money and other material things so that one can be counted in a list as being a “Christian”. Neither are we talking about “converting” so that some family member will be pleased, or so that we can enjoy social acceptance in our community, or that we might receive other rewards.

In today’s world, many begin attending some “community church” that is conveniently

located and offers the sense of “belonging” for people who often have no other nearby “friends” and “family” connections. The doctrine that is taught, the name the group wears, and the scripturalness of the worship are not investigated or even counted as of great importance. It is a church, it offers a sense of spirituality, and it fills a social need. What God says in His word about conversion, Christianity, the church, worship, and the way of life for the Christian — these matters may not even be studied because of the subconscious belief that God will gladly accept whatever we offer.

But many who lead churches today are preaching “another Gospel”, about which Paul warned in Galatians 1:8,9: *“If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”* False teachers are not representatives of Christ but of Satan. 2 Corinthians 11:14,15 describes such a person: *“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”*

Christ said, *“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me”* (Luke 9:23). True conversion is

not based on convenience or a social life or ease and acceptance in this world. It will mean turning away from the popular but sinful things, even when such a change of heart means sacrifice and the bearing of a cross.

To be converted to Christ one must **hear** the word of God (Romans 10:17), **believe** in God and in Christ as the Son of God (Hebrews 11:6), believe the facts of the Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), be willing to **repent** or turn from the old life of sin (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30), **confess** with his mouth before others that he believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Matthew 10:32,33), and **be baptized** in water for the forgiveness of his sins (Acts 2:38).

On the day of Pentecost when the Lord’s church had its beginning, after the people had been taught of Christ and had become believers in Him, they wanted to know what they must do to be saved. Peter and the apostles answered, *“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”* (Acts 2:38).

A few days later, as the apostles were speaking to another group of people, they said, *“Repent ye therefore, and **be converted**, that*