

CONVERSION

Introduction:

1. The word comes from the Greek *strepheo* (στρεφω) which means, “to turn, reverse; to turn one’s self, to turn around.”
2. This word is found 23 times in the NT and translated as “turn, turned or turning” and once as “converted” (Matthew 18:3).
3. Another Greek word is *epistrepho* (επιστρεφω) which means, “to revert; to turn to, to cause to return, to bring back, come back, return.”
4. This word is found 48 times in the NT and is translated as “turn,” “return,” “covert” or “converted” (Acts 3:19).
5. Conversion is a “spiritual turning which is man’s own act in response to God’s command.”
6. True conversion is according to and based upon the Word of God rather than the feelings of man (cf. Psalm 19:7; 51:13).
7. Let us consider ***Changes Involved in Conversion...***

I. Conversion Demands a Change of Heart

- A. To be converted, one’s affection must be changed from the love of sin to the love of God.
- B. This begins by hearing the Gospel, which creates faith that changes the heart (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 4:12; Jer. 23:28-29; John 6:63; Acts 2:37).

II. Conversion Demands a Change of Life

- A. To be converted, one’s conduct must be changed from sin to righteousness.
- B. True faith leads to repentance – a change of mind that results in a reformation of life (Matt. 3:8; 21:28-29; Luke 17:3-4; Acts 3:19; 26:20; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10).

III. Conversion Demands a Change of Allegiance

- A. To be converted, one’s devotion must be changed from Satan to Christ.
- B. Confession of faith in Christ is the public acknowledgement of one’s change in allegiance (Matt. 10:32-33; John 9:22; 12:42; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 John 4:15; 1 Tim. 6:12-13; Acts 8:37).

IV. Conversion Demands a Change of State

- A. To be converted, one’s relationship must be changed from the realm of Satan’s rule to God’s kingdom.
- B. Baptism changes one’s state or relationship from lost to saved (1 Pet. 3:20-21; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 41; 22:16; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Romans 6).

V. Is It Possible to Become Unconverted?

- A. Yes, just reverse the process... (cf. Rev. 2:4-5; 2 Pet. 2:20-22)
 1. Stop hearing (or listening to) the Gospel
 2. Lose faith – *change one’s heart (affection) from God toward sin*
 3. Regret repentance – *turn back to a lifestyle of sin*
 4. Deny one’s confession – *change allegiance back to Satan*
 5. Separation from God – *one’s state is changed from saved to lost*

- B. A person who does this needs to be converted again.
- VI. Is It Possible to Become Reconverted?
- A. Yes, but by God's second law of pardon.
 - B. One who has fallen away is still a child of God – a disinherited child, an erring, wayward, fallen brother.
 - C. He must once again hear and believe the Gospel – *a change of affection*.
 - D. He must repent of sins – *a change of life* (Acts 8:22-23).
 - E. He must confess his sins (1 John 1:9).
 - F. He must pray, asking for forgiveness, as his brethren pray with him (Acts 8:24; James 5:16).

Conclusion: *Do you need conversion?*