The Effects of Real Conversion

Message Notes

Acts of the Apostles 2:38-41 NLT - “Peter replied, ‘Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God.’ Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation!’ Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.”

1. **The Power of Conversion**
    1. It’s incredible the **transforming power** of Jesus Christ. His followers were radically different. Ask the **Maniac of Gadara, ask Mary Magdalene**, ask the sons of thunder — everybody he came into contact with who received him became a different person. The message of Christ is not one of better behavior; it’s one of complete transformation.
    2. **True Conversion:** In Biblical times, it wasn’t uncommon to find great personalities, leaders, and prophets surrounded by a following of their own disciples. Many followed for various external reasons (such as association or privilege) or personal gain. It was important that there be a clear distinction between those followers and Christians. In the establishment of the New Testament church, the apostles laid a clear foundation of what the criteria would be for those belonging to the church and identified Believers/Christians. What made followers of Jesus and New Testament Believers different? **True Encounter. True Transformation. True Confession**. They all knew, as we all do, that when you truly encounter Jesus, you are forever changed.
    3. **Transformation means -** make a thorough or dramatic change in the form, appearance, or character of. (Ex. Metamorphosis: Inside out. Caterpillar/ Butterfly)
    4. **Romans 12:2** - Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.
    5. There are many programs in place to help people change bad habits, etc. Although I’m grateful for them, they are trying to change people from the outside in. Jesus transforms you from the inside out.
    6. Your outlook on life is different.
    7. It’s like when you've been on a diet and working out - what you begin privately, begins to be noticed outwardly.
2. **The Process of Conversion**
    1. **Sanctification -** The action of making something holy
    2. **B. Discipleship -** the training process of becoming like Jesus.
    3. The conversion process begins with an encounter with God and culminates in a name change.

4. God not only wants to change you, but also to change your **identity**.
5. **Catharsis**: In literary terms, catharsis refers to the emotional purification or release, that leads to a sense of renewal or cathartic relief. It's essentially a purging of intense emotions, like pity and fear, resulting in a feeling of emotional cleansing and restoration
6. **Character Arc**: Example- “The Grinch” - we witness an inner change of heart that results in the outward change of identity.
7. Simon’s name was changed to Peter. Simon means reed, Peter means rock!
8. Jacob means “heel-grasper,” and Israel means “one who fights with God.”
9. Saul killed Christians; Paul wrote ? of the New Testament.
    1. No longer will you be called a drug addict, but a child of God.
    2. No longer will you be called a hypocrite, but a child of God.
    3. No longer will you be called dishonest and disloyal, but a child of God.
10. What I love about each of these men is that before they launched into their ultimate purpose, they needed some time to be developed. We all need to go through a process. This is a journey. Don’t do it alone. **Get in a B-group.**

3. **The Proof of Conversion**
    1. **Deep repentance and sorrow.**
    2. When one has been truly converted, a noticeable difference is evident.
    3. John the Baptist said to prove, by the way you live, that you’ve truly repented. (Luke 3:8)
    4. I’m reminded of the day I truly came to Christ. All of my friends could tell something had changed immediately. My personality remained the same, but my lifestyle had undergone a change.
    5. Peter said, **Be baptized.** Then he gave a slight teaching on baptism.
    6. It’s not a flawless record, but a changed heart.
    7. Baptism is a public declaration and proof that the old you is gone and the new you has arrived. (2 Corinthians 5:17) It’s a statement!
    8. Baptism is also an act of obedience. Jesus was baptized.
    9. wear my wedding ring every day to remind myself and others that I belong to someone else.
4. **The Promise of Conversion**
    1. Peter said in verse 39 that this promise is for you and your children. This is the reception of the Holy Spirit, which we will discuss in subsequent weeks.
    2. It also means that if you follow Jesus, a **generational blessing** will be upon your life.
    3. If you allow this transformation to occur, you will become a new person, and you will also notice that your children and grandchildren are transformed as well.
    4. We often say that we want our children to have better than we did. The best thing we can ever give our children is Jesus!

Peter walking on water - Are you ALL IN?

Application:

- Have you been truly converted?
- Have you been baptized?
- Baptism party after the service