

What Is Conversion?

by James Smith

James Smith's sermon explores the profound transformation that occurs in true conversion, emphasizing the necessity of a genuine relationship with God and the changes it brings to one's life.

Scripture: Matthew 18:3, John 3:3, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 4:22, James 1:22, James 4:8, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 John 3:9

Topics: "Spiritual Conversion", "Christian Renewal"

Description

James Smith preaches on the profound transformation that occurs in conversion, where the soul turns from error to truth, sin to holiness, works to Jesus, and Satan to God. This change involves a shift from rebellion to submission, from enmity to seeking reconciliation with God. Conversion leads to a complete renewal of the individual, turning a hardened sinner into a childlike believer who views everything through a new lens, finding joy in prayer, praise, and fellowship with God.

Transcript

Conversion is the turning of the soul, from error to truth, from sin to holiness, from works to Jesus, and from Satan to God. Man has turned his back upon God; in conversion he turns his face to God. Man has closed his ear against God, when converted, he says, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." Man is in open rebellion against God; in conversion, he throws down his weapons, and submits to God. Man is the enemy of God; in conversion, he seeks to be reconciled to God.

Conversion changes a hardened sinner--into a childlike believer; who comes to Jesus to be taught, cries to the Lord for salvation, and meekly stoops to learn from the least of God's saints. In conversion, the proud intellect is humbled, the hard heart is melted, and the stubborn sinner is changed into another man. He hates what he formerly loved--and loves what he formerly hated. He views everything differently: the Bible is a new book; he sees the ways of God with new eyes; he wonders at himself and--at all around him.

He once could not tell what was meant by the new birth before--but he knows now. He once could see no beauty in Jesus before--but he is the "altogether lovely One" now. He could not enjoy prayer or praise before--but he can enjoy them now. "All things have become new." No book like the Bible now; no day like Sunday now; no place like the house of God; no people like the saints; no subject like the love of Christ; no service like the service of God; no pleasure like that which flows from fellowship with God.

Conversion includes conviction of sin, embracing the Savior, and walking according to the perceptive will of God.

Reader, are YOU converted? The Lord Jesus has himself said, "I assure you--unless you are converted and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" Matthew 18:3

There must be a change of heart, and a change of life--or there is no salvation. You must be born again by the Spirit of God--or perish. You must be purified by the Word of God, justified by the obedience of Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit--or you have neither title to, nor fitness for heaven.

Let no man deceive you--God's Word is plain and positive upon the point! Do not deceive yourself--lest you should be undeceived in the burning lake of fire and brimstone! As the tree falls--so it must lie! And it always falls--the way towards which it leans! If your thoughts, desires, hopes, and affections lean towards heaven, and towards God--all will be well; but if not, it will be ill with you, and misery with you forever. Examine yourself carefully, for your everlasting welfare is at stake! Better be deceived on any other point--than on this point. Be this your prayer, "Search me, O God--and conform me to the image of your Son."

It is to be feared that very many professors are not really converted to God. They have changed their opinions, they have professed religion, they have joined a church; but God has not changed their hearts! They are still carnal and worldly! Moral they may be--spiritual they are not. Pray they may--but fellowship with God in prayer, they have not. They are numbered with the saints--but they are not saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit. They talk of grace--but they do not experience its power. They allow themselves to be deceived--and imagine that all is well, though they have never passed from death unto life, or been born of the Spirit of God.

Reader, take heed lest you should be deceived. Nothing is easier in these days. It is respectable to profess religion, to be a member of a church, and attend the ministry of a popular preacher. But real Christianity is something far beyond this! It is vital union to Christ. It is possessing the Spirit of Christ. It is being separated from the sinful world. It is crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts. It is mortifying the old man with his deeds. It is being risen with Christ, by the faith of the operation of God; and as such, setting the affections on things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. It is visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.

Let me beseech you as a friend, not to stop short of these things. Seek to have a thorough work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Make sure work for eternity. Dig deep, and lay your foundation on the rock. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. Count all things but loss, that you may win Christ. Aim high, be an uncommon Christian that you may be able to say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I--but Christ lives in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Spirit of the living God, create us anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, and bear your witness with our spirits that we are born of God!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-smith/what-is-conversion/>

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