

## CONVERSION

Acts 3:19

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Define "Conversion." "To turn." **Acts 26:20 (epistrepho)**;  
**Cf. Mt. 5:39 (strephe)**
2. Necessity of conversion. Emphasized by text and **Mt. 18:1-3**;  
**James 5:19-20 (epistrepho) After having turned away again!**

### DISCUSSION:

#### A. Is man Active or Passive in Conversion?

1. Some say, "Wholly an act of God." Who then is responsible for the lost?
2. Another extreme: "Man does it all." **Jer. 10:23**
3. The truth is both are active.
  - a. **1 Cor. 3:9** The apostles were fellow-laborers with God, as are we.
  - b. **John 3:16** We must believe, and obey, **John 3:36** where "believeth" is translated "obeys."
  - c. **Ephesians 2:8-9** Saved grace through faith.
  - d. **Matthew 13:15 (epistrepho)** Emphasize man does turning, God does healing.

#### B. Conversion is a threefold change:

1. Heart must be changed. **Acts 15:9** "...purifying their hearts by faith."
  - a. Intellect must be changed by hearing and understanding the truth.
  - b. Emotions or sensibilities are changed because of this knowledge.
  - c. Will is changed and we repent and convert. **Titus 2:11-12**
2. Life must be changed. **Matthew 3:8** "...bear fruits worthy of...."
3. State of relationship is changed. **Col. 1:13; Rom. 6:4**

#### C. Essential steps of conversion:

1. Cannot turn to one thing without turning from something else.
2. If never turned in wrong direction, no occasion to turn another direction.
3. Essential steps in turning from or to God are the same:
  - a. Adam and Eve turned wrong direction by definite steps. **Gen. 3**
    - 1) Preacher preached a lie — Eve heard it.
    - 2) She believed the lie.
    - 3) She obeyed the lie.
    - 4) She became guilty — was not condemned by faith only. Led husband into guilt.
    - 5) God drove them out and closed the gate!
  - b. In man's return same steps must be taken.
    - 1) Gospel must be preached and heard. **1 Cor. 1:21-23**
      - a) **Psalms 19:7** Word converts
      - b) **John 6:45** Those who hear and learn come to Christ
      - c) Therefore God uses agents: **Romans 10:12-15, 17**
    - 2) Must believe the truth. **John 20:30-31**
    - 3) Must obey the truth. **1 Peter 1:22**
    - 4) God pardons us.

5) Receives us back into his family.

**D. Difference between "Conversion" and "Pardon."**

1. Conversion takes place in mind of man — Pardon takes place in the mind of God.
2. Man cannot tell by feelings whether pardon has been granted.
3. Ill: Man in prison feels as if he is pardoned, regrets crime, but gates do not open.

E. It is Our Fault if Never Converted.

1. Our hearts wax gross. **Matthew 13:15**
2. We will not; **Matt. 23:37**
3. "Ye will not come." **John 5:40**

**CONCLUSION:**

1. God provided the plan — we must be converted His way.
2. Other ways may seem right, but lead to death. **Prov. 14:12**