

Unless You Are Converted

Our society of increasing tolerance of wicked behavior has corrupted the reasoning of many religious people so that they think God will accept me as I am. Men have exalted themselves above what God has spoken and revealed through His Son and the Holy Spirit, assuming that God will overlook deeds of darkness, works of the flesh and acts of disobedience. But God, who is love and is longsuffering, commands repentance (Acts 17:30).

The only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, came to make entrance into the kingdom of heaven accessible to all men. That entrance is dependent upon conversion. He taught, *“Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 18:3). Therefore, the person who is not converted will not enter the heavenly kingdom. The Lord does not accept everyone just as they are without conversion. All must be converted, and conversion means changes must be made.

The apostle Peter preached the same message. *“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”* (Acts 3:19). All who have transgressed God’s law have sinned (1 John 3:4; Romans 3:23). Sin separates men from God and from the hope of eternal life. Therefore, sin must be blotted out, washed away, cleansed. Sin will not be blotted out if the individual does not repent and is not converted. Sinners must make changes in their lives. They are called by the gospel to come out of darkness to walk in God’s marvelous light.

True conversion is much more than some meaningless ritual administered for church membership. New Testament conversion unto Christ is a change of heart, a change of allegiance, a change of thinking, a change of purpose, a change of lifestyle, a change of service and a change of worship. Christians in Thessalonica turned to God from idolatry to serve the living God in Christ (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10). This all encompassing change of the total person is achieved by daily adhering faithfully to the word of the Lord. *“...Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God”* (Romans 12:1-2).