

Biblical Theology

U5L3: Conversion

Nature of Conversion

- Definition: One's willing response to the Gospel call, in which he sincerely repents of his sins and places his trust in Christ for salvation.

1. Repentance: heartfelt sorrow for sin, renouncing of sin, and a sincere commitment to forsake sin and to walk in obedience to Christ.

- Turning from sin.
 - Understanding sin is wrong.
 - Sorrow for sin and hatred of it.
 - Personal decision to forsake sin.
- **Acts 2:37-38** - *"Repent and be baptized, for the forgiveness of your sins.*
- **2 Corinthians 7:9-10** - *yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance.*
- **Acts 3:19** - *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,*

2. Faith: trust in Jesus as a living person for forgiveness of sins for eternal life.

- Turning to Christ
 - Utter shift in dependence.
- **Mark 10:52** - *"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.*
- **Romans 1:17** - *For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

Important Aspects of Conversion

- Common misconceptions regarding certain aspects of conversion:

1. Genuine conversion is active, not passive.

- True conversion is more than passive knowledge of or understanding.
 - **James 2:19** - *You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*
 - **Acts 26:27-28** - *"Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"*
- True conversion results in powerful, personal trusting relationship with Christ. (Active, not passive)
 - **John 6:35** - *Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.*
 - **John 7:37** - *On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.*
 - **Matthew 11:28-30** - *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

2. Faith and repentance must come together.

- One does not happen before the other, one happens as the other happens.
 - **Acts 3:19** - Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,
 - **Isaiah 55:6-7** - Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.
 - **Acts 20:21** - I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.
 - **Hebrews 6:1** - Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God,

3. Genuine conversion results in a life of continual faith and repentance.

- Even conversion is then and now.
 - **Luke 9:23** - Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe in your own words the difference between faith and repentance?
2. How would you biblically and compassionately respond to someone who believes that they're going to heaven because they believe in the historical account of Jesus but do not entrust him with their life? What scripture passages would you use?
3. Are faith and repentance a part of your daily life? Explain.

Reading Assignment

Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem – Chapter 36: Justification