

# Conversions In Acts

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## Solomon's Portico

(Ac 4:1-4)

### INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
  - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on the "Conversions In Acts."
  - a. The last sermon looked at the "The First Great Entrance."
    - i. **Ac 2:41** "So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls."<sup>1</sup>
  - b. This week we are going to look at "Solomon's Portico."
    - i. This is the second "wave" of conversions mentioned in the book of Acts.
      - a. **Ac 4:4** "But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand."

### I. What Led To The Conversions?

- A. Peter & John had gone to the temple (3:1)
  1. It was the time when the evening sacrifices happened as well.
  2. This was a public event that took place at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.
- B. Peter & John came across a lame man (3:1-5)
  1. This man had been lame since **birth**.
    - i. This wasn't someone that had become lame and if healed be seen as one that had over time been healed.
  2. This man was **daily** at the temple gate called Beautiful.
    - i. This was someone that everybody was familiar with and knew his ailment.
  3. This man asked Peter & John for **alms**.
    - i. This was someone who obviously didn't know Peter & John's miraculous ability as he simply asked for alms ie money, food...charity.
- C. Peter & John give the lame man more than alms (3:6-8)
  1. Peter tells the man he has **no** silver or gold.
    - i. Peter & John were not "wealthy" preachers by any means.
  2. Peter **heals** the man in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.
    - i. This is a miracle for a few easily seen reasons.
      - a. This man went from unable to walk with weak ankles and feet to strong ankles & feet which were able to leap with no side effects.
      - b. This man did not do anything to receive this miracle except take the hand of Peter. In other words he was passive in it.
      - c. This man then praised God for what happened not out of desire for "public compensation" but out of desire to glorify God and showing who deserved the credit for his new found legs.

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<sup>1</sup> All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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- d. This man continued to be able to walk and didn't "lose" his new found waling ability.
  1. Many so called healings today are frauds for two reasons.
    - i. Most the time they are fake and this is why they no longer happen here in America in a public way anymore as people can see the same people being "healed" at each event, thus the "gig is up."
    - ii. Sometimes there is someone that can't walk well or the like but after an emotional bout from a "healer" they stand for a second or walk a couple of steps. However after the emotions wear off they are back in the same situation they were. They are not actually healed and that is evident by the lack of "leaping" and so forth.
  - ii. In the name of Jesus Christ means by His authority.
    - a. This is clearly demonstrated by the Jewish leaders when they ask by what power or authority do you do this.
      1. **Ac 4:7** "And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"
    - b. This is the same as we read or hear in movies "stop in the name of King George..." i.e. stop by the king's authority.
- D. All the people see the leaping & praising man (3:9-10)
  1. The people in the gate & temple **recognized** the man as the lame man.
    - i. There could be no denying by the Jewish leaders who this was so they could not deny what happened to him.
      - a. **Ac 4:16** "...What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it."
- E. Peter takes this opportunity to preach to the people (3:11-26)
  1. The people were in awe and ripe for preaching so Peter & John preach and teach them.
    - i. **Ac 4:1** "And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them"
- F. Thus...
  1. What led to the conversions...was there anything that got the conversions going...yes it was Peter & John preaching to the people.

### II. What Was Said To The Non-Christians?

- A. Peter asks why they think it was by their authority this was done (3:11-12)
  1. People often when amazed lose their common sense and assume where they shouldn't.
    - i. This is a perfect example. The Jews no that no man apart from God can do miracles but they are so amazed they attribute it to Peter.
- B. Peter then preaches Jesus by explaining the miracle (3:13-26)
  1. As one brother put it "Jesus is proclaimed, as the miracle is explained..." (Sermon: The 2000 At Solomon's Porch by Copeland, Mark)
    - i. This is exactly what Peter does.

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2. Peter explains the true source of the miracle
  - i. It was not by Peter or John's power it was through their **faith** in Jesus as the Christ.
    - a. Through faith in Jesus whom the Jews had killed.
    - b. Through faith in Jesus whom God had glorified.
    - c. Through faith in Jesus whom God had raised from the dead.
    - d. Through faith in Jesus whom many witnessed after His resurrection.
  - ii. It was not by Peter or John's power it was through **their** faith in Jesus' name or authority.
    - a. Through faith in Jesus' authority they healed the man.
      1. Notice it wasn't the man's faith but the apostles.
3. Peter then acknowledges their ignorance but explains it is not an excuse.
  - i. They killed the Messiah not knowing He was the Christ.
    - a. There is no doubt of that, as even Paul makes mention of this.
      1. **I Co 2:8** "None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."
  - ii. They had no reason not to know Jesus was the Messiah though.
    - a. They had been told by the prophets' mouth.
      1. **Is 53 & Ps 22** are great examples of this.
  - iii. Though ignorant they still needed repentance & conversion.
    - a. Ignorance is not an excuse one will be able to use at the judgment.
      1. **II Th 1:8** "in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."
      2. **Ac 17:30** "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent"
4. Peter explains why repentance & conversion are necessary
  - i. Repentance is necessary as it is the crucifixion of the old self.
    - a. **Ro 6:6** "We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin."
  - ii. Conversion is necessary as it is the point one gets "into Christ."
    - a. **Ro 6:3** "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"
    - b. **Ga 3:27** "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
  - iii. Repentance & conversion are necessary because...
    - a. They allow one's sins to be "blotted out."
      1. This is a reference to the ancient practice of erasing mistakes made on papyrus.
      2. Thus one's mistakes/sins would be remitted.
    - b. They allow for one's soul to be "refreshed."
      1. This is a reference to the "receiving of the gift of Holy Spirit."

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2. When one is sealed by the Holy Spirit, who is sent by Christ, one's soul is refreshed.
  - i. **Ep 1:13** "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit"
- c. They allowed for the "sending of Jesus Christ."
  1. This is a reference to the Second Coming.
  2. Jesus' return will not happen until "the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago" (**Ac 3:21**).
    - i. In other words our obedience to the gospel is part of the fulfillment of the prophets and necessary for Christ's return.
      - a. **II Pt 3:9** "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."
  - d. They allowed for all sinful people to turn from their wickedness.
    1. This is the reason Christ came and died so that we could have our sins or wickedness removed.
- C. Thus...
  1. What was said to the non-Christian...was there any specific doctrine mentioned...yes Peter preached the doctrine of conversion i.e. the obedience of the gospel.

### III. What Was The Mentality Of The New Converts?

- A. There is not much mentioned immediately after the conversions
  1. All that is really stated is 5000 men heard, believed, and obeyed what Peter taught.
- B. However if we go over a bit we will find what their mentality was like
  1. In **Ac 4:23-31** we find the converts boldly praying.
    - i. After Peter & John are told to how the Jewish leaders told them not to preach Jesus anymore those that had been converted along with the previous ones as well lifted up their voices a prayed boldly to God.
    - ii. They had a confidence about them even under the stress of persecution.
  2. In **Ac 4:32-37** we find the converts being proactive in brotherly love.
    - i. They were united completely with the other Christians.
      - a. They were all of one heart and soul.
        1. This applied to their understanding of Scripture.
        2. This applied to their physical means as well.
- C. Thus...
  1. What was the mentality of the new converts...was there anything surprising after their conversion in their attitude or actions...absolutely, they became bold against persecution and were completely united/integrated with the rest.

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### IV. How Does Knowing This Help Us Help Others?

- A. Knowing this helps us understand what will lead to people obey the gospel
  - 1. It is the seizing of opportunity and preaching Jesus to the lost.
    - i. In **Acts 2** the apostles went out to the people and made the opportunity.
    - ii. In **Acts 3** the apostles went out and took advantage of an opportunity.
- B. Knowing this helps us understand what needs to be said so others will obey the gospel
  - 1. People must realize their need for Christ because of their sins.
    - i. **Ac 3:15** “and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.”
  - 2. People must realize their need for obedience to Christ because of their unworthiness.
    - i. **Ac 3:26** “God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”
  - 3. People must realize their need for unity with one another.
    - i. **Ac 4:32** “Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.”

### CONCLUSION

- 1. Brethren when we examine these things let us make sure we learn the lessons given here.
  - a. Let us apply these to our lives and make them work for us to God’s glory.
- 2. Question: Are you striving to take hold of the opportunities that arise to teach Jesus?
  - a. If so continue therein and never grow slow in doing so.
  - b. If not why not?
- 3. Invitation
  - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
    - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
  - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
    - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
    - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
    - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
    - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
    - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
    - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**