

Conversions In Acts

The Disciples Of John Converted

(Ac 19:1-7)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on the different “Conversions In Acts.”
 - a. Last week we looked at “The Corinthian’s Conversion.”
 - i. **Ac 18:7-8** “And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.”¹
 - b. This week we are finishing up this series by looking at “The Disciples Of John Converted.”
 - i. **Ac 19:4-5** “And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.” 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
3. The four questions we will examine today is...
 - a. What led to the conversions?
 - b. What was said to the non-Christians?
 - c. What was the mentality of the new converts?
 - d. How can knowing this help us help others?
4. With these in mind let us examine our lesson for today.

I. What Led To The Conversions?

- A. Paul leaves Corinth for Syria (Antioch) by way of Cenchreae
 1. Aquila & Priscilla went with Paul.
 2. Cenchreae was south of Corinth
- B. From Cenchreae they went to Ephesus
 1. Paul goes as is his custom to preach in the synagogue and reason with the Jews.
 - i. The Jews ask him to stay longer but Paul declined but said he would, if God willed, come back to them.
 2. Paul leaves Aquila & Priscilla there in Ephesus.
- C. From Ephesus goes to Caesarea and then down to Antioch
 1. This completes Paul 2nd missionary journey.
- D. Paul starts his 3rd missionary journey
 1. The text says in **Ac 18:23**...
 - i. “After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.”

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

Conversions In Acts

- E. While Paul is away from Ephesus a man named Apollos arrives preaching
 - 1. **Ac 18:24** "...He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures."
 - i. The term "Scriptures" here refers to the O.T.
 - 2. Apollos though "competent in the Scriptures" and "instructed in the way of the Lord" did not have a full or proper understanding of the N.T. Scripture.
 - i. He knew the O.T. very well.
 - ii. He was a disciple of John (though most likely never knew him personally) which means...
 - a. He knew baptism was for the remission of sins.
 - 1. **Mk 1:4** "John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."
 - b. He knew there was a kingdom of God but thought it was "at hand" and didn't know it was already "here."
 - 1. **Mk 1:15** "...The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
 - 2. **Co 1:13** "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son"
 - iii. He was unaware of the church and its establishment.
 - 3. Aquila and Priscilla take Apollos in and teach him "the way of God more accurately" (**Ac 18:26**).
 - i. There he comes in contact with the "brethren" of Ephesus.
 - a. This seems to indicate that he was already a Christian and thus show that John's baptism before the crucifixion allowed entrance into the church after the resurrection like we find with the apostles.
 - 1. **Ac 2:41** "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to **them**." (emphasis mine)
- F. Paul leaving the region of Galatia and having gone through Phrygia he ends up back in region of Asia more specifically Ephesus
 - 1. Upon arriving he found some "disciples" and discovered that they were not Christians so Paul taught them the truth and they become Christians.
- G. Thus...
 - 1. What led to the conversions...was there anything that got the conversions going...yes it was Paul asking the right questions and then teaching them the truth.

Conversions In Acts

II. What Was Said To The Non-Christians?

- A. Paul asks a calculated question as it appears he knew they were “disciples of John”
 - 1. “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”
 - i. Remember if one is without the Holy Spirit they are not a Christian.
 - a. **Ro 8:9** “You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.”
 - 2. Of course, it is very evident that they were young in their discipleship to John based on their response of not having even heard of the Holy Spirit.
 - i. Add this to the fact that these men are in Ephesus and this is why most believe that these men were taught by Apollos while he was there.
- B. Paul now having their attention asks the most important question
 - 1. “Into what then were you baptized?”
 - i. Remember that before the establishment of the church even Jesus’s apostles were baptizing under John’s baptism that is repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
 - a. **Jn 3:22-23** “After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. 23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized.”
 - 2. They responded that they had been baptized under John’s baptism.
 - 2. They responded that they had been baptized under John’s baptism.
- C. Paul now uses this to teach/preach about the kingdom of God
 - 1. He taught them that...
 - i. This Jesus who they knew was more than just a contemporary of John’s He was the Messiah.
 - 2. He taught them that...
 - i. They needed to be baptized for the remission of sins in the name of Jesus.
 - a. Remember Paul had been taught this very same thing.
 - 1. **Ac 22:16** “And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.”
- D. Thus...
 - 1. What was said to the non-Christians...was there any specific doctrine mentioned...yes they were taught the truth concerning Jesus as the Messiah and that they must conform to His teachings.

III. What Was The Mentality Of The New Converts?

- A. After Paul laid hands on them they were able to prophesy and speak in tongues
 - 1. This shows us that they were not just going to go and sit back after becoming a Christian.
 - i. They were going out preaching and teaching.

Conversions In Acts

- B. These disciples became evangelists
 - 1. They, being young Christians, needed the knowledge of the gift of prophecy.
 - i. This according to Paul was the most important gift as it taught the Scripture.
 - a. **I Co 14:1, 5** “Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy...5 Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.”
 - 2. They, being evangelists in Ephesus, needed the gift of tongues.
 - i. Remember Ephesus was the capital of that province and the center of trade in that part of the world.
 - a. People from all over who spoke any number of languages would be there.
- C. Thus...
 - 1. What was the mentality of the new converts...was there anything surprising after their conversion in their attitude or actions...yes they immediately became preachers/teachers of God’s Word.

IV. How Can Knowing This Help Us Help Others?

- A. Knowing these things helps us help others by understanding we need to be ready to help
 - 1. Paul appeared to know they were disciples of John thus it would seem that he was told that by someone.
 - i. It appears that either Aquila and Priscilla or some other Christians informed Paul of Apollos’ teaching and that there were some those that he baptized out there.
 - a. Though we cannot be sure this seems very logical and I am of this persuasion given the events that are recorded.
 - 2. Thus we need to be ready when we find out there are those willing to listen to the gospel being taught.
- B. Knowing these things helps us help others by understanding we need to ask questions concerning peoples spiritual awareness
 - 1. That people now-a-days believe they are Christians even though they are not is without dispute.
 - i. We need to use that information to our advantage when we teach God’s Word.
 - 2. Paul used precise questions that were meant to make these men question what they had done.
 - i. I often use the question method when door knocking or dealing with someone that is strong minded that they are Christians.
 - a. First: Are you a Christian?
 - 1. This forces them to show their hand so to speak as to where they think they are spiritually.

Conversions In Acts

- b. Second: How did you become a Christian?
 - 1. This makes them have a foundation for their belief concerning their salvation and something they can recollect back to during the study.
- c. Third: If I could show you a verse that proves to be different from what you thought or what you have been taught will you sit down and study with me or set up a Bible study with me?
 - 1. This puts the ball in their court. If they say yes then there are several verses you could go to such as **I Pt 3:21**.
 - 2. If they say no then you know they don't care if they are spiritual ok or not and it is time as Paul did to dust off and move on.
- C. Knowing these things helps us help others by understanding we need to get young Christians involved in teach/preaching as soon as possible
 - 1. The old saying is true "the teacher always learns more than the students."
 - i. This is because the teacher puts so much time into their lesson.
 - 2. We need to get young Christian men doing the following...
 - i. Leading Bible studies (for non-Christians) with a mature Christian there to assist them as soon as possible.
 - a. Young Christian men have non-Christian friends!!!
 - ii. Preaching both devotionals and full length sermons as soon as possible.
 - a. Young Christian men though not always eager are usually willing to do at minimum devotionals and most after doing some of those will start to want to do a sermon.
 - iii. Leading prayers, singing, communion...as soon as possible.
 - a. This is perfect training for young Christian men.
 - 3. We need to get young Christian women doing the following...
 - i. Leading Bible studies (for non-Christian women) with a mature Christian woman there to assist them as soon as possible.
 - a. Young Christian women have non-Christian friends!!!
 - ii. Teaching in the young children's Bible classes with the mature teacher there to help in the beginning, but then let them in the rotation.
 - a. Young Christian women learn very quickly the joys of seeing young kids (often they have kids) learning the Bible and that easily translates to wanting to be involved in such.
 - iii. Be involved with the many great works found in the church such as...
 - a. Visitation
 - b. Cooking for those in need of such
 - c. Work around and in the building that needs done
 - 4. The point is the younger the Christian the faster they need to get involved.
 - i. This will lead to having a sense of belonging that should be cultivated.

Conversions In Acts

CONCLUSION

1. Brothers and sisters let me say that this series of lessons has...
 - a. Opened my eyes in many ways.
 - b. It has challenged me in many ways.
 - c. It has motivated me in many ways.
2. Question: Are you willing this week to implement the things we have learned, not in the future but now?
 - a. If so I look forward to hearing about and seeing the fruits of such labor.
 - b. If not why not? What is holding you back?
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**