

SUMMING UP GOD'S RECORD OF CONVERSIONS **(All 11 Cases) in Acts**

Lesson Twenty-One

From the outset of this course of study, we have most carefully avoided rushing to conclusions, in order to make as few mistakes as possible concerning the word of God. When we came to Lesson 14, how easy it would have been merely to announce some plan of "conversion" of our own human device and then to rush along to other matters. On the other hand, seeing that the eternal destiny of precious human souls is at stake, how unfair and inconsiderate this would have been!

Contrariwise, we have slowly and deliberately paced ourselves to a point-by-point examination of each and every one of the 11 cases of conversion, as recorded in God's "book of conversions", the book of ACTS. Up to this lesson, remember, we have studied each of these cases individually. However, it should be abundantly clear to all, by now, that all of God's teaching is not limited to the record of any single case of conversion. God's word is just not written that way. But, as Isaiah 28:10 describes it, "Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; HERE a little, and THERE a little."

If we limit our conclusions to the "little" we find "here", but ignore the "little" we find "there", we not only deal unfairly with the way the Bible is written; but we arrive at wrong answers, as well. Please remember that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." It follows, therefore, that any conclusions or preconceived notions we may have entertained, WHICH LEAVE OUT ANY PART of God's teaching on the subject of conversion – such conclusions or notions are just WRONG; and GOD'S WORD IS STILL RIGHT! As Romans 3:4 says it: "God forbid; yea, LET GOD BE TRUE, BUT EVERY MAN A LIAR; as it is written. That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightiest overcome when thou art judged."

That ALL of the ways and plans for salvation, being taught all over the world, cannot be true should be self-evident. Many of them are CONTRADICTIONARY. And when churches and preachers teach opposing doctrines on anything, can BOTH be RIGHT? For instance, one church teaches and practices "infant baptism"; another contends one must be at least 16 years old. Are BOTH RIGHT? Both MAY be wrong; but one just HAS to be wrong. How can they teach so oppositely to each other and both be right!

Most so-called "Protestant" churches teaches that salvation is by "FAITH ONLY" or by "FAITH ALONE." The "Catholic" Church contends that "WORKS" are necessary, too! Are BOTH right?

Some churches contend one is saved the moment he BELIEVES; others, that he must also REPENT; still others, that he must CONFESS and BE BAPTIZED.

Are ALL right?

One church teaches IMMERSION for BAPTISM; another contends that "SPRINKLING" and "POURING" are "just as good."

Are BOTH right?

One church argues for baptism in WATER; another says, No, we must be baptized with the baptism of the HOLY SPIRIT!

BOTH right?

One declares that baptism is “FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS;” another says it is NOT for the remission of sins.

Are BOTH right?

Such contradictory teachings can be cited “ad infinitum.” It is quite possible that ALL may be WRONG; it is NOT POSSIBLE that ALL may be RIGHT! However, it IS possible that amid the welter of all such confusion and contradiction, the truth may be found. But, if the truth is in there somewhere, how shall we ferret it out and know for sure that it IS the TRUTH?

There is ONLY ONE WAY to arrive at any responsible, reliable conclusion in this matter, as far as the WORD OF GOD is concerned. We must examine carefully and study prayerfully ANYTHING and EVERYTHING God’s word has to say in this connection, add it ALL up, and see what ALL God has taught on the subject.

ALL OTHER WAYS are partial, incomplete and, to some extent, at least, untrue.

THIS WAY is thorough, complete, and leaves nothing to guesswork. For the “SUMMING UP” of ALL 11 CASES OF CONVERSION, study the accompanying charts on “ACTS OF APOSTLES”—BOOK OF CONVERSIONS.

Now, from the CHART, please note that we have correlated ALL THE PERTINENT FACTS regarding conversion from the 11 cases as recorded in “Acts.” To facilitate our study, separate columns are arranged so as to accommodate each fact, command or promise given pertaining to conversion. On the left-hand side of the chart, you will note all 11 cases of conversion listed in order and the chapter or chapters cited where found. In each case, since teaching or preaching was done, the next column takes account of this, and cites the reference in evidence. The succeeding five columns show what the various sinners did in being converted, in reaction to the teaching and preaching that was done. Then, lastly, the right-hand column lists the RESULTS received (or promised) from obeying the FORM OF DOCTRINE thus described.

The record of each case of conversion, as you observe, is NOT UNIFORM throughout. Some cases are described in detail; others rather sketchily. In ALL cases it is clearly shown that TEACHING and/or PREACHING was done. Thus, for example, whereas, in Case No. V, the scriptures do not SAY in so many words that the sinner HEARD what was preached, it is necessarily inferred from the context that he did. The same goes for Case No. IX; in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (Case No. VI), nothing is said of his BELIEVING what he heard - or of REPENTANCE or of CONFESSING his faith. Yet, the fact that he was BAPTIZED implies that he obeyed the gospel Ananias preached unto him. In only three of the cases of

conversion is REPENTANCE either mentioned, commanded or described. (Cases No. I, III & IX) Yet, in Acts 17:30, we learn that God “now commandeth ALL MEN EVERYWHERE to REPENT.” Thus it is not necessary that repentance be specified in each case, since God requires it of ALL! The fact that it is mentioned in the three cases referred to is sufficient to show the connection of REPENTANCE in God’s order for man’s conversion. The only case showing CONFESSION (of faith), please note, is that of the Ethiopian eunuch- Case No. V. God does not have to repeat something MANY times to make it so. ONE time is enough! The one time Acts mentions the eunuch confessing, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” is sufficient to include CONFESSION OF SUCH BELIEF in God’s teaching on conversion.

Although practically all so-called “Christian” denominations deny baptism as having any connection at all with conversion (turning to God), how curious it is of God to record baptism IN THIS VERY CONNECTION in 10 of the 11 cases of conversion described! The only case that does not specifically mention baptism is Case No. II - at Solomon’s Porch. Whereas, on Pentecost, Peter had commanded, “Repent... and BE BAPTIZED,” at Solomon’s Porch, he commanded, “Repent ... and BE CONVERTED.” Inasmuch as ALL TEN OF THE OTHER CASES OF CONVERSION mention BAPTISM at this point, it seems reasonable to infer that Peter’s command to “be converted” must have included baptism, too. Do you agree?

As for the RESULTS either granted or to be expected, based on obedience to the things commanded, NO SINGLE CASE OF CONVERSION MENTIONS ALL. On Pentecost (see right-hand column on the chart) at least three results are mentioned; at Solomon’s Porch, three more. Also in the cases of the Ethiopian eunuch, Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius and the Philippians Jailer, results are cited.

Since no ONE case sets forth everything Acts teaches on conversion, how, then, shall we arrive at the sum total of the true teaching on this subject in this extraordinary book of conversions? Surely, it must be by COMBINING ALL THE INFORMATION in the several columns together!

In arithmetical addition, we should proceed from right to left. In algebra, addition is from left to right. Seeing that our information logically proceeds from left to right, let us add it all up algebraically – column by column-and see what is the GRAND TOTAL, as set forth in Acts, on the subject of conversion.

Reading across the bottom of the chart, after we have added the information in each column all together, here is the conclusion of all our studies, in Acts, thus far; That TEACHING and/or PREACHING started each case; sinners, thus, HEARD the gospel, leading them to BELIEVE in Christ, to REPENT of their sins, to CONFESS their faith and to BE BAPTIZED. Resulting from these conversion, those thus obeying the form of doctrine taught and/or preached received REMISSION OF SINS, RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT, WERE SAVED, HAD THEIR SINS BLOTTED OUT, ENJOYED “TIMES OF REFRESHING,” WERE BLESSED, REJOICED, and had their SINS WASHED AWAY.

LESSON-21

(SPACE FOR YOUR STUDY NOTES)

ACTS OF APOSTLES – Book of Conversions							
CASES OF CONVERSION	TEACHING OR PREACHING	SINNERS HEARS	SINNER BELIEVES	SINNER REPENTS	SINNER CONFESSES	SINNER IS BAPTIZED	RESULTS
I. ON PENTECOST (Acts 2)	Peter preached (vs. 14-36, 38-40)	They heard (vs. 37 & 41)	“Pricked in their heart” (vs. 37)	Peter said, Repent (vs. 38)		Peter said, “be baptized” (vs. 38); about 3,000 were baptized. (vs. 41)	1. Remission of sins (vs. 38) 2. Receive Holy Spirit (vs. 38) 3. Save selves (vs. 40)
II. AT SOLOMON’S PORCH (Acts 3,4 & 5)	Peter preached (3:12-26) and taught (4:2)	Hear (3:22-23) Heard (4:4)	About 5,000 believed (4:4); multitudes believed (5:14)	Repent (vs. 19); turn from iniquity (vs. 26)		Peter said “Be converted” (vs. 19)	1. Sins blotted out (vs. 19) 2. Times of refreshing (vs. 19) 3. Blessing (vs. 26)
III. THE SAMARITANS (Acts 8)	Phillip preached (vs. 5,12); also Peter & John (vs. 25)	Heard (vs. 6)	Believed (vs. 12)			Baptized (vs. 13; also see vs. 16)	
IV. SIMON, THE SORCERER (Acts 8)	Phillip preached (vs. 5,12); also Peter & John (vs. 25)	Heard (vs. 6)	Believed (vs. 13)			Baptized (vs. 13 & 16)	
V. ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH (Acts 8)	Philip preached (vs. 35)		Believed (vs. 37)		Confessed (vs. 37)	Baptized (vs. 36 & 38)	Rejoiced (vs. 39)
VI. SAUL OF TARSUS (Acts 9)	Ananias preached (vs. 17)	Heard (vs. 4)				Baptized (vs.18)	
(Acts 22)	Ananias preached (vs. 17)	Heard (vs. 4)				Baptized (vs.16)	Sins washed away (vs. 16)
VII. CORNELIUS & HIS HOUSE (Acts. 10)	Peter preached (vs. 34-43)	Hear (vs. 22-23) Heard (vs. 44)	Believe (vs. 43)			Baptized (vs.47 & 48)	Remission of sins (vs. 43)
VIII. LYDIA & HER HOUSE	Paul & Silas preached	Heard (vs. 14)	“Heart opened”			Baptized (vs.15)	

(Acts 16)	(vs. 13)		(vs. 14); faithful (vs. 15)				
IX. THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER (Acts 16)	Paul & Silas preached (vs. 32)		Believe (vs. 31&34)	Washed their stripes (vs. 33)		Baptized (vs.33)	1. Saved (vs. 31) 2. Rejoiced (vs. 34)
X. THE CORINTHIANS (Acts 18)	Paul preached (vs. 4 & 5)	Many heard (vs. 8)	Believed (vs. 8); Crispus believed (vs, 8)			Baptized (vs. 8); Crispus also baptized (I Cor.1:14)	
XI. THE EPHESIANS (Acts 19)	Paul preached (vs. 4)	Heard (vs. 5)	Believed (vs. 2)			Baptized (vs. 5)	

GRAND TOTAL	} TEACHING AND/OR PREACHING WAS DONE IN EACH CASE OF CONVERSION	SINNERS HEARD+	SINNERS BELIEVED+	SINNERS REPENT+	SINNERS CONFESSED FAITH IN CHRIST	SINNERS WERE BAPTIZED	1. FOR REMISSION OF SINS 2. TO RECEIVE HOLY SPIRIT 3. TO BE SAVED 4. TO BLOT OUT SINS 5. FOR TIMES OF REFRESHING 6. FOR BLESSING 7. FOR REJOICING 8. TO WASH AWAY SINS.
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LESSON-21
SUMMING UP GOD'S RECORD OF CONVERSIONS
(All 11 Cases) in Acts
QUESTIONS ON LESSON

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SUMMING UP GOD'S RECORD
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QUESTIONS ON LESSON TWENTY-ONE

1. In all, how many cases of conversion have we studied in Acts?

2. Is ALL of God's teaching on conversion limited to any ONE case?

3. If not, how does Isaiah 28:10 teach us God's word is written?

4. If we **accept PART** of God's word and **reject PART**, will our answers thus based on such PARTIAL INFORMATION be **RIGHT** or **WRONG**?

5. Is it possible for ALL the ways and plans for salvation being taught all over the world to **contradict each other** and ALL of them still be right?

6. Explain how we can avoid errors in conclusions drawn from our studies of the word of God:

7. From our studies of the 11 cases of conversions in Acts, in how many cases was TEACHING and/or PREACHING done? _____
8. In response to what was taught or preached, LIST **FIVE THINGS** sinners did as recorded in Acts:

9. In how many cases of conversion, as recorded in Acts, is HEARING mentioned? Which case does NOT mention hearing?

10. How many cases mention BELIEVING? Is believing mentioned in EVERY CASE? If not, which case does NOT mention believing?

11. How many cases mention, command or describe REPENTANCE?

12. Does repentance have to be **mentioned** in EACH case in order to be binding on ALL?

13. In how many cases of conversion is CONFESSION recorded?

14. Was this confession of one's SINS or was it of one's **FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST**?

15. Quote the eunuch's confession of faith verbatim:

16. If God says a thing JUST **ONE TIME**, is it **TRUE** or **FALSE**?

17. Does God's repeating something **more than once** make it any **TRUER** than as if he had said it **once ONLY**? _____

18. In how many cases of conversion is BAPTISM mentioned?

19. In which case is baptism NOT mentioned?

20. Which case connects BAPTISM and REMISSION OF SINS?

21. When Peter told those on Pentecost to "SAVE yourselves" (Acts 2:40), what did those do who "gladly received" his word?

22. Does the fact that these people were BAPTIZED in response to Peter's exhorting them to SAVE themselves, connect BAPTISM with SALVATION? Explain

23. Which case of conversion connects BAPTISM with WASHING AWAY SINS? If Saul's sins had been forgiven him the moment he BELIEVED (as some contend), would he have had any sins left to be WASHED AWAY at his baptism? If your answer is "yes," then please explain Acts 22:16:

24. How many RESULTS are listed in connection with these cases of conversion?

25. If we, today, HEAR (the gospel), BELIEVE (in Jesus Christ), REPENT (of our sins), CONFESS (our faith in Christ) and ARE BAPTIZED, just like those recorded in Acts, should we receive **the same results** as they?