

# Conversion

**Ps 19:7**

**1**

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

The KJV here reads “converting.” The Hebrew word is...

**2**

**Shuwb** OT:7725 (shoob); a primitive root; to turn back (hence, away)

How does man view the Law of God? Adam and Eve apparently looked at it as a series of guidelines that really wasn't necessarily true. The Israelites seemed to view it as nothing more than a series of restrictions to be hated or changed as felt. Many in the world today seem to view it much the same as did they. Why is that? Is the Law of God so restricting that it draws the life right out of you? Is it so confining as to make one's very existence unbearable? What is it about the Law of God that makes so many people so reluctant to commit to God in faithful obedience? I wish I knew the answer to these questions. I don't. Is it that they don't like having restrictions? The Law of God can be restrictive, especially when David, to whom this Psalm is attributes, wrote these words. The Law of Moses was very restrictive in its nature having both do's and don'ts, and yet notice what the David says...

**3**

***“The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul”***

When he spoke of "the law of the Lord", David did not merely mean the law as it was given in the Ten Commandments, although they too are perfect, and are also used in the conversion of souls. The term includes the entire doctrine of God, the whole divine revelation; and though, in David's day, the revelation was not completed as we have today, for the New Testament was not then given, nor, necessarily, all that much of the Old Testament, yet the text loses none of its impact, regardless of which Law is under consideration. God's Law is perfect, all of His Law. That given to Adam and Eve, the Law of the Patriarchs, the Law of Moses, as well as the Law of Christ, all are perfect, doing exactly what God intended each of them to do, prepare His people for the purpose He intended them for.

A tree is known by its fruit, a book by its message, and a man by what he says and does. Remember what Christ said about trees that bear no or bad fruit?...

**John 15:5-6**

**4**

5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned

The branch gets its nourishment from the vine. Whether or not the branch is valid, produces fruit, begins with the vine, but it can also happen where the vine is sound and has branches that produce good fruit, all except for that one branch that, for whatever reason, just doesn't. Just because a branch grows from a sound vine, doesn't guarantee it being a viable, producing branch. Those are the ones Christ is talking about, the ones that, while they may be seemingly attached to

Him, aren't producing any fruit. These will be cut off and thrown into the fire. The Word of God, the vine, has always been able to nourish those who choose to abide in it, in God. That is what David is talking about when he says that "*It is perfect, restoring the Soul.*" We are going to look at some thoughts from this passage today...

- 5
- 1) How does the Word of God convert a soul
  - 2) The depth of a true conversion by God's Word
  - 3) Where does true conversion lead

The word convert or conversion is defined as...

Convert

6

1. cause to change in form, character, or function. "production processes that converted raw material into useful forms" synonyms: change, turn, transform, metamorphose, transfigure, transmute; More
2. score from (a penalty kick, pass, or other opportunity) in a sport or game.
3. a person who has been persuaded to change their religious faith or other beliefs. "he is a recent convert to the church" synonyms: proselyte, neophyte, new believer; catechumen  
"Christian converts"

So then, our first point...

7

- 1) How does the Word of God convert a soul

As we look at this thought let's first consider the idea of God's Word, His testimonies. The Psalmist writes...

*Ps 119:152*

8

152 Of old I have known from Your testimonies That You have founded them forever.

God's Word is eternal. His Word is the manifestation of who and what God is. His power, His love, His truth, His majesty, all that He is is revealed in His Word and it is as eternal as He is. Christ repeats this same thought in...

*Matt 24:35*

9

35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

The Word of God, according to our text can and will turn anyone who will but heed it away from the world and towards God. That said, why then, when a man reads the Bible through fifty times, and, for fifty years, hears sermons that have all come out of the Bible does what he reads and what he hears not magically turn him into a Christian. The answer is simple, that's not the way the word works. This is where some have developed an erroneous understanding of the way that conversion happens. Many teach that conversion is a product of the Spirit of God working directly upon the heart and causing it to accept the word. On the surface, there is an inherent truth in that statement, but the extension of it leads to error. Does the Holy Spirit work on the hearts of the hearer of the Word? Yes, absolutely yes. The question is how. Is it a direct working of the Spirit or is it indirect? If it is direct, then the first question must be, why doesn't God work that way on

everyone's heart? Is He a respecter of persons, deciding that you will be saved but you will not? Obviously that just isn't the case. God does not discriminate choose one man over another, but His spirit does work on a man's heart. How? In the parable of the sower Christ illustrates that the Word falls on someone's heart, in their mind, and begins to grow, that is the working of the Spirit. When a man hears the Word, truly hears it, then the Spirit of God begins working through that Word, guiding, changing, growing, teaching, strengthening, comforting the one who chooses to allow it to. That is what Paul means in...

**Rom 8:16**

**10**

**16** The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

This is how conversion happens.

**11**

A) The Scripture of Truth

Begins to work through a man's hearing, begins to grow within a man's heart, begins to be accepted by a man's intellect, then begins to change that man's will to the will of God, that, friends, is conversion. It is not a spur of the moment decision that is made because others think it needs to be. It is not just an emotional response to a stirring sermon, though emotions are most definitely a part of the change. Nor is it just an intellectual decision that is made without regard of the emotions involved. Conversion, the act of being changed into a fruit bearing, fellow heir with Christ, is an ongoing, life-long, effort that is made by the one who has accepted Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

**12**

B) The Spirit working through the truth

It makes no more sense to think that the Spirit has nothing to do with conversion than to think that it is the sole reason for it. The Spirit of God speaks to our spirits, that is what God through Paul tells us. When the Word is heard and heeded God's Spirit works through that Word and testifies with our spirits that the Word is truth.

This leads us right into our next point...

**13**

2) The depth of a true conversion by God's Word

Again, looking at the parable of the sower in Matthew 13 we see that Christ describes varying degrees of conversion. Some ignore the Word, the seed, completely, while in others there is a seeming acceptance of the truth of it only to have it overcome by the world and erased in the hearts of those with no depth of faith. Only a very few do we see the Word of Truth taking hold and growing, developing a depth that can withstand the tares of the world and truly change the heart of the converted.

The idea of depth of conversion is what defines the type of Christian that we are. The depth of our conversion, the strength with which the Word of God abides within us, is the source of our faith, comfort, strength, and love of God, everything that we are as His children. Remember the weapon that Christ used when Satan took Him into the wilderness to tempt Him?

**Matt 4:4**

**14**

4 But He answered and said, "It is written,

"It is written." God's Word is the greatest weapon that man has in being able to overcome not only Satan, but his own unfaithfulness, if he will just let it.

**Eph 6:17**

**15**

**17** And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

God has given man every tool and weapon necessary for man to win the battle for his soul. The Word of God can defeat any foe, any opponent, if man will just use it.

**Heb 4:12-13**

**16**

**12** For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. **13** And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

The impact here is not only that God's Word, when allowed, can show us exactly how to grow in His Word, but will also serve to protect us from the attacks of Satan. That is the power of the Word.

**1 Peter 1:22-23**

**17**

**22** Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, **23** for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.

Peter talks of the Word as a "living and enduring thing." That speaks to the depth of the conversion that we as Christians are to have, to grow into. The truth of the matter is simply that no one comes to the Lord as a mature, knowledgeable in all things, well-grounded Christian. That is something that has to be grown into. It doesn't come by accident, nor by just showing up to services. It takes a concentrated effort to learn what God says and to put those things into application in our lives.

Part of the growth that the Christian goes through is seen in the understanding that when the Word of God converts a man, transforms him into a faithful follower of God through Christ, it should take away from him his despair, the despair of hopelessness that comes from a recognition that sin separates us from our creator. He hates the sin as much as when he feared that it would destroy him forever. By faith, he sees the wounds of Jesus, and he knows the sacrifice Christ made to set him free from his sin, and that should make him forever hate sin. Isn't that an excellent conversion?

There are a couple of points that can be made concerning true conversion...

**18**

C) True conversion gives a man perfect rest  
But does not stop his progress

He knows that the work that has saved him is the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows that there is nothing that he can add to our even take away from what Christ did that would in any way improve it. He can rest in the bosom of the Lord while working to make his own election sure...

**2 Peter 1:10** 19

**10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

20 D) True conversion gives a man security  
But it does not allow him to quit being watchful

**1 Cor 10:12** 21

**12** Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.

22 E) True conversion gives a man strength and holiness  
But never lets him boast

Therein is the conversion power of the perfect Law of God seen. True conversion is accomplished through the Word and not because of any inherent strength or ability of man. Man may glory, but only in the Lord.

23 3) Where does true conversion lead  
Our text reads...

24 ***"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul,"***

The change that the Word of God works in the believers life is seen in the life that that believer begins to live. Conversion is seen in the core beliefs that man holds. A true convert discards any beliefs that don't coincide with the Word of God. Conversion is seen in the direction that a man pursues in his life, changing his will to that of God. A man can't profess to be converted and never change the way he lives. Conversion is seen in the confession that a man makes of Christ in his life and in his proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of God. Ultimately, true conversion is seen in the way a man obeys God's Word, whether faithfully and completely or intermittently and in part. True conversion is seen in the power of God through His Word to change the lives of the convert. If there is never any change seen, where is the conversion?

And lastly, true conversion is realized in eternal life...

**1 John 5:13-15** 25

**13** These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. **14** This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. **15** And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

God's Word can and will change us if we let it, if we invite it to, if we believe it. That is the power of God's Word.