

Real Change: Conversion

- What do people think (right or wrong) it means to be converted to Christianity?
- Why is it important for us to have a firm grasp on conversion as it is explained in the Bible? ([pg 12-13](#))
- What are the risks of misunderstanding conversion?

Series Introduction

Biblical conversion is more than professing belief. It's not reciting a creed. It's not merely praying a prayer or walking an aisle or raising your hand. It's not reaching a certain age, attending a class, or passing through some other rite of adulthood. It's not a decision you made in the past, and it's not a journey. Conversion is turning with our whole lives from self-justification to Christ's justification, from self-rule to God's rule, from idol worship to God worship. Conversion is God's work in us. It's being brought from darkness into light. It's being made new, not merely nice. ([read pg 13-14, 17 of book](#))

Session One: Do We Need to Change?

Getting Started

1. It seems that people often get offended if someone suggests that they need to change. Have you observed this? Do you get upset at the suggestion that you need to change? Why does this happen?

Main Idea

All people desperately need to change because we are *by nature* alienated from God, rebellious toward God, and subject to the wrath of God.

2. How might the world respond to the declaration that all people need to have their nature changed?

Digging In

Regardless of the fact that many people would oppose this idea, the Bible teaches that *all* human beings are in need of fundamental change. Consider what Paul says in Romans 1:18-32...

Read Romans 1:18-32

1. Who is Paul talking about in these verses?
2. What are the things that Paul says people do in this passage? Does anything Paul says strike you, surprise you, or raise questions for you?
3. What is God's attitude toward humanity as described in this passage?
4. What does Paul say can be known about God (vv. 19-20)? How are these things made known (v. 20)?
5. How should we respond to this knowledge (v. 21)?
6. What have people done to the truth about God (vv. 18, 21,22,23)? What does He mean?
7. What has happened to our hearts and minds as a result (v 28)?
8. How would you summarize this passage's teaching about human nature and God's attitude toward humanity as a whole?
9. In light of this passage, how would you respond to someone who says that human beings are fundamentally good? Or that human beings can become good or achieve goodness?
10. What evidence do you see in the world that this passage is true?
11. Why do you think it's important for us as Christians to clearly proclaim that people are in need of radical change? What would happen if we muted this part of the message?
12. How can you (as an individual) clearly communicate this need for change?
13. How can the church (as a whole) clearly communicate this need for a change?

For personal reflection:

Have you been changed? That is, have you done more than change your behavior?... Have you been made new, with a new desire to love God and love others?

When you share the gospel or teach your kids the gospel, do you tell them that they need to be "made new"? Or do you teach them to "be nice" and change their behavior?

How does your understanding of conversion affect your assurance of your own salvation?