

CHURCH MEMBERS WHO NEED TO BE CONVERTED

Text: James 5:19-20

INTRO: The word translated "convert" in the KJV literally means to turn. In Mark 5:30, it is used literally, to tell us that Jesus "turned about" to see the woman who had touched His garment. Most of the instances where the word is used, it is used in a spiritual sense. There are church members who need to be turned from the course they are pursuing, they need to change; they need to be converted.

I. BACKSLIDERS. James 5:19-20.

Gal 6:1, Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

Gal 5:4, You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

A. The Bible tells us that the backslider is in worse condition than he was before he became a Christian.

2 Pet 2:20-22, For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world thru the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them & overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A

dog returns to his own vomit," & "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

B. This is true because he is in grave danger of reaching the point where he will find it impossible to repent & be converted.

Heb 6:4-6, For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, & have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, & put Him to an open shame.

II. THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CONVERTED TO A CERTAIN PREACHER RATHER THAN TO THE LORD.

1 Cor 3:1-8, And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, & even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, & divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, "I am of Paul," & another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and

each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

III. THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CONVERTED TO PROMOTIONALISM, DISPLAY, SOCIAL FUNCTIONS & SUCH LIKE.

- A. Like those who followed Jesus because of the loaves & fishes. NOTE: Jesus did not do this to draw a crowd.

John 6:26, 66-67, Jesus answered them & said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves & were filled... From that time many of His disciples went back & walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"

- B. There was perhaps an element of something of this nature in the conversion of Simon the sorcerer.

Acts 8:18, 22, And when Simon saw that thru the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money... Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

- C. There is no way God's people can successfully compete with night clubs, theaters, sporting events, etc., for long at a time. What God's people must do is give to those who are interested the one thing that no one else is offering them--the pure, unadulterated word of God. 2 Tim. 4:2.

IV. THOSE WHO ARE CONVERTED TO A CHURCH BUILDING, OR TO A CERTAIN PARTY OF WORSHIPERS.

John 12:42, Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.

John 9:18-22, But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, & that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.

ILLUSTRATION: Robert Turner tells of some brethren in Calif who bought a bldg from the Methodists. 2 families of Methodists were so attached to the bldg, they submitted to baptism and remained there.

V. THOSE WHO ARE CONVERTED TO PROFESSIONALISM IN THE PULPIT.

1 Cor 2:1-5, And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus

Christ & Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

VI. THOSE WHO ARE CONVERTED TO THEIR OWN FEELINGS & EMOTIONS. Who seek an emotional "high."

2 Cor 10:4-5, For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments & every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, & being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

1 Cor. 5:7; Prov. 28:26; Jer.10:23.

Springhill, LA, March 10, 1974

La Porte, TX, June 11, 1978

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, December 18, 1994

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, October 24, 2004