

True Conversion



"If a person claims to be converted, we are entitled to ask two questions: 'From what?' and 'Into what?'"

JOHN BLANCHARD



PRAY FIRST: Let me learn by paradox that the way down is the way up, that to be low is to be high, that the broken heart is the healed heart, that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit, that the repenting soul is the victorious soul, that to have nothing is to possess all, that to bear the cross is to wear the crown, that to give is to receive, that the valley is the place of vision.

Understanding the Truth

There are four common misconceptions of what it means to be a true believer or Christian. See if you can recall them:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

None of these things are clear indicators that one is truly a Christian. The single greatest evidence that a person is a true Christian is that he has been _____! (*2 Corinthians 5:17*)

- The first sign that a person is a true believer is that he has been delivered from _____ to _____ . (*Colossians 1:12-13*)

Sign #2—Romans 6:17-18, 20-22

A true believer is one who has been delivered from _____ to _____.

- A. When you think of a "slave," what words come to your mind that describe his condition?
- B. According to Romans 6:16, what is characteristic of a slave?
- C. According to verse 16, a person's general pattern of living proves who his true master is. If his life is characterized by sin (that which is opposed to God's will), whose slave is he?
- D. If his life is characterized by obedience (which reflects God's will), whose slave is he?
 - What is the result of the first slavery?
 - What is the result of the second slavery? Righteousness (Gk. *dikaioisune*) means the standard that God requires man to achieve that he could never reach on his own. At the time of their conversion, God imputes this righteousness to those who are His (*2 Corinthians 5:21*).
- E. Read Matthew 6:24. What is true about every human being?
- F. What is true of the person who is born of God? (*Read 1 John 2:29.*)
The word "practice" is in the present tense in the Greek language, which means "continuous and repeated action." People usually practice that which they enjoy and to which they are enslaved.
- G. Read 1 John 3:7-10. How can you clearly distinguish between the child of God and the child of Satan?
- H. According to Ephesians 4:22-24, how is the "new self" created?
- I. According to Ephesians 5:9, what does the fruit (evidence of true nature) look like in a person who is truly saved?
- J. According to Romans 6:22, what is the evidence that one has been delivered from sin as his master? The book of James shows us that there are certain marks that set us apart from the world and manifest true saving faith. Read the following verses and seek to identify the marks of a person who has been delivered from sin to righteousness:
 - James 2:14-26: _____—Are these evident in your life?
 - James 3:1-12: _____—How is yours doing?
 - James 3:13-18: _____—Whom do you depend on for yours?
 - James 4:1-4: _____—Are you prepared to be an enemy of the world?

A person who has been truly saved or born again is not perfect or sinless; however, because of this life-changing relationship with Christ, his entire life or nature has been so radically changed that he can never live in or enjoy sin again. The principle of sin is broken and the practice of sin is interrupted.



Examine the consistent pattern of your life. Test yourself with these questions:

Does the general pattern of your life demonstrate obedience to God?

- Needs work
- Yes, by His grace

Does your speech reflect His righteousness?

- Needs work
- Yes, by His grace

Are you depending upon Him for wisdom?

- Needs work
- Yes, by His grace

Are your responses to your spouse, children, and/or co-workers God-honoring?

- Needs work
- Yes, by His grace

Are you seeking God's will as the consistent pattern of your life in everything that you do?

- Needs work
- Yes, by His grace

APPLICATION

Being a doer of the Word

Has this sign of deliverance from error to truth been seen in your life? If so, share how. If not, you now know what to look for as God works in your life. Close in prayer thanking God for delivering you from error to truth, or asking God to open your spiritual eyes to see the way things really are.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Placing yourself in transparent and accountable relationships

How are you doing in the area of **MARRIAGE** and **FAMILY**?

- How is your family joy and harmony?

(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)

- How well have you loved your spouse this past week?

(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)

- How well have you loved your children this past week?

(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)

Obeying the Truth—Your Mission this Week

Engaging the lost through word and deed with the intention of imparting the Gospel



List three sins that you find yourself “occasionally” enjoying. Talk with someone about practical steps you can take to develop a hatred for those sins. Make sure you also consider the things to do to develop a love for righteousness.



MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK: 2 Corinthians 5:21

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”



EXTRA RESOURCES FOR THE VAULT

Alleine, Joseph. *An Alarm to the Unconverted*. Mulberry: Sovereign Grace Publishers. 2002. Print.
Bolton, Samuel et.al. *The Puritans on Conversion*. Grand Rapids: Soli Deo Gloria Publications. 2003. Print.

There are four common misconceptions of what it means to be a true believer or Christian. See if you can recall them:

- praying the sinner's prayer
- walking forward in a church service
- saying you accepted Christ
- saying that Christ has touched you

The single greatest evidence that a person is a true Christian is that he has been transformed!

The first sign that a person is a true believer is that he has been delivered from darkness to light.

Sign #2—sin to righteousness

- A. trapped, oppressed (answers may vary)
- B. obedience to his master
- C. he is a slave of sin
- D. he is a slave of righteousness
 - death (v.22)
 - eternal live (v.22)
- E. cannot serve two masters
- F. he practices righteousness
- G. the child of God does not practice sin
- H. in righteousness and holiness of truth
- I. goodness, righteousness, and truth
- J. sanctification
 - James 2:14-26: faith-produced works
 - James 3:1-12: taming the tongue
 - James 3:13-18: wisdom
 - James 4:1-4: no longer friend of the world

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.