

No Change - No Conversion

by Selwyn Hughes

Conversion is the change by which one passes from the kingdom of self to the kingdom of God, and it is essential for entering the kingdom of heaven.

Scripture: Matthew 18:3, John 3:3, Acts 3:19, Acts 26:18, Romans 16:5, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 4:22, 1 Thessalonians 1:9, James 5:19

Topics: "Spiritual Conversion", "Eternal Life"

Description

Selwyn Hughes emphasizes the importance of spiritual conversion as the gateway to receiving divine forgiveness and eternal life. He highlights Jesus' words that being converted is essential to entering the kingdom of heaven, emphasizing that all other distinctions in society are insignificant compared to being either converted or unconverted. Hughes expresses sadness over the NIV translation of Matthew 18:3, preferring the more powerful imagery of being 'converted' rather than simply 'changing.' He defines conversion as the shift from the kingdom of self to the kingdom of God, emphasizing that true conversion involves a significant change in one's life.

Transcript

"Greet ... Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia." (v. 5)

For reading & meditation:

Romans 16:1-16

A word which the gospel associates with salvation is the word "conversion." Salvation is the offer of divine forgiveness and the gift of eternal life; conversion is the way we enter into that experience and receive the gift. The word "conversion" means to turn about or change one's direction. Though other religions talk about spiritual conversion, the experience they speak of bears no relation whatsoever to the thought in the mind of Jesus when He said: "Except ye be converted ... ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3 KJV). We divide people into races, classes, sexes, nationalities, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, but Jesus divided men and women into just two classes - the converted and the unconverted. Apparently, to Him no other distinctions mattered. If you are converted, you are in the kingdom; and if you are not converted, you are not in the kingdom. There are no exceptions. Listen to the words once again: "Except ye be converted ... ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." I think it sad that the NIV translation of the Bible doesn't use the words "except" or "converted" in Matthew 18:3. It simply says:

"unless you change and become like little children." The truth is still there, but in my opinion the words used are not as picturesque or as powerful. Conversion can be explained like this: it is the change, gradual or sudden, by which one passes from the kingdom of self to the kingdom of God. And if there is no change, there is no conversion.

O God, I am thankful that amidst all the awakenings and new experiences I can enter into in this life, You are eager to give me the supreme awakening - spiritual conversion. May multitudes enter into it today. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

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