

Vertical vs. Horizontal

by Selwyn Hughes

The sermon highlights the difference between horizontal and vertical conversion, emphasizing the importance of a deep inward change that comes from surrendering to God.

Scripture: John 3:3, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 2:4

Topics: "Spiritual Conversion", "Inner Transformation"

Description

Selwyn Hughes emphasizes the importance of experiencing a deep, radical vertical conversion in Christ, rather than settling for superficial horizontal changes. He shares his personal journey of initially being 'horizontally' converted by trying to be a good person, but later encountering a profound inward change through a total surrender to God, leading to a transformative vertical conversion. Hughes warns against being converted to mere religious practices or external behaviors, stressing the need to truly encounter Christ for a genuine and life-changing experience.

Transcript

"... God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions ..." (vv. 4-5)

For reading & meditation:

Ephesians 2:1-10

A Hindu once said in my presence: "A man may change his acts but not his character." He was saying that a change is possible, but not a vertical change; there can be improvement, modification, a change of attitude, but no deep radical change. The Christian church is not without a sprinkling of what yesterday I called "horizontal" conversions. Many historians have called attention to the fact that when Christianity swept through Europe, there were many genuine conversions to Christ but many horizontal ones too - people taking the Name of Christ for political or economic expediency. They were converted horizontally but still in need of a vertical conversion. When I was about fourteen years of age I was "horizontally" converted. I was a mischievous young man, and one day in church I made up my mind to be "a good boy." I tried hard to give up such things as swearing, stealing, and so on, but it didn't last. Although I felt religious, there was no great inward change. On a horizontal level I was converted, but not in relation to God. About a year later, sitting in the same church and under deep conviction of sin, I made a complete and total surrender to God. I was vertically converted. I walked out of that church feeling as if I had been

turned inside out. From that moment my life was changed, old habits began to disappear, and my whole being was flooded with light. I tell you with all the conviction of my being, the vertical was much different than the horizontal.

O God, help us not to be converted to the things surrounding Christ - religious rituals for example - but to Christ Himself. For if we don't touch Him we don't touch life, and there will be no deep inward change. In His dear Name we ask it. Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/selwyn-hughes/vertical-vs-horizontal/>

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