

Lesson Six: More Conversion Stories

Acts 3—Peter and John at the Gate of the Temple

The second time the gospel is preached to the lost in Acts is in Chapter 3

3:1-10 Peter and John heal a man who had been lame from birth.

3:11-18 A crowd gathers around Peter and the healed man and Peter begins to preach Jesus to the crowd, the same Jesus which they had rejected and crucified a few months before. He says the power of Jesus is how the lame man was healed. He says that Jesus is the Christ, the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament.

3:19 Peter's commands to the lost who were listening:

Repent

Be converted (KJV) Turn to God (NIV)

For what purpose? That your sins may be blotted out or wiped away

3:20-26 Peter makes a few more points about how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament

The Response of those who were listening to Peter is recorded in 4:4:

But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of men came to be about 5000.

Please note that the details of this conversion story are somewhat different than what is recorded in Acts 2. Why is this the case? Luke (the human author of Acts) often summarizes by making reference to a few of the conversion details rather than all of them every time a conversion takes place. He expected the readers to get the idea from the fuller accounts and not have to record every detail every time the gospel is preached.

As we read through the conversion stories in Acts, a pattern develops:

Message—The good news of Jesus is preached.

Belief—When people hear about Jesus they have a choice. Do they believe it or not?

Repentance—If they believe, how much do they believe? Enough to change? Enough to give over their life to Christ?

Confession of Faith—Do they believe it enough to say it out loud to someone else?

Baptism—Do they believe it enough to “die” with Christ in baptism and be raised up to a new life in Him?

Salvation—forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit

It is very helpful to put these details on a grid and see how they show up in the conversion stories. Sometimes they are stated in black and white; sometimes they are implied; sometimes they are logically required. Stated or not they are always there in the story.

IT'S TIME TO GET OUT “THE GRID” AND FILL IT IN.

Acts 8:1-13 Philip the Evangelist in city of Samaria

The third time the gospel is preached and lost people are saved in Acts is in Chapter 8. Philip is not an apostle but he has spent much time with the apostles in Jerusalem and is introduced to us in Acts 6:1-7 as a Christian man of “good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (6:3) selected by the church and the apostles of Christ to take care of a food distribution problem. Philip is God’s man for this job and God has seen fit to include what Philip did in Samaria in the book of Acts.

Philip is forced to leave Jerusalem like thousands of other Christians because of persecution against them in the city. (Acts 8:1-3) Philip goes about 40 miles north to the city of Samaria and begins to preach. The story is recorded in Acts 8:1-13.

8:5 Philip proclaims Christ to the lost people in Samaria

8:6 They listen closely to what Philip says

8:12 They believed what Philip said about Jesus and were baptized

8:13 Simon the Magician also believed and was baptized

PLUG THIS INFORMATION INTO “THE GRID”.