

# Blog



## Converted

Have you been converted?

“Unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3) Conversion is about change. It involves a radical transformation in the life of an individual. By turning away from sin and turning towards Christ a person’s life is dramatically altered. Through repentance and faith we can be converted and become a new person.

Conversion is more than an outward change. It is change on the inside. Conversion happens when the Holy Spirit brings a spiritually dead person to life and plants a new life in their soul. Their sinful heart is cleaned up, their mind is transformed and a new person emerges. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

One of the easiest ways to explain conversion is to look at the lives of those who have been converted. If real change has taken place on the inside it will soon become apparent to everyone else on the outside. One such person is James, the half-brother of Jesus. He changed from a cynical unbeliever to a devoted apostle. At a specific point on his life’s journey, James was converted.

*“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”* (James 1:1)

A pattern of conversion emerges when looking at James’ experience, and it is applicable to all of us.

## **Before conversion**

Being related to Jesus didn’t automatically make James a believer. On the contrary, for most of his early life he appears to have been a definite cynic. “Not even his brothers believed in him.” (John 7:5). Furthermore, he seems to have regarded his brother as mentally unhinged due to religious fanaticism. “When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”” (Mark 3:21) Everyone begins life unconverted. Regardless of religious background, everyone needs to be converted. For every Christian believer there was a time before conversion.

## **At conversion**

The events of the first Easter changed James' life forever. His mother stood near the cross and watched his half-brother being crucified. He knew where the tomb was in which they had buried Jesus. After three days reports began to circulate that the tomb was empty and some of the disciples had reported seeing the risen Christ. As many as five hundred people made this claim. But everything changed for James when he met the risen Jesus for himself. "Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles," (1 Corinthians 15:7) Conversion happens when an unbeliever believes the gospel and has a personal encounter with the living Christ. For every Christian believer there is a moment when they were converted.

## **After conversion**

More is known about James after his conversion than before. It was as a result of his conversion that life truly began for him. He became a devoted disciple, developed a ministry among the Jerusalem church, was one of the leading apostles in the early church and wrote one of the earliest letters of the New Testament. James was a different man as a direct result of his conversion. What happened to James can happen to anyone. An encounter with Christ can change anybody and lead them into a whole new life. For every Christian believer there is a life after conversion.

"Conversion is a work above man's power. It is a resurrection from the dead, a new creation, a work of absolute omnipotence. Conversion is a supernatural work." (Joseph Alleine). Have you been converted?

*Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Saviour. Amen.*