

Conviction and Conversion: The Power of the Gospel

Romans 1:14-18

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- “I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. 15 So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness”

Conviction and Conversion: The Power of the Gospel

- Acts 2:36-47 - When Peter preached his message on Pentecost in Jerusalem, 3,000 people were convicted and converted.

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- Many people heard the word and many were moved by it
 - Acts 2:36-37 - “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

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- Only 3000 were convicted to the point of conversion
 - Acts 2:38-41 - “Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call. 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation. 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”

Conviction and Conversion: The Power of the Gospel

- The difference is that the truly converted continue with the Lord
 - 1John 2:19 - “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”

Acts 2:42-47

- “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

People Continue Because They Have Character

- Acts 1:14 - “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”
- They prayed from the ascension to Pentecost, 7 days.

People Continue Because They Have Character

- They have no character
 - Mark 4:17 - “and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.”
 - Luke 8:13 - “But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.”

What Builds Character?

- Hard work
 - One of the worst things that parents can do to their children is to deny them the experience of hard work
 - James 1:25 - “But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

What Builds Character?

- Going forward when you feel like dropping back.
 - You cheat yourself out of developing character every time you give yourself a break when you know you can do it
 - It is a form of violating your conscience; it will lead to more and worse violations

What Builds Character?

- James 1:12 - “Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”
- Heb. 10:39 - “But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.”

What Builds Character?

- Trials and testing
 - James 1:2-4 - “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”
 - Rom. 5:3-4 - “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

What Builds Character?

- Imitating good examples
 - 2Tim. 1:13 - “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”
 - Phil. 3:17 - “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.”

People Continue Because They Are Consecrated

- 2Cor. 5:14-15 - “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”
- Isa. 53:11 - “He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.”

People Continue Because They Are Consecrated

- Rom. 5:15 - “But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.”
- Matt. 20:28 - “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

People Continue Because They Are Consecrated

- Some folks stay in the local church out of habit.
- Some stay because their family and friends are there
- Some stay because of outside pressure.

People Continue Because They Are Consecrated

- Jesus is consecrated as our Savior because He gave Himself to us
- We are not consecrated to God until we give ourselves to Him.

People Continue Because They Are Consecrated

- Why are you here?
 - “I want to go to heaven.”
 - “I want to be in fellowship with God and His children.”
 - “I want to be like my Lord and God.”

People Continue Because They Are Consecrated

- What kinds of things would end your consecration and commitment?
 - Phil. 3:7-10 - “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death”