

## Lord, What Wilt Thou Have Me To Do?

- A. Paul's primary conversion experience is recorded for us in **ACT 9:1-9**.
1. conversion: I. Turning in position, direction, destination. II. Change in character, nature, form, or function. The bringing of any one over to a specified religious faith, profession, or party, esp. to one regarded as true, from what is regarded as falsehood or error. *Theol.* The turning of sinners to God; a spiritual change from sinfulness, ungodliness or worldliness to love of God and pursuit of holiness.
    - a. Such conversion requires the Law of God. **PSA 19:7**.
    - b. Paul had been born into a monotheistic society that believed their God was the only true God the Creator.
    - c. Paul was trained up in the most zealous sect of that religion. **ACT 26:4-5**.
    - d. Paul lived a very principled life, technically blameless and with a good conscience. **PHIL 3:6; ACT 23:1**.
    - e. Paul's conversion was not one of an idol-worshipping heathen nor of a debauched, flesh-pleasing reprobate but of a serious religious man who was doing what he thought was pleasing to his God. **ACT 26:9**.
  2. *Conversion* is a process that happens throughout the life of God's saints and it is connected with repentance. **ACT 3:19**.
    - a. It is not the same as *regeneration*, which is a miraculous creation of a new heart and spirit in man by the sovereign act of God once and in a moment. **JOH 1:12-13**.
    - b. Those who are regenerated will at various times still need conversion. **LUK 22:32; JAM 5:19-20**.
  3. Paul had a very dramatic and life changing experience on the road to Damascus where he met his Lord and Savior and saw the light.
    - a. Heretofore in religious zeal he was "...breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord..." (**ACT 9:1**).
    - b. Heretofore he was one of that type from whom David prayed for deliverance. **PSA 27:12**.
    - c. Heretofore he was as leviathan (**JOB 41:21**), serpentine and dragon-like. **ISA 27:1**.
  4. He was persecuting Jesus' disciples, which Jesus took personally, and he was rebelling against his master, as Jesus told him when stated, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (**ACT 9:5**).
    - a. prick: Anything that goads or pierces; an instrument or organ having a sharp point....A goad for oxen. *to kick (work, spurn) against the pricks*.
    - b. goad: A rod or stick, pointed at one end or fitted with a sharp spike and employed for driving cattle, esp. oxen used in ploughing.
      - (1) This is how meek and gentle Jesus sometimes directs ministers, who are likened to oxen. **1CO 9:9-10**.
      - (2) When an animal is kicking against the prick or goad of its master it is rebelling against his master's instructions or the direction and speed he wishes him to go.
      - (3) Christ has various means by which He pricks His ministers: affliction, chastening, conviction by the truth. etc. David felt these and it straightened out his furrow. **PSA 51:12-13**.
  5. Paul had heard the truth at Stephen's mock trial as Stephen preached the truth about Israel's history and abuse of God's prophets, including the greatest of prophets, God's

Son, the Just One, and Paul had rejected the truth. **ACT 7:51-60; 8:1.**

- a. Paul was going in the wrong direction, rebelling against truth, kicking against the pricks.
  - b. His heart may have been pricked by the truth (per **ACT 2:37**) but hardened against it and "...past feeling..." (**EPH 4:19**).
6. Now Paul's response to Jesus' words to him was that he came under conviction, changing his mind concerning his former behavior, and asking the Lord, trembling and astonished, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (**ACT 9:6**). c/w **ACT 2:37**.
- a. conviction: *Theol.* The fact or condition of being convicted or convinced of sin. **under conviction(s)**: in the state of awakened consciousness of sin.
  - b. This is evident in the response, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" That is the proper response of a soul under conviction. Paul came to the sudden realization that Jesus was Lord as he heard the very voice of Christ alive and speaking to him.
    - (1) Mind that one does not need to audibly hear the voice of Christ to be convicted of sin and convinced that He is Lord.
    - (2) The written and preached word of God suffices since it is as the voice of the Author. See **ACT 13:27**.
  - c. It is obvious that Paul had a change of mind regarding his former behavior and was now willing to do what Jesus told him to do.
    - (1) This conviction or state of awakened consciousness of sin is reflected in the words of **ROM 7:9**.
    - (2) This is the commandment coming to the conscious mind which heretofore had buried it under Pharisaism and law-works righteousness.
    - (3) It is a death similar to what Nabal and Isaiah experienced. **1SAM 25:37; ISA 6:1-5**.
7. In reply to Paul's question, Jesus said, "...Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (**ACT 9:6**).
- a. Jesus sent a preacher named Ananias to tell him what he wanted him to do as He told Paul he would. **ACT 22:12-16; 26:16-20**.
    - (1) Jesus did not send him a philosopher, seminary or a deacon board.
    - (2) Sinners are brought to faith by preachers. **ROM 10:13-17**.
    - (3) Preachers are taught and fitted by preachers. **2TI 2:2**.
  - b. Note carefully **ACT 26:19**. Paul did as He was told to do by Jesus and the preacher Ananias. He meant what he said and followed through with it.
  - c. Not all that come under conviction act upon that conviction as Paul did, and others act upon it but only for a while and do not fully follow Jesus. **JOH 6:60-66**.
  - d. Having the will to do right is noble but inadequate. God works in His children "...both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (**PHIL 2:13**).
  - e. Those who say they will but do not are NOT doing God's will. **MAT 21:28-31**.
  - f. Those who say they will but only upon their own terms are not fit for the kingdom of God. **LUK 9:57-62**.

B. Note the elements present in Paul's conviction and conversion.

1. God shined a light round about Paul and Paul saw the light.
2. God spoke and addressed something wrong in Paul's life and Paul came under conviction.
3. God spake as Paul's master and Lord and was received as such by Paul.
4. Paul assumed a humble posture and attitude before God.
5. Paul received the admonition without any resistance, argument, self-justification, or self-will.

6. He rather submitted himself fully to the will of God.
  7. He received further instructions and baptism from a man of God.
  8. He obeyed what he was told to do both by Christ and the man of God.
- C. Most convictions and subsequent conversions are not as dramatic as Paul's was but the elements will be present in genuine conversions.
1. For a conversion to Jesus as Lord and obedience to Him you need light and you need to see the light.
  2. First of all, Jesus Himself is light. When He appeared to Paul and spake to him, Paul saw a light "...above the brightness of the sun" (**ACT 26:13**).
    - a. Note: The Son's light is brighter than the sun's light. If you are going to worship the Son, make sure it is not connected with the worship of the sun. Worship the brighter light.
    - b. The sun is obviously the lesser light and lesser light *rules darkness*. **GEN 1:16**.
      - (1) Those who worship nature's life-force (essentially all pagan religion is sun worship) are in spiritual darkness. They are spiritual children of the night. They worship the creation rather than the Creator and the result is played out in their moral code. **ROM 1:25-26**.
      - (2) By contrast, true worshippers of the true God are spiritual children of the day and of true light. **1TH 5:5-9**.
    - c. This is no flippant or moot point. The mingling together of elements of pagan sun worship with Biblical Son worship provokes God to jealousy. **1CO 10:20-22**.
      - (1) Sunbursts, green trees, wreaths, obelisks, maypoles, etc., are emblems or pictures of the false god of creature-worship.
      - (2) The church is supposed to be espoused to Christ as His chaste virgin. **2CO 11:2**.
      - (3) What husband would not be angered and jealous if his wife could not be intimate with him without pictures of other lovers stapled to the headboard?
    - d. Light can have no communion with darkness. **2CO 6:14**.
    - e. Genuine conversion involves a change of creed as well as conduct!
  3. Jesus Christ is the true light in this dark world. **JOH 8:12**.
    - a. When you meet Jesus, you meet light.
    - b. When you follow Jesus, you no longer walk in darkness but you have light.
    - c. When you believe on Jesus you come out of darkness into light. **JOH 12:46; EPH 5:8**.