

I'm Converted, Now What?

- I. What do I mean by "converted"?
 1. **Converted** - 1. Turned, turned back. 2. That has turned or been brought over to a religious faith or profession, whether from a different religion or from irreligious life.
 2. Conversion is turning to God from a previous life of sin and false religion (**Act 15:3 c/w Act 15:19**).
 3. A complete conversion includes being baptized and added to a local church (**Act 15:3 c/w Act 14:1, 21-23**).
- II. So now that I've been baptized and added to a true church, now what?
 1. Should I tell everyone I meet about the true faith of Jesus Christ?
 2. Should I keep it to myself and not stir things up with my family, friends, and acquaintances?
 3. Do I need to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature as Jesus commissioned His disciples to do?
 4. Why doesn't everyone with whom I share the truth love it like I do?
 5. Why does my approach to witnessing sometimes seem to turn people away?
- III. The "great commission" was fulfilled.
 1. The "great commission" was given by Jesus to the apostles (**Mat 28:19-20; Mar 16:15**).
 2. They fulfilled it to the letter (**Mar 16:20; Col 1:6,23**).
 3. We should still share the faith with people, but we are not obligated to all be missionaries in foreign lands.
 4. If we were, it would not be enough to send or support others, but we all would have to go.
 5. If you get a call (phone call, email, letter, etc.) from someone in a foreign land to come and preach the gospel to them, then go, but otherwise don't feel obligated to do so.
 6. There are plenty of heathen in America that need to hear it too.
- IV. Let your light shine.
 1. Christians should be the salt of the earth (**Mat 5:13; Mar 9:50**).
 - A. Salt seasons and makes food more pleasing.
 - B. Our speech should be seasoned with salt, not guile and bitterness (**Col 4:6**).
 - C. Christians who have lost their savour are good for nothing (**Mat 5:13**).
 - D. Salt is also a preservative, as Christians should be to society.
 2. Christians are the light of the world (**Mat 5:14-15**).
 - A. Don't hide your light.
 - B. Don't shy away from sharing your faith when you have opportunity.
 - C. Live out your faith and let people see your good works so that they will glorify God (**Mat 5:16; 1Pe 2:12**).
 3. Give someone a reason to ask you about your faith.
- V. Be always ready to give an answer (**1Pe 3:15**).
 1. To be ready to give an answer, you need to study (**Pro 15:28; 2Ti 2:15**).
 2. In order to talk about the things of God, you must first understand them yourself (**Psa 119:27**).
 3. This is why God has given us the scriptures (**Pro 22:20-21**).
 4. Don't think that God is just going to beam down the needed Bible verse at the appropriate time which you have never read nor studied.
- VI. Pray for open doors and opportunity (**Col 4:3-4**).
 1. God opens doors of faith (**Act 14:27; 2Co 2:12 c/w Act 16:8-10**).

- A. God opens the doors of men's hearts so that they will hear what you have to say (**Act 16:14**).
 - B. Pray that God sends these people to you (**Psa 119:79**).
 - 2. God also closes doors (**Act 16:6-7**).
 - 3. When Jesus opens a door, no man shuts it; likewise when He shuts one, no man opens it (**Rev 3:7-8**).
 - 4. When a door is open, stick your foot in it.
 - 5. Know that when a door opens, there will be adversaries on the other side if it (**1Co 16:9**).
 - 6. Before you talk to men about God, make sure to first talk to God about men.
- VII. Realize that not everyone is going to receive the faith with joy like you did.
- 1. Most (**Isa 6:13**) are unregenerate and can't understand it (**1Co 1:18; 1Co 2:14**).
 - 2. For some, the devil snatches the word away as soon as they hear it (**Mar 4:15**).
 - 3. Many just don't care (**Rev 3:15-16**).
 - 4. Some are enemies of it (**2Th 3:2**).
 - 5. Family and those closest to you are often the most resistant.
 - A. A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and among his own family (**Mar 6:2-4**).
 - B. Jesus came to bring division and not peace, even between close family members (**Luk 12:51-53; Mat 10:34-36**).
 - C. God called Abraham *alone* (**Isa 51:2**).
 - D. Don't be surprised when your family rejects your faith.
 - E. Hoping with great expectation that they will be converted could set you up for great disappointment (**Pro 13:12**).
 - 6. Don't necessarily conclude that because someone at first rejects the truth that they are on their way to hell.
 - A. What would you have thought about the apostle Paul prior to the Damascus road (**Act 9:1; Act 26:9**)?
 - B. What would you have thought about King Manasseh (**2Ch 33:9-13**)?
- VIII. Make sure your zeal is according to knowledge (**Rom 10:2**).
- 1. Remember that you were once where the person you are witnessing to is now.
 - 2. Learn to listen first so that you know where the person is coming from concerning faith before you speak (**Jam 1:19; Pro 18:13; Pro 19:2**).
 - 3. Don't overwhelm people with too much information at once (**Pro 17:27-28; Pro 29:11**).
 - 4. It's okay to not tell someone everything you believe, especially when it is unsolicited.
 - 5. If you overload them, they will shut down and not take in what you are saying.
 - A. Let them ask you questions and draw the information out of you (**Pro 20:5**).
 - B. Watch the facial expressions - they will tell you when you've said enough.
 - C. "There is such a thing as having too much to say, and saying it till hearers are sent home loathing rather than longing." (C.H. Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students, p. 77)
 - 6. Stay focused - don't discuss everything under the sun in one sitting.
 - A. It's best to define the terms of the discussion ahead of time if possible and discipline yourself to not chase rabbits.
 - B. A fool's eyes are in the ends of the earth and you may have to reign them in (**Pro 17:24**).
 - C. When speaking with people with unfocused and undisciplined minds, you need to stay in control of the conversation.

- D. This is especially important in a debate - you must hold their feet to the fire.
 - 7. Start with something the person agrees with to establish common ground.
 - A. Paul did this (**Act 17:28-29**).
 - B. Don't start off talking to a Catholic about how the Pope is antichrist.
 - C. Rather start by discussing something you both agree on, like how abortion is wicked.
 - 8. Define your terms when discussing doctrine with people.
 - A. For example, many people don't know what words like regeneration, quicken, born again, election, reprobation, justification, sanctification, depravity, or conversion mean.
 - B. If you don't define your terms, you will likely be speaking over the other person's head, or they will be interpreting what you are saying differently than you mean it.
 - C. "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." - George Bernard Shaw
 - 9. Contending and arguing for the faith is scriptural.
 - A. We are commanded to do it (**Jud 1:3**).
 - B. Paul gave us ample examples of this (**Act 17:2; Act 15:1-2; Act 17:17**).
 - 10. Control your spirit (**Pro 25:28**).
 - A. Don't be soon angry (**Jam 1:19-20; Ecc 7:9; Pro 14:29**).
 - B. Never resort to name calling or hurling back insults (**Pro 26:4**).
 - C. Be very cautious about raising your voice in a discussion/debate.
 - D. A soft answer is far more likely to break through someone's defenses (**Pro 15:1; Pro 25:15**).
 - E. Family and those closest to you know how to push your buttons and you are more likely to lose your temper around them and say something you will regret.
 - F. Often times a Christian's zeal will exceed his wisdom and discretion.
 - i. This was the case with Peter (**Luk 22:49-50; Joh 18:10-11**).
 - ii. Jesus' last miracle before His death was to heal a wound made by an overzealous disciple (**Luk 22:51**).
 - 11. Remember that you are not the Holy Spirit and you can't convict someone of sin, only God can.
- IX. Recognize when a door is closed.
- 1. Facial expressions say more than words.
 - 2. When someone has shown themselves to be a fool, leave (**Pro 14:7**).
 - 3. Cast not your pearls before swine (**Mat 7:6; Pro 9:7-8**).
 - 4. There is time to shake the dust off of your shoes at them (**Mat 10:14; Act 13:50-51; Act 18:6**).
 - 5. At that point, it's best to talk about the weather.
- X. Pray that the word of the Lord will have free course and be glorified (**2Th 3:1**).
- 1. Cast the bread upon the water and let God make it return after many days (**Ecc 11:1**).
 - 2. We don't know who the elect are, so sow the seed anytime you have the chance and don't worry about whether or not it will be received well (**Ecc 11:4-6**).
 - 3. Remember that it is God who gives the increase (**1Co 3:6-7**).
 - 4. God's word will accomplish what He pleases with it and it will not return void (**Isa 55:11**).