

2 Cor. 5:17: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come

Intro: We have the blessing of baptizing four new converts today! Baptism is an outward sign of an inward reality. And that inward reality is the reality of conversion! You have been made new in Christ!

Baptism: 1) Reminds Us That Jesus Was Baptized For Us; 2) Baptism Is Done To Be Obedient To Jesus Christ; 3) Baptism Displays Our Union With Christ; 4) Baptism Displays Our Death To Sin; 5) Baptism Displays Our Glorious, New, Everlasting Life In Christ; 6) Baptism Displays Our Confession Of Faith In Christ; 7) Baptism Displays Our Cleansing From Sin; 8) Baptism Displays The Holy Spirit Being Poured Out On Us; 9) Baptism Reminds Us Of Our Adoption Into God's Loving Family As His Beloved Children Forever; 10) Baptism Reminds Us That We Belong To God; 11) Baptism Represents Our Formal Entrance Into The Church – The Body Of Christ

Langston Hughes: the whole building rocked with prayer & song. Still I kept waiting to see Jesus. Finally all the young people had gone to the altar & were saved, but one boy & me . . . Westley & I were surrounded by sisters & deacons praying. It was very hot in the church, & getting late now. Finally Westley said to me in a whisper: “. . . I'm tired o' sitting here. Let's get up & be saved.” So he got up & was saved. Then I was left all alone on the mourners' bench. My aunt came & knelt at my knees & cried, while prayers & song swirled all around me in the little church. The whole congregation prayed for me alone, in a mighty wail of moans & voices . . . “Langston, why don't you come? Why don't you come & be saved? Oh, Lamb of God! Why don't you come?” Now it was really getting late. I began to be ashamed of myself, holding everything up so long. I began to wonder what God thought about Westley, who certainly hadn't seen Jesus either, but who was now sitting proudly on the platform, swinging his knickerbockered legs & grinning down at me, surrounded by deacons & old women on their knees praying. God had not struck Westley dead for taking his name in vain or for lying in the temple. So I decided that maybe to save further trouble, I'd better lie, too, & say that Jesus had come, & get up & be saved. So I got up. Suddenly the whole room broke into a sea of shouting, as they saw me rise. Waves of rejoicing swept the place. Women leaped in the air. My aunt threw her arms around me. The minister took me by the hand & led me to the platform. When things quieted down, in a hushed silence, punctuated by a few ecstatic “Amens,” all the new young lambs were blessed in the name of God. Then joyous singing filled the room. That night, for the first time in my life but one for I was a big boy twelve years old – I cried. I cried, in bed alone, & couldn't stop. I buried my head under the quilts, but my aunt heard me. She woke up & told my uncle I was crying because the Holy Ghost had come into my life, & because I had seen Jesus. But I was really crying because I couldn't bear to tell her that I had lied, that I had deceived everybody in the church, that I hadn't seen Jesus, & that now I didn't believe there was a Jesus anymore [**Mark Dever:** False Conversions: The Suicide Of The Church]

Conversion: 1) New Hearts; 2) New Faith; 3) New Direction; 4) New Desires; 5) New Obedience; 6) New Family; 7) New Love; 8) New Position In Christ

Since you are in Christ, you are a new creation: the old has passed away; behold the new has come!

1. When You're Converted, You're Given A New Heart

a. You had an old heart: a dead heart; a cold-toward-God heart; a hot-toward-wickedness, sin, & evil heart; a selfish heart; a bored-with-God heart; a hard, stone-like heart; a sick heart; a deceitful heart.

- **Jer. 17:9:** The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

- **Matt. 15:8:** This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me

- **Matt. 15:17-20:** Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person.

b. But now you're given a new heart: God supernaturally, by His Word & by His Holy Spirit, gave you a new heart! A living heart; a heart on fire for God that hates sin; a heart for others; a soft heart; a humble & loving heart that tells the truth & loves the truth!

- **Ezek. 36:25-27:** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

- **Jn. 3:3-8:** “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb & be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water & the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, & that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

2. When You're Converted, You're Given A New Faith

a. You had an old faith: You trusted in yourself; you trusted in your own righteousness; you trusted in your own plans & your own ideas; you trusted in education or sports or a man or woman; you trusted in children, the nice home, the nice car, the American dream, you trusted in something – anything other than trusting in God to give your life purpose & meaning. You may have trusted in a false religion: Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism.

- **Isa. 31:1:** Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help & rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many & in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD!

- **Lk. 18:9:** He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous . . .

b. But now you're given a new faith: God supernaturally, by His Word & by His Holy Spirit, gave you true, saving, justifying faith alone in Christ alone! You trust in God & His salvation through Jesus Christ! **GOSPEL!**

- **Eph. 2:8-9:** For by grace you have been saved through faith. & this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

- **Rom. 4:4-5:** Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. & to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness

- **Rom. 10:9-10:** if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord & believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes & is justified, & with the mouth one confesses & is saved

3. When You're Converted, You're Given A New Direction

a. You had an old direction: You were running toward sin, death, & hell. You ran from God either in a way that looked good to the world or in a way that looked bad to the world. You ran from God in your own righteousness, like the rich young ruler in the Bible or like the older brother in the parable of the prodigal sons. Or you ran from God in a way that's more obvious to the world that you are evil: drug addiction, violence, sexual perversion, crime.

- **Eph. 2:1-3:** you were dead in the trespasses & sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body & the mind, & were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

- **Rom. 3:10-12:** as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

b. But now you're given a new direction: God granted you to run to Him, life, & righteousness! You repent!

- **Eph. 2:4-5:** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved

- **1 Thess. 1:9-10:** you turned to God from idols to serve the living & true God, to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

- **Acts 20:21:** testifying both to Jews & to Greeks of repentance toward God & of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. When You're Converted, You're Given New Desires

a. You had old desires: Your god was your belly, your appetites, your glands. You desired sex; you desired money; you desired the fame of this world (glory, girls, & gold!); you desired yourself; you only desired God's gifts!

- **Gal. 5:19-21:** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery,

enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, & things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

b. But now you have new desires: Now, God granted you to desire Him & His Word & righteousness!

- **Ps. 119:72, 103:** The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold & silver pieces . . . ¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

- **Gal. 5:22-24:** the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. & those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions & desires. [**Shino & Shania story:** Somali Muslims convert to Christ.]

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5. When You're Converted, You're Given A New Obedience

a. You had an old obedience: You obeyed yourself; you obeyed your own sinful passions; you were a slave to sin; you were a slave to the world, the flesh, & the Devil.

- **Rom. 6:20:** For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

- **Rom. 8:7-8:** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

b. But now you're given a new obedience: Now, by God's grace, God granted you to obey Him, live for Him, & submit to Him! Now you want to obey all that Jesus has commanded! You won't be presumptuous (suicide).

- **Rom. 6:6-18:** We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin & alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, & your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, &, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. [**Rosaria/Durbin**]

6. When You're Converted, You're Given A New Family

a. You had an old family: You may have only had a biological family, but you may not have even had that; you may have had a family that only & always helped you sin & run from God more; you may have had a family who taught you a false religion; But you may have had a family who modeled God's ways & taught you God's truth. But even then, you really weren't a full participant in that godly family, because you didn't know God!

- **Eph. 2:12:** remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel & strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope & without God in the world.

b. But now you're given a new family: By God's grace, you have been adopted into God's family: the church!

- **Jn. 1:12-13:** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- **Mk. 10:28-30:** Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything & followed you." Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake & for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses & brothers & sisters & mothers & children & lands, with persecutions, & in the age to come eternal life. [**Nabeel Qureshi**]

7. When You're Converted, You're Given A New Love

a. You had old loves: Think about what or who you loved most before you were converted. You loved yourself most; you loved all the gifts around you that God gave you; you loved your sin: sex, stuff, & sensations.

-1 Jn. 2:15-16: Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh & the desires of the eyes & pride of life – is not from the Father but is from the world.

b. But now you're given a new love: Now God has transformed what you love most! You love Him with all your heart, mind, soul, & strength. You love your neighbor as yourself. You love other Christians, especially!

- Ps. 42:1-2: As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? **[Nearer my God to Thee! Nearer to Thee!]**

- Ps. 63:1-3: O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry & weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power & glory. Because your mercy is better than life, my lips will praise you.

- Ps. 73:25: Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

- Phil. 3:7-8: But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things & count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

8. When You're Converted, You're Given A New Position In Christ

a. You had an old position in Adam: Every human being in the world is either in Adam or in Christ. And we all started out in Adam: a helpless, spiritually dead, God-hating, rebellious, selfish sinner.

- 1 Cor. 15:22: For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

b. But now you're given a new position in Christ: When, by the mercy of God, you trust in Jesus Christ by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Bible alone, all for the glory of God alone, then you are mysteriously & spiritually united to the Lord Jesus Christ forever!

- John Piper: It is the reality of all the ways that the Bible pictures our human connectedness to Christ, in which he is indispensable for every good that we enjoy. No saving good, no eternal good, no God-exalting good, no soul-satisfying good comes to us except as we are connected to Christ.

- Rom. 8:1: There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

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Christ Jesus Came, Made All Things New
Lived Righteousness In Every Hue
Spoke And Lived Like None We Knew
Then Died And Took God's Wrath We're Due
But Rose Alive, All Things Renew
By Faith Alone He Will Save You
Grants Heart Desires, Pure Through And Through
You Will Repent, Obey Him Too
In His Church Find Family True
With Love, Your God, You Will Pursue
In Christ, The Old He Overthrew
He'll Be Your All, All Things Subdue
For Christ Changed You, Made All Things New!