

Conversion to Jesus Christ: (#13) The Conversion Event

In our study of the important subject, conversion to Jesus Christ, we have addressed a number of matters. We have given most of our attention to God's work of grace in preparing the sinner prior to the event when he is converted. Last Lord's Day we addressed God's work of grace in regeneration, that is, when God in His sovereign grace causes a sinner to be born again, that is, experience the grace of regeneration. This work of God's grace in an individual results in his conversion from his lost, sinful state, into the life of a Christian, one who believes the gospel and is committed to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Today we arrive to consider the very act of conversion, when the sinner is transformed into a Christian. I would like us to read a passage that speaks to this matter. It is at the end of the Book of Acts, in which we read of Paul's arrival to Rome and his witness for Jesus Christ once he arrived there. Let us read **Acts 28:11-31**.

¹¹After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island. ¹²And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days. ¹³From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, ¹⁴where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. And so we went toward Rome. ¹⁵And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

¹⁶Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

¹⁷And it came to pass after three days that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them: "Men and brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, ¹⁸who, when they had examined me, wanted to let me go, because there was no cause for putting me to death. ¹⁹But when the Jews spoke against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation. ²⁰For this reason therefore I have called for you, to see you and speak with you, because for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain."

²¹Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you. ²²But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere."

²³So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. ²⁴And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. ²⁵So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, ²⁶saying,

'Go to this people and say:

"Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand;

And seeing you will see, and not perceive;

²⁷For the hearts of this people have grown dull.

Their ears are hard of hearing,

And their eyes they have closed,

Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,

Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.”

²⁸“Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!” ²⁹And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves. ³⁰Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, ³¹preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

The Lord in His providence brought the apostle Paul to the city of Rome where he would bear witness to the gospel to the people of this capital city of the Empire. It was a fulfilment of a prophecy that had been pronounced on Paul long before. We read of this in Acts 23. Paul was in Jerusalem at that time. He had been arrested after a riot resulted from his witness to the Jews in Jerusalem. We read in Acts 23:11 these words, “But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, ‘Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.’” The events of Acts 28, which we read, were well over two years after the realization of that word from the Lord. The Lord in His providence had Paul arrested. As a Roman citizen Paul appealed his case to Caesar, and to Caesar he was taken.

Although Paul was known most everywhere in the empire, he was still unknown to most of the Jewish people of Rome when he arrived there as a prisoner. But there were some “brethren” in the area (cf. Acts 28:14). But in Rome itself the Jewish people had not heard of him or of the gospel he proclaimed.

Paul met with the Jewish leaders, to tell them of the news regarding “the hope of Israel” (28:20), for which said he had been made a prisoner. They expressed their desire to hear from him on these matters. And he did so. We read that when they appointed him an occasion for this, they came to where he was, even many of the Jews. He taught and explained to them solemnly, teaching them regarding the kingdom of God, and particularly how Jesus is the realization of those promises set forth in the Hebrew Scriptures, that is, our Old Testaments.

Not everyone received his words as true. Some did, but others did not. The gospel divided the people as it commonly does whenever it is proclaimed clearly and accurately. There were those that were persuaded. They became Christians. They were converted to Jesus Christ. But others objected and rejected his teaching. Paul declared that God had spoken before in the prophecy of Isaiah of ones like they were. Paul spoke to them directly:

“The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, ²⁶saying,

‘Go to this people and say:

“Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand;

And seeing you will see, and not perceive;

²⁷For the hearts of this people have grown dull.

Their ears are hard of hearing,

And their eyes they have closed,

Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,

Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,

So that I should heal them.”

The work of God’s grace in conversion is imbedded in these words. In the second to the last line we read that God had declared they would not “understand with their hearts and turn” so that they might be saved from their sin. The action described in the word “*turn*” is that of *conversion*, turning from sin to Jesus Christ. The King James Version uses the word “converted” instead of the word “turn. It translates verse 27 this way:

For the heart of this people is waxed gross,
And their ears are dull of hearing,
And their eyes have they closed;
Lest they should see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their heart,
And should be converted,
And I should heal them. (Act 28:27, KJV)

Luke, who wrote the Book of Acts, recorded the apostle quoting **the prophecy of Isaiah**. The words are from the occasion of God calling Isaiah to his prophetic office. Let us turn to **Isaiah 6** and consider the context of these words.

Isaiah records ***God's call of Isaiah to his prophetic office***. First we read on the initial vision that Isaiah saw in **verses 1** through **4**.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ²Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³And one cried to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!”

⁴And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. (Isa. 6:1-4)

King Uzziah had reigned over Judah for 52 years. It had been a time of peace and prosperity in the land. With his death, however, a sense of fear and foreboding swept over the land. Assyria to the north was a threat to the entire region. There was uncertainty about the future of the people. But God revealed to Isaiah through this vision that even though Uzziah had died, in reality God was governing the fortunes of His people. Isaiah was caught up to the throne room of heaven and God gave to him a vision of His holy and sovereign power. The well-being of Judah lie in the will of their sovereign God, not with whoever it was who sat on Judah's throne.

We read in **verse 5** Isaiah's reaction to his initial vision:

So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts.”

Isaiah saw God in His holy glory and was struck down with a sense of guilt for his own sin. He knew that he was a sinner and he knew that his people were no better. A clear vision of God, an understanding of His sovereign dealings among mankind will lead to humility and an acknowledgement of guilt for one's sin.

In **verses 6** and **7** we read of God's call of Isaiah to his prophetic office. God cleansed and prepared Isaiah so that he would be able to reveal His Word to His people.

Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. ⁷And he touched my mouth with it, and said:

“Behold, this has touched your lips;
Your iniquity is taken away,
And your sin purged.”

God not only cleansed Isaiah of his sin, but He qualified and gifted him to serve in his prophetic office. We then read of God’s commission of Isaiah in **verses 8** through **9a**. Isaiah speaks,

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying:

“Whom shall I send,
And who will go for Us?”

Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”
⁹And He said, “Go, and tell this people...”

First Isaiah spoke, indicating that God had spoken to him. And then God spoke. God asked for a volunteer. God was searching for one to bear His message to Judah. God said the words, “*For us*”, in other words on behalf of the heavenly court which is in the throne room of heaven. This should probably not be understood as a reference to the Blessed Trinity.

Isaiah responded with courage and boldness. He had a sense of forgiveness and cleansing, which resulted in his courage, boldness, and the desire to advance the will of God. A sense of guilt will tend to close one’s mouth to expressing the things of God. We read in Romans 3 that it was in God’s purposes “that all the world might be guilty, so that every mouth may be stopped” (Rom. 3:19).

God declared to His prophet: “*Go, and tell this people...*” Here, we see a change in the way God refers to His people--now they are “this people.” To this point He had referred to them as “My” people, which is the language of a covenant relationship. The word “this” “puts distance between God and Judah.” This also reveals the purpose of chapter 6: it legitimizes the prophetic office and message of Isaiah and it reveals the tenor of his message--one of judgment upon the nation.

In **verses 9b** through **10** we read the substance and the tenor of the message that Isaiah was to bear to the people. Actually, verse 9 is content of “the message.” **Verse 10** speaks of the end or goal that God intended for Isaiah’s ministry of this message.

‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand;
Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’

¹⁰“Make the heart of this people dull,
And their ears heavy,
And shut their eyes;
Lest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their heart,
And return and be healed.”

These are the verses that Paul quoted in Acts 28.

Before we consider the precise purpose and meaning of these verses, take note of the literary features of this verse. We see the use of “inversion” in which there is a repetition of words with reversed order: heart, ears, eyes -- eyes, ears, heart. The purpose is for expressing emphasis, the importance of this matter.

Now the result of God's judicial action in this case is insensitivity, ignorance, and indifference which would continue until the time of judgment. Their spiritual hearing, seeing, and understanding was to be removed. The evidence of God's judgment upon a people is their lack of concern, lack of understanding of God and His ways, and an inability to be aroused or instructed in the things of God. For healing to take place, there must be repentance; for repentance to take place there must be understanding of one's condition and there must be present the concern and desire to change. If one does not respond to the prompting of God in the day of His gracious dealings, He ceases His gracious workings and renders those whom he is judging incapable and unwilling to turn; thereby sealing their doom when His day arrives.

Isaiah seemed to be surprised and puzzled by this commission. He asked the Lord how long he would bear this message to "this" people. We read in **verse 11**, "Then I said, 'Lord, how long?'" God answered is prophet:

"Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant,
The houses are without a man,
The land is utterly desolate,
¹²The LORD has removed men far away,
And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.
¹³But yet a tenth will be in it,
And will return and be for consuming,
As a terebinth tree or as an oak,
Whose stump remains when it is cut down.
So the holy seed shall be its stump." (Isa. 6:9-13)

The time that God had given His people to repent was now passed. For this generation of Isaiah's day, the time of salvation was no longer. God would harden this people leading to their just condemnation and destruction.

Isaiah's anticipation of this kind of ministry was distressing to him. He had volunteered to bear God's message, but the message was not a pleasant one. He and his message would not be received. And so, he asked God how long this ministry would last. **Isaiah 6:11** reads, "Then I said, 'Lord, how long?' And then God answered him, "Until cities are devastated and without inhabitant, houses are without people, and the land is utterly desolate." He was to preach or bear witness until there was no one remaining to hear, until the time when the land would be desolate and vacated due to the destruction of the land and the deportation of the populace.

Isaiah did not object to God's verdict or dealings. No appeal is even voiced as others in the past had appealed to God on behalf of condemned societies, but he wanted to know how long. Upon God's answer to him Isaiah could say, "The Lord has removed men far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land" (6:12).

And yet God held forth the promise that some would respond to Isaiah's message. We read in **Isaiah 6:13**,

But yet a tenth will be in it,
And will return and be for consuming,
As a terebinth tree or as an oak,
Whose stump remains when it is cut down.
So the holy seed shall be its stump.

And so, this portion of God's word concludes with a note of hope. God would spare a remnant, a tithe. It will, too, be subject to burning. In other words it, too, would encounter judgment as well, but it will survive.

Two kinds of trees are mentioned. Both were hearty trees that would sprout again even after having been cut down and having their stumps burned. There was still life residing in them that will sprout again. So it is with a remnant that God purposed to preserve for Himself. Thus hope is held forth; but salvation will come even to this remnant only after it has undergone judgment.

God can make blind eyes see and deaf ears hear, but He also can render seeing eyes blind and hearing ears deaf to His message so that they continue in their self-destructive ways. God removes His dealings of mercy and grace and renders insensitivity and ignorance of the way of peace. God judicially hardened this people so that they would encounter His just judgment upon them. God is sovereign in all His dealings with mankind.

Actually, these verses from Isaiah 6 are quoted in the New Testament other than by the apostle Paul. All four Gospels record our Lord Jesus citing these verses. In **Matthew 13:13ff** our Lord quotes this Isaiah passage as a prophecy of those Jews who reject the teaching of our Lord during His earthly ministry. Isaiah foretold of their obstinacy and the judgment of God upon them. Their refusal to hear the Lord Jesus was itself the judgment of God upon them.

In Mark's Gospel these verses are quoted in order to give reason why our Lord taught in parables. He did so in order that those "on the outside" would not be able to understand and respond, thereby preventing their forgiveness and insuring their judgment (Mark 4:12). In Luke's Gospel we read of a similar usage of this Isaiah passage (Luke 8:10). Our Lord spoke in parables so that the truth may be veiled from any but His disciples.

And then the passage is quoted also in **John 12:39ff**. In John, an explanation is given as to why the people were not responding to the Lord Jesus in spite of all the signs that had been evidenced through Him: it was because God was preventing them from understanding.

The Apostle Paul quoted Isaiah's prophecy to show that the Lord was doing the same kind of judicial action in the early decades of the Christian church. God had judicially blinded a number of the Jewish people so that they would receive their just judgment at His hand. But in doing so, God was intending to extend His mercy to others, even the Gentiles. After these verses from Isaiah 6 were quoted, we read this in **Acts 28:28**: "*Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!*"

God deals with people in this manner today as well. In spite of the repeated prompting of the Holy Spirit, a professing Christian may harden his heart to the things of God, to the need of turning from sin. God will not always strive with this person. That one can grieve the Spirit to such a degree that the grace that the Spirit bestows to bring about man's repentance and recovery from sin can no longer be experienced. Consider the warning given to professing Christians in Hebrews 3:

⁷Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you will hear His voice,

⁸Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,

In the day of trial in the wilderness,

⁹Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me,

And saw My works forty years.

¹⁰Therefore I was angry with that generation,

And said, ‘They always go astray in *their* heart,

And they have not known My ways.’

¹¹So I swore in My wrath,

‘They shall not enter My rest.’”

¹²Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, ¹⁵while it is said:

"Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." (Heb. 3:7-15)

We should always be aware that the preaching of the Word of God may produce this kind of effect in our hearers-- a hardening which leads to death. Paul wrote of this in 2 Corinthians 2:

Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. ¹⁵For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. (2 Cor. 2:14-16)

The truthfulness of a matter or the proof of God working in and through a message or messenger is not easily determined. Often times the preacher is blamed for not being clear or understandable, and indeed, he may be at fault, but the hearing end is equally important. There are some who, because of their neglect, indifference, and refusal to respond, have rendered themselves incapable of understanding the simplest of spiritual truths. If they would have heard and understood so as to respond, they would be converted and healed, but God would see to it that they would not.

Let us turn back to **Acts 28** and consider more carefully what is recorded for us.

First, notice **the main subject** of his teaching and **the source** for his teaching. In **verse 23** we read, "So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening."

The main subject that he taught was of *the kingdom of God*. The Kingdom of God is a major theme of the Old Testament and the New Testament. There are several different aspects or manifestations of the kingdom of God. First, it can be said that God's Kingdom speaks of God's sovereign control over all events that transpire in His world. God has always been King, been the Sovereign Ruler over all of His creatures. This idea is set forth in many places, but we might consider **Psalms 145:10-13**:

¹⁰All Your works shall praise You, O LORD,
And Your saints shall bless You.

¹¹They shall speak of *the glory of Your kingdom*,
And talk of Your power,

¹²To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts,
And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.

¹³*Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,*
And Your dominion endures throughout all generations.

This speaks of God's kingdom irrespective of His creatures acknowledging or yielding to His rule.

We may also read of the everlasting Kingdom of God in King Nebuchadnezzar's words of Daniel 4:34ff, "I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His *kingdom* is from generation to generation.

³⁵All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;

He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And among the inhabitants of the earth.
No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, “What have You done?” (Dan. 4:34f)

But there is another aspect of God’s Kingdom set forth in the Scriptures. From the beginning of man’s sin, fallen man has been in rebellion to God, failing and refusing to acknowledge God as the rightful King over His creation. God is through history reasserting His control over His creation. He is calling out a people to receive His salvation, ones who have come to recognize and submit to His rule. The Old Testament foretold the day when God would raise up a righteous King, even the Son of David, who would establish and expand His kingdom over the world. The Apostle Paul spoke of this kingdom to the Jews in Rome, teaching them regarding the Kingdom of God, with particular emphasis on Jesus Christ being God’s promised King.

And notice the source for Paul’s teaching of the Lord Jesus and the Kingdom of God. We read in Acts 28:23, “many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from *both the Law of Moses and the Prophets*, from morning till evening.” The source of teaching was the Hebrew Scriptures, what we call the Old Testament. Paul was proclaiming the gospel of the promised kingdom, with Jesus Christ being King, even Lord of that Kingdom, and he was doing so from the Old Testament. The Old Testament rightly interpreted is Christian Scripture for it foretells of this promised age of salvation, the good news of the kingdom of God.

Let us look again at the passage in **Acts 28** in which Paul quoted from Isaiah 6. **First**, recognize this truth: God is the Sovereign Lord who alone brings salvation to the soul; it is of the Lord’s doing. The people would not hear, would not respond, as God says, “So that *I should heal them*” (Acts 28:27). God alone can bring “healing”, but He chooses to do so on those who hear attentively and take to heart the message of His Word.

But **second**, although God is sovereign in the dispensing of His mercy and grace in salvation, *man is responsible if he fails and refuses to hear and respond to the gospel of God’s Kingdom*. The guilt lies with man. Their ears are hard of hearing; their eyes they have closed; their hearts have grow dull. Man is responsible for how he responds to the message of God’s Word to him.

And third, even though God must do a work of grace in order for a sinner to receive salvation from Him, nevertheless, every person has the responsibility to “turn”, or be converted. Clearly the Isaiah passage and the fact that Paul quoted it, shows that people have a responsibility to *convert* or *turn* to Jesus Christ. Again, **verse 27** reads,

²⁷For the hearts of this people have grown dull.
Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed,
Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,
Lest *they should understand with their hearts and turn,*
So that I should heal them.”

We emphasized last week the sovereignty of God in causing people to be regenerated, or born again. Only the regenerated person has the desire and the ability to respond in faith on the gospel of Jesus Christ. But conversion involves our deliberate action. We are to turn from sin, from a self-ordered existence, and we are to submit to Jesus Christ as Lord, the promised King over the inaugurated Kingdom of God. This is why being converted is frequently voiced as a command. But being regenerated or being born again is never a command, for it is beyond our ability.

There are other places where the idea of “turning” is the act of converting to Jesus Christ. We read in James 5:19 and 20: “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone *turns him*

back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.” Here, to turn one back is to lead him to be converted.

We also read in 1 Thessalonians of their conversion to Jesus Christ.

⁶And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. ⁸For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. ⁹For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and **how you turned to God from idols** to serve the living and true God, (1 Thess. 1:6-9)

Conversion is something that we are to do, but what we only can do through the grace of God working upon and in us. And so, even as when we were at the point of converting to Jesus Christ, we were asking and trusting God to enable us to do so. The King James translation of Jeremiah 31:18 expresses this idea well. Jeremiah has rebellious Ephraim (Israel) saying to the Lord,

Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: **turn thou me, and I shall be turned**; for thou art the LORD my God. (Jer. 31:18, KJV)

Becoming converted to Jesus Christ is something that we do. We take action. We believe on Him. We turn from our sin and yield to Him as our Lord and Savior. We are to give our full effort in this matter. This is not a half-hearted matter. It is surrendered our whole self, our whole life, unto the Lord. But we need to recognize that our turning is due to a work of God’s grace in us. We are to be as the apostle Paul who described his own testimony. He wrote,

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was* with me. (1 Cor 15:10)

Being converted is all important. But please understand, although the turning is our responsibility, and if and when we turn it is due to the grace of God working in us, it is wholly the work of God in bringing healing and restoration to us from the misery and ruin we brought upon ourselves through sin. Consider again the words of Acts 28:27. In quoting Isaiah’s prophecy in which the words of God are spoken, we read:

...Lest they should understand with their hearts and **turn**,
So that **I should heal them**.”

Only the Lord can bring remedy to us for our sin. We are to “turn” to Him and then He will begin the process of “healing” us.

This grace of conversion involves the turning of one’s entire life. It is an act of repentance, turning from sin unto God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Let us close by considering the second sermon of Peter recorded in the Book of Acts. In Acts 3:11ff we read of Peter’s preaching to unbelieving Jewish people in the temple area of Jerusalem

Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon’s, greatly amazed. ¹²So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: “Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. ¹⁴But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and

asked for a murderer to be granted to you,¹⁵ and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.¹⁶ And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

¹⁷Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.¹⁸ But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.¹⁹ ***Repent therefore and be converted***, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,²⁰ and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,²¹ whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.²² For Moses truly said to the fathers, ‘The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.’²³ And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’²⁴ Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days.²⁵ You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’²⁶ To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, ***in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.***” (Acts 3:11-26)

The entire action of turning from sin, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, submitting to Him “in all things”, is what is essential. This is the act of conversion. May the Lord enable each of us to say that we have given ourselves wholly in this matter, for this no other way of salvation.

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24f)