

# Efforts At Conversions In The Book of Acts

*A LOOK AT THE TEACHERS  
AND THE PROSPECTS,  
SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES*

*“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”  
Acts 2:37*

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**LESSON 1: "INTRODUCTION TO CONVERSIONS"**

The Book of Acts by Luke is, among other things, a history of many efforts at converting both individuals and groups of people, both large and small. This series will examine the efforts made by various individuals at bringing people to Christ, to save the souls of those who are doing God's will. There are many thousands of failures, yet many, success stories recorded in this book. Most of these efforts will be examined so that the learner will know, understand and be able to apply the principles learned from examining both the background and techniques of the persons making the evangelizing efforts, as well as a similar look at the prospects.

The lessons are designed for the non-Christian, the new Christian and those wishing to become more proficient at doing "personal work." The objectives will differ for different people.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. *The non-Christian should be able to:*

- a. Give examples of what the non-Christians were told to do in answer to the question of "What must I do to be saved," as given to us by the Holy Spirit through Luke,
- b. Compare and evaluate to satisfaction, his or her own actions with those who accepted God's will and were being saved.
- c. List their own words, with appropriate references, those things being required of the souls being saved in the New Testament.

2. *The New Christian should be able to:*

- a, b, and c above
- d. Give more confident answers to acquaintances, family and friends as to their own actions in becoming saved, going by the pattern and requirements given in the various examples of conversions in the Book of Acts.
- e. "Be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks, the reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15).

3. *The personal worker should be able to:*

- All the above, plus:
- f. Name at least six examples of conversions and the things required of the prospect.
- g. Give in their own words, the background of the prospects and the approach by the teacher.
- h. Give details of at least one success or failure in efforts to convert someone themselves.

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Questions and activities:

1. Define: "Conversion"

What is God's part?

What is the convert's part?

2. **Without looking at your Bible**, list as many examples of conversion *efforts* as you can, from the Book of Acts, and describe them as successes or failures:

3. Successes:

Failures:

4. What can we learn from the *Successes*?

*Failures?*

5. Why did God give us both the successes and failures?

## EFFORTS AT CONVERSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

### ***FIRST EFFORT: PENTECOST, (ACTS 2:14-38.) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)***

1. Describe the majority of the audience, beliefs, background, home location, language.
2. What were some of the purposes of their being there and listening to Peter and the other apostles?
3. What had they seen and heard in the last couple of months?
4. What was unique about the scene they were now witnessing?
5. What was Peter's approach? (Was it subtle, harsh, truthful, sarcastic, condescending, heartfelt?)
6. Did he excuse their behavior?
7. Describe some of the different thoughts that might have been going through the minds of the people listening:
8. Did Peter get their attention? If so, how?
9. What was the recorded reaction of many?
10. Who brought up the need for them to do something?
11. What did Peter tell them they should do? What would be the results?
12. Did they join the church?

### ***SECOND EFFORT: SOLOMON'S PORCH, (ACTS 3:11-4-4.) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)***

1. (Peter and John had healed the lame man in the Temple and it caused a stir among the huge crowd.) What was the thrust of Peter's words to them?
2. What was similar in this to his lesson on Pentecost? (3:11-26)
3. What was different from Pentecost?
4. What was it that caused "many of those" to believe?
5. Debate the following: (Fill in both arguments)
  - A. "Since we can't work miracles, we are really handicapped in personal work."
  - B. "We are fortunate because we have something better than miracles: The Word."
6. What was the background of the people in the audience. (Where were they? What does this suggest?)
7. What did they generally believe?
8. Considering questions 6 and 7, who might we compare this to today?
9. List some things we might open with, then other things we might include in a discussion with these kind of people:

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**THIRD EFFORT: TEMPLE AND SOLOMON'S PORCH, ACTS 4:31-33; 5:12-14. (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. Peter and John had just been admonished to “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.” (Acts 4:17-18). What was their answer (4:19-20)?
2. Describe the people present (4:31):
3. In 5:11, why did fear come over all the church? Were there others besides the church? If so, whom?
4. In 5:12-13, why did the rest not join them (see verse 17)?
5. Are there those today who may even believe but not join with the Christians?  
What might keep them from it?
6. However, did some actually join with them? How are they described?
7. The NKJ says they would not “join” them. When they did join with them, how did they accomplish the union?

How does that “joining” differ from the “Join the church of your choice” expression used today?

8. Look at Acts 2:47. How did those people get into the church? When did they get added?
9. Is it possible that there are those who worship and get their names in the directory, who aren't “added” to the church by the Lord? How will we know?

**FOURTH EFFORT: SIMON THE SORCERER, ACTS 8: 9-13. (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. What does the occupation of a sorcerer at least imply about Simon?
2. Do we assume that Simon was not sincere in what he was doing in his believing in Christ?  
Explain:
3. In 8:13, what action did Simon take?
4. Where were they when Simon believed and was baptized?
5. Where was he when he tried to purchase the power of the apostles?
6. Do we know why he followed the apostles? List some possible reasons:
7. Read about the men and women in Samaria in 8:12. What caused them to act as they did? (8:4-6)
8. What did they “believe?”
9. Why don't we have the power to work miracles today? (It caused people to believe in New Testament days.)
10. What do we say to people who claim that their preacher can do miracles? (1 Cor. 13:8-13)
11. Are there Simon's today who obey then fall away? List some reasons (Matthew 13:1-23)

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**FIFTH EFFORT: ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH, ACTS 8:26-39. (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. What do we know about Philip?
2. What part did the Holy Spirit play in this conversion?
3. How did Philip know where to go and what to do?
4. Who was the Eunuch?
5. What was his religion?
6. Describe his diligence in religion:
7. How did Philip start his study? (Vs 30)
8. What did he find out? (Vs 31)
9. Where did Philip start his teaching? (Vs 35)
10. Who suggested baptism when they saw the water? (Vs 36)
11. What condition did Philip put on the baptism? (Vs 37a)
12. What did the Eunuch add to Peter's answer? (Vs 37b)
13. What suggests immersion? (Vss 38,39)
14. What can we assume that "preaching Christ" (Vs 35)
15. What was the reaction of the Eunuch after the baptism? (Vs 39) (Why not before the baptism, since he said he believed that Jesus was the Son of God?)
16. What might be some parallel examples today of people like the Eunuch?
17. How should we begin with them?

## EFFORTS AT CONVERSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

**SIXTH EFFORT: SAUL OF TARSUS. ACTS. 9:1-18; 22:1-16; 26:12-18 (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. Briefly describe Saul's background:
2. Was Saul a religious man or just a fanatic, or both?
3. Was Saul saved on the road to Damascus? How do we know?
4. How did Ananias feel about doing personal work with Saul?

How can we relate to that today?

5. What can we learn from Jesus' comments to Saul on the road?

What approach did Ananias take? (Why?)

6. When Paul recounted his conversion in Acts 22 and 26, was the story different? (Why, why not?)

**SEVENTH EFFORT: CORNELIUS (ACTS 10: 24-48; 11:1-18) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. What was significant about Cornelius' conversion? What events led up to Peter preaching to Cornelius? (10:9-16; 30-33):

2. What was Cornelius' background in religion? (Acts 10:22)

Do we ever talk to anyone like Cornelius?

3. After Cornelius gathered family and friends together, what did he say they wanted? (Acts 10:33)

Do we ever talk to anyone like that today?

4. What did Peter teach them? (Acts 38-43)  
What happened during the lesson? (Vs 44)  
Were they saved at this point?

5. What did Peter command them to do? (Vss 47-48)

**EIGHTH EFFORT: SERGIUS PAULAS, (ACTS 13:6-12) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 9 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. What do we know about the proconsul? (Vs 7)  
What did he want from Barnabas and Saul? (Vs 7)

2. What was Elymas trying to do? (Vs 8)  
Are there any people like this today?

3. What was it that astonished Sergius Paulas? (Vs 12)

4. What happened to Elymas?

5. What will be the fate of those today who try to prevent people from hearing the word?

## EFFORTS AT CONVERSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

### ***NINTH EFFORT: ANTIOCH GENTILES (ACTS 13:38-48) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)***

1. What message did Paul preach to the Jews? (Acts 13:37-39)

What did he say would justify them from all the Law would not?

2. How did the Gentiles feel about the word? (Vs 42)

3. What was it that made them glad and glorify the word? (Vss 47-48)

4. What did those who were appointed to eternal life do? (Vs 48)

### ***TENTH EFFORT: LYDIA, (ACTS 16:13-16) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)***

Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke came into Philippi and on the Sabbath went out of the city to the riverside and spoke to the women who met there.

1. What does the expression “who met there” suggest about the women? (Acts 16: 13)

2. (Acts 16:14-15) Lydia from Thyatira \_\_\_\_\_ us; She \_\_\_\_\_ God; She heeded the things \_\_\_\_\_ by Paul. Her and her household were \_\_\_\_\_. What does this tell us?

3. How sincere was she?

### ***ELEVENTH EFFORT: PHILIPPIAN JAILER, (ACTS 16:25-34) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)***

1. Why were Paul and Silas in Jail? (Vss 16-24)

2. What were they doing at midnight? (Vs 29) \_\_\_\_\_ Was this the right thing at the right place at the right time to the right people? \_\_\_\_\_ Is it out of place for two friends to offer a prayer at a meal in a public restaurant?

3. What caused the Jailer to be frightened and want to kill himself?

4. When told they were all there, what did he want know? (Vs 30)

5. What did they tell him? (Vs 31)

6. Was he saved yet? \_\_\_\_\_ What was missing for him and his family? (Vs 32)

7. What happened the same hour of the night? (Vs 33)

8. What evidence do we have that they were sincerely converted? (Vs 34)

### ***TWELFTH EFFORT: THESSALONIANS (ACTS 1-4) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)***

Paul went to the Synagogue and taught for three Sabbaths, reasoning with them from the Scriptures.

1. What was Paul’s basic message? (Vs 3)

2. What was the result for some of them? (Vs 4) \_\_\_\_\_ What does this mean?

### ***TWELFTH EFFORT: BEREANS, (ACTS 17:10-12) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)***

Paul and Silas ended up in Berea, being secreted away from Thessalonica at night. (Vs 10)

1. The Bereans not only “received the word with readiness” but also did what? (Vs 11)

2. Why weren’t they saved when they “Received the word?”

3. Having received the word, searched it, determined the truth, what did they do next? (Vs 12)

4. Why does it say that some were “baptized,” and also say that some “believed?”

## EFFORTS AT CONVERSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

**FOURTEENTH EFFORT: GREEKS AT MARS HILL, (ACTS 17:16-34) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. What had Paul been preaching in the city of Athens, before they took him up to the Areopagus (Mars Hill)? (Vs 18)
2. What was the goal of the audience for Paul? (Vs 21)
3. In Paul's opening remarks, did he condemn them for their strange beliefs? What did he say to them? (Vs 22-23)
4. Would this get their attention? How is this for a "sales" technique?
5. These people had never heard about God or Creation or The Flood or Egypt or Israel's captivity. He didn't address any of these. Why not?
6. He only quoted one person, though he dealt with much truth. Whom did he quote? (Vs 28)
7. His whole message was about one person and one major event. Who and what? (Vs 31)
8. What success did he have in his teaching? (Vs 32)

**FIFTEENTH EFFORT: APOLLOS AND THE EPHESIANS, (ACTS 18:24-19:6) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. Apollos had the eloquence of a Billy Graham, but like Graham, wasn't preaching all the truth, "knowing only the baptism of John." (Vs 25) Aquilla and Priscilla taught him the truth. What was their method? (Vs 26)
2. What result did they have? (Vss 27-28)
3. Paul came into Ephesus and wanted to teach them. How did he find out what they knew? (19:2)  
Why two questions?
4. He discovered they'd been baptized in the baptism of John. What was the first word Paul used when he began to teach them? (Vs 4) (See Acts 8:35)
5. What pattern can we learn from the teaching to both the Eunuch and the Ephesians? (Acts 8:30 and 19:2-3)

**SIXTEENTH EFFORT: FELIX, (ACTS 23:10-25) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

Paul is brought before the governor, Felix, and offers his defense.

1. What were his basic beliefs? (23:14-15)
2. What was Paul's claim for his being judged? (Vs 21)
3. Later, teaching Felix/wife, what did he teach? (Vs 25)
4. What were the results? (Vs 25--see also 26, 27)

**SEVENTEENTH EFFORT: AGRIPPA, (ACTS 26:1-29) (FILL IN THE CHART ON PAGE 10 AS APPROPRIATE.)**

1. What did Paul confess before Agrippa (Vss 4-11)
2. What purpose was given for Paul conversion? (Vss 16-18)
3. What source did Paul go to, to justify the Resurrection? (Vss 22-23)
4. What question did Paul ask Agrippa at the end? (Vs 27)
5. What was Agrippa's reply and Paul's reaction? (Vs 29)



**EFFORTS AT CONVERSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS**

Check the appropriate box for H, B, R, C, B, and add the scripture for each check. In the next box, give the prospect's beliefs and background, with scriptures. In the last box, describe the teacher's approach and the results.

	Hear	Believe	Repent	Confess	Baptized	Prospect(s)' Beliefs and Background:	Teacher's Approach:
1. Pentecost (2:14-38)							
2. Solomon's Porch (3:11-4:4)							
3. Temple/Solomon's Porch (5:12-14)							
4. Simon, Sorcerer (8:9-13)							
5. Ethiopian Eunuch (8:26-39)							
6. Saul (9:1-18; 22:1-16; 26:12-18)							
7. Cornelius (10:24-48; 11:1-18)							
8. Sergius Paulas (13:8-12)							

**EFFORTS AT CONVERSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS**

	Hear	Believe	Repent	Confess	Baptized	Prospect(s)' Beliefs and Background	Teacher Approach:
9. Antioch Gentiles (13:42-48)							
10. Lydia (16:13-16)							
11. Jailer (16:25-34)							
12. Thessalonians (17:1-4)							
13. Bereans (17:10-12)							
14. Greeks, Mars Hill (17:16-34)							
15. Ephesians, (Apollos) (18:24-19:6)							
16. Felix (24:10-25)							
17. Agrippa (26:1-29)							