

Call to Obedience #234
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Many are called, but few are chosen. The chosen ones are the drawn ones.

False Conversions

By Reimar Schultze

The Burden of the Church

Much of the church is prayerless. There are two obvious reasons why:

1. Many conversions are false conversions.
2. Most professing Christians do not enter into a life of self-denial.

The effect in both cases is similar, resulting in Paul's words, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:5), and as Peter stated in his epistle, "These are wells without water" (2 Pet. 2:17).

In each case, there is the appearance of conversion, but no real substance; there is a religious performance, yet the source of it is not of God but of the flesh. In the former case, a genuine connection with God was never made to start with, and the person lives under a constant illusion of having been saved. In the second case, there was water in the well, but through neglect, the well has dried up. We have only time to consider the first reason for the powerlessness in the church.

False Conversions

False conversions may be characterized by some outer reformation of life, by some outer conformity to religious standards and rituals and measures, without there having been an inner transformation of heart and spirit.

That there are false conversions and that there will be many of them is evidenced by this passage: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22,23).

Notice the words of Jesus, "I never knew you...." That is to say that there never was a day when these men's names were entered into the book of life. And false conversions lead to false christes, false apostles, false prophets, false pastors, evangelists and teachers, false miracles and exorcisms, and false witnesses and anointings. Also note the word "many." These false conversions and their subsequent fruits will not be rare – they will abound and will put a heavy burden upon the church of Jesus Christ.

Let us now consider what must lie at the root of every true conversion:

I. There Must Be a Drawing by the Father.

Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44a).

Only those drawn by the Father are given to the Son to be genuinely converted. This boils down to these simple conversion formulas:

The Father draws – the Son saves.

What the Father does not draw – the Son cannot save.

Every true child of God is a gift of the Father to the Son! Again, Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me..." (John 6:37a).

Millions of "believers" think they are born of God because they made an altar confession. They prayed the sinner's prayer, they followed the right scriptural path to salvation, but they are nonetheless wells without water simply because they have never been drawn by the Father. They have not been sent by the Father to the Son for their conversion. Consequently, they lack

the witness of the Holy Spirit that they were saved at the altar; they have been intellectually and scripturally convinced by their counselors that they are saved. In reality, they have not received a new heart but have simply made a decision for Christ, without realizing that WE CANNOT "DECISION" OURSELVES INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. So let me ask you, can you change the nature of a goat by dressing it in the clothing of a sheep, or can a bitter well bring forth sweet waters?

We must be born again!

There is no salvation without the "drawing." Now, let us ask, then, what are:

II. The Conditions to be Drawn.

Who will the Father draw and then present to the Son for salvation? The answer is: the Father will draw a sinner when he awakens to his destitute, sinful condition, recognizing his miserable fate, crying in his wicked heart, "Oh, God, have mercy upon me, a sinner," and when the sinner is willing to do nothing for the rest of his life but to love and to serve Jesus.

This is illustrated in the biblical parable of the Pharisee and publican in the temple. "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:11).

Charles Finney, perhaps the greatest revival preacher of the 18th century, suggested that we should not call people to the altar as long as they can look the evangelist straight in the eye when the gospel is being preached to them. Until sinners hang their heads in shame over their sins, they are not conversion material. Hence, notice here in this text, the publican "would not lift up ... his eyes." Further, take note that the publican stood afar off. He knew he was not worthy to even come to the temple. When God sees such a contrite condition in the hearts of men, he draws them. He then knows that the sinner's heart of stone is ready to be made into a heart of flesh.

If we try to get people saved without their being ashamed of their sins, we do the drawing and we do the "saving," and we end up with false conversions. We end up with spiritually dead people who have no fire and are unwilling to come to the next prayer meeting. And if they do come, they do so out of a sense of duty, and not out of love for God.

One of the evidences of a person genuinely converted is the witness of the Holy Spirit, for his Spirit "beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16). Another evidence of true conversion is that after receiving Christ, we will, with our first breath of the new life, say as Paul did on the Damascus Road, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6b).

If you have a witness that you are born again, but at the moment of your conversion, you do not have a "Lord, what will you have me to do" attitude, you have a false witness, and you had a false conversion. Indeed, too many Christians have come to the altar more like the Pharisee, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican" (Luke 18:11). They come with an attitude of "I'm not so bad, not as bad as others."

So, when the conditions in the heart of the sinner are right, that sinner will be drawn. But he can only be drawn to the porch or vestibule of salvation. Although on the one hand he is now nigh unto God, on the other hand he is still far off. God is holy, and sin creates a gulf between God and man.

Hence, when the sinner is on the front porch of salvation, God can do no more for him but to send him to his Son. Only his Son can forgive, because only his Son shed his blood for the cleansing of the sinner. Only the Son can utter the welcome words: "Your sins are forgiven you." Hence, the process, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me...." Hallelujah!

This is a spiritual paradox: only through the Father can we come to the Son, and only through the Son can we come to the Father. Our first coming to the Father is coming to the front porch of our salvation. Our second coming to the Father is through the blood of Jesus, our entering into the Holy of Holies to dwell with the Father. Whenever we come to Jesus, having

been drawn by the Father, Jesus gives the assurance that he “that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37b).

III. Two Common Reasons for Failed Conversions.

The two most common reasons why people seek salvation is because they want prosperity and heaven. But in either way, there is no salvation because there is no drawing of the Father unto him for such people.

1. Jesus must be our prosperity. When Abraham refused the loot of the king of Sodom after the battle of the kings, God appeared to him in a vision, saying, “Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward” (Gen. 15:1). If Jesus is not rich enough to us that we have to seek riches outside of him, our hearts will not be drawn by the Father. If Jesus is not the pearl of great price to us for which we are willing to sell all our other pearls in order to get him and his kingdom, we will not be drawn (Matt. 13:45,46). Those attempting to get saved to attain earthly blessings will leave Jesus when the storms of life arise.

2. Christianity is not an Escapist Religion. Millions come to the altar each year because they fear hell and want to go to heaven. They only see Jesus and his atoning work as a stepping stone or as a doormat to wipe off their sinful feet in order to escape hell and get to heaven. They have no intention of serving and following the Lord Jesus in the here and now, each moment of each day.

Now, can you see why most churches do not have genuine, old-fashioned prayer meetings? Do you see why the average American minister prays less than four minutes each day? Or can you see why there is little witnessing being done; and whatever is being done is done in a methodically, dry, and technical way, not coming from the heart? Can you see why there is no soul travail? Can you see why church people want to get the church service over with in an hour and then are quick to change the conversation to something other than the things of God? Indeed, the hearts of persons with false conversions are far from God.

Can you see why the entertainment spirit has come into the church? Can you see why the world’s dress code, the world’s music, the world’s critical attitudes, the world’s materialism, and the world’s hurry and worry and immorality has entered the sanctuaries of the Lord? It is simply because much of the church is not born of God!

Oh, my friend, have you been drawn of God or does your religion consist of lifeless, loveless duty, and of a heart void of the witness of the Holy Spirit?

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.”

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me....”