

## Five Life-Altering Steps

**Intro:** In our teaching through the years we have tried to help people see in a simple way what they must do to become a Christian and have the hope of eternal life in heaven. One way we can show that is by looking at those who became Christians in the Bible and summarizing their response to God. This morning we heard the wonderful story of the conversion of the Ethiopian. It is one of several examples given to us in the book of Acts. By looking at charts like this one we can see five things mentioned in these cases of conversion. Those who became Christians heard the good news about Jesus, believed the message about Jesus, repented of their sins, confessed Jesus as their Lord, and they were baptized in His name.

Virtually all of you have obeyed that message; and have known these steps for many years and sought to teach them to others. We might call them five life-altering steps. Each of these steps involves a principle of great importance that can change our lives forever. Let's consider how.

### **Hearing the gospel changes our understanding.**

Hearing the gospel gives us the opportunity to get clarity about our relationship with God and it changes our understanding.

***We understand that we are accountable to God as our Creator.***

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Cor. 5:10)*

***We understand that we have sinned against His law.***

*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Rom. 3:23)*

***We understand that we are under God's eternal wrath.***

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, (Rom. 1:18)*

***We understand that we can only be saved by God grace through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.***

*"But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone." (Hebrews 2:9)*

### **Believing the gospel changes our conviction.**

*As the result of hearing the gospel, our conviction is changed.*

***We are convinced that Jesus worked miracles while on this earth. The eye-witness testimony of those who lived with Jesus makes that clear, men like Peter who said:***

*"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—" (Acts 2:22)*

***We are convinced that Jesus claims to be God's Son are true.***

*"Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:30–31)*

***We are convinced that He died to save us from our sins.***

*"just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28)*

***We are convinced that He was raised on the third day and ascended to heaven.***

*"that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;" (Romans 10:9)*

### **Repenting of sin changes our intention.**

*When we understand our lost condition before God and realize that only through believing in Jesus that we can be saved our intention is changed.*

***We intend to leave a life of sin.***

*"Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

***We intend to live a life of obedience to God.***

*"and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God." (Romans 6:13)*

*It doesn't mean that we expect to be perfect; but it means that we will be progressing in holiness through the help of God.*

### **Confessing Christ changes our allegiance.**

*We rarely use that word except maybe in our national pledge; but in it we acknowledge that we will be loyal to our country and not betray it. So in the same way confessing Christ changes our allegiance.*

***Our allegiance will no longer be to our family, or friends, or even to a preacher.***

*"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." (Matthew 10:37)*

***Our allegiance is to Jesus.***

*"Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him." (2 Corinthians 5:9)*

### **Baptism in Jesus' name changes our condition.**

*Completing these five steps dramatically changes our spiritual state before God.*

***Our condition changes from unforgiven to forgiven.***

*"And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38)*

***Our condition changes from being a child of the Satan to being a child of God.***

*“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” (Galatians 3:26–27)*

***Our condition changes from being in the domain of darkness to being a citizen in the kingdom of Jesus.***

*“For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,” (Colossians 1:13)*

***Our condition changes from being outside the body of Christ to being a member of His body.***

*“Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?” (Romans 6:3)*

*“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)*

***Our condition changes from being destined for wrath to being destined for salvation.***

*“For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (1 Thessalonians 5:9)*

**Conclusion: Have you taken these five life-altering steps? Did these steps alter your life?**