

Converting Souls

What can we learn from the Apostle Paul about converting others to Christ? Here are five “keys” to converting souls from Paul in the book of Acts.

Key Find People Who Are Close. Paul would often look for prospects in places that were filled with God-fearing, scripture-reading people (Acts 17:1-4).

Key Face Rejection and Press On. Paul looked for people to teach right after he was rejected by others (Acts 17:5-10; see also 9:23-26; 13:6-12,46-52; 14:5-7,19-21; 18:6-11; 19:8-10; 20:19-20).

Key Point People to the Scriptures. Paul looked for people to teach who were eager to search the scriptures (Acts 17:11; see also 20:20-27).

Key Open the Door To All. Paul looked for people to teach from every background (Acts 17:12; see also 13:46; 14:1; 16:10; 17:18ff; 18:4; 19:10,17; 20:21).

Key Count on Others For Help. Paul would often move on and rely upon others for help in teaching (17:13-15; see also 18:19,24-28).

The Christian will always face challenges in teaching the lost, but we can learn from Paul and be successful. There are still “good and honest hearts” who want to be saved. Let’s get out there to reach them and teach them! - *Chris Reeves*

Sentence Sermons

- Our Christianity is to be a daily walk of life not just a philosophical thought of mind.
- A little oil of courtesy and kindness will reduce a lot of friction.
- Spiritual sickness cannot be cured by religious quacks.
- Stand up for your rights, but don’t ever fall down on your duties.
- Christians should try to avoid two things: misdeeds and missed deeds.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Enemies of the Cross

¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

- Philippians 3:18-19

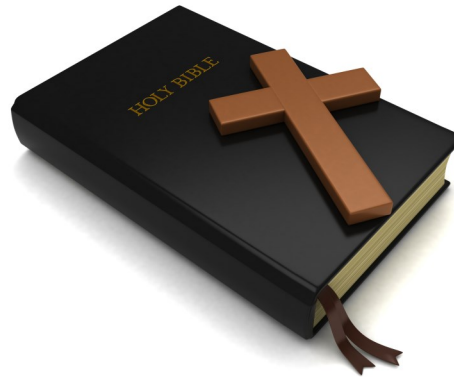
Jesus had his enemies among the Jews. The Apostles who preached Jesus had their enemies among the Jews and the Gentiles. The Lord's arch-enemy is the Devil who sows the seeds of destruction (Matthew 3:39; Acts 13:10).

When Paul was writing to the brethren at Philippi, he mentioned those persons who were "enemies of the cross of Christ". Paul himself, one of the greatest enemies of Christ, was converted and became a friend of Christ. Paul encouraged these Christians to imitate and walk after his example (3:17). He then wrote to them about the "enemies of the cross of Christ" (3:18). Who are these enemies?

Let's break down this verse further. Paul writes that "many walk" - they are on the broad way (Matthew 7:13-14); "whose end is perdition" - they will be lost (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9); "whose god is the belly" - they are selfish (2 Timothy 3:2); "whose glory is in their shame" -

they are shameful in conduct (Ephesians 5:12); and, "who mind earthly things" - they are this-world focused (Philippians 2:21).

Today, there are still "enemies of the cross of Christ". For example, the way of Christianity is the way of a unified body - one church of Christ (Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20; 2:14). But, all who promote a religion other than that of Jesus Christ are enemies. All world religions (Judaism, Islam,



Buddhism, etc.), Protestant denominations (Baptist, Methodist, etc.), Catholicism, and pagan religions (Wicca, etc.) are all enemies.

The way of Christianity is the way of the New Testament gospel - the word of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:17-18,23). But, all those people who teach something other than the New Testament gospel are enemies (Romans 16:18). All errors taught are enemies: marriage, divorce, and remarriage er-

rors, plan of salvation errors, work and worship of the church errors, false science errors, unbelief errors, and ignorance errors are all enemies.

The way of Christianity is the way of self-denial, suffering, and sacrifice (Philippians 2:8; Matthew 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). But, all those who are selfish are enemies (Philippians 3:19). All acts of selfishness are enemies: indifference, apathy, self-satisfaction, lukewarm, misplaced priorities, and preeminence are all enemies.

The way of Christianity is the way of separation from the world (Romans 6:6). But, all those people who are worldly are enemies (Philippians 3:19; James 4:4). All acts of worldliness are enemies: lust, sexual immorality, materialism, idolatry, improper language and dress, works of the flesh, strife and division, and compromise are all enemies.

Like Paul before obeying the gospel, all people are enemies of Christianity prior to obeying the gospel (Romans 5:10; Col. 1:21). And, all the Lord's enemies then and now will be put under his feet (Acts 2:35; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Hebrews 1:13).

Don't be an "enemy of the cross", be a friend of Jesus by doing today what he commands (John 5:14)? - Chris Reeves