

TO THE GROUP LEADER: This resource is designed to help you lead others to better understand one of the “Basics of the Faith” booklets published by P&R. The numbers in brackets indicate the page number in the booklet. Below each question is an answer based on what the author presents or advice on how to discuss the question. You have the freedom to adapt the questions to best fit your group.

A good teaching technique is to distribute the questions to the group and have them write down how they would answer BEFORE reading the booklet. After reading, members can refine their answers based on their reading. As a group, members can discuss their views to affirm or modify what they wrote.

1. Let's begin with the obvious question: What do you think it means to be converted? When does it happen? How does it happen? (5-8)
Take just a little while to feel out how much your group understands about this aspect of salvation. You will be giving them more information as you work through the booklet.
2. Think of the three persons of the Holy Trinity. We usually speak of them in this order: Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That is a *logical* order. But in terms of our *experience* of the Trinity, it is the reverse of that order (p. 6). Review the booklet and use a brief phrase to describe the unique work that each Person plays. Then recall your own encounter with each person of the Trinity:
 - a. Called by the Holy Spirit (p. 11). My encounter with the Holy Spirit *before* my conversion:
 - b. Conversion - embracing Jesus Christ, God's Son (p. 18). My growing attraction to Jesus leading to my conversion was...
 - c. Loved by God whom I now call my Father (p. 25). My awareness that I am God's son or daughter happened to me when...
3. What is your story, or testimony, of how you came to Christ? What role did **you** play in this? (8-11)
Give one or two people a chance to *briefly* share their testimony. Maybe have one share who had a dramatic change and also one who grew up in a covenant home.
4. If you came to Christ after early childhood, who made the first move in your conversion – you or the Holy Spirit? (11-17)
There will probably be a lot of questions about this section. Be sure you understand the concept of *effectual calling*. If you don't think you know it well enough to answer questions, consider bringing the pastor into the discussion.

5. Would you describe your conversion as a dramatic or gradual turning? (18-25)
 Let some of the group work through this even after reviewing this section. If there are those who are not sure, then have the group work with him or her. It may turn out the story will be similar to the one Steve gives of the woman who wanted to join his church before she was totally converted.
6. List some of the evidences that should become more and more evident following a person's true conversion. (18-25)
 - a. There is desire to be baptized.
 - b. There is a desire to officially join with the fellowship of the saints (the church).
 - c. There is a growing desire for the Word of God.
 - d. Your prayer life should begin to grow more intimate with God.
 - e. (others)
 - f.
 - g.
7. What is God's ultimate goal in your conversion? (25-29)
 God's goal in everything is to bring glory to Himself. When we glorify Him, He gives us blessings far beyond what we ask or imagine. He loved us first and enabled us to love Him.
8. What should be our goal following what God has done for us in our conversion? (28-29)
 We have become His children. Because of His great love, He adopted us into His family. Like any adopted child, we must come to know our adopted parents and grow to love them, especially as we learn to trust them. He deserves our worship, praise, and thanks.
9. One of the benefits of conversion is our being adopted into God's family. As an adopted child, how should we then see the rest of our family? (29-29)
 We are not adopted as an only child. We are joined into the fellowship of the church, and as such, we must see the church not as an option, but as part of God's grand plan for us. We grow when we are part of a family. We don't grow when we stay away. Church is never an option; it is God's plan A, and there is no plan B.

After going through these questions, read the text and fill in the answers in preparation for class, noting other questions you might have. [By the way, if you do have any other questions about what you read, write them down here so you remember them at class time.]

APPLICATION

1. 2 Corinthians 13:5 says: *Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you fail to meet the test.* After reading this booklet, are you sure you are *fully* converted? If not, now would be a great time to make sure.
2. If you are fully convinced you are converted and actively living for Jesus, then it is time you take all you have learned and share it with someone during this coming week.

For Further Study

Beginnings: Understanding How We Experience the New Birth, Stephen Smallman. P&R Publishing, 2015.
What is Discipleship?, Stephen Smallman. P&R Publishing, 2011.
What is Regeneration?, Matthew Barrett. P&R Publishing, 2013.

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