

# F. Y. C.

## For Your Consideration

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## Light Reveals, Darkness Conceals

That's obvious. We can see in the light but we can't see in the dark. Anyone who has visited a cave knows what is absolute darkness. While there are many ways to illustrate the concept "Light Reveals, Darkness Conceals," what the Bible says about light and darkness is paramount.

The more society drifts away from godly living, the darker it becomes. The contrast becomes more evident as our lights shine brighter. We are witnessing the result of such contrast: **The more evil is exposed, the more the light is hated.**

### WE ARE TO SHINE OUR LIGHT

It's been noted that the striking of a match at night can be seen from a mile away. Similarly, our light (influence) can be "seen" far and wide. We must not hide our profession of faith and our lifestyle as a disciple of Jesus. Let our light shine brightly for all the world to see – no matter how much darkness surrounds us.

*"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*

Matthew 5:14-16

### SOME HATE THE LIGHT

There are people who hate the light because it reveals their ungodliness. They hate being exposed and want the light to be turned off. It's no surprise they attack anyone who shines their light.

*"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."*

John 3:19-21

### WE ARE TO WALK IN THE LIGHT

*This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

1 John 1:5-7

# CONVERSION

*Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.*

Acts 15:3

## CONVERSION

“A turning about, or round.” Synonyms: changed belief, a rebirth, regeneration, transformation.

How is one converted to become a disciple of Jesus Christ (Christian) is clearly presented in the New Testament.

It involves the “inner person” – one’s heart, soul, and mind.

## CONVERSION PROCESS

Change in **knowledge** brought about by hearing the Good News.

Change in **thought** brought about by believing the message.

Change in **actions** brought about by a change of heart based on the message believed.

Change in **allegiance** brought about by confessing (owning) Jesus as the Christ.

Change in **condition** brought about by being baptized for the remission of sins.

Change in **position** brought about by being added to the number of saved. Child of God.

**Outward signs are a reflection of what has happened within.**

## WHAT HINDERS ONE FROM BEING CONVERTED?

### **Not willing to listen.**

“Hearing” is not always the same as “understanding.”

### **Not willing to accept message.**

“I understand” is not the same as “I believe.”

### **Not willing to have a change of heart.**

“I know I should” is not the same as “I’m willing.”

### **Not openly acknowledging Jesus as the Son of God.**

Wanting the benefits while refusing to confess Jesus as the Christ.

### **Not being baptized for the remission of sins.**

Belief resulting in new way of living is not complete until the guilt of sins is washed away.

## CONVERSION IS NEITHER MYSTERIOUS NOR COMPLICATED

✓ It’s changing the “inner man” (you inside) by faith in Christ.

✓ One’s life being changed by conforming to the Gospel and sound doctrine.

✓ Not just changed—but cleansed from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ.

**WARNING:** Unless one is converted he cannot have a part in the kingdom of the Lord.

*“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord...”*

Acts 3:19

# 'I'm Ignorant?'

(A True Story)

A son-in-law complained to his wife that his father-in-law had called him “ignorant!” He said, “What does he know? I’ve had 15 years of higher education and possess several master degrees and he only went to school through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.”

The son-in-law was overlooking the fact that his father-in-law had been receiving instruction for many years while attending the “School of Life” and had enrolled in many “classes.” The education he received is not found in school rooms.

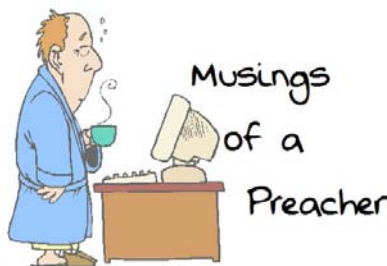
Book learning gives us the tools. Where we learn how to use the tools is in the “laboratory of life” (note the root word “*labor*”). It’s what we learn after we’ve been schooled. True education is not just book-learning.

This also applies to studying the Bible. Bible knowledge is a tool. Knowing is not enough. Applying your knowledge of the Scriptures is where the full value of knowledge is realized.

*What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things,  
and the God of peace will be with you.*

Philippians 4:9

## NEGATIVE PREACHING



I received a phone call from a preacher in a neighboring town. He said he would like to meet with me for lunch at a local restaurant. So I suggested a certain restaurant where we could meet. While we were eating the preacher brought up the reason why he wanted to have lunch with me. He said he had heard talk (rumors) that I was against negative preaching.

At first, I couldn’t understand how such a rumor could have started. Then it came to me. A few weeks back I had mentioned to a member that I did not use negative preaching as a means to build up the members. I found it counter productive. To build up, I said, I use positive preaching. It appears that comments were misconstrued as they were passed around.

I explained to my friend that I had witnessed preachers berating members in an attempt to make them do better, but it resulted in the members becoming discouraged and frustrated. Then the members were chastised for being discouraged.

In one instance a number of members in a congregation had become discouraged because the sermons were all negative and laced with: “You’re not doing enough. You’re falling short. Stop sinning.” And similar comments.

In another situation, a member said to the preacher that she enjoyed the sermon. That night, the preacher got up and said that he was a failure. Why? Because someone enjoyed his sermon. He said his sermons must make the members feel uncomfortable. He felt it was the only way to “shape them up, and to keep them from sinning,”

Point Made.

Tear down what is wrong. Build up what is right.

I’m glad my friend came to me for clarification. Thank God for true friends.



# Ponder This In the Short Run



## CHURCH

### By lying

one can avoid punishment that is due.

### By stealing

one can acquire without working.

### By being dishonest

one can gain an advantage.

But the gain is only temporary. In the long run one has to live with his or her conscience bearing witness and accusing (not a pleasant experience). Also, one lives in fear of being found out. Later, if not sooner, the consequences will have to be dealt with. Maybe not in this life, but certainly at the judgment.

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

2 Corinthians 5:10

### In the Long Run

When one is honest, truthful, and hard-working his conscience voices approval.

There is no fear of being found out.

There is no fear of being punished.

There is no fear of the judgment.



### The short run may be tempting, but it's the long run that matters most!

*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.*

1 Corinthians 9:24

Greek: *ekklesia* – from *ek*, “out of,” and *klesis*, “a calling” (*kaleo*, “to call”), was used among the Greeks of a body of citizens “gathered” to discuss the affairs of state, in Acts 19:39.

In the Septuagint, it is used to designate the “gathering” of Israel, summoned for any definite purpose, or a “gathering” regarded as representative of the whole nation.

In Acts 7:38 it is used of Israel; in Acts 19:32, 19:41, of a riotous mob.

It has two applications to companies of Christians,

(1) to the whole company of the redeemed throughout the present era, the company of which Christ said, “*I will build My Church,*” Matthew 16:18, and which is further described as “*the Church which is His Body,*” Ephesians 1:22; 5:23,

(2) in the singular number (e.g., Matthew 18:17, RV marg., “congregation”), to a company consisting of professed believers, e.g., Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:5, and in the plural, with reference to churches in a district.

– Vines Expository Dictionary

### NOTE

There are 35 references in the New Testament where the Greek word *ekklesia* is translated “churches”; e.g.: Romans 16:16 *All the churches of Christ greet you.*

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Bible references are from the NASB except where another translation is referenced.

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