

## Converted to Christ as an adult - but have you become as a little child?

How do you see your own conversion to Christ? To be converted to Christ means to be born again. How do you view that expression of Jesus “Born again”? What kind of a birth did you in fact have? It wasn’t a natural or physical re-birth was it? So what kind of birth was it? Was it your spirit that was re-born? Was it born as a fully mature spirit or as a new born baby spirit? Even though you were an adult physically did you now see yourself as a new born baby, spiritually? Was there a wholesale shift in your thinking from the pride of physical adulthood to the humility of being a spiritual child, or not?

Matt 18:3-4 (Jesus) ...**Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever** (He is speaking to adults) **humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.**

Did Jesus really mean that; unless my whole frame of reference about myself changes to that of a little child I cannot enter the kingdom of heaven? The Bible makes clear that our adult physical bodies are not capable of entering heaven; it says they will simply return to the dust from which they came. Only our new born spirits have the potential of entering heaven, but for that to happen we must truthfully acknowledge the infant state of our spirits. As soon as we do we will then want to grow up spiritually:

1 Pe 2:2 (This is written to adults) **As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow** (spiritually) **thereby,**

Before Christ’s first and second coming adult hearts have to become as little children’s

Before Jesus began His public ministry God raised up John the Baptist. His mission was to make ready a people prepared for the coming of the Lord. The principal part of this mission was to turn the hearts of adults to become like little children’s – so they could enter God’s kingdom. When the Bible speaks of our hearts it is referring to our spirits (1 Pe 3:4, Ps 51:17). The Bible foretells of a similar mission to prepare adults for Christ’s second coming, it too seeks to soften their hearts to become as little children’s:

Luke 1:17 **He (John) will be a man of rugged spirit and power like Elijah, the prophet of old; and he will precede the coming of the Messiah, preparing the people for His arrival. He will soften adult hearts to become like little children's, and will turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous.**

TLB/NKJV

When we were born again we became the spiritual children of our Spiritual Father, who fathered us with the seed of His word. We became God’s children, not as adults but as babies. But the success of this new birth hinges on whether we will accept the reality of what in fact took place, and begin to think, act and speak as little spiritual children:

Mark 10:15 (Jesus) **Assuredly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it** (compare Mat 18:3 above)

An example of a mature adult humbling himself before God as a little child:

After the reign of King David, his son Solomon became king of Israel. By then he was a mature adult, married and fully immersed in the responsibilities of government. But he didn't see himself as an adult; instead, with respect to making right choices or doing things that were consistent with God's will, he saw himself as helpless as a little child:

1 Kings 3:7 (Solomon) **Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king ...but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.**

A highly educated, full grown man saying, with respect to living and ruling wisely, he doesn't know how to go out or come in - without God's guidance. Neither do we know how to make simple righteous choices and live in the spirit realm, where God is, without His continuous direction. This is where every Christian is intended to live as God's sons. Only child like humility, which puts and keeps my will under God's will, can live there.

On the other hand, pride, which puts my will above God's will, cannot live in the spirit realm. Instead, pride lives in the natural realm, by sense and reason, where God is not, for in the natural realm it thinks it knows how to go out and come in, so it doesn't need God. A person converted to Christ in whom pride still reigns, who therefore won't become as a little child, is on a tragic course, Jesus says, to miss heaven altogether.

1 Jo 2:28 **And now, little children, abide (live) in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.**

A B Simpson comments; it seems from this that only little children can live in Christ; and John included himself. Every other Christian will be ashamed at Christ's second coming.

Jesus and the Apostles often referred to full grown Christian adults as "little children"

Jesus: John 13:33 Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer...

Paul: Gal 4:19 My little children for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.

John: 1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you...

Have you ever seen the parallel between your natural and spiritual birth and upbringing

When were you born naturally? As part of a period of total dependency on your mother what basic skills did you spend your first few years of life being taught how to do them?

- Did you learn to eat natural food without someone having to feed you?
- Did you slowly learn how to talk with your natural tongue?
- Did you learn, after many falls, how to walk unassisted?
- Did you learn to eliminate natural waste without making a mess of yourself?
- Did you learn to wash with natural water and dress yourself with natural clothing?
- Did you learn to exercise your natural body?
- Did you learn to obey and receive correction from your natural parents?
- Later, did you learn how to reproduce natural children?

Did we learn these things on our own; was a copy of "self development for babies" put into our cribs? No, someone with great patience had to teach us these basic life skills.

When was your spirit born again? Did you than have a period of total dependence on your spiritual mother (the Church, Christians including those who birthed you)? What basic skills did you or should you have spent your first years as a Christian learning?

- Have you learned to feed you spirit with God's word daily, by yourself?
- Did you learn how to speak God's word from your spirit and not from your head?
- Did you learn how to walk in your spirit, continuously led by God's own Spirit?
- Did you learn how to eliminate spiritual waste, your sins, without others' help?
- Did you learn to wash with living water and be clothed with God's righteousness?
- Have you learned how to exercise your spirit daily, in conversation with God?
- Did you learn to always obey the Father (and mother) of your new born spirit?
- Did you learn how to reproduce spiritual children by winning souls to Christ?

Do we learn these basic skills of Christianity on our own or did someone else with great patience have to teach us? But pride refuses to be taught; only childlike humility learns. Do you humbly see yourself as a little spiritual child, are you growing up spiritually? Or do you see yourself first as an adult and unknowingly therefore you remain a spiritual baby? Is it due to pride, that won't put its will under God's will, that you live mostly in the natural and not the spiritual realm? Are you living just like an unconverted person?

1 Cor 3:3 (These words are written to Christian adults) **For you are still only baby Christians, controlled by your own desires, not God's. When you are jealous of one another and divide up into quarreling groups, doesn't that prove you are still babies, wanting your own way? In fact, you are acting like people who don't belong to the Lord at all.** TLB

If you have difficulty seeing your need to become as a little child it is likely because you put your confidence in your own natural intelligence. But God hides His truths from our natural intelligence revealing them only to the spirits of those who are as little children.

Luke 10:21 (Jesus) **...I praise you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from the intellectuals and worldly wise and for revealing them to those who are as trusting as little children...** TLB

If these scriptures describe you, would you consider softening your heart and humbling yourself by choosing to put your will under God's will? Won't you become the little child who you were once born again to be, and enter the kingdom of heaven? Where is the kingdom of heaven? It's the realm of God's Spirit and it is only found within your spirit:

Mark 10:15 (Jesus) **Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.**

Rom 14:17 **For the kingdom of God is...in the Holy Spirit.**

Luke 17:21 (Jesus)...**The kingdom of God is within you** (if you have the Holy Spirit)

We can only enter the kingdom of God, that is, to live "in Christ", if we as little children are submitted to God's Spirit within our spirits. Isn't it foolish of us to defiantly live in the natural realm, by sense and reason, and expect to inherit a spiritual kingdom? We were re-born in our spirits; now we must learn to live in our spirits, in order to inherit eternity.