

Scripture Reading:

1 THESSALONIANS

1:1 – 10



IMITATORS & EXAMPLES

A Series in 1 Thessalonians



**IMITATING JESUS MEANS
IMITATING HIS EXAMPLES.**

Imitation is the foundation of much human learning.

BOTH IMITATORS AND EXAMPLES

1 Thessalonians 1:6 – 7

You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.



SELECTING FOR 'THRIVING SURVIVAL'

We don't need antibiotics.
We select our genetic
lines for survival in nature,
not just speed of growth.

- Joel Salatin

HOW DO YOU PREDICT PERSEVERANCE?

What makes for present assurance also leads to future perseverance.

4 EVIDENCES OF GRACE:

1. Conversion
2. Worship
3. Discipleship
4. Martyrdom (witness)

First 2 today.

1. CONVERSION

1 Thessalonians 1:9 – 10

“...They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”

CONVERSION

The full **change** (turning) of mind and heart from idols to **serve** the living and true God, and to **wait** for his Son from heaven.

**"CONVERSION" IS A
CONDESCENSION WORD.**

Conversion is really the
opposite of bigotry.

DEFINITIONS

Conversion: The full change of mind based on persuasive evidence warranting a change.

Bigotry: Refusal to change one's mind after persuasive evidence warrants believing your previous conclusions were prejudicial.

NICE VS. NEW

Becoming nicer,
healthier, or more
'mindful' people

or

reorienting to
God in worship



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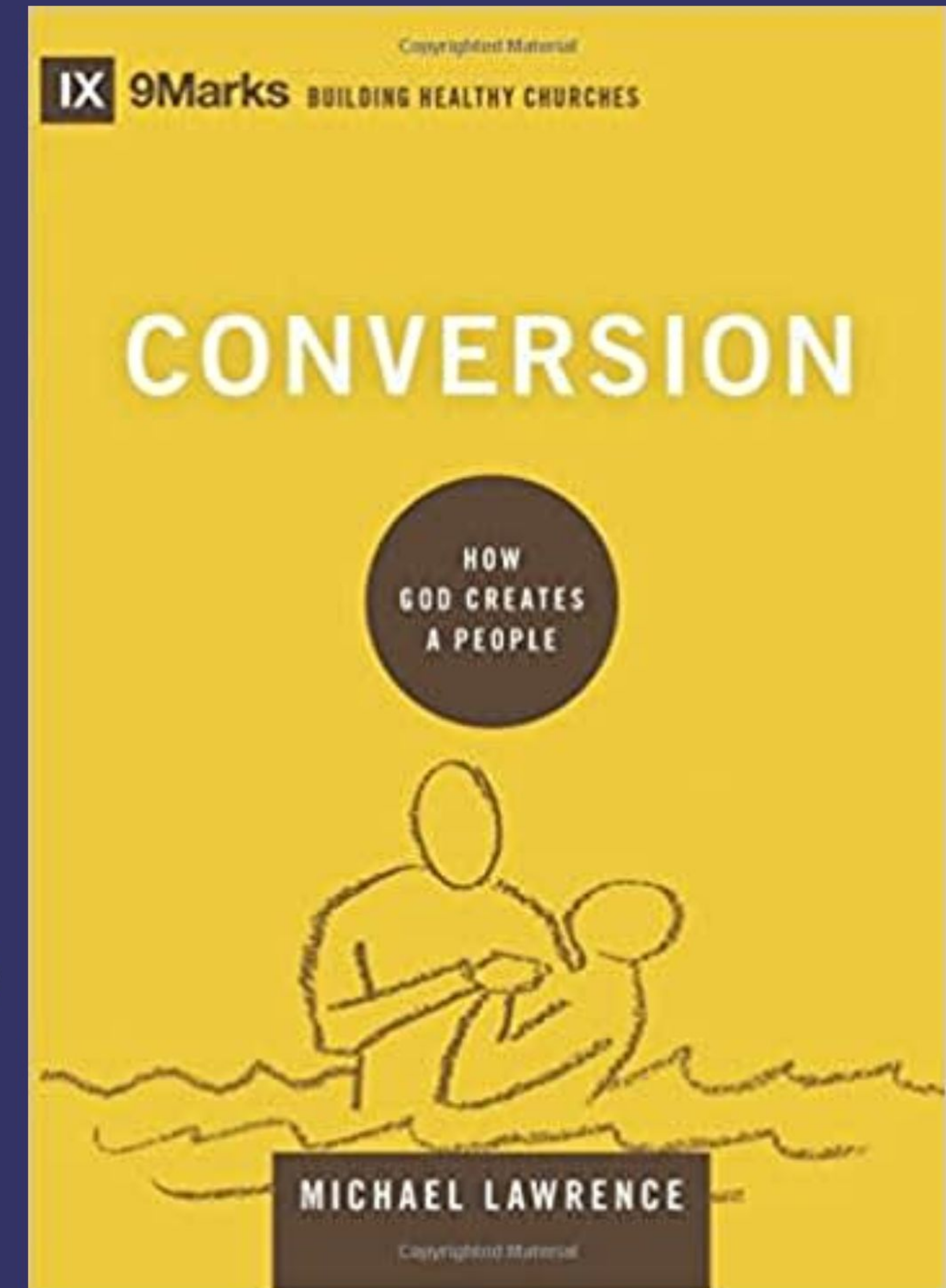


World Weavers
ADVENTURES OF THE SPIRIT



Michael Lawrence

“There is no need to become a true believer. Rather religions help people become better, nicer people, and any religion will do the trick. This assumption...is why so many people in the west have abandoned religion altogether. If the point is simply to be a better person today than I was yesterday, then why do I need any religion at all?”



CONVERSION'S COMPONENTS

1. Full change—Repentance and faith
2. Gospel—The truths we put our faith in
3. Regeneration—God's work in us
4. The Holy Spirit—God with us

BEING MADE NEW

John 3 - "must be born again"

Eph. 2 - "God made you alive"

2 Corinthians 5 - "a new creation"

Ezekiel 37 - "dry bones" live

Romans 6 - "buried" and "raised"

Titus 3:5 - "regeneration"

Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26 - Heart of "stone" to "flesh"

All PASSIVE to the human believer.

IMITATING CHRIST'S EXAMPLES IN CONVERSION

Conversion is a noble recognition that we were wrong (idolaters) and want to turn to the God who is both living and true. And serve him.

2. WORSHIP

The moment of conversion leads to ongoing worship because conversion turns us away from idols and produces joy.

GOD AND NOT IDOLS

1 Thessalonians 1:9 – 10

They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

WELCOMING WITH JOY, IN SPITE OF AFFLICTION.

Joy is the wide universal,
sadness is the narrow particular.

1 Thessalonians 1:6

You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16 – 18

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

ROMANS 8:17 – 18

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—
heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if
indeed we share in his sufferings in order
that we may also share in his glory.

I consider that our present sufferings are not
worth comparing with the glory that will be
revealed in us.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

A regenerate person is
"someone who has been given a
taste for God."

IMITATION

Imitate those who worship with
joy no matter what the affliction

1 Thessalonians 2:2, 14 – 15

Acts 16

William Cowper

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