



King of Conversions

Read: Luke 23:35-43

Conversion stories are always rather interesting. I have heard many accounts about how people came to encounter Jesus as their personal King and Saviour. In this week's gospel we hear the conversion story of the thief who was hanging on the cross next to Jesus. Here is a man who probably spent his entire life estranged from God, but during his final moments had a conversion and found salvation by accepting Jesus.

Conversions seem to have three components. First, we must acknowledge our failings, and recognize that something in our life is broken. It is a feeling of estrangement from our relationship with God. This epiphany occurred to the thief. He knew that his errant choices had led to his condemnation.

Second, we must accept Jesus. Unfortunately, like the thief, we cannot save ourselves. Salvation is a free gift from God (Ep. 2:8). The book of Romans tell us, "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (10:9).

The third part of any conversion story is worship. This may sound strange, but once we have experienced God's mercy the heart is naturally elevated to worship the giver of the gift. Worship is the natural reaction of a heart that's encountered the richness of God's love. It is an act of gratitude. As Hebrews 9:14 says, Christ died to "purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God." First our hearts must be convicted, and then we are free to worship God.

We all need a saviour. We all need a King. Jesus is that King. Only he has the power to forgive sins. Only he has the power to transform our lives. His rule is one of mercy, compassion, tenderness and love. Let us lay our burdens down before him and worship him as our King and our God.