

## *The Conversion of Crispus*

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**Introduction:** How many of you have heard of Crispus?

- A. The church at Corinth began during Paul's second missionary tour. **(Acts 18:1-8)**
  - 1. Often great things begin in a small way. Paul found opportunities wherever he went. Here he found common ground in tent making.
  - 2. When those in the synagogue blasphemed and Paul left, did that end his opportunities with the Jews?
  - 3. Very often what we see as a small opportunity or a hindrance may be just the door to a great work for the Lord. Let us keep teaching!
- B. Crispus was converted in the midst of opposition and slander.
  - 1. When we are consistent in our teaching and in our spirit, the wrong actions of others often cause someone else to see the truth in a clearer way.
  - 2. Let us never underestimate the power of the gospel! **(Rom 1:16-17)**

### ***I. The Means of Crispus Conversion***

- A. What was Paul's "secret" in converting so many souls? **(1 Cor 2:1-5)**
  - 1. Paul simply preached the message of the cross. There were no gimmicks or special presentations.
  - 2. This served God's purpose. Those who would become His children must go through certain changes of the heart. The wisdom of men often causes men from missing the gospel.
  - 3. The gospel alone appealed to Crispus.
- B. There were others who wanted more from Paul. **(1 Cor 1:22-25)**
  - 1. The Jews wanted a personal sign while the Greeks wanted wisdom. In both cases they wanted to dictate to God that which would appeal to their flesh.
  - 2. Paul never gave them what they wanted. Their "felt needs" were that which stood in the way of their conversion.
  - 3. We must trust God in our work with the lost. This is also true in our work with other Christians! Let us not give in to demands that lead us away from God.
- C. There are many "mega churches" that proclaim the future growth in this country lies with appealing to the "whole man".
  - 1. These churches do get numbers, but they do not get many conversions.
  - 2. What if "Brother Paul were here?". He would only give them the gospel. **(2 Tim 4:1-2)**
  - 3. Let us give Crispus credit, he found appeal in the cross of Christ.

### ***II. What did Crispus do to be Saved?***

- A. Did Crispus do more than believe? **(Acts 18:8)**
  - 1. It depends on what you mean by believe. In this context the term "believed" is used in a comprehensive sense, encompassing all that the Corinthians did to become a Christian.
  - 2. Sometimes the word believe or faith can mean "mental assent" alone. **(Jas 2:14,17)**

- B. Consider two men who hear Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost.
  - 1. Both hear the conclusion and believe that Jesus is the Christ. (**Acts 2:36**)
  - 2. But only one came to repent, confess and be baptized. (**Acts 2:37-38, 41**)
  - 3. Only one "believed" in this comprehensive sense.
- C. The Phillipian Jailer also "believed". (**Acts 16:34**)
  - 1. What did he do? He first was humbled and ready to turn to God. (**Acts 16:29-31**)
  - 2. He then heard the message and was baptized! (**Acts 16:32-33**)
  - 3. He was saved by "faith" at the time all are saved by faith. (**Col 2:11-13**)
- D. Paul himself baptized Crispus. (**1 Cor 1:13-14**)
  - 1. Did Crispus only believe? No.
  - 2. Faith is the foundation and baptism is the last step into Christ.

### ***III. Some Obstacles Facing the Conversion of Crispus***

- A. **He has to separate himself from his old friends.**
  - 1. He was formerly the "chief ruler". Can you imagine the shock that swept the synagogue when he "defected".
  - 2. Without a doubt many did some talking to rationalize about him. Ex. "He has lost his mind, or He has never known God".
- B. **He left to be a part of an unpopular religion.**
  - 1. The Greek's there celebrated the temple of Venus.
  - 2. The Jews already had given their rejection.
  - 3. There would be many who would look unfavorably upon him. (**Gal 1:10**)
- C. **He now is associating with some formerly immoral people.**
  - 1. What did Crispus see when he looked around the church at Cornith? (**1 Cor 6:9-11**)
  - 2. The Pharisee could never have done this! (**Luke 18:9**)
  - 3. Could you see the thoughts of the Pharisee in the assembly at Cornith. He would have attacked Paul too. (**1 Tim 1:15**)
  - 4. Could you have attended Corinth? How does the grace of God change our thinking?

### ***IV. The Great Blessings Crispus found in His Conversion***

- A. He gained the forgiveness of his sins. (**Acts 3:19**)
  - 1. Even if he had lived with a high degree of purity.
- B. He was assured he was right with God. (**1 Cor 1:2**)
  - 1. He was "sanctified", set apart for God Himself.
- C. He gained the hope of the resurrection of the righteous. (**John 5:28-29**)
  - 1. Think of the joy when Crispus first heard this read. (**1 Cor 15:50-55**)
  - 2. It is better to have this hope wit problems and challenges, than to be with a popular religion and be lost.

**Conclusion:** Crispus did not regret his decision. Will you follow him now?  
 (Adapted from Bill Hall)