

Title: DIFFERENT CONVERSIONS, SAME CALL, JOHN 21:1-14.  
(Chatham, NJ; 04/18/10, AM) [D – Contrasting Outline]

Theme: Though the conversions of the Apostles and of Paul were different, the result was the same calling to follow.

Purpose: To describe the differences while suggesting that all of us have been called to follow.

Introduction:

1. The anticlimactic nature of John 21 shines a light on the struggle that the Apostles had even after the resurrection.
2. They didn't know what to do next.
3. Their conversion wasn't complete, or at least it didn't have a clear direction.
4. By contrast Paul's conversion happens almost in an instant and his mission begins immediately.
5. The conversion schemes may be different in some important ways, but the call is still to follow Jesus.

## I. Preparation for Their Calling.

### A. The Apostles.

1. Intimate and lengthy contact with Jesus.
2. They shared meals.
3. They saw Jesus in his human form more than anyone else.
4. They performed tasks.
5. By the time of John 21 they still weren't sure what to do; they go fishing.
6. Not until Pentecost was there no uncertainty.
7. The preparation had been extensive.

### B. Paul

1. Dramatic contact with the already risen and glorified Jesus
2. Three days without food and water
3. How could he prepare for this?
4. Yet Paul did not hesitate: he proclaimed Jesus immediately, Acts 9:20.
5. He spent "many days" there, and during that time he may have gone to Arabia and back to Damascus, Gal. 1:18.
6. This could have been preparation for his ministry to the Gentiles.
7. His preparation was "on the job" as well as without the benefit of seeing the Lord in his human state.
8. His rabbinic training, however, had prepared him in a way unique among the Apostles; see Acts 22:3.

## II. In Relationship to the Resurrection and Ascension.

### A. The Apostles

1. Some got a glimpse of his glory on the Mount of Transfiguration.
2. Mostly they saw him and spoke with him in more ordinary ways: eating, traveling, sleeping, and talking.
3. They had to hold together the miraculous and the mundane.
4. They saw him suffer and die.
5. They saw him rise from the dead and ascend back to heaven.

6. This lengthy time of learning discipleship gave them some unique insights into the humanity of Christ.
7. Their faith took time to develop and mature.

B. Paul

1. Paul's conversion was divine intervention in quite a different way than the Apostles had encountered Jesus.
2. He even says of himself that he was untimely born.
3. He saw only the resurrected and glorified Jesus.
4. He was also struck with blindness, something he could not ignore.
5. There was no slow development of faith; it was quick and decisive.
6. However, we must concede that he had all the necessary elements of OT faith to make the transition to faith in Christ. (Acts 9:22 reflects this.)

III. Everybody is a convert.

A. We all resist the Way.

1. The Apostles resisted the mission to suffer and die.
2. Paul resisted the church.
3. We resist God's will by sinning and refusing to repent.
4. Our walk of faith becomes a striving to understand and obey God's will.
5. We are converted in various small ways in our faith walk.

B. We are called in different ways.

1. The Apostles directly
2. Paul in a vision
3. Most of us are taught the ways of the Kingdom; this is as legitimate a calling as any dramatic experience.
4. The testimony of God in your life can be told in a lot of ways, but it all comes down to our response.

Conclusion:

1. Peter is commanded, "Follow me."
2. The call for all of us is the same command to follow.
3. However, we are called to follow in different ways (Peter in one way, John in another).
4. It is a call to worship and obey.
5. It is different yet the same.
6. Although we may exhibit faith in fits and starts, we have to keep heeding the call.
7. Follow the examples laid out for us: trust and obey.