Date: 11/10/18 (Based on Conversion: A Home Run of 4/2/16)

Title: Baseball Champs

Theme: When a sinner is converted, his life changes. Instead of going directly away from God, he goes directly toward Him.

Object: Baseball, glove, bat, Red Sox shirt.

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

The apostle Paul wrote these words in a letter to the Christian church in a city called Corinth.

What he is saying in this verse is that if we know Jesus and trust Him and love Him, we become different people.

Jesus changes us from people who disobey God, to people who love God, and love His commandments, and want to obey Him.

It’s a change that we call conversion.

Have you ever heard of the World Series?

It is a series of seven games between the two best teams in baseball.

To win the World Series, you have to win four out of the seven games.

And the team that does that is the World Series Champions.

Guess who won the World Series this year. It was the Boston Red Sox!!! [Show Red Sox T-shirt]

That’s our team! That’s the team we root for! They’re the world champions in baseball.

Many people believe that this was the greatest Red Sox team in history.

They won 108 games out of 162 in the regular season. No other Red Sox team has won more games than that.

Now there are many rules in the game of baseball.

The game lasts for nine innings, and whoever has more runs at the end of 9 innings wins the game.

During each inning, the teams take turns batting and fielding.

When a team is in the field, their most important player is the pitcher.

He tries to strike out all the hitters on the opposing team. [Show glove and ball]

[Explain windup, pitch, strike zone, curve ball, knuckle ball, slider, fastball, change up, etc.]

A good pitcher can throw a fast ball that goes 100 mph!

Now I’m going to be the hitter with the bat. [Pick up bat.]

As the ball comes over the plate, I swing with all my might.

And if I hit the ball right on the center of the bat, the ball sails over the fence for a home run.

So a baseball that’s going 100 mph in one direction stops the instant it hits the bat and goes back in the opposite direction at 100 mph or more.

Conversion can be something like that.

Do you remember the apostle Paul?

Before he was converted he hated Christians. He was rounding up Christians and putting them in jail. He was there when the Christian Stephen was stoned to death, holding the coats of the people who were throwing the stones and cheering them on. He was on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians there and throw them in jail.

But on the way, God not only stopped him but turned him around.

Instead of hating and persecuting Christians, he became a Christian and the greatest missionary in the Bible.

The same thing happens to everyone that becomes a Christian: They get converted and turned around.

Before we know Jesus, we are all running away from God. We love ourselves instead of God.

So we disobey His commandments and travel the broad way to destruction.

But when we meet Jesus and accept Him as our Savior, He changes us from going the wrong way to going the right way.

It’s just like turning a fast ball into a home run.

Would you like Jesus to hit a home run with you?

Let’s ask Him to change our direction in life!