

Name: _____



Advanced Bible Correspondence Course
Lesson 33B: Life of Thankfulness

Q. 90. WHAT IS THE QUICKENING OF THE NEW MAN?

ANSWER: IT IS A SINCERE JOY OF HEART IN GOD, THROUGH CHRIST (A), AND WITH LOVE AND DELIGHT TO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD IN ALL GOOD WORKS (B).

(A). ROMANS 5:1, 14:17, ISAIAH 57:15; (B) ROMANS 6:10-11, GALATIANS 2:20.

Conversion: Sorrow and Joy

The previous answer showed us a mark of true conversion: sorrow of heart, mortification, a breaking down, hating and fleeing from everything that is wrong. Now a different mark comes to light, which is a joy of heart in God. This joy stands in opposition to sorrow.

That joy begins at regeneration. Then God's love enters the heart. And love is accompanied with joy. With a sorrow over sin, there is at the same time a joy in the heart. This is wonderful indeed! As the love of, and unto God is shed abroad in the heart, that joy has everything to do with God. It comes from Christ, although that person is not yet aware of it. That awareness comes with the knowledge of Christ, because it is especially a joy in God through Christ. Then that joy is also much deeper. In any case, it is not a superficial, transient joy. No, that joy is and remains in the heart. This is why the word "sincere" is used. For that reason, Peter could write: *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*" 1Peter 1:8.

Thankfulness

Together with that joy, there is also thankfulness for the deliverance received. That thankfulness desires to express itself. A "thankfulness" which only exists in words is not true thankfulness. True thankfulness wants to express itself in deeds. It wants to know: "What does the Lord desire of me?" That I desire to do with all my ability. My whole life must be a single testimony of thankfulness. I want to live for the Lord. In such a life good works will be seen. If there are no good

works, then my faith is a dead faith. The apostle James wrote in his epistle: *“for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”* (James 2:26).

Q.91 BUT WHAT ARE GOOD WORKS?

ANSWER: ONLY THOSE WHICH PROCEED FROM A TRUE FAITH (A), ARE PERFORMED ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF GOD (B), AND TO HIS GLORY (C); AND NOT SUCH AS ARE FOUNDED ON OUR IMAGINATIONS OR THE INSTITUTIONS OF MEN (D).

(A). ROMANS 14:23; (B) LEVITICUS 18:4, 1 SAMUEL 15:22, EPHESIANS 2:10; 1 COR. 10:31; (D) EZEKIEL 20:18-19, ISAIAH 29:13, MATTHEW 15: 7-9.

What are good works?

What are actually good works or good deeds? Everyone at one time or another does things which are good in principle. A person does his work faithfully, takes good care of his wife and children, does not steal, does not swear, and leads a decent life. This is certainly not wrong, so it must be good. In a sense, this is true, but there is an expression: “When two people do the same thing that does not mean that it is always the same thing.” For instance, as an employee in a certain business, I can do my work faithfully and conscientiously. I am trustworthy. Why do I do this? Is it because the Lord requires this of me? Or is it done in order to gain the favour of people, so that they will trust me completely? I am even in the possession of the key to the money box. One day I seize the opportunity and run off with a large sum of money. Of what value then was my earlier trustworthiness? We could mention many such examples.

From a true faith.

Before He calls something good, the Lord looks at the heart. Why is this done? What is intended by this?

Answer 91 says that good works must meet three requirements in order to be truly good works: they must be fruits of a true faith, must correspond completely with what God requires in His law, and must be focused on God’s honour.

To do a good work, I need faith. Paul tells us: *“For whatsoever is not of faith is sin”* (Romans 14:23). This indicates that there is a bond with the Lord Jesus. I feel dependent on Him and pray for His help. I realize that sin cleaves to that work and pray for His cleansing blood. I am also convinced that I seek to serve God in this work.

According to the Law

Is what I do according to God’s law? God’s law unerringly declares who God Himself is. Therefore He can only be satisfied with what completely agrees with His law. Otherwise he can never call it good. He Himself is perfect. Therefore

He can never be satisfied with anything that is less than perfect. So we will never be able to think: "This is also possible." The Lord Jesus says: *But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*" (Matthew 15:9).

To the honour of God

Is it my desire to honour God with my deeds, or do I have myself in view? For example, it is possible that a man is very religious in order to be respected by men. The Lord Jesus says: *"Therefore when thou does thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."* (Matthew 6:2)

The Lord created us to honour Him in thoughts, words and deeds. If we fall short of this, we sin. To sin indeed means, "missing the mark." In one of the epistles of Paul we read: *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"* (1 Corinthians 10:31). Perhaps you think this is strict. Believe it: God's child does not desire it otherwise; He or she wants to be entirely God-oriented. That makes him or her happy.

Questions:

1. *What is the "new Man"?*

2. *What are marks of true faith?*

3. *What three things are required for an act to be a good work?*

4. *In itself, to sacrifice is good. Why was the sacrifice of Cain unto God not a good work? (Hebrews 11:4)*

5. *It was good that David desired to have the ark in Jerusalem. Why was the first attempt not a good work? (2 Samuel 6)*

6. *To pray is good. Why was it not a good work for the Pharisee? (Luke 18:9-14)*

Evaluator: _____

Meditation: **REGENERATION**

O GOD OF THE HIGHEST HEAVEN,

 occupy the throne of my heart,
 take full possession and reign supreme,
 lay low every rebel lust,
 let no vile passion resist Thy holy war;
 manifest Thy mighty power,
 and make me Thine for ever.

Thou art worthy to be praised with my every breath,
 loved with my every faculty of soul,
 served with my every act of life.

Thou has loved, espoused me, received me,
 purchased, washed, favoured, clothed, adorned me,
 when I was worthless, vile, soiled, polluted.

I was dead in iniquities,
 having no eyes to see Thee,
 no ears to hear Thee,
 no taste to relish Thy joys,
 no intelligence to know Thee;

But Thy Spirit has quickened me,
 has brought me into a new world as a new creature,
 has given me spiritual perception,
 has opened to me Thy Word as light, guide, solace, joy.

Thy presence is to me a treasure of unending peace;

No provocation can part me from Thy sympathy,
 for Thou has drawn me with cords of love,
 and dost forgive me daily, hourly.

O help me then to walk worthy of Thy love,
 Of my hopes, and my vocation.

Keep me, for I cannot keep myself;

Protect me that no evil befall me;

Let me lay aside every sin admired of many;

Help me to walk by Thy side, lean on Thy arm,
 hold converse with Thee,

That henceforth I may be salt of the earth and a blessing to all.

*Taken from: "The Valley of Vision" a collection of Puritan prayers and
devotions*