

Name: _____



**Advanced Bible Correspondence Course
Lesson 33A: The Life of Thankfulness**

Q. 88. OF HOW MANY PARTS DOES THE TRUE CONVERSION OF MAN CONSIST?

ANSWER: OF TWO PARTS: OF THE MORTIFICATION OF THE OLD, AND THE QUICKENING OF THE NEW MAN (A).

**(A). ROMANS 6:1, 4-6, EPHESIANS 4:22-24, COLOSSIANS 3:5&6, 8-10,
1 CORINTHIANS 5:7, 2 CORINTHIANS 7:10.**

Conversion

Without conversion unto God no person can be saved. It is stated more than 140 times in the Bible: repent ye. But that repentance must be true and genuine. Then is it necessary in the first place to know what conversion actually is. An unconverted person runs away from God. He must stand still, turn around, and return to God. In order for him to stand still and return, a new birth is necessary, which is called regeneration. Christ said to Nicodemus: *“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3).

Regeneration is the beginning of conversion. It causes a process to begin that will last a lifetime: forsaking his old life and the restoration of man to be what he was when God created him, namely, as God’s image bearer. In answer 88 the forsaking of one’s old life is called the mortification of the old man. The restoration of God’s image in man is called the quickening of the new man. What these expressions mean is explained in the following questions.

Q.89 WHAT IS MORTIFICATION OF THE OLD MAN?

ANSWER: IT IS A SINCERE SORROW OF HEART THAT WE HAVE PROVOKED GOD BY OUR SINS, AND MORE AND MORE TO HATE AND FLEE FROM THEM (A).

(A). ROMANS 8:13, JOEL 2:13, HOSEA 6:1.

What is the old man?

Is it someone who is old? No, the old man is the man before his conversion, the man who by nature is prone to hate God and his neighbour. Because of sin, he is incapable of doing any good and is inclined to all evil. What, that implies we have learned in questions 5 and 8 of Lord’s Days 2 and 3. Review these once more.

In this respect, every person who is not yet converted is only an “old man.” Everything in the old man is directed against God. And that has to die. This does not happen all at once in regeneration. No, the old man is so strong that it takes a lifetime to mortify it. So the old man still continues to live in a regenerate person. However, the Lord guarantees that victories will be gained over the old man.

The regenerate person

A regenerate person can never, completely and absolutely, fall back into his old life again, although he is sometimes afraid that this will happen. It does require much striving and prayer. The latter is especially needed, for God’s help is indispensable in this strife.

In regeneration, a person receives a new heart and a new life. By the mouth of Ezekiel, God said to the people exiled in Babylon: “*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them*” (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

Then he begins to see that he has sinned all his life, indeed, that he is entirely sinful. That causes sorrow, namely grief and remorse. It is not that he scolds himself and thinks: How foolish I have been; now I am left with the sad consequences. It is not only a matter of finding the *consequences* of sin the worst part. If that were the case, he would only regret what he has done. No, he finds the worst part of it that he has sinned *against God*. He repents because of sin *itself*. With his sins he has angered God, the God who has never been but good to him.

Pangs of love

Becoming aware that one is nothing but a sinner causes pangs of love, for such a person has come to love God.

He desires to eradicate those sins, root and branch, in order to make everything well again with the Lord. But in that he has no success. He sees more and more sins in his heart. However, he may also experience that his sins are washed away by the blood of Christ. It was for that reason that the Lord Jesus died on the cross. When this happens, peace enters his heart. Then it is well again between God and himself. This makes him exceedingly thankful. Out of thankfulness, he increasingly hates sin. And whenever it is possible, he runs away from sin. He wants to eradicate sin from his life. This is what is meant by fleeing from sin. At the moment when God’s child dies, the old man also dies. Then all his sins die. They are buried with him. And when one day the Lord Jesus returns and God’s child is resurrected, he will be totally renewed. No trace of sin will be found in him anymore. Then his heart is as pure as Adam’s was in Paradise.

Questions:

1. Briefly describe what conversion is.

2. What does true conversion begin with?

3. What is “the Old man”?

4. What is the “mortification of the old man”?

5. What is it “to flee” from sin?

6. When is the old man dead?

7. What is the difference between regret and repentance?

Evaluator: _____

Meditation: Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of.
2 Cor.7: 10

By setting forth the curses of the law and the terrors of hell, a sinner’s conscience may be made to tremble under the dread of damnation; he may be said to repent. Judas thus “repented himself,” and said, “I have sinned.” He might be sorry for it; his sin might make his heart ache and fill his soul with horrors; but here was no *godly* sorrow; God was not in his heart; here was no repentance unto salvation; this was out of his sight; his repentance was unto damnation; for “he went out and hanged himself.” Matt. 27:5. Natural fears and legal terrors may excite sorrow without the grace of repentance.

What then is godly sorrow? It springs from God, it is excited by the views of God, it is directed to God, and arises in the heart on account of God. With David

the soul cries, “against Thee *only* have I sinned.” Psalm 51:4. The heart is pierced to the very quick with anguish for having sinned against a God in Christ, a sin-pardoning, a soul comforting, a most affectionate Father. This is the sorrow of faith; it is grateful to God.

Again it *worketh repentance*: it causes the soul to change its mind and its conduct. Its *mind*: sin and Satan had deceived it; it foolishly fancied there were some sweet charms in sin that could make it quite happy; but it now feels the wormwood and gall of it; it looks at its sin, and looks at its Saviour, and cries, O my Lord and my God, could I ever be so mad as to turn from Thee to sin? I lament my folly; Jesus, pardon me. Its *conduct*: godly sorrow causes the soul to turn away from sin with loathing and detestation, to turn to the Lord with humble faith, holy hope, and ardent desire, and earnest cry. “Cast me not away from Thy presence; take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore to me the joy of Thy salvation.” Psalm 51: 11, 12. Though sin has made me miserable yet Thou and Thou only canst make me happy. This repentance is “unto salvation:” it brings the soul to Jesus. There is salvation in Him, and in no other. Acts 4:12.

This repentance is “not to be repented of.” O my soul, canst thou ever change thy mind concerning the precious salvation of Jesus, by repentance with life from a godly sorrow for sin? Beware then of those “fools” who “make a mock at sin:” Proverbs 14:9; of those who deride godly sorrow for sin, and laugh at all repentance as downright legality. “Except ye repent,” says Jesus. “ye shall all perish.” Luke 13:3.

Taken from: "A Sprititual Treasury for the Children of God" by W. Mason

