

## #7

# CONVERSION AND REPENTANCE

When we realize our sin problem and our helplessness to rise above our natures on our own there is only one thing left to do. To give up and let God take control! When God brings us up to this point we consider the miracle of conversion. But what about repentance? Don't we have to repent first to come to God? Doesn't repentance come before conversion? In this lesson we will explore what the Bible teaches about conversion and repentance.

**1. How important is the experience of conversion?** John 3:3 \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Where does the power for the new birth come from?** John 1:12, 13 \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Who is the active agent in the new birth?** John 3:5; Titus 3:5 \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Conversion is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. It is marked by a change of attitude toward God. Instead of running away from God the one who is being converted turns toward God.*

**4. Does mankind naturally understand spiritual things?** 1 Corinthians 2:14, Romans 8:7

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**5. So what must take place in order for us to understand?** Ephesians 4:23, 24

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*Note: Conversion creates a new and deeper capacity for knowing God. The Holy Spirit renews your mind and thereby creates new understandings and interests that were not there before. You begin to experience a new desire to know God.*

**6. Does the new heart lead to a changed life?** Ezekiel 36:26, 27 \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Conversion is called the new birth. It's the beginning of spiritual life. Just as you cannot choose your own birthday in the physical life, you cannot choose your own spiritual birthday. You cannot convert yourself. Or others for that matter. That is completely up to God. You can share Christ with others but it is up to the Holy Spirit to change the attitude toward God.*

**7. What promise does God make about the work He starts in us?** Philippians 1:6

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8. Is repentance necessary for salvation? Luke 13:3; 2 Peter 3:9 \_\_\_\_\_

9. What types of people feel the need for repentance? Mark 2:17 \_\_\_\_\_

10. Are there a genuine and a false sorrow for sin? 2 Corinthians 7:10 \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Genuine sorrow for sin includes a turning away from the sin. The false sorrow for sin is more of a sorrow for the consequences of the sin. The thief is not sorry he stole but only sorry that he got caught and is now in jail.*

11. So where does genuine repentance come from? Acts 5:31 \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: "Just here is a point on which many may err, and hence they fail of receiving the help that Christ desires to give them. They think that they cannot come to Christ unless they first repent, and that repentance prepares for the forgiveness of their sins... The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ... We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ."*  
*Steps to Christ, p. 26.*

**How is repentance accomplished? Do we come to Christ in order to repent, or do we repent in order to come to Christ? We cannot repent of anything UNTIL we come to Christ. Repentance is something we receive. It is a gift from God. We come to Jesus and He grants us a spirit of repentance and then forgives our sins. We do not cleanse ourselves in order to come to Christ. Instead we come to Christ and then HE does the job of cleansing us.**

12. How does God lead us to repentance? Romans 2:4 \_\_\_\_\_

13. After Peter denied Jesus and then remembered His goodness, what did He do? Matthew 26:74, 75

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***Conclusion: We cannot turn away from sin in our own strength but we can seek the Lord to do those things for us. God delights to help those who cannot help themselves. We don't turn away from sins in order to repent. We come to Jesus in order to repent. Our part is only always to come to Him.***

## #8

# SURRENDER

As we perceive that God is real and active in our lives we have a desire to learn more about Him. As we begin to sense our sinfulness and our need for Christ we begin to desire a personal relationship with Him. We want to give Him our love but sometimes there seems to be nothing there. How does this work of conversion begin and what is my role in it? We shall see more clearly as we begin our study on surrender.

### **1. What did Jesus teach about the righteousness needed to enter heaven?**

Matthew 5:20

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### **2. What type of righteousness is needed for salvation? Galatians 2:15, 16, 21**

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*Note: Righteousness by faith is a transaction; the greatest trade that was ever made! We trade our total sinfulness in exchange for Christ's holy righteousness. This is the only righteousness that can gain us entrance into heaven. We receive this righteousness of Christ's when we give up on trying to obtain salvation by our good works or behavior and surrender our will to God.*

### **3. What are those who are baptized into Christ Jesus also baptized into?**

Romans 6:3

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### **4. How is the sinner put to death? Romans 6:6** \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: There are a number of ways that one could kill oneself if one wished. You could shoot yourself with a gun, take pills, etc. but no one can kill himself by crucifying himself. And it's the same way with surrender. Someone else has to do that for us. That Someone is God. But, because He is a gentleman, He does not force Himself or possess us against our will. He asks our permission first.*

*Revelation 3:20*

### **5. Do dead people sin? Romans 6:7** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Note: In the physical life we are born and then we die. In the spiritual life we die first and then we are reborn.*

### **6. How did Jesus speak of self-surrender? Matthew 16:24-26**

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*Note: We all have to die! Our choice is whether we want to die to self and be reborn in Christ or to die without Christ and forfeit our salvation. The more we hold on to the control of our lives here on earth, the more surely we lose our eternal life. But when we decide to surrender control for the sake of Christ... we gain eternal life!*

### **7. Is self-surrender a one time experience? Luke 9:23 \_\_\_\_\_**

### **8. Is there life after spiritual death? Romans 6:4, 5 \_\_\_\_\_**

### **9. Who is it that controls the new life? Romans 6:13 \_\_\_\_\_**

*Note: An instrument is totally controlled by another. Surrendering, or giving up is admitting that we can do nothing. Inevitably, therefore, the work of bringing us to the point of surrender must be the work of God. It is not something we can do for ourselves.*

### **10. What choice do we have as to who is in control of our lives? Romans 6:16; Luke 11:23, James 4:4**

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*Note: We are controlled by either God or Satan! The only control we have is to choose who is going to control us. "Unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light."*

*Desire of Ages, p. 324*

11. How do we resist the Devil and his control? James 4:7-8 \_\_\_\_\_

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*Note: Submit and draw near to God. Let God fight against Satan in your behalf. You are not strong enough on your own.*

12. Aren't we supposed to use our will and will power to do good? Romans 7:18-19

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*Note: "Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can **choose** to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered on Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him."*

*Steps to Christ, p. 47*

***Conclusion: Instead of wasting our time in good works we need to re-channel those energies into spending time with Christ. As we make the choice to spend time day by day in beholding Christ, as we invite Him to do His work in our lives, He will lead us step by step to the point of surrender. Giving up is possible only when He has brought us up to that point.***