



## Conversion

**...lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,  
and understand with their heart, and be converted.  
(Matthew 13:15)**

### Semantics Part 2

As mentioned in *The Trinity in the Restoration*, man is a tripartite being, comprised of spirit, soul, and body; and that all three must be restored according to God's full and perfect salvation plan.<sup>1</sup> *Conversion* marks the beginning of that process.<sup>2</sup> The *Introduction* to this series pointed out that conversion is a change of heart and a change of mind—making conversion a matter of the *soul*. Man's *spirit* cannot be converted; it must be *regenerated*.<sup>3</sup> Neither can the body be converted; it must be *resurrected*.<sup>4</sup> Therefore conversion applies to the soul, or the *inner self*.<sup>5</sup> In the fall, Adam did not sin with his spirit or his body: he sinned with his soul—which in turn affected his spirit and his body. He made a deliberate choice to depart from the intimate union he enjoyed with God, and must now make a deliberate choice to return.

### Absolute Surrender

A soul can understand his need of salvation and believe that Jesus paid the penalty for his sins—yet may have no *volition* to secure this great salvation.<sup>6</sup> His heart and mind acknowledge and accept the truth of the Gospel—yet he is not *willing* to turn to God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength.<sup>7</sup> Here is the great distinction between a true penitent and one who is *Christian In Name Only* (CINO). The true penitent is utterly broken before God, and most willingly throws himself at the foot of the cross of Christ, holding nothing back—and then rises from that cross to a new life and a *new heart*!<sup>8</sup> Yet the CINO always holds back something for himself, and therefore rises from the cross still unconverted. And though he may have a new Christian *religion*—still the *old heart* remains. He may truly hate his sin and truly seek Jesus for the salvation of his soul: yet his *will* remains obstinate nonetheless—which prevents his total and full surrender.

Now, seeing that conversion involves such a great and monumental event that must transpire within the heart, mind, and *will* of the soul, and how the sinner cannot judge for himself whether his repentance meets God's criteria:<sup>9</sup> *How is it that so many evangelists, pastors, and teachers dare to proclaim someone is saved—when they cannot possibly perceive that which only God can see and know?* This is largely the reason why there is so much sin in the House of God. Unconverted sinners have been led to believe they are saved by those who preach the Gospel. This should shake up all who

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stand as leaders and teachers of God's people. The Bible does not say to *convince* souls that they are saved. No! The Bible says to *persuade* them that *Jesus saves!*<sup>10</sup> Let the heart and life alone demonstrate whether the soul is saved—which is the only real observable evidence of a genuine conversion.

### Baptism of Repentance<sup>11</sup>

Any discussion about conversion must also include baptism—but not for the reasons commonly taught. Some believe that water baptism is required for salvation according to Mark 16:16: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* However the very next statement declares that it is only *he that believeth not that shall be damned.*<sup>12</sup> So according to this passage there is indeed a baptism that saves—but it is clearly not water baptism. Otherwise how could the thief on the cross join Jesus in Paradise without receiving outward water baptism?<sup>13</sup> The answer is found in Acts 2:38, where the Apostle Peter declares, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.* Peter is speaking of an *inward baptism* that takes place in the truly repentant soul.<sup>14</sup> It is performed by God the Father,<sup>15</sup> in the Name of His Son,<sup>16</sup> once the soul repents from his sins and turns in true faith to Jesus Christ. This is justification in action!

- Repentance toward God
- + Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ
- + (Inward) Baptism for remission of sins
- = Conversion and the New Heart

If God has accepted your repentance as true, if He has accepted your faith in Jesus Christ as genuine—you *have already been inwardly baptized for the remission of sins!*<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if you have never been baptized in water, either at church or some other baptism event—it does not mean you are not saved! You are as saved as the Ethiopian Eunuch, who believed first—*then* was baptized in water;<sup>18</sup> and as the seller of purple, who worshipped God, believed the message about Jesus Christ—*then* was baptized in water.<sup>19</sup> Their worship of the one true God, and their faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ *was their inner baptism!* Therefore a true believer is one who has been *inwardly* baptized for the remission of sins, though he or she may not yet be outwardly baptized in water.

### Water Baptism

This study will not focus on the importance of water baptism and its symbolism, except to say that a truly converted soul *should* be baptized. For water baptism is one of two *Signs of the Covenant* between you and the Lord<sup>20</sup>—in anticipation of the greater *Baptism with the Holy Ghost* that is given in *regeneration*. Yes, the soul can be saved without water baptism—but it is highly unlikely that the Baptism with the Holy Spirit can be received without first entering into the Covenant of God through obedience in water baptism.<sup>21</sup> This also marks the great distinction between a New Testament Christian and a New Covenant Christian. At conversion the soul is a New Testament Christian. At regeneration the soul becomes a New Covenant Christian.<sup>22</sup>

The soul that truly repents from sin and in faith turns to the Lord Jesus Christ (according to God's criteria), is therefore *converted* to Christ—and immediately receives the *inward* Baptism of Repentance. His or her sins are washed in the blood of the Lamb of God,<sup>23</sup> without ever stepping into any water baptismal. This is how the disciples of Jesus could be saved *before* the Savior went to the cross, and *before* they were given the Holy Spirit. It is a baptism given by the FATHER in the NAME of Jesus. And although this is indeed a grand and wonderful experience—yet it *is not* the greater Baptism with the Holy Ghost that is given to those that *obey* Him.<sup>24</sup>

Continued in *Semantics Part 3 – Regeneration*

## NOTES & SCRIPTURES

### Scriptures are from the King James Bible

**1** And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Th 5:23)

**2** And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mar 1:15)

Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls. (1Pe 1:9)

Knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. (Rom 13:11)

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. (Php 2:12)

He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Heb 7:25)

**3** O Lord, by these *things men* live, and in all these *things is* the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. (Isa 38:16)

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (2Co 3:6)

And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. (Rom 8:10)

**4** And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (Joh 5:29)

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of his resurrection: (Rom 6:5)

Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Rev 20:6)

If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Rom 8:11)

Martha saith, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. (Joh 11:24)

**5** Or, inner man.

**6** How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; (Heb 2:3)

**7** And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! (Luk 18:24)

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (Mat 22:37)

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. (Deu 6:5)

**8** I have found David the *son* of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. (Act 13:22)

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward him. (2Ch 16:9)

Blessed *are* they that keep his testimonies, and *that* seek him with the whole heart. (Psa 119:2)

The New Heart will be covered in a future study.

**9** See SDS *The Greater Delusion*.

**10** And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jesus was Christ. (Act 18:4-5)

And [Apollos] began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded

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unto him the way of God more perfectly...For he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ. (Act 18:26,28)

Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: (Act 19:26)

And as [Paul] reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled...(Act 24:5)

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. (Act 26:28)

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men... (2Co 5:11)

- 11 The Baptism of Repentance will be a future study.
- 12 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. (Mar 16:16)
- 13 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.(Luk 23:43)
- 14 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. (Eze 36:25)
- 15 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. (Eze 36:25)
- 16 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Act 2:38)
- 17 I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. (Exo 33:19)
- 18 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here* is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Act 8:36-37)
- 19 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that

she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us. (Act 16:14-15)

- 20 The two ordinances are Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper (also called Communion).

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (Mat 28:19)

After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. (1Co 11:25)

- 21 Water baptism is the first act of obedience in the salvation process.

- 22 As mentioned in *The Grace that Saves*, a New "Testament" Christian is one who is saved during the 2,000 years since Jesus came in the flesh. A New "Covenant" Christian is a true believer in Jesus Christ—who has also been regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Promise of the Father) as an indwelling presence. Recommended reading: [The Two Covenants](#), by Andrew Murray, pub. 1898.

- 23 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (Eph 2:13)

Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; (Rom 3:25)

Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (Rom 5:9)

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; (Eph 1:7)

- 24 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so *is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. (Act 5:32)

But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. (Rom 6:17)