

AN OPEN LETTER to those awaiting baptism

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

Unconditional Surrender!

Life is a constant struggle. All humanity has been struggling against GOD!—without realizing it. We have all been the enemies of God. As James said: "Whoso therefore intends to be the world's friend maketh himself God's enemy" (James 4:4, Panin trans.).

When God begins to convict us and to call us out of this world with its trials and troubles, its pains and diseases, we might as well admit we can't win. There is nothing left worth struggling for. Resisting God by rebelling against His perfect law has been a losing battle all along! Then comes that moment—when you recognize that God demands your *unconditional surrender!*—your *repentance!*

Repentance means *unconditional surrender* to the rule, the AUTHORITY, of God. It means a total *change of mind*, an admission that you have been doing wrong. When God deals with you He *breaks you up totally*—brings you to heart-felt repentance and godly sorrow which makes you want to quit sinning and obey Him. He then takes you as His child to remake you, to remold you, to rebuild you into the right kind of character through a process of RE-EDUCATION. You will need to study the Bible to find how you ought to live. You will have to surrender to God's will as expressed in His law.

Real repentance involves a willingness on your part to live by every word of God. It involves a process of, first of all, *unlearning* all the error you have had stuffed in your mind since childhood and then, secondly, opening your mind to believe and practice what God commands in His Word—the Bible. Jesus said we must all *repent*—repentance means a CHANGE of mind, a determination to quit breaking God's law, to quit sin (I John 3:4)—and *believe*—recognize Christ as Savior and believe the gospel of the kingdom which He preached (Mark 16:15, 16).

What Conversion Means

Thousands are realizing for the first time that this work of God which is spreading the true gospel of the kingdom—the government, rule and authority of God around the world is the event **PROPHESIED FOR NOW!** (Matthew 24:14.) It is stirring, thrilling—different from anything you have heard before. It is changing the lives of thousands. The true gospel gives *conversion* a new meaning. The message of Christ, buried for centuries under the rubbish-heap of superstition and pagan doctrines and rituals, makes clear what is *wrong* with the world and what YOU need to do about it.

Conversion is not joining a church denomination or merely believing in the person of Jesus Christ. Conversion means a CHANGE, a turning around into the right way to live, instead of following the crowd or doing what seems right to the carnal mind. It means a life of OBEDIENCE to God's law. It means a total CHANGE of behavior, a new outlook on life, a new viewpoint, new goals and new thoughts. Everything becomes changed.

Conversion is not accomplished in a minute—it's your lifetime work. It is a process of *growing* to maturity—mental, emotional and spiritual maturity! You have to GROW UP IN EVERY WAY (Eph. 4:15). You have to learn self-discipline, self-mastery, self-control, patience and love. You have to endure to the end.

But you can't do these things *alone*. You need God working in and through you. As Paul said: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is GOD who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13).

Why BAPTISM Is Necessary

Since you *cannot* remain converted without the continual assistance of the

power of God in your life, how are you going to receive that help?

Remember what Peter shouted to the multitudes on the day of Pentecost? "Repent and be BAPTIZED"—then what? "And ye shall receive the gift of the HOLY SPIRIT" (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit is the character of God, the nature of God, the power of God implanted within you after you have been baptized. It is the spirit of a sound mind (II Tim. 1:7). Paul wrote that if we become converted we begin to master the evil thoughts and inclinations of our carnal mind because "we have Christ's mind" (I Cor. 2:16).

Think of it! You can have the mind of God in you through the Spirit of God, IF you repent, believe and ARE BAPTIZED. These are the *conditions* to receiving the gift of God's spirit. You must be willing to *obey*. Peter said God gives the Holy Spirit "to them that *obey* him" (Acts 5:32).

Baptism pictures a BURIAL, a death of the old self with its carnal desires and appetites and sinful thoughts. It symbolizes a RISING from the grave to a new kind of life (Romans 6:3-5). Only immersion properly pictures the meaning. When you are buried by baptism you not only follow a command of Christ (Matt. 28:19), you are also acknowledging that you want to destroy your old self, and live a new life through God's help—to "walk in newness of life." When you have thus been baptised, God has bound Himself to give you His Holy Spirit. He cannot break His promise!

God's Spirit is His mind. It will open your mind to understand the Bible as you have never understood it before. It will help you to master yourself as you study the Bible to find out how you ought to live. You will begin to live and act according to the *law* of God.