

# **TITLE**

# **“THE THREE CONVERSIONS”**

## **SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 73:**

Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

**2** But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

**3** For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

**4** For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.

**5** They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.

**6** Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.

**7** Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.

**8** They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.

**9** They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

**10** Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.

**11** And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

**12** Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

**13** Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence.

**14** For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

**15** If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.

**16** When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

**17** Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.

**18** Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

**19** How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

**20** As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

**21** Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

**22** So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.

**23** Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.



**24** Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

**25** Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

**26** My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

**27** For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

**28** But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works.

John Wimber often used to say that we all need three conversions: to be converted to Christ, converted to his church and converted to his cause.

Let's understand the three conversions today.

## **1. Converted to Christ**

**Psalms 73:1** ` Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.'

**Acts 9:1-6 says,** 'And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest. And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord?



And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.'

Newton is best known as the author of the hymn 'Amazing Grace.'

'Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now I'm found  
Was blind but now I see.

To be rescued is to be saved, set free, delivered from danger, attack or harm. Jesus is the one who rescues you.

I know that there are millions of people, including the people in Iloilo who are antagonistic towards Christians and the Christian faith?

God can change the most unexpected people

The church is rescued from the darkness brought about by Saul's attacks, and Saul is rescued from his own inner darkness. God's transforming power changed Saul from a persecutor of the church into the great church leader, evangelist and Apostle Paul.

Saul's physical blindness symbolized the spiritual darkness in his life at that point.

## 2. Converted to his church

### **Psalm 73:12-17**

**12** Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

**13** Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence.

**14** For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

**15** If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.

**16** When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

**17** Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.



**Psalm 73:17 says,** 'Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.' I have no time to read the entire psalm to understand this verse. But my emphasis is 'Until I went into the sanctuary of God.'

The COVID-19 has caused many people to miss church for almost 2 years. A study has shown that many people has stopped going to church even after the COVID-19 has lifted all restriction.

I enjoy coming to church. I need to come to church. I enjoy praising God in the worship service. When the service of God starts, my spirit is touched, lifted up and the presence of God soothes me, softens me, marinate my being and lift up my spirit. I felt life when I enters the house of God. I am converted to the church.

**Psalms 73** was written by Asaph. Asaph caught himself from sliding further into despair over the perceived prosperity of the wicked. Many a times we are like Asaph. Our ability to understand the ways of God through this fallen, worldly, time bound human intellect is doomed to failure. Knowledge is good but trust is better.

The crisis in our lives seems to build and build until we enter into the house of God. Here we gained a perspective on our problem that we did not have before. Here we are able to see things from an eternal viewpoint. How do we gain understanding when we enter the sanctuary of God?



**A.** By prayer and worship in the sanctuary, we understand that God is at the center of all things, and we gain a fresh appreciation of both God and eternity

**B.** By hearing the word of God in the sanctuary, we understand that there is a truth that go beyond what we see and experienced in everyday life

**C.** By observing sacrifice (communion, giving, repentance) we understand that God takes sin so seriously that it must be judged and atoned for, even if it is by an innocent victim who stands in the lace of the guilty by faith.



We are converted not only to His church. But we are converted in His church. Faithful followers openly expressing their doubt and confusion can affect other believers. A place and time of fellowship with God can bring peace to our confusion. The wicked's prosperity is fleeting and their time of confrontation with God will sure come.

### 3. Converted to His cause

#### **Psalm 73:28**

**28** But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works.

Concerning the cause of Christ, we need to understand a few things:

## **A. Pursuit of God's cause**

Ultimately, nothing can stop God's cause. When the church was born in the book of Acts, the bible says, 'but the word of God continued to increase and spread'. It literally means it grew in leaps and bounds.

## **B. Purpose in God's cause.**

The existence of the Church is evangelization of the world. The existence of Israel was to show the world the existence of God and to come to the salvation of God. Think carefully what were you before you come to the salvation of Christ. Left to myself, without the aid of the Holy Spirit, everything in my world centers on me; my concerns, my preferences, my agenda.

I realized that I am not the focal point of my existence, God is. God is not serving my kingdom; I am serving His kingdom. When God answers prayer, or does something wonderful in my life, it is for His cause not mine. And when people come to know Jesus under my ministry or through me, it is because, and only because God willed it to be so.



