THE EXPERIENCE OF CONVERSION

Introduction

1. The danger of relying on Baptism.
2. Religious conversion is more than Baptism
3. This passage refers to an experience – the coming of sinners to salvation.

1.   THE FIRST EXPERIENCE OF CONVERSION OFTEN IS ONE OF DEEP SORROW

1) "mourn" –the idea is very strong here in this passage.

2) **ILLUSTRATION**: death of a first-born son. The bereavement is so great that members of the same family cannot face seeing one another.

3) It is what we see in Acts 2 after Peter's preaching.

4) The reasons for this sadness:
   (i)   Their life has been wasted up until now
   (ii)   They have displeased God by a sinful life
   (iii)   Repentance unto life means that we hate our past sins.
            APPLICATION: See how clearly this is seen in this passage.

2.   WHAT OCCASIONS THIS GODLY SORROW IS A "LOOK"

1) They see Christ crucified

2) The famous account of the conversion of Count Zinzendorf – a famous Christian leader in Germany.

3) The spiritual sight of Christ pierced in the gospels breaks our heart:
   (i)   His love for sinners
   (ii)   His grace to the unlovely

   (iii)   His substitutionary work
   (iv)   His propitiation
   (v)   The only remedy for sinners

4) Why this sight so affects us:
   (i)   He died for us
   (ii)   He is the Lamb of God
   (iii)   His blood gives us peace
            OBSERVE: This prophecy probably also refers to the future conversion of the Jewish nation one day. See Romans 11.

3.   WHAT AGENCY BRINGS SINNERS TO SEE CHRIST CRUCIFIED IN THIS SAVING WAY?

1) The Holy Spirit here spoken of.

2) He comes on sinners as the Spirit of "grace and of supplication"

3) Grace is divine power to change man's sinful heart.

4) When we receive God's spirit we are taught to pray.
            ILLUSTRATION: Paul in Acts 9.

5) The fruit of this is peace:
            ILLUSTRATION: William Cooper's conversion.

6) The peace comes because we experience cleansing in the blood of Christ: Zech. 13:1

7) It means: Abundant pardon!

CONCLUSION

Have you had this experience?

PSALM
102²: 13 – 20
104: 31 – 35
150: 1 - 6