‘The importance of conversion!’

(Foreword)

The times in which we are living are undoubtedly those referred to in the Holy Bible as the 'last times' that precede the fulfilment of God's wrath on the whole earth and the Last Judgement.
Shortly before the manifestation of the last plagues from heaven, we have the Great Tribulation prophesied by God’s Son, Jesus, which we recognise in the misfortunes of the last century since the two World Wars.
The prophecy about this difficult period can be read in chapter 24 of the Gospel of Matthew, part of which can be found on the menu page "The Great Tribulation!".
The misfortunes that we are experiencing in this last century, as plagues from God, are confirmed by the words ‘the last’ in the following vision of Revelation. This tells us that before the fulfilment of God's wrath there would have been other plagues, because we persist in doing evil and always refuse to do God's will. The vision is as follows:

(I saw another great and marvelous sign in the sky: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them God’s wrath is finished.) Revelation 15 : 1

A striking example of a current plague from God is undoubtedly the war provoked by Russia as a consequence of our disobedience in keeping God's commandments.
God's prophecy was given to us through Moses and some words make it clear that this prophecy began its fulfilment with the two World Wars about a century ago.
The prophecy refers to a nation soaring like an eagle, looking fierce, and it prophesies the take-off of war planes that did not exist at the time of Moses, together with the fierce or menacing appearance of these war planes, tanks, warships, huge missiles, etc.
The prophecy is as follows:

(Because you didn’t serve Yahweh your God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, by reason of the abundance of all things; therefore you will serve your enemies whom Yahweh sends against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in lack of all things. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you. Yahweh will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, as the eagle flies: a nation whose language you will not understand, a nation of fierce facial expressions, that doesn’t respect the elderly, nor show favor to the young.) Deuteronomy 28 : 47

Fulfilment of this prophecy along with the others must be a valid motive to lead us to conversion, as a process of transformation of heart and mind that leads to the eternal salvation of our souls, passing from a condition of life lived in wickedness to a new life lived in respect of the Lord our God and of His will.
Our wickedness should not only be understood as acts of wickedness or bullying of our neighbour, because for the Lord, it already consists, for example, of worshipping an idol instead of God, even when it is accompanied by harmony and joy among us.
This is understood from the following words of God through the prophet Jeremiah:

(I will utter my judgments against them concerning all their wickedness, in that they have forsaken me, and have burned incense to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands.) Jeremiah 1 : 16

This change of life is not only the eventual change from one religion to another, since a person might not belong to Christianity but still do God's will even better than one who has been baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as the Lord Jesus commanded us.

However, it is the constant endeavour to practise God's righteousness, keeping the commandments of God the Father and of his Son Jesus Christ, appointed by God as our Lord, that separates the righteous from the wicked, i.e., those who do not obey his will, making enemies of God to their misfortune. Regarding the lordship of Jesus, the importance of conversion to Christianity, and baptism in the name of the Lord, it is helpful to read the following Gospel testimony:

(This Jesus God raised up, to which we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you now see and hear. For David didn't ascend into the heavens, but he says himself, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit by my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."' "Let all the house of Israel therefore know certainly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.)
Acts of the Apostles 2 : 32

All people should be Christians, because if we believe in the divine manifestation of the Son of God on earth and the pure truth revealed by Him with the Holy Gospel, concerning the Kingdom of God, the power of Satan, etc., then we should accept that we belong to Christianity; we should obey the will of God through His Son Jesus Christ, having given us the following command for the purpose of eternal salvation of the soul after His resurrection:

(Afterward he was revealed to the eleven themselves as they sat at the table; and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they didn't believe those who had seen him after he had risen. He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who disbelieves will be condemned.) Mark 16 : 14

Another testimony from the Gospel that confirms this will of the Son of God is the following:

(But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had sent them. When they saw him, they bowed down to him; but some doubted. Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you. Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.) Matthew 28 : 16

Therefore, being a Christian for the purpose of the eternal salvation of the soul must not merely be formal. As we can see from the two quotations just given, one must believe in God and do His will. It is through God that we find ourselves living in this world, for better or for worse, in the hope or rather certainty, of being able to live eternally in a much better condition than at present, after submitting to the sovereignty of God, our Creator.
Throughout the ages, the Lord has always called us to conversion through His prophets, hoping to grant eternal life to all those who recognised the manifestation of God's will in their preaching and who, believing in Him and in the prophetic words of His servants, obey by submitting themselves to God's will. A quotation from the Holy Bible from the Old Testament period from which we understand that the eternal salvation of the soul depends on conversion is as follows:

(For thus said the Lord Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, "You will be saved in returning and rest. Your strength will be in quietness and in confidence.") Isaiah 30 : 15

One of the calls to conversion by one of the Lord's prophets is recorded in the following quotation from the prophet Ezekiel, dating back to some six centuries before the birth of Jesus:

(“Therefore I will judge you, house of Israel, everyone according to his ways,” says the Lord Yahweh. “Return, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions in which you have transgressed; and make yourself a new heart and a new spirit. For why will you die, house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him who dies,” says the Lord Yahweh. “Therefore turn yourselves, and live!) Ezekiel 18 : 30

The above Word of God makes us realise that if a man undertakes to transform his heart by also renewing his spirit, he will not face ruin, understood as eternal condemnation of his soul on the Day of Judgement. For God's last words are (Repent and live).
We received another call to conversion at the time of the Lord Jesus, through his prophet John the Baptist. He not only urged the people to convert by preaching, but also practised the rite of purification in water as a visible action of exorcism that was meant to help sinners free themselves from the presence of the evil spirit living within them and inducing them to do evil.
The following is a reference to the Holy Gospel:

(In those days, John the Baptizer came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!” For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, make the way of the Lord ready! Make his paths straight!”) Matthew 3 : 1

We received the next call to conversion directly from the Son of God, Jesus, who also made a statement that no prophet had ever made, saying (The time has come), as if God's judgement was imminent or nearly so. The Gospel quote is as follows:

(Now after John was taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Good News of God’s Kingdom, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and God’s Kingdom is at hand! Repent, and believe in the Good News.”) Mark 1 : 14

The Lord demands a process of conversion that persists over time, until the last day of our existence on earth, continually manifesting our love for our neighbour and for our God, and always keeping His commandments. The words of Jesus recorded in the Holy Gospel are as follows:

(Many false prophets will arise and will lead many astray. Because iniquity will be multiplied, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved.) Matthew 24 : 11

If the Lord Jesus demands our perseverance in doing God's will, having accepted His doctrine, how can those who do not accept it and put it into practice be saved?
This process of conversion, as a transformation of our heart and spirit, consists of moving from being enslaved to the devil who holds us captive, not allowing us to do God's will, to the freedom of God's children, as the Lord Jesus made us understand in his following words:

(Jesus therefore said to those Jews who had believed him, “If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”) John 8 : 31

For the Lord, knowing the truth means knowing God and his will, and if the Spirit of truth who lives in Jesus and who is God himself will set us free, hen our conversion will lead to eternal freedom.
