

Is it necessary to confess one's sins as soon as possible after the act of contrition?

Very strictly speaking, that is not necessary, but I strongly urge you to do so. You will thus be all the more sure of being forgiven and you will obtain, at the same time, the precious graces attached to the sacrament of penance, those that are called the sacramental graces. Perhaps, now, you will be tempted to say to yourself: "If it is easy to obtain the remission of sins through perfect contrition, I do not have to trouble myself about confession. I will sin without scruple, and I will be discharged of the debt of sin by an act of perfect contrition!" Anyone who would think in such a way will not have even a shadow of perfect contrition. He would not love God above everything, since he would not have the serious desire to break with sin and change his life, the condition required equally by confession and perfect contrition. He could well fool himself, but he could never fool God. He who truly has perfect contrition is entirely resolved to renounce mortal sin. He will cleanse himself as soon as possible in the sacrament of Penance, and, by his good will aided by the grace of God, he will keep himself from sin, and he will strengthen himself more and more in the happy state as a child of God.

Perfect contrition is a great aid for those who loyally and sincerely wish to recover and preserve the state of grace, and especially for those who fall into sin from habit, i.e., who, in spite of their good will, lapse again from time to time owing to their bad habits and their own weakness. It is, however, entirely different for those who use perfect contrition as a means of sinning with impunity: they turn the divine remedy of perfect repentance into a hellish poison. Don't be among the latter, my dear reader, and don't allow so precious a grace to serve you ill.

## **V. WHY IS PERFECT CONTRITION SO IMPORTANT AND SOMETIMES EVEN NECESSARY?**

It is important throughout our life and at the moment of our death.

First and foremost, it is important during our life. What, in reality, is more important than grace? It beautifies our soul; it penetrates it and transforms it into a creature of a new order by making it a child of God and heir to heaven. It renders all the works and sufferings of the Christian worthy of eternal life, it is the magic wand that changes all into gold — into the gold of supernatural merits. What, on the contrary, is sadder than a Christian in the state of sin! All his sufferings, all his works, all his prayers remain barren, without any merit for heaven. He is an enemy of God, and if he dies, he goes to hell.

The state of grace, therefore, is of capital importance and necessary to the Christian. If you have lost grace, you can recover it in two ways:

- (1) by confession,
- (2) by perfect contrition.

Confession is the ordinary means, but since it is not always available, God has given us an extraordinary means: perfect contrition.

Let us suppose that one day you have the misfortune to commit a mortal sin.