

Following the Steps of Jesus

How can a Man Be Born Again

Date 2/20/11 WBCFWB

Text: John 3:1-15

Introduction;

The new birth, along with God's great love (John 2:16-17), is the most important revelation ever made in all of human history.

Background to Jesus teaching about being Born Again; (v.1-2) "facts about Nicodemus"

1. He was a ruler (archon) of the Jews.

- This means he was a senator or a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews
 - a. He was a Pharisee- means the separated ones- self-righteous, heartless, hypocritical.
 - b. He was the master of Israel; that is, he held some official position of the highest rank.
 - He was either the leading official or the leading teacher of Israel.
 - c. He apparently was wealthy. He spent a great deal of money on the burial of Jesus.
 - d. He was silent at the trial of Jesus, saying nothing to defend Jesus, but he boldly stepped forth after the Lord's death and publicly helped in the burial of Jesus.

2. He came in behalf of the religionists.

- He said, "**We know.**" Some religionists wondered if Jesus was the true Messiah.
- **Rulers - questioning - wondering:** Is He really the Messiah? Some become believers.

3. He acknowledged Jesus only as a teacher from God.

- He and others saw the miracles Jesus did- only a man from God could do such miracles.

4. In essence, Nicodemus was asking, "Who are you?"

- The miracles show that God is **with you**, but you are claiming to be the Messiah, the Son of God. **Are you—truthfully—in all honesty?**

Note that Jesus did not answer Nicodemus directly.

- He **saw into** the empty, searching heart of Nicodemus and saw the honesty of his question.
- Jesus went right to the heart of the matter.
- Miracles and signs were not what was important.
- **What was important was for Nicodemus to be changed: changed spiritually, changed within, and changed completely—to undergo such a spiritual change that it could only be described as being born again.**

The new birth is a necessity, an imperative. (v.3)

One must be "born again" or else he will never "see" (v.3) nor "enter" (v.5) the Kingdom of God.

- The Question Everyone must Ask is; Have "I" been Born Again? When, where, how?

What does it mean to be Born Again according to the Bible?

- It is the **regeneration and renewal of one's spirit and behavior** (2 Cor. 5:17).
- It is the **endowment of a new life**, of a godly nature (2 Peter 1:4).
- The **new birth is so radical a change** in a person's life that it **can be described only as being born again.**
- Something so **wonderful happens to the soul** that it is just like a **new birth.**
- It is a spiritual birth, **a birth beyond the grasp of man's hands and efforts.**
- It is **so radical, so life-changing, and so wonderful** that it **can be wrought only by the love and power of God Himself.**

What does Jesus teach about being Born Again? Notice 4 things about the New Birth;

I. The New Birth is A Necessity – (v.3, 7)

- A person will never see (v.3) nor ever enter (v.5) the Kingdom of God unless he is born again (v.7).
- Nicodemus was a moral, religious man, one of the chief teachers (rulers) of the Jews, yet he did not understand the truth about the new birth. (*Many Religious People today*)
- Spiritual truths cannot be grasped by the carnal mind of sinful man (**1 Cor. 2:10-14**).

II. The New Birth is A Spiritual Birth – (v.5-6)

- The birth of a new power and spirit in life.
- It is not reformation of the old nature (**Romans 6:6**) “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”
- It is the actual creation of a new birth within—spiritually.

A person is spiritually born again:

A. By water, even the Spirit [first birth “water” / second birth “Spirit” (v.5).

B. By the will of God (James 1:18) “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

C. By incorruptible seed, even by the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23) “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth an abideth or ever.”

D. By God from above (1 Peter 1:3) “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”
The word *again* (ana) in the phrase “born again” also means above (John 1:12-13).

E. By Christ, who gives both the *power and right* to be born again (John 1:12-13).

III. The New Birth is A Definite Real Experience – (v.14-15)

A person experiences the new birth:

A. By believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God -

(1 John 5:1) “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:”

Believe: to *have faith* (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), i.e. **credit; by implication to entrust** (especially one's spiritual well-being to Christ) :- **believe (-r), commit (to trust), put in trust with.**— (Strong's Greek & Hebrew Dictionary)

(John 3:14-15)

(WWW) “Looking to the serpent in faith brought healing. In like manner, Christ was made sin for us, for it was sin that was killing us. As we look to Christ by faith, we are saved. Brass symbolizes judgment, and Christ experienced our judgment when He was lifted up on the cross. Christ had to die before men could be born again; His death brings life. What a paradox!”

(Adam Clark) [John 3:16] “That no man is saved through this sacrifice, but he that believes, i.e. who credits what God has spoken concerning Christ, his sacrifice, the end for which it was offered, and the way in which it is to be applied in order to become effectual.

That those who believe receive a double benefit:

1. They are exempted from eternal perdition-that they may not perish.
 2. They are brought to eternal glory-that they may have everlasting life.”
- If an Israelite believed God's message (the good news of healing), he looked upon the lifted up serpent, and he was healed.
 - If a man did not believe God's message, he did not look, and he died.
 - Thus it is with us today: **every man must believe the message of Christ in order to be healed, that is, be born again.**

B. By the gospel as it is shared by believers (1 Cor. 4:15; Philemon 10).

C. By the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23) “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth an abideth or ever.”
or **by the Word of Truth** (James 1:18) “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

IV. The New Birth is A Changed Life, A Totally New Life. (v.8)

A person proves that he is born again:

A. By doing righteous acts (1 John 2:29)

(Ephes. 2:10) “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Ephes. 4:24) “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

B. By not practicing sin (1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18).

C. By loving other believers (1 John 4:7).

D. By overcoming the world (1 John 5:4).

E. By keeping himself (1 John 5:18).

F. By possessing the divine seed or nature (1 John 3:9;

(2 Peter 1:4) “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

Close: How can a Man (anyone) be Born Again?

Believe that Jesus is Your savior for Your sins – Repent of Your sins – Believe “Trust” Jesus as Your Only hope for Heaven – Receive forgiveness according to His Word – live as it is So!

Inv.

1. Are You Born Again? Have You Receive Jesus as Your Personal Savior? If Not...
2. Would You Ask Jesus Today to be Your Savior? Why Not Today?