

Chapter 4: Born Again

In John 3:3-7, Jesus talks about being “born again.” Nicodemus, a member of Israel’s Sanhedrin ruling council, asks the question most people have: How can we be born a second time? However, Jesus was not talking about a second natural birth, but rather a supernatural re-birth.

- Jesus says we must be born of both water and spirit in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Water refers to our physical birth, while spirit refers to being re-born spiritually.

In this “fallen” world, we are separated from God by sin. After the fall of humanity in the Garden of Eden, death entered the world, both physical and spiritual death.

- We no longer have God’s Spirit within us, but rather we inherit a “sinful nature” that keeps us separated from God.
 - *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. (Galatians 5:16-21, NIV)*

Jesus Christ came to pay the penalty for our sins and reconcile us to God the Father.

- *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (2Corinthians. 5:18-19)*

In so doing, He also enabled us to receive His Holy Spirit within our spirit through faith in Him.

- *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? (1Corinthians. 6:19)*
- *And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Galatians 4:6-7)*

This is the spiritual re-birth that is meant by being “born again.”

- When the Holy Spirit indwells us, we receive guidance, comfort, power, correction and instruction directly from God.
 - **But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things. (John 14:26)**

Being “born again” results in a major change in how we think, feel and act.

- If we don’t experience this kind of life-altering change, we have not received the Holy Spirit within us.
 - There are many people who call themselves Christians but who have not been truly born again.
 - Mental belief in Jesus is not enough. Rather, we must believe with all our hearts in order to receive Him into our hearts.

Those Christians who have not truly been born again will not see the Kingdom of God nor enter Heaven.

- Unfortunately, the Church has not stressed this enough. These “pseudo-Christians” have been shortchanged and are typically the ones who give Christianity a bad name. Without God’s Spirit within us, it is extremely hard to overcome our sinful nature.