

John Newlin Ministries, Inc.

- realizing the power of a life in Christ-

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WHAT DOES BORN AGAIN REALLY MEAN? WHAT IS BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT?

Even serious long term believers struggle at times to explain these crucial terms Jesus used to describe what was required to see the Kingdom of God and to enter that Kingdom.

Here are the relevant scriptures:

...no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. – John 3:3b

...no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. – John 3:5b

Jesus said both of these scriptures and we have to truly understand them.

He is saying that just to see the Kingdom you have to be born again. To actually be in it, there is more involved. You have to be **born of water and the Spirit**.

Let's think a bit about all this. After his remark of being born of water and the Spirit, Jesus went on to say in John 3:6 that *Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit*.

It's a spiritual thing we are talking about. God is spirit. He is not a creature of the flesh. Neither is the Holy Spirit. Neither was Jesus until he was born as a baby with a human mother.

Do you remember that at one point when he is talking with the woman at the well in Samaria, Jesus tells her that God is spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and truth. That is a powerful statement. Just saying words of praise and such is not enough. There must be a spiritual connection.

So back to those powerful words of the Lord in John 3:3,5.

Being born again obviously means in some way starting over. A new beginning to life. But of course no one can physically be born again as a baby. Well, that is not what Jesus is talking about. He is speaking about spiritual rebirth!

So let's think. Jesus says even just to see the Kingdom a person has to be born again. But to actually be in it, the person must be **born of water and the Spirit**.

Take a moment and remember one of the great accomplishments of Jesus for us all in his going to the cross: He took all our sins upon himself and served as the sacrifice for those sins. He paid the price and

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus!

if we have him as our Lord, God the Father does not look upon any of those sins when he sees us. He just sees a forgiven person.

So if a person repents of his sins, if a person asks the Lord Jesus seriously for forgiveness and to come into his life as his Lord, those sins are readily forgiven. **The person is washed clean of those sins...**in a sense a **washing with spiritual water if you will**. He is no longer carrying that baggage with him. Certainly a person can dip in a river or be sprinkled with water if that helps him in his conscious receiving of all Jesus has done for him; but the point is that Jesus has done it and a person has to receive it.

Now let's go a step further. The second part is that a **person must be born of the spirit**. Even though so many just see the temporary physical bodies we operate in on earth, we are in reality spiritual beings in physical bodies. And **Jesus has said we must receive a new spirit**. That spirit is the essence of you, of who you are.

When a person seriously and with all his heart repents and asks Jesus to be his Lord, he is **washed clean of those past sins as we have said, ...and he receives a new spirit!** There really is a new you. Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:17 says the old has gone and the new has come.

It's really true.

In John 1:12-13 there is a wonderful description of this. There John the disciple writes that *"... to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he [Jesus] gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."*

The Good News Translation of the Bible actually says for that highlighted phrase: **God himself was their Father.**

That's it! **That's the born of the spirit part. You get a new spirit from God.** God himself directly becomes your father.

Maybe as a last point on all this, it is good for us to look back at a precursor scripture in the Old Testament. In the book of Ezekiel there God is speaking to Ezekiel about bringing the Israelites back to their homeland and he tells Ezekiel to say this to the Israelites:

*"I will **sprinkle clean water upon you**, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will **give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you**; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."* (Ezekiel 36:25-27)

We all must be born of water and the spirit if we are to be in the Kingdom of God.

REASSURANCE – GOD CHOSE YOU

Encouragement In An Increasingly Difficult World

God chose us believers in Jesus before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. He predestined us for adoption as his sons through Jesus Christ. God's elect people – his believers – have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying work of the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood. (Ephesians 1:4-6; 1 Peter 1:1-2)

With all that said, then what really has been going on the past two thousand years since Jesus ascended to Heaven after the resurrection? Simply this:

Believers in Jesus have been working tirelessly to help the Father draw those people he has chosen as described above to knowledge of Jesus and acceptance of Jesus as their Lord. While God has chosen the believers, they still individually have to come to that level of belief and have Jesus as their Lord! As you know from your own life and the lives of others, people come to faith in Jesus at varying times in their lives. Beyond that, many have lived in areas far afield from any teaching of the gospel and have been far out of range of ever hearing the truth. How can they believe and accept the Lord as the Father has intended for them unless somehow someone gets the truth to them?

Thus the two thousand years of basic teaching ministry and evangelism and missionary work in getting the truth out to those living near and those in the far corners of the world. Has everyone God has chosen before the creation of the world now received this knowledge and accepted Jesus as their Lord? Apparently not, or else surely Jesus would already have been here to collect his believers.

But we are from all accounts, from all current events, from the fulfillment of prophecy, so very close to his coming that we do expect to see him any day.

We must remember, there are some people who hear and come to know Jesus even during the seven year Tribulation, no doubt through seeing or hearing materials left behind by the believers taken away during the rapture and somehow being drawn by God even then to a saving knowledge of the Lord. These people too are part of God's elect, those chosen before the creation of the world.

I don't want all this to get too deep and far afield, but some of you surely must be wondering about all those not chosen by God before the world began. Are those people never going to be in the Kingdom? Certainly it appears that way. Jesus of course died for the whole world. His sacrifice is sufficient for the entire world. But quite apparently, there are many who never recognize that or accept him as Lord.

We know from the Lord's own words that the number of believers is not a high percentage of the population. In Jesus' own words, "small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

This even leads to further wondering on our part – if there are many on earth who were not chosen by God to be in the Kingdom before the world began and are never going to be there, what really are they? People populating our world, people never truly seeing the truth, people we believers have had to learn to live around and deal with. Maybe all this is just part of the great training for believers that life on earth surely is. More of God's refining.

OUR THANKS AGAIN TO ALL THOSE SUPPORTING THIS MINISTRY WITH YOUR PRAYERS AND FINANCIAL DONATIONS!

**STAND FIRM IN YOUR FAITH AND KEEP YOUR EYES ON JESUS!
SOON YOU WILL BE SEEING HIM IN A WHOLE NEW WAY!**

May you live in the blessings of God always.

John

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