**Being Born Again**

One night, a member of the Jewish council named Nicodemus came to see Jesus in secret. He wanted to learn more from this great Teacher without angering Jewish leaders who hated Jesus. In that discussion, Jesus told Nicodemus, “Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). He then added, “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (v.5).

The term “born again Christian” is thrown around a lot these days and that’s ok. But we need to make sure that the expression conveys the same concept that Jesus intended when He spoke of being born again.

**The blessing of starting over spiritually.** Paul wrote, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Corinthians 5:17). He is teaching that, when a new person is born, the old man of sin must be put to death. “Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin” (Romans 6:6-7). The new birth is not a license to live anyway I like; it is the opportunity to leave a corrupt life and enter a life of devoted service to Christ.

**The new birth is made possible by Christ’s sacrifice.** In verses 14-15, Jesus told Nicodemus, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.” Because Jesus paid the price for our sins, the Father can offer us a new start and still remain a just God (Romans 3:26).

**The new birth is based on faith and obedience.** Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6), and the kind of faith that saves is a demonstrated faith (James 2:18). Peter expressed it this way: “Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God” (1 Peter 1:22-23).

The power of the gospel is its ability to change us. God is offering each of us the gift of starting over. If you turn your back on your sinful past (Luke 13:3), confess Jesus as the Lord of your life (Romans 10:9-10) and submit to immersion to symbolize the crucifixion of the old man and the birth of the new (Romans 6:3-7), you can be born again, a child of the King.

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