

BASIC BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

7. THE NEW BIRTH

Text: John 3:1-7

In this account of a meeting between our Lord Jesus and Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews, we are given an insight into the real issues of life. Nicodemus was looking for the ultimate realities. He addressed Jesus as “Rabbi” or “Honourable Master”. He recognised in Jesus someone different, unique. What message did Jesus have for him?

Our Lord’s answer is plain. He had no interest in the politics of this world. He had come to usher in the Kingdom of God – the everlasting Kingdom. All those who, like Nicodemus, are seeking for the better life, the good life that has no ending, may find fulfillment in God’s Kingdom. However, there is one qualification for those seeking admission: they must be born again. These words open up a totally new concept of spiritual truth and form the substance of our discussion in this lesson.

TWO DOMINIONS

There are two dominions.

1. The Kingdom of this world, ruled by Satan who is referred to as a “prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The Kingdom of this world belongs to the realm of darkness and shall be destroyed at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. The Kingdom of God is the kingdom of light, ruled by Jesus Christ. It is an everlasting Kingdom of justice and truth, love and joy and peace.

All of the people of the world belong to either the kingdom of Satan or the Kingdom of God. To those seeking admission to God’s Kingdom, there is just one requirement:

YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

It is absolutely essential. Our Lord says it three times (John 3:3,5,7). There can be no mistake or compromise.

What is the meaning of being born again? Firstly, let us consider what it is not.

THE NEW BIRTH: WHAT IT IS NOT

From the story of Nicodemus we may draw certain conclusions. Nicodemus was a devout and deeply religious person. He was also a highly respected ruler of the Jews, but he had no idea what it was to be born again. He attended worship services and prayed regularly. He kept the law and observed various traditions meticulously. But he was not born again.

TO BE BORN AGAIN IS NOT

1. Joining a church
2. Attending Sunday Worship Service
3. Observing rules and regulations
4. Doing good works
5. Giving to charity
6. Making resolutions
7. Imitating Jesus
8. Believing that there is a God
9. Reading the Bible and praying
10. Being humble and sincere

All the above are good, but they do not constitute the essential steps to the NEW BIRTH. They do not make one “born again”.

THE NEW BIRTH: WHAT IT IS

In John 3 verses 5 and 6, our Lord makes it abundantly clear what it means to be BORN AGAIN. It is a SPIRITUAL PROCESS. There are two steps to this NEW BIRTH:

1. Born of water

Water speaks of cleansing dirt and impurities. In the physical sense, we think of washing our soiled hands or taking a bath at the end of the day.

In the spiritual sense, washing refers to the cleansing of sins that have polluted one’s soul. The soul that has not been cleansed is foul and loathsome. It cannot enter God’s Kingdom. Every sin and impurity must be thoroughly purged and cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus before one can gain entry to God’s Kingdom.

2. Born of the Spirit

The NEW BIRTH is not a physical process, as Nicodemus imagined. Neither is it a mental or psychological change. It is a spiritual RE-BIRTH. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in effecting a RADICAL CHANGE in one's life.

It is a CHANGE of a person’s

- a. NATURE – refined, unselfish
- b. HEART – pure, indwelt by GOD’S SPIRIT
- c. WILL – subjected to GOD’S WILL
- d. OUTLOOK – HEAVEN-Oriented
- e. AMBITION – for extension of the Gospel
- f. DESIRES – to imitate and exalt CHRIST
- g. GOAL – GOD’S KINGDOM

WHO NEEDS TO BE BORN AGAIN?

All who desire to enter God’s KINGDOM of everlasting joy and peace MUST BE BORN AGAIN. This world and its attractions will pass away. It may be 50 or 70 or 90 years. That is

our lifespan, lived by the life we receive from our parents, our FIRST BIRTH. In a short time, our earthly journey is over.

But that is not the end of things. In fact, death is only the beginning of ETERNITY for our souls. Where will you spend eternity? That is the BIG QUESTION.

GOD has prepared an everlasting Kingdom, a better country. To live in that place, you need the NEW BIRTH or SECOND BIRTH. Those who do not have the new birth will be condemned to an eternity without GOD, to an eternity in HELL.

So, those who are born once die twice, and those who are born twice die once.

HOW CAN IT BE BORN AGAIN?

1 **Acknowledge** that I am a sinner, lost, condemned, bound for hell. God's Word says it: There is none righteousness. All have sinned (Romans 3:10,23).

2 **Confess** my sins and ask the Lord Jesus Christ to cleanse and forgive me. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Look to Jesus, lifted up on the cross and dying for me, bearing my sins.

3 Repent. Be willing to surrender my life to the Lord. Pray the prayer of repentance. Say to the Lord, "I am willing to give up every sin, all my bad habits, evil thoughts, wicked ways. I give myself to thee. I want to start a NEW LIFE IN JESUS, FOR JESUS' sake. Amen."

If this is your sincere desire, GOD'S SPIRIT WILL DO IT for you. Like a mighty wind, the SPIRIT will blow through you and in an unseen, mysterious way, GOD will change you.

THIS IS THE NEW BIRTH.

THE BENEFITS OF THE NEW BIRTH

1. **Your sins are cleansed, forgiven**

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12).

2. **You become a NEW PERSON**

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

3. **You become a child of God**

"... that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:5). "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:5).

4. **You obtain an inheritance** in God's everlasting Kingdom (Ephesians 1:11).

5. **You have CHRIST as your Lord and Master.**
6. **You have the Holy Spirit as Comforter.**
7. **You belong to a NEW FAMILY** – the household of faith (Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 2:19).

CONCLUSION

To be born again is the most wonderful experience anyone can ever have. If you have not been born again, you really have nothing. If you have been born again, you have everything.

YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

7. THE NEW BIRTH

Fill in the blanks (one letter for each space)

1. The NEW BIRTH is not a _____ .
2. Only those who have been born again can enter the Kingdom of _____ .
3. The NEW BIRTH means being born of _____ and of the _____ .
4. The FIRST BIRTH equips us to live on this _____ .
5. We pass through this world for only a short time, like _____ .

Multiple choice: Underline the correct answer

6. A person can enter the Kingdom of God
 - (a) by doing good
 - (b) by keeping the law
 - (c) by being born again
7. The first step in the NEW BIRTH is
 - (a) to make a resolution
 - (b) to have our sins washed away
 - (c) to join a church
8. The NEW BIRTH is a
 - (a) mental readjustment
 - (b) spiritual rebirth
 - (c) brain washing
9. When a person is born again he becomes
 - (a) a new person
 - (b) a child of God
 - (c) a neurotic
10. To be born again is
 - (a) quite unnecessary
 - (b) the most wonderful thing that can happen to anybody
 - (c) Satan's trap