

What does it mean to be born again?

Scripture: ¹*“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus a ruler of the Jews. ²The same came to Jesus by night and said unto him Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.*

³*Jesus answered and said unto him; verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ⁴Nicodemus saith unto him, how can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?*

⁵*Jesus answered, verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (St John: 3 vs1-6, KJV).*

Introduction

Birth is the bringing into existence of a **tender new life** of **same kind** as the **parent** from **a seed**, in a process called reproduction. The process is characterized by two integral sub-processes of **formation** and **environmental change**.

A seed is the propagative part of a living being. Generally it is the smallest part of a living being that has the capacity to transmit its life. In nature, for a new life to be formed there must be a fusion of the male and female seed in a process called fertilization.

To be born again as used in our text above, is actually a rebirth of the natural man that capacitates him with:

- The ability to see the kingdom of God, (John 3:3) and
- The ability to enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5).

It is a rebirth because it takes place in the life of a person that has already been naturally born into this world, governed by its own laws called natural laws; the law of gravity, the law of action and reaction, the law of motion, the law of forces amongst others. But in this case the process is spiritual because it is done by God himself. The Bible says God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth (*John 4:24*). The truth is God’s word (*John 17:17*) and the spirit is that sleepless part of man with whom God communicates and fellowships. The spirit in the fallen man needs to be quickened in order to re-establish communion and fellowship with God, which our father Adam lost through sin. There is a dual operation that takes place; the forgiveness of sins and the quickening of the spirit. This is the born again process.

The natural birth has same characteristics as the rebirth. Thus, in application of our natural understanding on this subject in this text, we are bound to ask the following pertinent questions:

In the rebirth, what is the seed? Who is the parent? Where does the new birth take place? How does the formation take place? How does the environment change for the new born?

The seed is the Word of God that is sown in the heart of man through reading or hearing of the message of salvation, (*Mark 4:14*). And the "spiritual fertilization" takes place when the Spirit of God comes into contact with the Word (the Seed) in the heart of the man who believes.

The parent of the new born here is God Himself who is drawn by virtue of faith into the life of the one who has believed His Word, the Seed. That is to say you need the word of God to be born again because the process is preceded by the sowing of the Word of God into your heart, (*Romans 10:9-14*). There is therefore a tremendous blessing in reading and listening to the word of God, (*Revelation 1:3*) and God will always make sure that you come across His word either by reading or by hearing, (*Mathew 24:14*). Even the birth of our Lord Jesus followed the same principle. The angel Gabriel first gave the Word (the Seed) and then the Holy Spirit came upon the Virgin Mary (*Luke 1:26-38*) to conceive the baby Jesus. You are therefore blessed as you read this message and meditate on it.

The baby that ensues from this spiritual birth abides in the spirit of the person concerned, and indispensably requires spiritual milk (*1st Peter 2:2*) to live, survive and grow even as the naturally born baby requires natural milk.

The new life is formed by the Spirit of God in the spirit of the person, who has believed God's word of salvation in Christ Jesus, (*John 6:63; Eph. 4:24; John 3:16*).

Finally and very importantly the environmental change in this spiritual birth called "born again" is a translation from the kingdom of darkness (the world) into the kingdom of light (God's kingdom), (*Colossians 1:13*). This environmental change is so evident that the individual (the born-again) is automatically subjected to a completely **new law** which at times contradicts the **natural laws** of life in the physical world. Jesus Christ the author of Christianity and our Savior whom the Almighty has made the mediator between God and man, demonstrated this by walking on the sea and by returning to heaven upwardly through the sky, defying the natural popular law of gravity (*Mathew 14:25, Acts 1:9*). He went further to say anyone that believes in Him shall be able to do the things He did and even greater things, (*John 14:12*).

In Romans chapter 8 verse 1, we read, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus, **the law of the Spirit of life** sets me free from **the law of sin and death**," (NIV). Anyone born again is operating under the law of the Spirit of life meanwhile the natural man is ruled by the law of sin and death. This explains the strange life of anyone born again towards those that are not, and it is often impossible for them to understand the new life of the born-again, except when they too become born again, (*1st Corinthians 2:14; Acts 4:13*).

A juxtaposition of some common principles in the two kingdoms will distinctively bring out the differences:

In the economics of God's kingdom, you give out in order to have more (*Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35; Prov. 11:24*), but in worldly economics you save what you have and you work for more.

In the kingdom of God if you want to be a leader you must be the one serving others but in the world it is the complete opposite, the leader is the one to be served (*Mathew 20:25-27*).

In the kingdom of God you consider others better than yourself, but in the world each one strives to surpass the other to prove their superiority and mastery, (*Philippians 2:3*)

In the kingdom of God, forgiveness is the tool used to establish peace, serenity and satisfaction by loving even one's enemies and opponents but in the world's system it is usually discord, vengeance or dominion, (*Romans 12:17-20*).

Therefore to be born again is to be spiritually regenerated in the inner man by God through, the forgiveness of sins, the formation of a new person and a spiritual translation from the world into the kingdom of God. The new or regenerated person acquires the ability to commune with the almighty God, truly calling him Father. Man is a trinity made up of the body, the soul and the spirit (I Thess. 5:23). The soul is the center of our reflection, understanding and decision, the intellect. The spirit is God's breath of life that was put in man on the day he was formed. The spirit is said to be dead when someone is living in sin, because sin disconnects it from God. The body is the container of both the soul and the spirit. The body is said to be dead (clinically) when the spirit and soul depart (*Gen. 2:7, 17; 1st Thessalonian 5:23, James 2:26*).

Who can help me to be born again?

In this rebirth called born again, God has made known to us the **unique door** to the new environment (God's kingdom) in the person of **Jesus Christ**, who because of His love for humanity appeased the almighty God through His sacrificial death on the cross, fulfilling all the requirements of divine justice, (*Revelation 5:1-10*) for all sinners. His sacrifice by death was so complete for the atonement of sins such that God the Father confirmed it by resurrecting Him on the third day after His burial. On the day of His crucifixion, immediately He gave up His spirit on the cross, God wrought a significant demonstration that explained what had happened in the spirit realm in which He confirmed that Jesus is the door to eternal salvation: God miraculously tore down the curtain that separated the **most holy** place and the **holy place** in the Jerusalem temple from top to bottom, (*Mathew 27:50-51*). This was a clear message from God saying the way into His presence which was hitherto accessible only to the high priest once a year had been henceforth opened through Christ to anyone who believes in Him. Jesus Himself declared on the cross just before dying that "it is finished" (*John 19:30*), meaning the accomplishment of the redemptive work. Even the saints that had died before His incarnation were raised to life and went into the holy city after His resurrection, a further confirmation that He is the only door into God's Paradise, (*Mathew 27:52-53*). *Jesus Christ summed it up in John 14:6 that He is the only way: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* He came from heaven to the world for a purpose and He accomplished it. Any man still living irrespective of the sins committed can go back to God and be reconciled through this door, Jesus Christ, (*Mathew 11:28, Revelation 3:20*).

Dear friend, do you want to go to heaven? The door is wide open before you! Jesus has done all He needed to do to help you. The ball is now in your court. Make up your mind to become born again that you may be eligible for heaven. You may not have as much time as you think. The Bible urges you to do so today! (*II Corinthians 6:2*).

What must I do to be born again?

The scripture records the story of a Samaritan woman who did not tarry a second to ask for her salvation immediately she came face to face with the door of salvation, Jesus Christ, (*John 4:10-17, NIV*). But the Lord Jesus in His wisdom drew her attention to an obstacle to her salvation that keeps most people today out of God's presence and reach. Verses 15-17, *"The woman said to him, 'Sir give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water'. He told her go call your husband and come back. 'I have no husband she replied.' Jesus said to her, you are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is you have had five husbands and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."*

The life that God gives us in Christ is "living water" that flows in our spirit man unto eternity. This woman did not hesitate to believe and to demand it from Jesus immediately she heard the message of salvation unto eternal life. But regardless of the zeal, her obstacle was the sins she has been committing and Jesus being omniscient knew but wanted her to realize and confess the truth about her sinful lifestyle so that she might be forgiven and cleansed to receive the new life (born again life). And when the woman confessed the truth, Jesus in His omniscience completed the story of her life. Thank God the woman did not pretend to be married even though she was staying with a man. She knew she was living in transgression and did not try to cover it by calling the sin partner her husband. She told Jesus the truth: "I have no husband" and the truth being her confession set her free. The bible says, *"he who conceals his sins does not prosper but he whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy."* (*Proverb 28:13. NIV*).

Many people want salvation, they need God's healing and deliverance, they desire to be born again into the kingdom of God, they want divine protection and eternal life, yet they hide or justify their sins in shame or pride and in so doing they put a barrier between God and them preventing the manifestation of God's gift in their lives (*Isaiah 59:1-2*).

Dear friend be like the Samaritan woman in the above passage. Go to Jesus in truth; He knows you even better than yourself but He loves sincerity and truth. He wants to see your willingness; remember He gave you a free will and therefore you have a choice. Even if you were a born again Christian who has gone back into living in sin, this call is for you too. Confess your sins to Jesus and repent for Salvation!

Sin is the missing of the mark (standard) that God has designed for us. Its evaluation and gravity depends uniquely on God's standard, (*Romans 8:33-34*). It changes our spiritual environment; it makes us to fall away from God's presence and from the grace. It gives Satan a legal right to attack and rob us of the good things that God has given to us including life. Many people die untimely deaths, they leave this world before God's appointed time for them. This is the work of Satan. When Adam and Eve sinned against God by missing the mark of obedience to his commandment, they fell away from God's presence and lost their authority over God's creation that was subjected to them. We see this in Genesis chapter 3 verse 9, when God came looking for them and said "...Where are you?" We understand that no one can physically hide from God's sight, so the question God asked was an indication of their spiritual change of environment (from light to darkness) which was a direct consequence of their sin. The loss of authority was manifested in the fact that man became

vulnerable and the same things that man had control over started controlling man, (sickness, disease, Satan and death).

As far as God is concerned it does not make any sense to conceal your sins neither does it do you any good because God with whom you have to do is aware of them and sees them vividly?

The Bible says ***“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,”*** (1st John 1:8-9, KJV).

The character in our text above (John 3:1-6), called Nicodemus who came to Jesus was a responsible intellectual of his time, a teacher of the law, a ruler of the Jews and a member of the religious ruling council called the Sanhedrin. This man’s life did not remain the same after that encounter. He believed in Jesus Christ despite all the knowledge and influence he had and he was transformed by the saving power of Jesus to the extent that he went back and confronted his colleagues (John 7:50-53). He was also the one who brought spices and prepared the body of Jesus for burial after He died on the cross. (John 19:39-40).

Dear friend do not allow who you are or what you are or what you have to make you miss Jesus Christ , the door of salvation and the giver of eternal life, (John10:28; 17:2-3).

How can I receive Jesus Christ and be born again?

It is not by chance that you happen to be reading this message for God had designed it for you at this time. God has spoken to you and if you have decided to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, to receive and enjoy His salvation and eternal life, then sincerely confess the prayer below from the depth of your heart to God. And God who sees and searches the heart is going to forgive you and grant you salvation instantly, writing your name in the Book of Life in Heaven. (Romans 10:9-10; Revelation 20:12).

If you are a backslider or an uncommitted Christian this prayer too is for you and God will renew you and help you to serve Him faithfully till the end, (John 6:37).

▪ Prayer of salvation:

“LORD JESUS CHRIST I AM A SINNER. I HAVE BEEN LIVING IN SINS THROUGH MY THOUGHTS, MY WORDS AND MY ACTIONS. I BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN SAVE ME FROM SIN AND CONDEMNATION. I BELIEVE THAT YOU DIED ON THE CROSS AND SHED YOUR BLOOD FOR MY SINS THAT I MAY BE SAVED AND YOU WERE RAISED FROM THE DEAD FOR MY JUSTIFICATION. OH LORD, FORGIVE ME OF ALL MY SINS. WASH ME IN YOUR BLOOD AND COME INTO MY HEART NOW. GIVE ME YOUR HOLY SPIRIT AND LEAD ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE. THANK YOU LORD. IN YOUR NAME I HAVE PRAYED.....AMEN”.

▪Important Recommendations

You are now in Christ Jesus for God has forgiven you of all your sins and saved you from condemnation and hell through your faith in the prayer you just made through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. You are now born again into God's royal family. Now that you have joined God's family, to bear righteous fruits pleasing to Him, you have duties in the Kingdom to:

- (1) Get a personal Christian Bible immediately. Read it daily, for God will speak through it to you.
- (2) Fellowship with God through daily Bible reading. Praises Him with songs and, worship Him in prayer.
- (3) Fellowship with other brethren in the same holy faith for mutual edification.
- (4) Share with others what God has done for you and tell them what God can do for them.

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!