

Born Again to Eternal Life

There is often confusion about what the Christian life really is about and who Jesus really is. Some think that it is about going to church whilst others consider it to be merely following the teachings of Jesus as in a Teacher – disciple relationship. This would make Jesus to be a good teacher or prophet and nothing more. So what is the Christian life?

Nicodemus was a Pharisee who believed that Jesus was a teacher who had come from God. He was a genuine seeker but had not understood fully who Jesus was and what He had come to do.

John 3: 1 – 21

1) The New Birth

- No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again – or literally born from above (v. 3)
- Jesus repeats this phrase in another way
 - No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh give birth the flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit
- Every person on earth is born of the flesh and is born with a sinful nature that is dead to God.
 - Ephesians 2:1 - 2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.
 - Isaiah 59: 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.
- Because we were born with a spirit that is dead to God we need more than ethical teaching.
- Jesus spoke about seeing and entering the Kingdom of God
 - When we were born we were born into the kingdom of darkness or dominion of darkness
 - This is the dominion where Satan rules
- If we do all our good ethics and good works we still do them in this dominion or kingdom of Satan.
 - Satan will allow good works in his kingdom because it makes people feel good and gives them a false sense of security
 - Satan even allows religion in his kingdom because as long as people think that they can work to please God that they are safe.
- We need to know that everyone and everything – good and bad – under the dominion of Satan will be judged and thus remains under the wrath of God.
- We need to enter the Kingdom of God to be saved.
- In order to enter the kingdom of God you have to be born again from above
 - John 18: 36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."
- We have to be born of the Holy Spirit
 - When this happens our spirits are “regenerated” i.e. they are made alive to God

- We come under God's dominion – we have been born again into the kingdom of God
- A man went to another country and wanted to become a citizen of that country. They told him that only people who were born there could be citizens. They said that the only way he could become a citizen is to return to his country and die there. Then he needs to be born again and when he is born again he must be born in that country then he will be a citizen of it.
 - This illustration is how it is to be born again into the kingdom of God.
 - Through the cross we die to the kingdom of Satan and we are born again into the Kingdom of God.

2) How are we born again?

- We are born again by faith in Jesus and His finished work on the cross
 - Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. (vs. 14 – 15)
- God initiated our rebirth by sending Jesus to die for us so that we shall not perish but have everlasting life if we believe in him.
- Salvation is always initiated by God because he loves us and he knows that:
 - We were in bondage to sin and couldn't set ourselves free even if we wanted to
 - Our sin kept us blind to God and he had to open our spiritual eyes to see the truth. No one seeks God.
 - As long as we remained in the kingdom of Satan we remained under condemnation and He loved us too much to condemn us
- Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call."

3) Consequences of believing and not believing in Jesus

- Believing
 - We receive eternal life – we have an assurance of salvation
 - We shall not perish
 - We become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1: 4)
 - We know and live by the truth
 - We have peace with God (Romans 5: 1)
- Not believing
 - We live under condemnation
 - Will perish in the eternal lake of fire – hell
 - Live in darkness – evil deeds
 - Hate the light