

Chapter 4: Being Born Again Will

Begin Your Healing Process

"Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . .
Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the
kingdom of God." (John 3: 3-5.)



Please read John John 3:1-8.

Christ, in his conversation with Nicodemus that night, made it clear that it was absolutely necessary to be born of water and the Spirit before one could enter his spiritual kingdom.

We will now consider what the Holy Spirit has to do with the "new birth."

Christ came to establish a new kingdom ; this kingdom is called the church. There never had been a kingdom like it. The kingdom of Israel was familiar to his generation, but this new kingdom was uniquely new ; it was difficult even for the disciples of Jesus to understand its nature.

The Christian life is begun as "a new creature," as a "newborn babe," "a regenerated soul." To be a Christian implies a new life.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

We have a butterfly on our gazebo at Project Rescue representing this transformation.

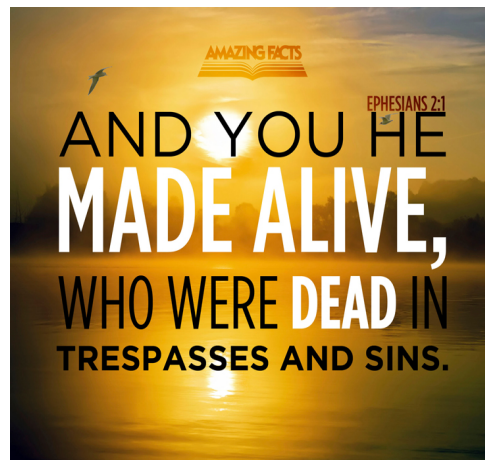


This new life implies a new birth, being born again, "born anew," "born from above." It is sometimes called conversion, regeneration, "alive together with Christ." (Eph. 2: 5.)

It is nowhere in the New Testament called "a new birth," but this is clearly implied in New Testament language.

"Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5

When we look at man's lost condition, we can see a reason for a new birth. Man has been separated from God ; his sins have come between him and God. (Isa. 59: 2.). The Bible represents man as a sinner; he is blind and dead through his "trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2: 1.)



Man is degenerated and desperately wicked in heart ; man is represented in this unregenerate state as at enmity with God. Man is unfit in this state to dwell in the spiritual kingdom of God; he is unfitted for the holy relationship of a child of God. The guilt and stain of sin are such that man needs a regeneration; he needs to be born again, he

must be born anew before he can enjoy the spiritual blessings which are in Christ.

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” Titus 3:4

The Holy Spirit convicts the sinner with gospel truth. The sinner hears the truth, believes it, and is begotten by it. Through the instructions of the Holy Spirit he is commanded to obey it. He turns in penitence from his sins, and is then baptized into Christ. All this is done through the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

This last act of being buried in baptism and raised to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 4) is the deliverance.

“Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:4



WHAT IS A SPIRITUAL BIRTH?

There are two necessary and essential actions in a birth—a conception and a delivery. This is true whether we have reference to a natural birth or a spiritual birth. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent in both of these actions in the spiritual birth. The word of God is the seed of the kingdom (spiritual birth process). "The seed is the word of God." (Luke 8: 11.)

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth : "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." (1 Cor. 4: 15.) He had preached the gospel at Corinth, "and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts 18: 8.) By the preaching of the gospel through the Holy Spirit, by the Corinthians hearing and obeying it, they were begotten by the gospel. Again, James wrote: "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James 1: 18.)

So Christians are brought forth "by the word of truth" which is the gospel. Peter emphasized the same when he wrote:

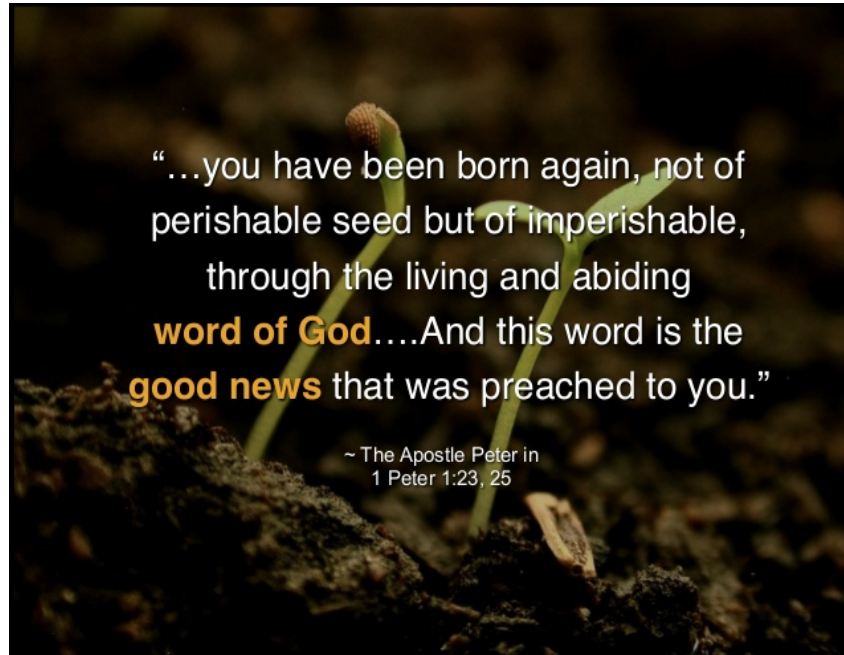
"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit . . . having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever."

I Peter 1:23-25

One is begotten by the word of God when that one believes. "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1 : 12, 13.)

The gospel is preached ; people hear the gospel; they believe it, and in believing it they are begotten of God. The Holy Spirit imparts the life ; life is imparted in the process of begetting.

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63

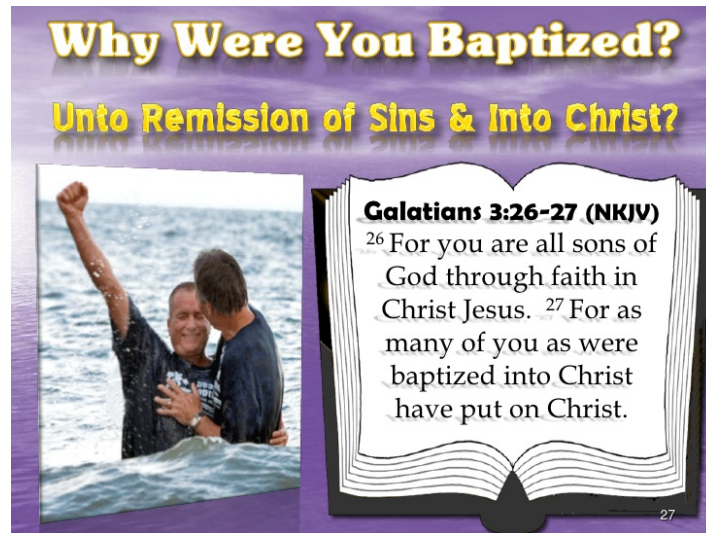


The second necessary action in a birth is the delivery ; this is done in baptism. "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body." (1 Con 12: 13.) The entire process is directed and accomplished by the Holy Spirit.

So Christians are brought forth "by the word of truth" which is the gospel. Peter emphasized the same.

"For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.)

All the examples in the New Testament of conversion reveal the fact that the gospel is God's power to save, when it is heard, believed, and obeyed.



The conversion of about three thousand on Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2, emphasizes that the gospel was preached by the Holy Spirit through Peter, that the people heard, were convicted, believed, and obeyed. They were thus converted and added to the church (please read Acts 2)

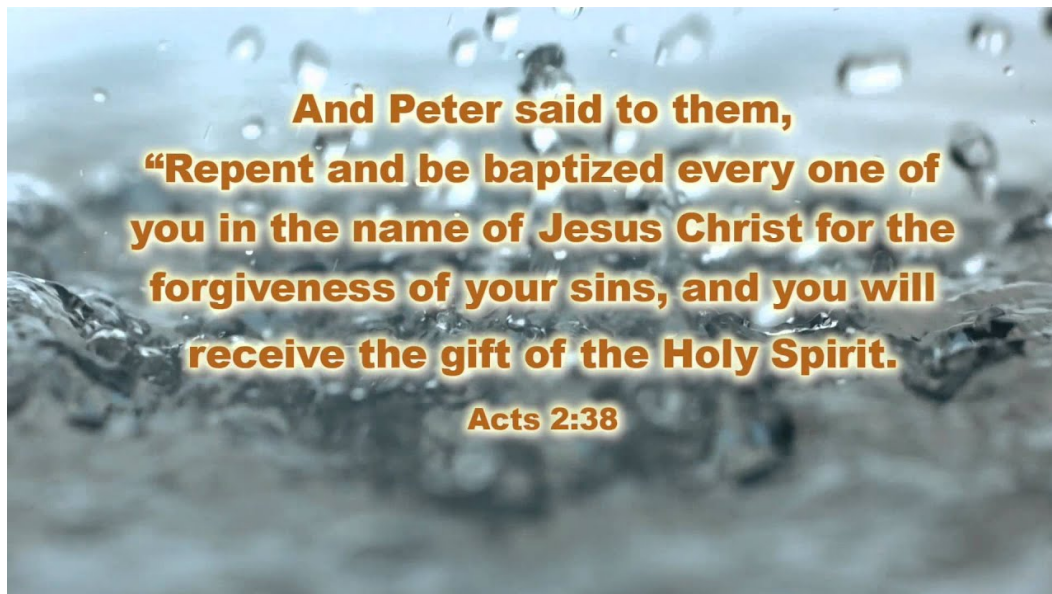
Baptism puts one into Christ. It is the last act of the translation from darkness into the kingdom of the Son of his love.

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Acts 2:1

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:36

“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.” Acts 2:41



Chapter 4 Test: Being Born Again Will Begin Your Healing

1. "Except one be _____, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Except one be _____ of _____ and the _____, he cannot _____ into the kingdom of God." (John 3: 3-5.)

Born – anew – born – water – Spirit – enter

2. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a _____ creation; _____ things have passed away; behold, _____ things have _____." 2 Corinthians 5:17

New – old – all – become – new

3. Regarding our relationship with God, why is it necessary for men and women to be born again?

To be regenerated

4. "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His _____ He saved us, through the _____ of _____ and _____ of the Holy Spirit." Titus 3:4

Mercy – washing – regeneration – renewing

5. How does the spiritual birth process compare to a physical birth process?

Conception and delivery

6. What is the seed in the spiritual birth process?

The Word

7. In Acts 2 what phrase describes **how** they were convicted?

“Now when they heard this”

8. In Acts 2 what phrase describes **when** the hearers were convicted?

“They were cut to the heart”

9. In Acts 2 what phrase describes their DELIVERY in their spiritual birth process?

Baptized

10. What does the butterfly on the gazebo by the front pond represent?

Transformation – Romans 12:2