

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev Chris Trinham

Children of the King

No 3

Born of the Spirit

Scripture Reading: John 3.1-24

Key Verse: For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 1 Peter 1:23

The world is hooked on to the biblical phrase 'born again' and uses it as an indication that someone has a renewed interest in some topic or a new lease on life. To the Bible-believing Christian to be born again means to have received the ministry of the Holy Spirit initiating that person into the kingdom and family of God whereby they receive from God the power to live a life that pleases Him.

Sometimes a person who claims to be a 'born again Christian' falls into sin or fails to meet the ethical expectations of others. Sometimes the actions of these people bring a real sense of shame to God's kingdom and damage the patient, godly witness of their Christian brothers and this is so sad, so tragic! What does the Bible teach about this concept of being 'born again'? If I have been born again, how then should I live? What does God expect of me?

First, The Essence of New Birth is a New Nature. Just as children inherit their nature from their parents, so the children of God inherit the divine nature from God.

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 1 Peter 1:23 NIV

The word 'seed' is a Greek word *spora*, not a seed to plant which is *sperma*, but the planting that has been sown, through the word of God. This crop sown in our hearts, says Peter in 2 Peter 1.4 makes us partakers in the divine nature:

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

2 Peter 1:3&4. NIV

This new nature is called in other

places 'Christ in you'. The Holy Spirit who caused the Christ child to be born of Mary physically now causes the nature of Jesus to grow in us spiritually. Colossians 1.27 & 2.6. It is in this sense that John 15.7&8 is true and is a real blessing.

The Apostle Paul was anxious that this process should be completed and that those he led to the Lord would be established in their faith. See Galatians 4.19

Second, The Manifestation of New Birth is Right Behaviour. As God's children we derive our behaviour from our new nature.

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.

Romans 8:9&10 NIV

If the Christian is living according to

the new nature that he has received, he will not want to sin because it is not now natural to do so, it will make him uncomfortable or unhappy. To sin is to live the way of the world, the devil or the former self life, and all that says Paul was nailed to His cross.

No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. 1 John 3:9 NIV

It is not impossible for a Christian to sin, but it is no longer natural and he will not want to go on sinning, and even more so as he learns of and grows in Christ and as the seed planted in him grows to fruition.

That fruit is a life of righteousness. The Christian life is not one of the rules and rituals of religion, but a moment by moment enjoyment in the power and blessing of a new life, the life of 'Christ in you'.

The fruit of the implanted seed is the ninefold fruit of the spirit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-25 NIV.

As Christians we can fall into sin when we fail to live by faith in the promises of God's word. It is not

trying, but trusting, that gives victory.

Third the Catalyst of New Birth is Belief. How does one become a child of God? The process begins when we believe what God has said about His Son, Jesus, that God has made Him to be sin for us, that upon the cross of Calvary He took our sins upon Himself and died in our place, and that His Father God would accept that sacrifice on our behalf.

When I see that, really see that, I say to myself and to God, "I am at heart a sinful person and I want to accept the death of Jesus in full payment for the penalty of my sin. In fact, I take Him now as the offering for my sin." Here is what happens when we do that. It is God's word and God's promise to you:

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12&15 (NIV)

If you in all sincerity have done that then you are now a child of God, and the Son of God, Jesus is born in you of the Holy Spirit. You now need to grow in grace and a knowledge of His word until Christ is formed in you.

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? 2 Corinthians 13:5 NIV

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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