



## John 3:1-16

# You Must be Born Again

"Lord," I prayed, "give me an opportunity to share Christ with my friend."

I had been building a friendship with an expatriate from the U. S. His mother was an Ecuadorian and he had married a beautiful young Ecuadorian woman. Although he was born and educated in the U. S., his parents brought him to his mother's country every summer to visit her family. Since I was a "ham" radio operator, he enjoyed talking with his parents back in the U. S. As our friendship grew I continued to pray the Lord would open the door to share Jesus Christ with him.

That opportunity came one Monday morning when he called on the phone and began to share what had happened a couple of hours earlier.

The landlord of the apartments where he and his wife lived asked him to go into the shower of a neighbor's apartment to check on him. The water had been running for quite some time, and there was no answer at the door. He went in and found his neighbor dead in the shower. Medical examiners theorized his neighbor had overdosed by accident on medication and had gone into the shower to try to overcome the effects of the medicine and died.

My friend continued, "I stared death face to face this morning, and if I die, I'll go straight to hell."

I listened patiently to him and I began to share with him from the Word of God some good news in Jesus Christ. I explained to him that God loves us, sent His Son to die for us on the cross and that if we put our faith in Him He would give us eternal life. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). We talked about sin and the consequences of being a sinner. I shared the fact that "while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly," and that "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6, 8). As I listened to Louis, I could sense that the Holy Spirit was speaking to him. I stressed, Louis "if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).

He listened with discernment and sensitivity and quietly said, "Wil, I need to think about it some more. But you be praying for me."

Before I hung up the phone I told him I would get some of my colleagues and we would be praying until he put his faith in Christ as his Savior.

I didn't hear from him the next day. On Tuesday morning when I arrived at my office at 7:00 AM he was outside the door pacing back and forth. "I didn't think you would ever get here!"

We sat and talked about those passages in the Bible that explain God's way of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. My friend believed on Christ as his Savior. It was beautiful to see a man dead in his trespasses and sins receive spiritual life. Right before my eyes I saw a man be "born again."

A little while later as we walked down the sidewalk in front of my office, he turned to me and said, "Wow! You didn't tell me I'd feel like this!" I said that I did not want to put the emphasis on feelings, but on Christ. We are saved, not by an experience, but by Christ. No two experiences are alike. Nevertheless, there comes a moment when the Holy Spirit brings us under conviction of our unbelief and our need for the Savior and causes us to put our faith and trust in Christ alone to save us.

John chapter three takes us to the very heart of the teaching of Jesus on spiritual birth. Man is dead in sin and is in the need of a spiritual birth. We can not respond to the things of God unless we have been born again. We see that birth beautifully illustrated in the man Nicodemus.

### **THE MAN NICODEMUS (3:1-2)**

Nicodemus was a man of distinction and outstanding character. He was intelligent, honest and upright. John in his gospel tells us: "Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God *as* a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him" (John 3:1-2).

Jesus was becoming popular with the people. No doubt, Nicodemus, who was a member the Sanhedrin, had heard about Jesus. Perhaps he came at night so he could have a private meeting with Jesus and ask all the questions he wanted to ask. Jesus trusted Nicodemus (contrast with 2:23-25).

#### ***What do we know about Nicodemus?***

He was a religious man. We know that he took his religion seriously because he was a member of the Pharisees sect. They were strict, narrow, traditionalists who were at times bigoted.

He was "a ruler of the Jews." He was one who is first or preeminent among his associates. He stood in a high position among the ruling class in Jerusalem. This would indicate that he was a member of the Sanhedrin.

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Nicodemus was a man of discernment is seen in his estimation of Jesus. "We know that You have come from God as a teacher." He did not jump in to condemn Jesus because of prejudicial ideas and motives. He was open-minded and wanted to hear Jesus personally. Nic was discerning. "No one can do these things that You do unless God is with him."

He was a cautious man. He came by night. I think he came to have a private time with Jesus in the quietness of the night away from those who would distract. He probably wanted a private interview so no one could interrupt them. It would be one rabbi talking to another rabbi about the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus also had a passion for justice. John 7:45-52 fills us in on an intense discussion going on between the Jewish leaders and the Pharisees. Nic stood up and asked, "Our Law does not judge a man, unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?" They didn't like his question. They replied, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee." Nic stood the ground alone, but it ended the discussion that day.

Here was a sincere man with a sincere hunger for truth. How would Jesus deal with a man such as Nicodemus?

### **THE MESSAGE TO NICODEMUS (3:3-16)**

#### *Jesus and Nicodemus face to face (vv. 2-3).*

Nicodemus' estimate of Jesus is that he is a teacher who has come from God. One of the criteria for him was "no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." John uses a word for "signs" that means "attesting miracles." They are tokens of divine authority that always points to the supernatural power of God in redeeming grace through Jesus Christ. Nicodemus looked, listened and saw God behind Jesus' teachings and miracles.

We also see Jesus' estimate of Nicodemus in verse three. Jesus looked at him and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he can not see the kingdom of God."

Jesus recognized a man who was sincere in his quest of the kingdom of God. Nevertheless, He also recognized that Nicodemus was a spiritual failure in spite of all his religious knowledge and enthusiasm.

#### *What does Jesus mean by "born again"?*

The idea is that of a spiritual birth. The new birth is the communication of spiritual life to that which is spiritually dead. The new birth is the commencement of something entirely new. It is a new life giving principle and therefore a second birth. It is a spiritual birth, or a new creation. It is something that God alone can do. A. W. Pink said it well,

The unregenerate sinner is in darkness, the darkness of spiritual death. The Holy Spirit moves upon, broods over, the conscience and heart of the one He is about to quicken. The Word of God goes forth in power. The result is "light" -the sinner is brought out of darkness into God's marvelous light. The Holy Spirit, then, is the One who produces the new birth.

The new birth is not a renovation of an old sinful life. It is not a reformation of social behavior. It is entirely the supernatural act of God giving spiritual life to a person in response to faith in Christ.

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When we are born naturally, we receive natural or physical life; when we are born from above, we receive spiritual or eternal life.

The apostle Paul wrote about this spiritual birth. He said, "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is indeed a radical change. However, it is not something man can do. God alone can do it. Jesus said, "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes" (John 5:21).

The new birth is also called spiritual "regeneration." It means the Holy Spirit originates eternal life, which comes into the believer in Christ at the very moment he believes on Christ. It is the instantaneous change from a state of spiritual death to a state of spiritual life. It is the creative work of God, specifically the Holy Spirit. The basic idea is that a believer who was formerly spiritually dead now has received eternal life. The believer is declared to be "alive from the dead" (Romans 6:13). "Even when we were dead in trespasses, [God] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and raised up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:5-6). "Born again" believers in Christ have received by faith a new life in Christ. This new life is entirely a supernatural act of God in response to our faith.

J. I. Packer defines "Regeneration, or new birth, is an inner re-creating of fallen human nature by the gracious sovereign action of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5-8) . . . . Regeneration is the 'birth' by which this work of new creation is begun, as sanctification is the 'growth' whereby it continues (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18."

B. B. Warfield said our salvation is "a radical and complete transformation wrought in the soul (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:24) by God the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5; Eph. 4:24), by virtue of which we become 'new men' (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10), no longer conformed to this world (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9), but in knowledge and holiness of the truth created after the image of God (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; Rom. 12:2)."

We experience the results of the new birth. It is instantaneous with our salvation. We need to make clear that this experience is the evidence of the spiritual birth. It is not the regeneration itself. What we experience are the results of the new birth. Let me illustrate.

When a brilliant young highly educated graduate of Manchester University came to Christ there was a radical change in her life. I shared Christ with a graduate student in psychology. She came up with every pseudo question conceivable. Then one night she said, "Wil, you have shot down every argument with solid answers. I am ready to yield to Christ." In those moments, she came deeply under conviction of her sin and unbelief. The Holy Spirit made it imperatively clear to her that Christ alone could save her through His death for all her sins. She acknowledged in her own heart: "All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him" (Isaiah 53:6). The Holy Spirit brought a deep conviction of sin and the reality of Christ's death for her. My friend put her faith in Christ alone to save her. In that moment she was born spiritually. Her face was bathed with tears when she believed on Christ to save her.

A few minutes later she exclaimed, "Peace! Peace! I've never experienced such peace in all my life!"

Some individuals light up like a 1,000 watt light bulb when they see the "light" of the truth of Jesus Christ and trust in Him. Others get excited and cry. Many show no emotion, but a deep sense of peace and forgiveness. No two people have the same experiences. But they know when the Holy Spirit brings new life to them. It is personal and it is life changing because it is the work of God.

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Jesus said, Nick you have to be born again. You must have a new birth. It is the production of a new life consecrated to God. It is a radical change of mind for the better. It's regeneration. It is the communication of spiritual life to that which is spiritually dead. It is the "baptism of the Spirit," the commencement of something new. Someone has said, "It is a crisis with view to a process; a rebirth with the prospect of a constant renewal." The Bible also calls it "regeneration." This spiritual birth is the supernatural act of God in response to faith. The experience is evidence of regeneration, but not regeneration itself. We experience the results of the spiritual birth. However, the regeneration itself is not an experience.

When a person receives Christ by faith, he is born again and in the act of the new birth receives a new nature. This new nature is patterned after the nature of God. That is why it is described as being born from above, born again or regenerated. It is God's kind of life; therefore, the believer can experience true intimate fellowship with God.

The apostle Paul wrote to Titus reminding him that Christ "saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7).

Paul has in mind the same idea that Jesus told Nicodemus. The "new birth" is a spiritual regeneration. It is the inception of a new state of things in contrast with the old. God gives us a new life, a new birth, new creation, a heavenly birth, a spiritual resurrection. Every believer receives a new supernatural life from God the moment he or she puts their faith in Christ alone to save them. It is the beginning of eternal life.

This new life in Christ begins the very moment a person puts their faith in Christ and it continues throughout eternity. It doesn't begin when you die and go to heaven. It begins now. It begins the moment you believe on Christ to save you.

Not only do we see Jesus and Nicodemus face to face, but we also see them head to head.

### *Jesus and Nicodemus head to head (vv. 4-8)*

Jesus uses four comparisons to bring out this great truth to Nicodemus. Jesus contrasts physical birth with the spiritual birth. Then He will contrast the wind and the Spirit.

Jesus was speaking about spiritual things. Nic couldn't get beyond the physical. Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" (vv. 3-4).

Jesus responded by drawing out a contrast between the physical birth and the spiritual birth. He made a statement about the spiritual birth in verse three. "Truly, truly, I say unto you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Whenever you see the double statement, "truly, truly" in the Gospel of John pay particular attention because Jesus is going to make a crucial statement regarding eternal life. It is literally, *amen, amen*. For certain, for certain, truly, truly.

Jesus repeated the double statement again in the next verse with added emphasis to introduce His first illustration. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' (vv. 5-7).

Remember that Jesus is illustrating the spiritual birth with the physical birth. How is one born of water? Is He saying you are born spiritually by baptism? No. The "born of water" is probably referring to the piercing and breaking of the water bag at the birth of a baby. An infant is born in water. The bag is broken and the child is born. It has no reference to water baptism or baptismal regeneration.

### *How is one born spiritually?*

Moreover, the water is part of the illustration Jesus is using to bring out the truth about spiritual birth. Examine carefully these words of Jesus when He spoke to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well. "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life" (John 4:14). Jesus is contrasting the stale, stagnant water from Jacob's cistern with spiritual water that is leaping up, gushing up to eternal life. The contrast is clear. Jesus gives spiritual water that issues in eternal life. Whatever water means here, it is exactly the same in John chapter three. Here Jesus tells us that eternal life is received when we drink of the water that Jesus gives. In John chapter 3, we are said to be born of the water and the Spirit. To be born again and to receive eternal life are really the same thing.

Again, we find Jesus in the Temple at the feast of the Tabernacles. Jesus stood and cried out in the Temple: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" What was He teaching? John tells us in the very next verse, "But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37-39). He is illustrating with water the spiritual life that the Holy Spirit gives the believer. The water of life is the good news of Jesus Christ coming down from heaven to save lost sinners who put their trust in Him for eternal life. That is the living water. Receive it, take it into your heart, and you will be born of water and of the Spirit.

Throughout John's writings, and in many other parts of the Bible, water is the recognized symbol of the Word of God. The new birth is by the Word and the Holy Spirit. This is the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and uses it to produce the new life. It is by the Word that we are born again and the Word washes us.

Peter declared to believers, "You have been born again, not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God" (1 Peter 1:23).

The Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the heart of the unbeliever to bring about a quickening of spiritual things. He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment to bring the sinner to faith in Christ. You are born again by the Holy Spirit "through the living and abiding word of God." The Holy Spirit is the author of spiritual life. Cf. Titus 3:4-7.

The same idea is found in Ephesians 5:26 where Paul is talking about the church. He uses the expression, "washing of water with the word." Metaphorically, being regenerated is pictured as being cleansed by water. Again, he is not referring to baptismal regeneration, but to the work of the Holy Spirit.

Only those who believe in Christ unto salvation are the sons of God in a spiritual sense. It is by regenerating work of the Spirit the believer is made a legitimate child of God. No one is a child of God by their natural birth (cf. John 8:44; Ephesians 2:1-3).

Physical birth is one thing, and spiritual birth is an entirely different matter. They do not take place at the same time. Jesus reinforced the thought a third time in verse seven, "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again or from above.'" Note the importance Jesus placed on this spiritual birth, or heavenly birth.

- **Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (v. 3).**
- **Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (v. 5).**
- **Do not marvel that I said to you, "You must be born again" (v. 7).**

It is hard to miss, isn't it? Jesus demanded a spiritual birth for everyone.

Since Nic was having a hard time with birth as an illustration He went on to give insight to the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration by reminding him of the wind (v. 8). Perhaps they could feel the fresh, cool breeze wrestling through the olive trees. Jesus said, "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

There is a beautiful wordplay in the original. Jesus used the word *pneuma* which means both wind and Spirit. You can't see the Holy Spirit (*pneuma*). He is invisible and His work is strange like the blowing of a powerful wind (*pneuma*). Nic you see the effects of the wind blowing and you hear it in the wrestling of the leaves, but you don't know where it is coming from or where it is going. You can't see it. The same thing is true with the Holy Spirit as He works in the heart. You can't see Him, but He is there bringing spiritual life to the believing sinner. Jesus said to the woman at the well, "God is Spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (4:24).

In this passage we see Nicodemus and Jesus face to face, head to head and heart to heart.

### ***Jesus and Nicodemus heart to heart (vv. 9-16).***

Nicodemus sounded a lot like his kin in our day. He asked Jesus, "How can these things be?" (v. 9). Jesus replied, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things?" (v. 10). Jesus is patient with Nic. You are one of the most significant and often quoted, powerful, influential teachers in Israel. How can you miss it, Nic? I am telling you from experience what I know to be true.

Jesus continued with His contrast of earthly things and spiritual truths. "Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and you do not receive our witness. If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things? And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man" (vv. 11-13).

Jesus told Nicodemus that the new birth is an experience that effects the whole person. Jesus said in effect, "Nicodemus it is spiritual, it deals with heavenly things, it is not legalistic, it is not composed of rituals. It is spiritual. It is from heaven. God does it. The very moment you believe on Jesus as your personal savior you receive a spiritual birth. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in every person who believes on Christ. It is His work, not man's work.

One of the finest individuals I ever met was a young man who worked as a Peace Core volunteer on a Special Olympic project in South America. He was completely blind since his third birthday. He was a student in one of my classes on the Beatitudes and Spiritual Growth. He wanted to interview me for a magazine article he was writing on self-acceptance and self-esteem.

I have a strong conviction that you cannot have adequate self-esteem without an intimate love relationship with Jesus Christ. As we were discussing these spiritual truths the Holy Spirit said to me, "Ask him, Wil." There was that profound sense of His presence with us. Again, "Ask him, Wil!"

I said, "Mickey, do you know what I am talking about?" His response was, "Uh, no."

I changed the topic of our conversation and shared with Mickey some good news in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit was working profoundly in the heart of Mickey making him aware of his sins and his need for Jesus Christ. He put his faith in Jesus Christ to save him for all eternity. He was "born again." It was a spiritual birth. This blind man saw the light of the Lord Jesus Christ and was beautifully saved from his darkness of sin and unbelief.

Jesus gave another illustration this time from the Old Testament wilderness experiences of people of Israel (Numbers 21:9). "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life" (vv. 14-15). Probably Nic didn't understand fully what Jesus was saying until God lifted Jesus up from the dead. Nic removed the body of Jesus from the cross (John 19:39). He saw with his own eyes that Jesus was dead. No doubt, his mind went back to those private conversations with Jesus.

## **THE MESSAGE OF JESUS TO US TODAY**

*We are all dead in our sin of unbelief until a spiritual birth takes place.*

Spiritual birth and physical birth do not take place at the same time. When Adam sinned it had a profound effect upon all mankind. Just because we are alive physically does not mean we are alive spiritually. We need to be born again because we are spiritually dead. We are unresponsive to the things of God, until we receive a spiritual birth.

The Bible says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." We have all received an "F" on our spiritual report card. It goes on to tell us that we have a penalty that must be paid for our sins. "The wages of sin is death." "The soul that sins will surely die." The apostle Paul was serious when he wrote, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins. . . But God, being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) . . ." (Ephesians 2:1, 4-5).

*Unless you are born again you cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

Spiritual birth is not an option. It is a divine necessity. You don't have a choice if you want to go to heaven. Spiritual birth is a must. It is as great a miracle as the raising of the dead. It is God the Spirit giving life to the spiritually dead. There is no other way of going to heaven. There is no other way of entering into the kingdom of God.

You can not join the family of God. You must be *born* into it. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, not the work of man. It is not "making your decision for Christ." It is not "come on down the aisle today and be saved." It is not whipping yourself up to a certain emotional pitch. It is not becoming religious. It is not morality and keeping the golden rule. It is not, "I trying my best to be a good person, preacher." It is not, "I'm trying to live the Christian life as best I can." It is not moral and social reformation. It is not waiting until you are worthy. It is not waiting until you think you can live up to it. Man's religious creeds, systems, rituals or ceremonies do not bring it about. No man made organization can do anything to you that will make you a child of God. Only



not bring it about. No man made organization can do anything to you that will make you a child of God. Only God's will can regenerate a dead person and enable that individual to trust only in Christ and His work of redemption. Spiritual life does not begin by "getting religion." It begins with the Holy Spirit bringing spiritual life through a spiritual birth. Only God can do that. He performs a miracle and you are born again!

Just as the new birth is not baptismal regeneration, it is not decisional regeneration. Unless you have been made a partaker of the divine nature, you are not saved. God works by His Spirit a work of grace through faith in Jesus Christ giving you a new heart and a new nature enabling you to trust in, to believe on, to rest in, to receive Him as your savior. When you are born again you begin living a new life with new attitudes toward the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. If God has not done a work in your life you are not born again.

"As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in 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 Holy Spirit brings about spiritual birth the very moment you believe on Christ.***

The very moment you put your faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior you are born again. A spiritual birth takes place when the Holy Spirit causes you to turn from walking in sin and unbelief and you confess to Him your need of Jesus Christ to save you. He brings you to an understanding that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and the very moment you believe on Him you are saved. In that moment a spiritual birth takes place, and you are "born again."

Jesus went on to explain to Nicodemus: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (v. 16).

I told you earlier about my friend in Quito. After he accepted Christ as his Savior he went home and shared his new found faith with his wife. She too believed on Christ as her Savior.

He had a good friend and fellow student in the university. He became burdened for his friend who had come to South America looking for cheap recreational drugs. He had been to Amsterdam and other cities in Europe during the 60's seeking freedom to use illicit drugs. My friend began to pray daily for his colleague.

A few months after my friend believed on Christ he was interviewed on missionary radio station HCJB. He invited his colleague to come and sit in the studio while he was guest on the live program. I sat in the studio as we listened to the interview going on in the control room next door.

As this university student listened to my friend he exclaimed, "Man, I knew something had happened to him, but I couldn't figure out what it was. Now I know. I want what he has!"

I turned said to him, "You can right now."

I shared the same good news I have shared with you today. For God so loved you, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever ~~you~~, me, anyone ~~who~~ believes on Him should not perish, but have eternal life. "For God so loved the world (place your own name there), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." By simple faith he asked Christ to be his Savior. You can too. God loves you and wants you to enjoy eternity with Him. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ to die for you on the cross. He did everything that needs to be done for you to be saved. The one thing you must do is **believe** that Christ died for you on the cross and rose from the dead.

*The new birth is the foundation for eternal security.*

The new birth as we have stressed in this study is a work of God, not of man. It is not dependent upon any human merit, worthiness, goodness, etc. The only requirement is to believe, trust, or put your faith in Jesus Christ. That is not a work. It is only receiving that which God gives in His grace and mercy. You can not reverse a spiritual birth. Once you have been born again you will always be in God's family, as His child. It is a once-for-all divine work whereby the sinner, who before was only "flesh" is made "spirit." It is an event, not a process. Prior to a certain point in time, a person is not born again, however after that point in time the person is. At that point he is a member of God's family. He will always be your Heavenly Father. He will never disown you. Faith is only a channel through which God can work in our lives. Our eternal security depends on the work of God, not man.

The apostle James reminds us: "Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow. In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures" (James 1:17-18). God "brought us forth" like a mother giving birth to a child. We have been "brought forth" into a living relationship with God "by the word of truth." You think God is going to fail on that? No way! You are a member of His family the moment you receive Christ as your Savior. That is the greatest assurance in an insecure world. I will stake eternity on Jesus Christ and what He did for me. There is no other way of entering into the family and kingdom of God. Please believe on Him today.

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God doesn't have life" (1 John 5:12).

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Series: People in Life of Christ

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