

Studies in Christianity A New Creature #2

S#1.

Being Born Again

S#2.

Text : **John 3: 1-21**

A. Our last lesson focused on the concept of becoming a “New Creature.”

S#3.

1. This concept is clearly stated in scripture.
II Cor. 5: 17 – Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature;
the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.
2. Observing that it is a biblical concept, we addressed HOW this transaction occurs.
 - a. One must have **faith** that Jesus is the risen Christ, the son of the only true God.
 - b. That faith must become strong enough so it will motivate him to **turn from** sin.
 - c. By the time one’s faith becomes that strong he must **confess it**, profess it, share it.
 - d. Of course, one who believes the gospel, lives by it and shares it will **obey it**.
3. One who becomes a “new creature” has a completely different value system.
 - a. **II Cor. 5: 17** – Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature;
the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.
 - b. Things that used to be important are no longer highly prized.

B. With this lesson we will explore what it means to be “born again.”

1. The Spirit by the Apostle John affirmed that only those who have been “born again” can be a part of the kingdom of God.
John 3: 3 – Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
2. The Spirit by the pen of the Apostle Peter taught us that one must be “born again” before he can anticipate inheriting a home in Heaven.
I Pet. 1: 3 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

S#4.

S#5.

C. In today’s religious customs the term “born again” is used in many ways.

1. Some use it to describe all Christians.
2. There are groups of Christians that use it to distinguish themselves from others.
3. It is often used to describe spiritually minded people.
- * 4. So what does it mean to be “born again.” Jesus established it isn’t physical birth.

I. Jesus taught that being born again is a prerequisite to salvation.**S#6.**

- A. **John 3: 3** – Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." **S#7.**

B. What was the kingdom to which Jesus referred ? (*future lesson*)

1. John the Baptizer preached the coming of the kingdom.

Matt. 3: 1 – ... John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, **2** " Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." **S#8.**

2. Jesus told many parables to explain the coming kingdom, e.g.,

Matt. 13: 24 – Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

3. The Apostle Paul taught that in order to be in it, wick people must be cleansed.

I Cor. 6: 9-11 – do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, **10** nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. **S#9.**

4. The kingdom is the church of Christ. *The Christians at Colossae were in it.*

- a. Bear in mind, the letter to the Colossians was written to faithful Christians.

Col. 1: 2 – To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: **S#10.**

- b. **Col. 1: 13** – For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

C. All saved people are added to the church which is the kingdom.

1. **Acts 2:38** – Peter said to them, " Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **S#11.**

2. **Acts 2:47** – praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved

3. Those who are baptized are placed INTO Christ.

Gal. 3: 27 – For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. **27** For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **S#12.**

4. When one is placed into Christ he is placed into salvation.

II Tim. 2: 10 – I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

D. Therefore, being born again is a pre-requisite to salvation in Christ. S#13.

II. In order to be born again one has to be born of water.**S#14.****A. The spiritual transformation has a physical component; it requires water. S#15.**

1. **John 3: 5** – Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
2. Some teach that this is the water in the woman's womb because they have deeply engrained doctrinal dogma which forbids any act related to salvation.
 - a. They point to Eph. 2: 8-10 to prove man has no part in the salvation process.
 - b. Jesus classified "faith" as a work.

S#16.

John 6: 28 – Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" **29** Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

* 3. It would be illogical for Jesus to require physical birth to living people.

B. Water and baptism in water are often related to the cleansing of sin.**S#17.**

1. The wicked people at Corinth were "washed" when they were forgiven.

I Cor. 6: 11 – Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

2. When one is saved and regenerated he is washed and the Spirit is involved.

Titus 3: 3 – For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, **S#18.** enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. **4** But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, **5** He 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, **6** whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- a. Lost sinners are saved by God's grace.
- b. Both water and the spirit were involved. (**Ax 2: 38** .. *spirit given = give life*)
- c. As a result the saved people anticipate Heaven.
3. Baptism in water is where the blood of Jesus washes away one's sins.
 - a. Baptism is the place where guilt is removed from one's conscience.

I Pet. 3: 20 –who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept **S#19.** waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. **21** Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

- b. Forgiveness occurs during baptism, but it is brought about by the blood of Jesus.

Heb. 9: 13-14 – For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer **S#20.**
 sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of
the flesh, **14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through
 the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse
your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

S#21.

III. Baptism is essential, but just being baptized does not make one “born again.”

- A. One must be born of the Spirit as well as born of the water.

S#22.

1. **John 3: 5** – Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of
 water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

2. When one is baptized he obeys a form of teaching in which he has faith.

Rom. 6: 17 – But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, **S#23.**
 you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching
 to which you were committed, **18** and having been freed from sin,
 you became slaves of righteousness.

3. When one is baptized he comes up out of the water with a new life.

Rom. 6: 4 – Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into **S#24.**
 death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the
 glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

- B. Not everyone who is baptized is born again. (*baptism requires commitment*)

S#25.

1. The one who is “born again” has developed a new mind and heart for God.

- a. **Rom. 12: 2** – And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed
 by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the
 will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- * b. If one has not restructured his value system, he is not born again.

2. The one who is born again views every aspect of life differently.

Eph. 6: 6 – Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to **S#26.**
 the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart,
 as to Christ; **6** not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers,
 but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

- a. The “born again” believer does the best job he can because of his faith.

- b. Every aspect of his life is controlled by his desire to please Christ.

- c. If one does not have the heart of a servant he is not born again.

- C. Only those who have surrendered to the lordship of Christ are born again. **S#27.**

S#28.

IV. To be born again is to be totally changed and also to be totally committed.

A. God is the original recycler.

S#29.

1. Being born again is being recycled.
2. The same material is made into something else.
3. **II Cor. 5:17** – Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

S#30.

- a. Vs – **18** ... A new ministry .. through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation
- b. Vs – **19** ... He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.
- c. Vs – **20** .. We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us;

B. When one is “born again” he is created a second time, starts over.

S#31.

1. **Eph. 2: 10** – For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
2. God had a purpose for us the first time He created us, but we ignored it.

C. To be born again one must become a spiritual person.

1. **I Cor. 2: 14** – But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. **15** But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. **16** For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

S#32.

2. The mind of Christ is communicated to us in His word. **It TAKES TIME**

CONCLUSION :

A. To be born again is not :

1. Not something strange and mystical.
2. Not a miraculous act of the Holy Spirit.

S#33.

B. When a believer’s faith grows deep enough for him to surrender, he’s born again

Gal. 2: 20 – I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

INVITATION : *Have you surrendered your heart to God ?*

S#34.

S#35. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**John 3: 1-21**

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; **2** 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." **3** Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 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?" **5** Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. **6** " That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' **8** " 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."

9 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?" **10** Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? **11** "Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. **12** "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? **13** "No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man. **14** "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; **15** so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

16 "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. **17** "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. **18** "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **19** "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. **20** " For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. **21** "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."