

# The Church of God

“Together in Truth-Bible Study”

## The Spiritual Birth – Bible Study Guide

### Why Must We Be Born Again?

Our spiritual journey begins with **Jesus’ declaration** to Nicodemus: “**Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God**” (John 3:3, KJV). In other words, no matter how religious or moral we appear, **spiritual rebirth is absolutely necessary** to enter God’s Kingdom. By our first (physical) birth, we inherited a fallen, sinful nature from Adam that separates us from God. The Bible teaches that “*all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*” (Romans 3:23, KJV), so we need a **radical transformation** to restore fellowship with a holy God. Jesus explained that “*that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*” (John 3:6, KJV) – meaning our natural birth makes us human, but only the Holy Spirit can produce a new **spiritual life** in us. **Without being born again by God’s Spirit, we remain spiritually dead** and unable to see or enter the kingdom of God.

- **Reflection:** Why do you think Jesus said we “must be born again” to see God’s kingdom? What problem does the new birth solve? (*Consider your own need for a spiritual rebirth, regardless of any religious background. Write your thoughts.*)

### Step 1: Repentance – Turning Away from Sin

The first step in the born-again experience is **repentance**. *Repentance* means having a sincere **change of heart and mind** about sin – feeling godly sorrow for our sins and turning away from our old life of disobedience to God. It’s not merely feeling guilty; it is decisively **forsaking sin** and choosing to follow God’s ways. Jesus Himself preached, “*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*” (Luke 13:3, KJV), underscoring that **without repentance there is no salvation**. When the convicted crowd at Pentecost asked what to do, “*Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*” (Acts 2:38, KJV). In that one verse we see that **repentance is immediately linked to forgiveness of sins and receiving the Holy Spirit**. In fact, the **moment we truly repent and turn to Christ, God responds with salvation. He justifies us (forgives and counts us righteous) and regenerates us (gives us new life by the Spirit)** – this “*born again*” miracle happens as we turn from sin to God in faith. Genuine repentance will be evident through our actions: a cleaned-up lifestyle and new priorities as we leave the old ways behind (cf. Acts 26:20).

- **Reflection:** What do you think *true repentance* looks like in someone’s life? Can you recall a time you repented – how did it change your attitude or behavior? (*Not down an example or feelings you had in that experience.*)

## Step 2: Justification – Made Right With God

The second aspect of spiritual birth is **justification**. *Justification* is **God's act of pardoning our sins and declaring us righteous** in His sight. When you put your faith in Jesus Christ, believing He died for your sins and rose again, God **credits Christ's righteousness to you** and your sins are forgiven (see 2 Corinthians 5:21). The Bible describes this as a legal verdict: we are **"justified by faith"** (Romans 5:1, KJV) – meaning by trusting in Jesus, not by our own works. Because Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, God can **"justify the ungodly"** (declare guilty sinners innocent) while remaining just (Romans 4:5, 3:26). In practical terms, **justification restores our relationship with God**: *"being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Romans 5:1, KJV). At the moment of true repentance and faith, **God instantly justifies us** – all our sins are put away as if we'd never committed them, and we stand **clean and accepted** before Him. This is purely by God's grace and mercy, not earned by any good deeds (Titus 3:5, Ephesians 2:8-9). In the new birth, justification is God **working for us** – He **cleanses our record and pronounces us His redeemed children**.

- **Reflection:** How does it make you feel to know God has completely forgiven your sins and declares you righteous because of Jesus? In your own words, what does it mean to have "peace with God"? (*Consider writing a response or a prayer of thanks for God's forgiveness.*)

## Step 3: Regeneration – New Life Through the Spirit

The culmination of being born again is **regeneration** – receiving **new life** from the Holy Spirit. If justification is God wiping away our sins, **regeneration is God giving us a new heart and spirit**. The word literally means a "new genesis" or new birth. When we repent and believe, God doesn't just declare us righteous; **He actually transforms us inwardly**. The Holy Spirit **"quickeneth"** us (makes us alive) where we were spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1). *"According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"* (Titus 3:5, KJV). In other words, the Spirit washes us clean and **gives us a fresh start**. Jesus described this to Nicodemus as being *"born of water and of the Spirit"* (John 3:5, KJV) – a spiritual cleansing and renewal performed by the Holy Spirit in a believer's heart. **Regeneration is entirely God's work in us**: just as we contributed nothing to our physical birth, we cannot manufacture our spiritual birth. It is the Holy Spirit who sovereignly gives new life, much like the wind blowing where it wills. When you are born again, **the Holy Spirit enters your life**, turning your heart from stone to flesh, giving you a new nature that loves God (Ezekiel 36:26-27). The result is a **"new creation"** in Christ: *"if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV). Regeneration is God **working in us** – imparting His life and power so that we actually **become children of God** in our nature (John 1:12-13).

- **Reflection:** In what ways have you experienced a "new life" since coming to Christ? Can you identify any changes in your desires, attitudes, or behavior that show you've been *regenerated* (made new) by the Holy Spirit? (*List a few changes or new desires you've noticed, or areas you hope to see transformed.*)

## Implications of Spiritual Rebirth

Being “born of the Spirit” is only the **beginning** of our journey. Just like a newborn baby, a born-again believer enters a new life with growth ahead. Here are some key implications of experiencing the spiritual birth:

- **A New Identity in Christ:** Through the new birth, you become a **child of God** – adopted into His family. *“To all who received him... he gave the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born... of God”* (John 1:12-13, KJV). You are no longer just God’s creation; you are His **redeemed son or daughter**. This identity comes with the privilege of calling God “Father” (Galatians 4:6) and the promise of an eternal inheritance (Romans 8:16-17).
- **Indwelling of the Holy Spirit:** When you are born again, God’s Spirit comes to live in you (1 Corinthians 3:16). The Holy Spirit guides, comforts, and empowers you to live a godly life. **His presence in you is the mark that you truly belong to Christ** (Romans 8:9). He begins to produce His **fruit** in your character – *“love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control”* (Galatians 5:22-23, KJV) – evidence of your new nature. Over time, a born-again person will show these qualities more and more, while sinful habits and attitudes fade.
- **A Transformed Life of Obedience:** Spiritual rebirth leads to a transformed way of living. The apostle John teaches that if we are truly born of God, it will show in our lifestyle – **right belief in Christ, love for others, and obedience** will be “vital signs” of our new life. We won’t become perfect overnight, but our **direction changes:** instead of living in continuous sin, we now desire to please God. *“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit [practice] sin”* habitually (1 John 3:9, KJV), meaning a regenerated person cannot remain comfortable living in sin as before. A changed life is **the natural result of being born again**.
- **Eternal Life and Security in Christ:** Being born again gives us the hope of eternal life. We have **assurance** that if we continue in Christ, we will be with Him forever (John 3:16, 1 Peter 1:3-5). Jesus said those who are His “sheep” and follow Him are secure in His hand. However, this assurance is for those who **keep following** – the gift of salvation is not a license to drift away. Just as physical life must be nurtured, **spiritual life must be nurtured** through faith, prayer, God’s Word, and fellowship.
- **The Call to Persevere (Don’t “Fall from Grace”):** The Bible includes **serious warnings** for born-again believers: after beginning our new life, we must continue in the faith and not turn back. It is possible to **“fall from grace,”** meaning to turn away from Christ after having known Him. For example, Scripture warns that if someone who has “escaped the pollutions of the world” through knowing Jesus becomes entangled in sin again, *“the latter end is worse with them than the beginning”* (2 Peter 2:20-22, KJV). Similarly, Hebrews cautions that those who have shared in the Holy Spirit and then willfully reject Christ risk severe consequences (see Hebrews 6:4-6). These passages urge us to

**remain faithful.** Being born again is not the finish line; it's the start of a lifelong walk with God. We need to **abide in Christ daily** – through prayer, studying Scripture, and fellowship with other believers – so that we **grow stronger and don't drift away** (John 15:5-6, Colossians 1:22-23). Thankfully, God will help us persevere. He promises to never leave us or forsake us, and He is able to keep us from falling as we trust Him (Jude 24, Hebrews 13:5). Our part is to “continue to work out [our] own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12), staying humble and dependent on His grace.

- **Reflection:** What do the warnings about “**falling from grace**” mean to you? How can a born-again Christian avoid drifting away from God? (*Consider practical steps – e.g. regular prayer, accountability, studying the Bible – and note down how you will continue to grow and persevere in your faith.*)

# Leader's Guide

*(This guide corresponds to the Participant's Guide sections, providing additional insights, answers to key questions, and tips for leading the discussion. Before leading the study, review each section along with the participant content. Allow participants to share, and use these notes to guide the conversation and clarify important points.)*

## Opening & Introduction – “Why Must We Be Born Again?”

**Leader Prep:** In this opening section, we establish the *necessity* of spiritual rebirth. Ensure everyone understands that “*born again*” is a biblical term (from John 3) and not just a cliché. Many people, like Nicodemus in John 3, have religion or head knowledge but still need a heart transformation.

- **Icebreaker Idea:** Ask, “*What comes to mind when you hear the phrase ‘born again’?*” Acknowledge responses. Then have someone read **John 3:1-7** (the Nicodemus encounter). Emphasize Jesus’ statement in John 3:3 and 3:5 that **we must be born again to enter God’s Kingdom**. Highlight that Nicodemus was a very devout man, yet **even he** needed this new birth. Point out how “*religion alone is not enough; you must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ*”.
- **Key Insight:** Explain **why** the new birth is necessary. Use an illustration if helpful: Just as a person born with a hereditary disease needs a radical cure, **every human is born with a “sin disease”** inherited from Adam (Romans 5:12). We are *spiritually stillborn* in sin and need God to impart *life*. Ephesians 2:1 is useful to mention – “*you hath He quickened (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins.*” All our good deeds or status can’t eliminate our sinful nature. Thus, Jesus insists on a **spiritual birth from above**. You might cite that “*all have sinned...*” (Rom 3:23) and “*the carnal mind is enmity against God*” (Rom 8:7) to show how serious our condition is.
- **To Answer Reflection Question:** Participants might say “Because we’re sinful” or “Because we need God’s life in us.” Affirm these answers. You can add that **without the new birth, we remain separated from God** and unable to truly live in His kingdom (both now and eternally). If not mentioned, reinforce that *human birth gives human life, but only the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life* (John 3:6). God’s plan of salvation is not to reform our old nature, but to **create us anew** (2 Cor. 5:17).

**Leader Tip:** Be sensitive in this section – some may not be “born again” yet. This could stir conviction in their hearts. Emphasize that this study will explain how someone can be born again today. Encourage honesty: invite questions like “*How can someone be born again?*” (Nicodemus asked that!). Assure them we will explore that next.

## Step 1: Repentance – Leading People to Turn to God

This part is about what we do in response to God's call: **repent**. Ensure the group understands repentance as more than guilt or fear of punishment – it's a genuine heart-turning.

- **Definition & Discussion:** You can ask, “How would you define repentance?” Listen, then clarify: **Repentance = turning away from sin and toward God**. It involves a sincere change of mind and heart. Highlight that true repentance is prompted by the Holy Spirit's conviction (John 16:8). According to 2 Corinthians 7:10, “godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation”. In other words, feeling sorry is not the end — it leads to a decision to change. The Church of God of Prophecy statement described it well: “repentance means not only being sorry for sin, but a turning from and forsaking the old life (sin habits) for a new walk by faith in God”. You may cite that to give a concise definition.
- **Biblical Examples:** Reinforce with Scripture. Mention Jesus' message in Mark 1:15 – “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Also, Luke 15 (the Prodigal Son) can be summarized: the prodigal “came to himself” and decided to return to his father – a picture of repentance. Most powerfully, use **Acts 2:38** (already noted in the guide) – Peter's audience believed his preaching and asked “What shall we do?” Peter's reply: “Repent and be baptized... for the forgiveness of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Stress that repentance is **the first command** of the gospel. When someone repents, **God stands ready to forgive and fill them with His Spirit**. The participant guide notes that repentance, forgiveness (justification), and the Spirit's gift (regeneration) are linked. Make sure they see how repentance connects to the next steps.
- **Reflection Question Follow-up:** When discussing what true repentance looks like, expect answers like: “changing behavior,” “asking forgiveness,” “making a 180° turn.” Draw out that it's not just an emotional moment; it results in action. Acts 26:20 is a helpful verse: Paul preached that people should repent “**and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance**” (KJV) – meaning their lives should prove their change. If someone shares a personal repentance experience, affirm it and note any life changes they mention (e.g. giving up a harmful habit, seeking reconciliation, etc.).

**Leader Tip:** Ensure everyone understands that repentance is an ongoing attitude too. While there is a decisive moment in conversion, Christians continue to practice repentance whenever we stray. It's part of our walk with God (1 John 1:9). However, in the context of new birth, we're focusing on that initial turning **from sin to Christ** that ushers in salvation. If someone seems unsure whether they've truly repented, gently invite them to talk or pray after. This study can be a catalyst for them to experience the new birth.

## Step 2: Justification – Explaining God's Forgiveness

Now we move to what God *does for us* when we turn to Him: He **justifies** us. This section can sometimes be abstract, so use simple terms (forgiveness, being made right with God) along with the theological term.

- **Key Points to Cover:** Justification is **instantaneous** and happens at the moment of true faith/repentance. It's God's judicial act where He **forgives our sins and declares us righteous** because of Jesus. You can phrase it as a judge dropping all charges against a guilty person because someone else (Christ) paid the penalty. Make it clear we are justified **by faith, not by our works** (Romans 3:28). Have the group look at **Romans 5:1** (the guide references it): *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God..."*. Highlight "by faith" – trusting in Christ, and the result "peace with God" – the relational restoration.
- **Additional Insights:** The Bible.org excerpt in your notes contrasts justification and regeneration: **"Regeneration is God working in us; Justification is God working for us."** Use that to clarify: in justification, God acts **as Judge**, in regeneration, He acts **as Life-Giver**. Emphasize that **justification is a gift** of God's grace. You might quote Titus 3:5-7 in part, which says we are justified by His grace, not by works. Also, 2 Corinthians 5:21 (not in participants' guide) beautifully summarizes: *"For He [God] hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us... that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."* This is the great exchange: our sin laid on Christ, His righteousness given to us – that's justification!
- **Possible Question/Answer:** Participants may wonder, *"How can God declare us righteous if we're actually not perfect?"* Explain that it's based on Christ's righteousness **credited** to our account (Philippians 3:9). It's like having an unpayable debt cleared by someone else's riches. Justification deals with our **status** before God (legally forgiven and clothed in Christ's perfection). It does **not** mean we have already become sinless in behavior, but God doesn't count our sins against us (Romans 4:7-8). It's important they grasp this assurance: if you have repented and trusted Christ, **you stand justified** – fully accepted by God. This brings great peace and joy (Romans 5:1,2).
- **Reflection Question Follow-up:** When asking what "peace with God" means, you might get answers like *"not feeling guilty," "knowing God isn't angry at me,"* or *"a sense of being right with Him."* Affirm that. Romans 5:10 says we were enemies, but now we're reconciled. Encourage participants to personalize it: because of justification, they can approach God confidently (Hebrews 4:16) as beloved children, not as condemned sinners. If anyone expresses lingering guilt or doubt, gently remind them that if they've met God's condition (repentance and faith in Jesus), **He has removed their sins "as far as the east is from the west"** (Ps. 103:12).

**Leader Tip:** Some might conflate justification and forgiveness. They are essentially the same outcome (our sins forgiven), but you can add that justification is even more – it's not only just-as-if-I'd never sinned, but also just-as-if-I'd always been righteous, because Christ's

righteousness is credited. Keep it simple though; the main goal is that they rejoice in being forgiven and made right with God. Also, watch for anyone who might think they must “earn” God’s favor; reiterate Ephesians 2:8-9 – we are saved by grace through faith, “*not of works.*”

### Step 3: Regeneration – New Life Explained

Now focus on regeneration, the inner transformation by the Holy Spirit. This is where *being born again* really becomes experiential – **a changed life**.

- **Clarify Regeneration:** Make it clear that regeneration = **the new birth itself** (the term “born again” refers to this act). It’s the moment the Holy Spirit gives new life to a believer. The participant guide includes Titus 3:5 – use that as a launch: we’re saved “*by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*” The image of “washing” communicates cleansing from our old life. **Regeneration is like a spiritual bath and rebirth** all at once – the old life is washed away; a new life begins by the power of the Spirit. You might remind them of Jesus’ words, “*That which is born of Spirit is spirit*” – only God’s Spirit can create spiritual life in us.
- **Discuss “Born of Water and Spirit”:** Participants might be curious about John 3:5 (“born of water and of the Spirit”). Be prepared to address this. Explain that interpretations vary: **(1)** Many Christians see “water” as a reference to **water baptism** as part of the conversion process (Peter did include baptism in Acts 2:38). If your church tradition emphasizes baptism, affirm its importance as an outward sign of the new birth. **(2)** Others note that Jesus expected Nicodemus to understand this, likely alluding to **Ezekiel 36:25-27**, where God promises, “*I will sprinkle clean water on you...and put a new spirit within you.*” Here “water” symbolizes cleansing from sin and “spirit” the inner renewal – essentially two aspects of the one rebirth. **(3)** Some take “water” to mean natural birth (amniotic fluid), implying a person must be born physically and spiritually to enter heaven. Regardless of the view, stress that **the core idea is the need for spiritual cleansing and renewal by the Holy Spirit**. If someone asks, you can briefly mention these views, but keep the focus on the Spirit’s work. It’s the Holy Spirit who **produces the new birth** in a repentant believer, just as Jesus illustrated with the wind analogy (John 3:8).
- **Life Change and Evidence:** It’s crucial to discuss how regeneration *changes us*. The participant guide notes 2 Corinthians 5:17 – use that: “*If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature...*”. Ask what “old things passed away” might include (e.g. old habits, old worldview) and what “new things” have come (e.g. new love for God, new conduct). It may be good to have someone read **Galatians 5:19-23** – contrasting “works of the flesh” vs. “fruit of the Spirit.” This shows the before-and-after picture of one who is born again. Emphasize that change is a process (sanctification follows regeneration), but **a basic change in direction happens at new birth**. Use the phrase: *Regeneration plants the “seed” of God’s life in us* (see 1 John 3:9 – God’s seed remains in the one born of God). Over time, that seed grows and bears fruit.

- **Address Assurance:** Many new believers struggle with assurance, especially if they don't feel dramatically changed. Encourage them that the evidence of regeneration might be gradual growth in love, holiness, and faith. The "vital signs" of new birth (as 1 John outlines) are **belief in Christ, love for fellow believers, and moral transformation**. If those are present and growing, it's a good indication one is truly born again. If someone lacks any evidence, it might signal the need to truly repent and trust Christ – handle that gently, possibly one-on-one later.
- **Reflection Question Follow-up:** Invite a few to share positive changes they've seen in themselves since being born again. Affirm every genuine example ("I have a desire to read the Bible," "I feel conviction when I sin now," "I have new peace," etc.). Note that these are signs of the Spirit's work. For those who are new or unsure, ask what changes they expect or hope for. This can lead into a prayer focus – asking the Holy Spirit to continue transforming each person.

**Leader Tip:** This section can be very encouraging – it's about *victory and newness*. Celebrate the reality of a changed life. Also, **give God the glory** for regeneration. As one source noted, *"You and I didn't have any responsibility in our own physical birth; the same is true for our spiritual birth... We bring nothing to the table... It's all and only the grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit."* So while humans must repent and believe, it's ultimately God who regenerates. This balance is important: we're not reinventing ourselves; **God is making us new**. Encourage the group to rely on the Spirit daily.

### **Implications of Spiritual Rebirth – Living it Out & Persevering**

In this final section, you'll discuss what being born again means for the believer's daily life and eternal destiny. It's an opportunity to guide them in how to **grow and stay strong** in their new life.

- **Summarize the Implications:** Go through each bullet from the Participant's Guide, ensuring understanding:
  - **New Identity:** Ask, *"According to John 1:12, what is our status once we're born again?"* (Children of God). This is foundational for their self-understanding. No longer slaves to sin, but sons/daughters of God. Encourage them to see God as a loving Father. Romans 8:15-16 might be worth citing – we received the Spirit of adoption, crying "Abba, Father," and the Spirit assures we are God's children.
  - **Holy Spirit Indwelling:** Discuss how amazing it is that God's Spirit lives in us now. This means we're never alone and have divine help to overcome sin. Perhaps share Galatians 5:16, *"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."* This reinforces that with the Spirit's power, we can live differently. Mention that the **fruit of the Spirit** (Gal. 5:22-23) will grow in us – encourage them to look for these qualities developing.

- **Transformed Life:** You can ask, “*Should a person's life look different after being born again? How so?*” This might echo earlier sharing. Bridge to 1 John’s “vital signs” as needed (faith, love, obedience). 1 John 3:14 is another reference – “*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*” Stress that a born-again Christian will grow in love for others and in obedience to God’s word. Not perfection, but a new direction and **conviction when we stray** (Hebrews 12:6).
- **Eternal Life & Security:** Here, emphasize the positive assurance we have. John 3:16 promises eternal life to the born-again believer. You might mention 1 Peter 1:3-5 about being born again to a living hope and an inheritance kept in heaven. However, the participant guide rightly balances assurance with the responsibility to continue in faith.
- **Dig into “Falling from Grace”:** This is an important and sensitive topic. Gauge your group’s background: some may have been taught “once saved, always saved” strongly, while others not. The guide presents **warnings** from Scripture, so ensure those are read or summarized:
  - 2 Peter 2:20-22: Make sure they catch how Peter describes people who **knew Christ and later returned to sin** – “*the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.*” That implies such a fall is possible and tragic.
  - Hebrews 6:4-6 (and perhaps Hebrews 10:26-27): These warn that renouncing Christ after knowing Him is a grave situation. The language “impossible to renew them again to repentance” is stark – explain it refers to the hardness of heart that comes with total apostasy.
  - Galatians 5:4: Paul uses “fallen from grace” specifically for those seeking to be justified by law instead of Christ. Explain “falling from grace” in context means **turning away from the gospel of grace to another reliance** (legalism in Galatians). It’s essentially **departing from Christ as our source of salvation**.
- **Teaching Balance:** Acknowledge the theological debate: *Can a true Christian lose salvation or not?* The materials lean toward the view that it is possible to fall away by a willful choice to abandon faith. You should communicate that **continued faith and perseverance are required** in the Christian life. As a leader, you might say: “While genuine believers have great security in Christ, the Bible’s warnings are there to prevent complacency. They urge us to remain faithful.” Point out verses like 1 Corinthians 10:12, “*Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall,*” as a general caution. Also Colossians 1:23 which conditions our final presentation as holy “*if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and settled*”. Even Jesus said in Matthew 24:13, “*he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*”
- **Assure God’s Faithfulness:** We don’t want believers to live in constant fear, but in healthy vigilance. Stress that **God is faithful to keep us** – bring up Jude 24 (“*able to*

keep you from falling”) and John 10:27-29, but explain as the openchristian source does: *No outside force can snatch us from Christ's hand, but we must personally keep following the Shepherd.* Nothing can separate us from God's love externally (Rom 8:38-39), but we shouldn't use that as an excuse to wander off in disobedience. In short, **encourage a balanced confidence:** trust in God's power to sustain you, and also take seriously the call to persevere.

- **Practical Tips to Persevere:** Work with the group to list how to remain strong. Common answers: *prayer, Bible study, fellowship, accountability, regular church involvement, confessing sin quickly, remembering the gospel daily.* Affirm each and add any missing ones. Emphasize the role of community – Hebrews 3:13 says to “*exhort one another daily... lest any be hardened by sin's deceit.*” Also, engaging in service or evangelism can keep one's faith vibrant. The goal is to make a plan so that no one present becomes the “seed on rocky ground” that withers away (Matthew 13:20-21).
- **Reflection Question Follow-up:** When they share ways to avoid drifting, ensure each suggestion aligns with Scripture. If someone says, “*God will make sure I never fall, so I don't need to worry,*” gently counter with the verses we just studied that urge vigilance. If another says, “*We need to live in fear of losing salvation,*” balance that by emphasizing relational love over fear: we obey and stick close to Christ *because we love Him,* not just fear falling. Perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). We stay committed to Jesus as a response to His grace, not as a fearful obligation.

**Leader Tip:** End the session on a hopeful note. Remind participants that **being born again is the greatest miracle** – they have a new life that is eternal. Encourage them that God who began this good work in them will carry it on (Philippians 1:6) as they cooperate with Him. Perhaps close by reading 1 Peter 1:3-5 or having a few sentence prayers of thanks for salvation. **Celebrate the new birth!** Also, if anyone has not yet experienced this spiritual birth, invite them to repent and believe in Jesus even now. Pray with those who desire it.

Finally, urge everyone to “*keep growing.*” The new birth is just the start – now it's time to mature. Suggest they continue studying the Bible (maybe even continue with more lessons in this series). The Christian life, once begun, is a **lifelong journey of faith and obedience.** By God's grace, we press on, **born of the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and kept by the Spirit,** all the way to our eternal home. Have them reflect one more time on how far God has brought them, and the glory that awaits as they remain in Him. Encourage them with Galatians 6:9 – “*let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*”

**End of Lesson** – As a leader, thank the group for their participation. Close in prayer, thanking God for the gift of spiritual birth and asking His help to live out these truths.