



NEW BIRTH (Part 2)

Good morning, and blessings to you today!

Last week we talked about the _____ of New Birth – the necessity for our own lives and the necessary for the people we bring to Jesus and the people we spiritually oversee.

There are many circumstances which bring a person to the point of New Birth.

Sometimes difficult life circumstances convince one the old way of life is not working – they wonder if God can help. Sometimes it is hearing the Gospel and realizing that Jesus is the way to Life.

Generally speaking, **two things** prepare a person for New Birth:

1- The communication of God's Word.

Romans 10:14 *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?* ¹⁵ *And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?*

There is a factual basis to the Christian faith which must be accurately communicated. There is one God who is creator and sustainer of all creation. He has a unique Son who came into our world as Jesus of Nazareth to reveal Father God to us. The Son is the only one who can forgive our sin and give us eternal life.

But simply knowing the facts about Christianity is not enough to deliver one from the power of sin, suffering, Satan, and Death. A person must connect with The-Jesus-Who-Is. Only that Jesus can forgive one's sin and resurrect them on the Day of the Lord.

And for one to connect with The-Jesus-Who-Is, God must perform a supernatural transaction. That act of the Holy Spirit transforms a person from a FALLEN and LOST creature into a NEW CREATION in union with The-Jesus-Who-Is.

2- The work of the Holy Spirit in bringing the person to Jesus for the purpose of transformation.

John 6:44 *"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day."* – Jesus

God's Spirit does three things to prepare one for the moment of New Birth.

John 16:8 *And when the Holy Spirit has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment....*

① The Holy Spirit convicts the world of SIN

John 16:8 is a challenging statement of Jesus. So let 's see if we can unpackage the meaning. As God's People we have the responsibility to share God's Word, which includes explaining God's definitions of right and wrong. But only the Holy Spirit convicts a person of their sinful condition and their specific sins.

Have you tried to talk to someone about their sin and gotten a negative response?

- Why are you being so judgmental? You Christians are such hypocrites talking to other people about their sin. Who are you to tell me what is right and wrong?
- There is no objective 'right and wrong'. I determine my own right and wrong. I don't care about God's right or wrong. I don't care about your right or wrong.
- Leave me alone. Mind your own business.

② The Holy Spirit also convicts the world of RIGHTEOUSNESS

Every time I reject God's definitions of right and wrong -- every time I voice an opinion about what I think is right or wrong -- I am testifying that I have also eaten from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I am revealing that I consider myself morally superior to the God of the Bible. My righteousness is more righteous than his righteousness.

But if the Holy Spirit has convicted me of my sin, what am I to do about that?

The answer given by most moral guides -- including many religions -- is to do more good things than bad things. Your good works will outweigh your sin and you'll go to heaven rather than hell.

But Jesus and the New Testament writers fiercely disagree. Your self-righteousness is like filthy rags to God. You can't get THERE from HERE by your own efforts.

"You must be born again!"

For that to happen, the Holy Spirit must convince me that my own righteousness is unable to rescue me from sin and Death. Then what can? The Holy Spirit reveals to me and convinces me the righteousness of Jesus is the only thing that can rescue me from sin and Death.

So to summarize, the Holy Spirit is the One who convinces me I am hopelessly LOST in my righteousness and the only righteousness that can save me is the righteousness of Jesus. Which leads us to the third preparatory work of the Spirit for New Birth.

③ The Holy Spirit convicts the world of JUDGMENT

If I have been convicted of my sin... If I have learned that only the righteousness of Christ will save me from my sin and Death... then a decision is required. Will I confess my sin to God and ask him to forgive me and save me? Or will I continue to try to make life work on my own terms?

For those who choose the latter, the Holy Spirit comes to convict of Judgment -- to convince me that my choice leads to Death and eternal Judgment.

But for those who choose the former, God comes to take away the old and bring the new: a new heart, a new Spirit, a new nature, a new life. Both now and forever.

NEXT WEEK: What happens at the moment of New Birth?

Blessings-



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