



NEW BIRTH (Part 3)

Good morning. Hope you had a good night's rest. Let's now enjoy God's word.

New Birth is both a mystery and a miracle.

One minute a person is lost in their sin, wandering in darkness. They are without hope for this life or for eternity to come. And then in just one short moment, they can be transformed by God into a new creation. The power of sin and Satan are broken. There is hope for this life and the life to come. It is a true mystery.

There are 'good' people who sit under the preaching of the Gospel for years. They are people who seem close to the kingdom, but they have never entered. And then there are people who are in such darkness – so terribly far away from God, that you would never think it could be possible for them to be saved from sin and Death. But then God breaks through and they embrace him... and they are born again.

My point is that we don't know in advance who will stay in darkness and who will choose the Light. (See **John 3:18-20**)

Over the years we have participated in the ministry of Jesus (see **Luke 4:18-19**). We have seen God do miraculous things! We have seen him give sight to the blind. We have seen him heal impossibly broken hearts. We have seen him dispatch hundreds of demons.

We have seen our miracle-working God provide needed finances, multiply food, cause broken vehicles to run, bring rain from a dry sky, divert severe storms, and rescue us from certain death.

But the most miraculous thing I have seen in seven decades is a person experiencing New Birth.

Physical life is produced by human sexuality together with divine action (Psalm 139). Divine action also produces spiritual birth. God produces New Birth in the person who invites him to do so.

In John 3:5 Jesus said, you must be born of water (physical birth) and the Spirit (spiritual rebirth).

I've heard a wide variety of testimonies about how God has saved people:

- Many people hear the Gospel, the Spirit calls them, they respond and are born again.
- Some struggle with God for years before the moment of 'surrendering' to his call.
- Some 'search for God' for a long time before he 'finds' them.
- For some the transformation is gentle and peaceful. For others it is dramatic and powerful.
- Some are saved as children (I was seven) and others are born again on their death-beds.
- Some are born again when young and later transition into an adult faith.
- Some instances of New Birth are beyond understanding. My wife and I once prayed for an angry and godless teenage girl who tried to commit suicide. She lay in a hospital bed brain-dead for three days. Then she awoke physically whole and born again!

But in all cases, there is a transition from the old life into the new life.

Our God is an amazing, creative God who pursues everyone in the hope they will turn to him, confess their sin, acknowledge their helplessness, offer him their hearts and lives, and be transformed into a new creation in Christ Jesus.

At the moment of New Birth several things happen:

- The person passes from Death to Life – **Romans 5:17; 6:4; 6:23**
- They make a New Covenant with their Creator – **Luke 22:17-20; Hebrews 4:16; 9:15; 12:24**
- The Holy Spirit transforms them into a new creation - the Holy Spirit comes to indwell them – the Holy Spirit permanently melds with their human spirit – **Titus 3:5**
- The Holy Spirit baptizes them into Jesus – they are now ‘in Christ’ and ‘Christ is in them’ – **Romans 6:3-4;**
- The Holy Spirit baptizes them into God’s People, where each assumes their function in the Body of Christ – **1 Cor. 12**
- The Holy Spirit gives them a new heart – the heart of Jesus -- **Ezekiel 36:26**
- The Holy Spirit begins to transform their thinking into the mind of Christ – **Romans 12:2**
- Their sins are forgiven and they are no longer slaves to sin – no longer under the rule of Satan – **Romans 6:6-22**
- The Holy Spirit imparts to them the holiness of God – **Hebrews 2:11; 1 Peter 2:5**
- The Holy Spirit imparts to them the righteousness of Jesus – **2 Corinthians 5:21**
- The purpose for which God created them begins to be activated by the Holy Spirit – **2 Corinthians 5:18-20**
- The Holy Spirit commissions them to participate in the ministry of Jesus – **John 14:12a**
- The Holy Spirit imparts a primary spiritual gift (**Romans 12:6-8**), and He further activates the ‘power gifts’ of the Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:7-11**) to do the ministry of Jesus.

I’m sure you can add things you have experienced or which you have witnessed God do at the moment of New Birth in others. You’ll also find many additional passages which will support each.

And this is just the beginning!

- This is the beginning of new life in Christ Jesus in which we are gradually transformed into the image of Jesus (**2 Corinthians 3:18**).
- This the beginning of relationship with God which can only grow and deepen and mature – until we see him face-to-face, and are transformed to be just like him. (**1 Corinthians 15**).

NEXT WEEK: More about living a transformed life in Christ following New Birth.

Blessings-



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