

**October 30, 2022. Dennis Gallaher. Born Again.**

The prodigal son - let's look at the end of the story. **Luke 15:24** *for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found. And they began to celebrate.* The term "born again" is used by Jesus and it's being used more and more today. It is the most important thing you can do today is to be born again.

**John 2:23** *Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. "Believed in His name" meaning His Messianic title. People were flocking to the Messiah as He was doing signs and wonders. But their belief fell short of true transformation. It was shallow - they were fascinated with the signs. John 2:24-25 But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.* So it is today - people looking for the spectacular and then they walk away.

The story continues with Nicodemus... he was the same. **John 3:1-3** *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." 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 was devout among Pharisees saying to Jesus, "we know who you are and that you come from God." Nicodemus respected Jesus realizing He had power. But Jesus takes him further saying, "unless one is born again." It is easy to profess to be a Christian but it's different when Jesus is in your heart. You must know the Christ of Christianity to be a Christian. To be a Christian is not doing good things; it's not knowing the Bible: it's not coming to church; it's being born again. "Born again" was a common term in Judaism. But Nicodemus still didn't understand that it meant to be born from above. We can't do that on our own. Nothing we do can make that happen. God knows what is in our hearts. Even doing things to be like Jesus is still based on our performance. No matter what we do, we can't be good enough to earn salvation.*

Being born again is in the revelation from God that we can't be good enough to earn salvation. Being born again is an understanding that we can't cover our sin with good behavior or religion. Being born again is the reason Jesus came because God knows this about us and He loves us so intensely that He sent Jesus, His own Son, as an answer to the dilemma of sin. What is the answer to erasing sin? Be born again.

When you confess Christ's name and commit to other things, then you are taking His name in vain. **Matthew 15:18** *But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them.* What's in our hearts is what defiles us.

Sin cannot be taken away with good behavior. Sin is a free act of an intelligent human being that asserts itself against its Maker. It goes all the back to the Garden and Adam and Eve. **Romans 5:12** *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.* Adam and Eve willfully went against God, their Maker, and ate from the forbidden tree. As a result, their spirit died; their connection with God died; their soul was stained with sin. Recognizing their sin, they hid from God, covered themselves from each other. We, man, have been trying to cover ourselves ever since. The only thing that can take away that stain of sin is the gift of Jesus to be born again. We will all die from our sin. We need a new birth.

Nicodemus wanted to understand in the physical but Jesus was saying it had to be a spiritual birth - born from above. It is not inherited, but received. Being born again is the miraculous movement when a person confesses, repents that they are lost and dead in their sins. Jesus came and paid the price for sin giving us the opportunity to be free from sin.

**Romans 5:6-8** *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

No one can inherit this; no one can intellectually receive this; no one can work their way into this freedom. **Titus 3:5** *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.* It is the grace of God - doing nothing to make God love you more or love you less. His grace is for all. God delights in giving new birth.

- **2 Kings 5** Nathan: Give up our pride matters.
- **Numbers 21** Obeying God matters.
- **John 3** Come to repentance to be born again.

Follow the gospel message and be born again by letting God pay the price for your sin on the cross. It is God's gift to us - the gospel of Jesus Christ.

---

Can you explain sin - how it came to the world and to each of us?

What does "born again" mean to you? How would you explain that to someone else.

Did you get a new revelation on being born again?