

Salvation & What It Means to Be Born Again

In this first lesson we are going to answer the following questions:

- What are the three kinds of death in the Bible?
- What are the effects of sin in man?
- How can someone be born again?
- What are the evidences of being born again?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Romans 5:8-9 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

KEY TRUTH

Because of the Cross, Jesus the Son of God has made spiritual life available to spiritually dead men.

A SPIRITUAL HEART TRANSPLANT

Ezekiel 36:25-26 25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

In John 3:1-7, Jesus told Nicodemus, who was a sincere “religious” leader:

- You must be born again.
- You need a new nature.
- You must experience a spiritual rebirth.
- No man can get to Heaven without being born again!

Why? What’s wrong with man? Why does he need to be reborn spiritually?

Genesis 2:17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

Because of Adam's sin of high treason (betrayal) in the garden of Eden, spiritual death infected the human family.

THREE KINDS OF DEATH IN THE BIBLE

Death in the Bible never means cessation (finality or end) of life; it always means separation.

1. **Physical Death:** Man's spirit and soul (the inward man) are separated from the physical body (outward man).
2. **Spiritual Death:** Man's separation from God. Man's spirit is cut off, disconnected from the life and nature of God.
3. **Eternal (Second) Death:** Man is forever separated from God and from Heaven, and is eternally condemned in Hell.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

Sin entered the human race because of Adam's disobedience, and spiritual death infected and spread to all mankind.

Adam was literally born again in the Garden of Eden—from life to death. He exchanged lordships, he exchanged kingdoms, he exchanged natures, he exchanged relationships. He sold out to the devil.

Romans 5:17 For...by the one man's offense death reigned through the one.

Spiritual death reigned over the human family because of the fall of man.

Romans 5:18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation.

Adam's sin brought judgment upon the whole human race:

- Man was under the sentence of death.
- Man was condemned, guilty, and under the wrath of God.

Romans 3:10-18 shows us that because of Adam's sin the whole human race was polluted with sin.

Romans 3:10 As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one....

When Adam sinned, it affected not only him but also all of his physical seed in future generations—the entire human family:

- A fallen man reproduced a fallen Adamic race.
- A corrupted nature in Adam reproduced a corrupted nature in his family.
- Spiritual death in Adam reproduced spiritual death in all of the human race: all of us are descendants of Adam’s family.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

Verse 21 says that because of Adam’s fall **spiritual death came upon mankind.**

Verse 22 says, “In Adam all die.” Or we could say that all of Adam’s offspring are under the death sentence.

- Adam’s sin permanently affected and infected the human family and was passed on to every race and passed down to every generation.
- Sin flowed from Adam like an impure stream to all the generations of men, polluting everyone and everything it touched.
- Adam sinned not only as the father of the human race, but also as the representative head of all his descendants. Therefore his spiritual death and the guilt of his sin were placed into their account.
- All of the human race was in Adam. So when Adam sinned and died spiritually in the garden of Eden, all of Adam’s descendants were poisoned with the sin nature and inherited spiritual death.

Genesis 3:20 And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

- The human race is the offspring of Adam, and by natural birth we have all inherited Adam’s fallen, corrupt nature.
- Human nature can only reproduce after its own kind. Human nature is fallen, corrupt, and sinful. Therefore when it reproduces, it reproduces fallen corrupt, and sinful humans.

THE EFFECTS OF SIN IN THE HUMAN RACE

Adam's disobedience produced spiritual death. Spiritual death caused the sin nature in man, producing the works of the flesh.

The effects of sin in man:

- Sin **dulls** man's ears (Acts 28:27). Sin **darkens** his eyes (Ephesians 4:18). Sin **diverts** his feet (Isaiah 53:6). Sin **defiles** his tongue (Romans 3:13-14). Sin **deceives** his heart (Jeremiah 17:9). Sin **devours** his intellect (1 Corinthians 2:14). Sin **condemns** his soul (Ezekiel 18:4).

What God says about the condition of every lost person—16 characteristics:

1. By nature all men are **spiritually dead** (Colossians 2:13).
2. By nature all men are **children of the devil** (1 John 3:10).
3. By nature all men are **children of disobedience** (Ephesians 2:2).
4. By nature all men are **cursed with Adam's sin nature** (Romans 5:12).
5. By nature all men are **children of wrath** (Ephesians 2:3).
6. Every unsaved person is **in the family of Satan** (Ephesians 2:1-3).
7. Every unsaved person is living in the kingdom of darkness **under Satan's lordship and influence** (Colossians 1:13; Acts 26:18).
8. Every unsaved person has **the nature of the devil** (John 8:44).
9. Every unsaved person has **demon activity working in his life** (Ephesians 2:2).
10. The unbeliever has his **mind blinded** and his understanding clouded with darkness (Ephesians 4:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4).
11. The unbeliever is **alienated** (cut off) from the life of God (Ephesians 4:18).
12. The unbeliever is **guilty before God** and living under God's wrath (Romans 3:19; John 3:36).
13. The unbeliever is far from God and **without hope** (Ephesians 2:12-13).
14. The unbeliever is an **enemy of God** (Romans 5:10).
15. The unbeliever **walks according to the lusts of the flesh** and the carnal mind (Ephesians 2:3).

16. The unbeliever is **a prisoner to the law of sin and death** (Romans 8:2; John 5:24; John 8:34).

RELIGION CANNOT SAVE US

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Religion is man's substitute for the true gospel of Christ.

Religion is any attempt to clothe ourselves and cover up our sins apart from the righteousness of Christ.

In **salvation**, we stop trying to make ourselves acceptable to God, and by faith we accept Him as Lord.

“Fig leaves” represent man's feeble religious cover-up through church membership, attempting to keep the Ten Commandments, self change, education, water baptism, saying prayers, being an honest citizen, doing good works, and trying to live a good life.

The fig leaf represents all the religions and false cults of mankind.

Proverbs 16:25 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

- It is impossible for man or religion to change our sinful nature. We need a spiritual heart transplant, which only God can give.

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

God has provided the remedy for the sin problem at the cross. At Calvary, God's Son Jesus cancelled the power of sin and made spiritual life available to spiritually dead men.

GOD'S REMEDY: THE FINISHED WORK OF THE CROSS

The number one reason why Jesus Christ came to the Earth was to cut the new covenant in His blood, to settle the sin problem, and to provide deliverance and righteousness for man.

Matthew 1:21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

The shed blood of Jesus is the only remedy for man's sinful condition and is the only remedy that can purge man's conscience, remove spiritual death, and impart God's righteousness. According to Leviticus 17:11, the Bible tells us, "the life is in the blood." Spiritual life has been made available for spiritually dead men through the precious blood of Christ.

The Old Testament system of animal sacrifices and the shedding of blood could only atone and cover up man's sins, but it could not remove them (Hebrews 10:1-4).

Four limitations of the Old Covenant system:

1. Under the Old Covenant, man's **sins were covered** (blood atonement), but the same nature in man and spiritual death could not be removed.
2. The Old Covenant was **unable to change the satanic nature** in man or bring spiritual life to man's spirit.
3. The Old Covenant **could not give man freedom from sin** or victory over the power of sin.
4. The Old Covenant with the blood of bulls and goats **could not free man from sin consciousness**, guilt, or condemnation.

No one was born again under the Old Covenant. All men were spiritually dead!

In the New and better Covenant, we don't approach God on the basis of a bleeding animal sacrifice. Through the shed blood of Jesus, we have the remission of our sins.

Remission means:

- To blot out completely as if sin never existed in our lives
- To cancel and remove sin from us, leaving us without sin, without guilt, without condemnation, and without inferiority

In the New Covenant, because of Jesus we don't have atonement for our sins; **we have the remission of sins!** (See Hebrews 9:24-26.)

We have the **absolute removal** of our sins and the **removal** of a guilty conscience. We are made God's righteousness!

WHAT DID JESUS ACCOMPLISH FOR US AT THE CROSS?

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

1. **At the cross, Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies** concerning His substitutionary death and atonement (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53).

Old Testament writers foretold in minute detail the sufferings of Christ and the manner of His death:

- He would be betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9; Matthew 26:49-50).
 - He would be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:15).
 - He would be forsaken by His disciples (Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:31).
 - He would be accused by false witnesses (Psalm 35:11; Matthew 26:59-60).
 - He would be spat upon and beaten with many stripes (Isaiah 50:6; Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 27:26; Mark 14:65).
 - He would be smitten with a rod (Micah 5:1; Matthew 27:30).
 - He would be nailed to a cross (Psalm 22:16; Matthew 27:35; Luke 23:33).
 - He would be mocked while hanging on the cross (Psalm 22:7-8; Matthew 27:39-40).
 - He would be pierced with a sword (Zechariah 12:10; John 19:33-37).
 - He would be offered vinegar and gall to drink (Psalm 69:21; Matthew 27:34).
 - None of His bones would be broken (Psalm 34:20; John 19:33-37).
 - He would be crucified with thieves (Isaiah 53:9-12; Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:27-28).
 - Soldiers would gamble for His garments (Psalm 22:18; Matthew 27:35).
 - He would be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60).
2. **At the cross, Jesus accomplished the defeat of Satan.** The cross cancelled Satan's legal claim over the human race (John 12:31-32; Colossians 2:14-17; Hebrews 2:14-15).
 3. **At the cross, Jesus canceled the power of sin.** Sin's penalty was paid for and sin's power was broken eternally (Romans 6:1-23; 1 Corinthians 15:54-58).

4. **At the cross, Jesus accomplished God's plan of salvation**, making righteousness available for mankind (Matthew 26:28; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:12-15, 26).
5. **At the cross, Jesus purchased bodily healing** for the sick and afflicted (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24).
6. **At the cross, Jesus opened the way of personal access to God** for every believer (Matthew 27:51; Ephesians 2:14-18; Hebrews 10:19-22).

At the cross, Jesus Christ was our:

- Sin bearer (Matthew 1:21)
- Sickness bearer (Matthew 8:17)
- Curse bearer and curse breaker (Galatians 3:13)

All of the curse (sin and the effects of sin) was placed on Jesus so that all of the blessings might come on us!

Jesus took upon Himself our sin, our sickness, and our disease. He bore our poverty, our spiritual death, and the curse that was against us. He carried our rejection and even our fear and oppression.

In exchange, Jesus has given us forgiveness and righteousness. He has provided healing and health, bringing physical wholeness and well-being. He has made a way for provision and prosperity, granted us eternal life, and brought us into the blessings of Abraham. Where there was rejection, He has given acceptance, and in place of fear, He has given us peace and a sound mind.

WHAT THE NEW BIRTH IS NOT

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Notice the Bible talks about "**a way**" (man's way) versus "**the way**" (God's way).

Salvation and being born again have nothing to do with:

Church membership, water baptism, education, good works, observing religious duties, an intellectual reception of Christianity, going to church or saying our prayers, living life by the golden rule and helping others, tithing and giving money to the church, keeping the

ten commandments, doing good deeds and trying to live our best, doing penance for our sins, attempting to make up for our sins through good works or by giving up certain things, reading or memorizing the Bible, being a good, honest citizen, being cultured, refined, or acting religious, taking communion, self reformation, trying to turn over a new leaf, or making New Year's resolutions.

Trusting in any of these is false salvation because these things cannot save us!

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags...

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.

It is the gospel truth that man **does not need religion**. Man **needs a “spiritual heart transplant.”**

WHAT THE NEW BIRTH IS

The new birth is a new creation from Heaven through a direct operation of the word of God and the Holy Spirit upon our lives — spiritually changing us completely and making us righteous new creatures in Christ.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins (NIV).

When we are born again, God takes us out of Adam, disconnecting us and putting us in Jesus Christ.

It is impossible for us to change our nature. We need a spiritual heart transplant. Only God can supernaturally change our nature.

The instant we repent and by faith take Jesus as our Lord, we are born again. God takes us out of Adam, disconnecting us, and puts us in Jesus Christ. We are delivered from the Adamic race and placed into the family of God, the new creation race.

Being born again is a divine act that changes us from the family of Satan to the family of God — from being a child of the devil to becoming a child of God, from having the nature of Satan to having the nature of God.

OUR LIVES AFTER CHRIST

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We are: Made alive in Christ and given eternal life (Ephesians 2:5-6.) Shown God's mercy and given salvation (Titus 3:5-6.) Blessed with wisdom and given the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30.) Given new spiritual life from God (1 John 5:11.) Reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-19.) Given undeserved favor, we are now God's friends (1 Peter 2:9-10.) Delivered from Satan's authority and rulership (Colossians 1:13.) Free in Christ (Romans 8:2.) Children of God (John 1:12.) Living in the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:13.)

HOW TO BE BORN AGAIN

Acts 20:21 We must repent and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mark 1:14-15 "The time is fulfilled...repent, and believe in the gospel."

Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the Lord, forsake your ways, and turn to Him.

There are two conditions for every sinner to be born again:

1. **Repentance** toward God
2. Personal **faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ

Acts 17:30 God commands all people everywhere to repent.

Matthew 18:3 And Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

Romans 10:9-10, 13 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved...for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (NIV).

What repentance is and is not:

- Repentance is not self-improvement or behavior modification
- Repentance is not feeling sorry for consequences
- True repentance is a complete change of heart, mind, and direction
- Turning away from sin and turning to God

- A transformation that produces a changed life

A New Testament example of repentance is the prodigal son.

Luke 15:17-18 The prodigal son “came to himself” ...and returned to his father.

Faith in Christ is trusting fully in Jesus—His death and resurrection—for your salvation.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF BEING BORN AGAIN?

- Now we are children of God and living in the family of God (John 1:12).
- We are partakers of God’s divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).
- We are in the kingdom of light and living under the lordship of Jesus (Colossians 1:13).
- We have eternal life in our spirits and sin cannot control us (1 John 5:11).
- We have been delivered from all of the curse and we have inherited all of Abraham’s blessings (Galatians 3:13-14, 29).
- We are declared not guilty of sin and enjoy freedom from condemnation (Romans 3:24; Romans 8:1).
- We are righteous and acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- We are sealed and marked as belonging to God by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13).
- We are cleansed and forgiven, and all our sins have been completely wiped away (Acts 3:19; Revelation 1:5).
- We are new creatures in Christ and we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us (1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17).
- We belong to Christ and we are blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3).
- We have been brought near to God and boldly we have free access into God’s presence (Ephesians 2:13; Ephesians 3:12).
- We have been redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus, and God looks upon us as righteous, pure, and holy (1 Corinthians 1:30).
- We have been released from the vicious law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).
- We are free from the authority, rulership, and power of Satan (Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13).
- We have freedom from the power of sin (Romans 6:14).

HOW TO KNOW WE ARE BORN AGAIN:

SEVEN EVIDENCES OF THE NEW BIRTH

1. THE WITNESS OF GOD’S WORD

1 John 5:11–13 — God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. If you have the Son, you have life.

The Word was written so we can know that we have eternal life.

2. THE INNER WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Romans 8:16 — The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

There is an inward assurance given by the Holy Spirit.

3. THE EVIDENCE OF A CHANGED LIFE

2 Corinthians 5:17 — If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

The new birth produces transformation: Change of lifestyle. Change of relationships. Change in habits and speech. Change in desires and direction.

You don't just believe differently—you live differently.

4. A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH SIN

1 John 3:9–10 — One born of God does not habitually practice sin.

Sin is no longer comfortable or normal. There is conviction and a desire to live righteously.

5. A NEW ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WORLD

1 John 2:15–17 — Do not love the world or the things in the world.

The pull of the world weakens. The desire to do God's will grows stronger.

6. A LOVE FOR JESUS AND HIS RETURN

Titus 2:11–14 — We live soberly, righteously, and godly, looking for the blessed hope.

You love Jesus. You look forward to His return. You become zealous for good works.

7. EXPECTED PERSECUTION

John 15:18–20 — If the world hates you, remember it hated Me first.

A transformed life will draw opposition. Persecution confirms you no longer belong to the world.