

What's "NEW" in Us?

A Look at the New Birth

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Introduction

- The Apostle Paul had been someone who, had he let them, would have had **quite a burden of awful things weighing** on His mind and heart...
- I think of his **being a Pharisee, of Stephen** and that is likely **not the end of his pre-redemption sinful behavior**, I'm sure there **were many other things...**
- **Phil 3:12-16**

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.:

- It is important, at the beginning of this New Year to do just this...
- There are many of the things in our live that, like Paul, can and would **shine a nasty light** on us and keep us from moving on in the service of the Lord!
- **How then, can we move on forward?**
- First, **we can realize just what is that God has done for us** and given us **in our "NEW" life** and then purpose to **walk in these and serve Him in the realization and use of these NEW things and qualities!!**
- And so, **first, we'll think about:**

A. Just What IS the New Birth

- It is an inner spiritual change or renewal as a result of the power of God in a person's life.
 - The “inner person” is changed from unredeemed or spiritually dead and made redeemed or alive in Christ.
 - It is a result of God overcoming or changing what is the results of Adam's sin and the curse of God that was a result.
 - **Ephesians 2:1-10 – Saved by Grace Through Faith**

¹ And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 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. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

- The phrase “**new birth**” comes from **John 3:3, 7**, where Jesus told Nicodemus,

³ Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

- Jesus meant that all people are so sinful in God’s eyes that they **need to be regenerated - recreated and renewed** - by the sovereign activity of God’s Spirit (**John 3:5–8**).
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⁵ Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

- The activity of God’s Spirit that regenerates sinful people comes about **through faith in Jesus Christ** (**John 3:10–21**).
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¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹ Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe; how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into

the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

- **Without faith there is no regeneration, and without regeneration a person does not have eternal life.**
 - Regeneration occurs at the moment a person exercises faith in Christ.
 - At that point, his sins are forgiven and he is born again by the power of the Holy Spirit working on behalf of Christ.
 - The new birth is **a decisive, unrepeatable, and irrevocable act of God.**
- Similar words in the Bible describe the same concept.
 - Paul said,

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17).

- Although our “outward man” is perishing, **the Christian’s**
“...inward man is being renewed day by day” (2 Cor. 4:16).
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B. The Necessity of the New Birth.

*The necessity of the new birth is **absolute.***

“Ye must be born again.”

- Note a couple things:
 - “Ye” is a plural reference and indicates that Christ had more than just a single individual in mind!
 - “...be born again” is a verb that tells us that **this is an action, not just a thought or an idea**
 - “Born again” is two-fold – again, it speaks of something done and of **more than just a simple, single thing...**
 - Like normal birth usually happens in more than one single moment and in **more than one single action**

- **So it is with being born again!**
- Now it is **NOT my intention** to give a Theology lesson here but **only to lay a foundation** for what will be a discussion of **what is NEW in us as we become believers**
 - 1) **Drawing and enabling** of Faith by God
 - 2) **Hearing** the Gospel via the Word, the Spirit and a witness
 - 3) The **application** of the Word by God's Spirit
 - 4) The **stirring** of the heart and mind to **repent** and **believe**
 - 5) The **adopting** of the Newly Born believer **into the family of God**
- Note LASTLY, that this is **something that MUST happen if** the one is to **avoid ultimate condemnation!!**
 - We should also conclude that **NOTHING can take its' place!!**

*There is **nothing** that can take the place of the needful new birth.*

- a. **A moral life will not take the place of the new birth.**
 - b. **Quitting your sins is not enough.**
 - c. **Joining the church is not enough.**
 - d. **Being very religious is not enough.**
- We also ought to be clear that the Bible declares that it **applies to ALL men!!**

This necessity of the new birth is universal.

Absolutely no man will enter the Kingdom of God **without the new birth.** John 3:3, 7.

³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

- That leads us to the question...

1) ***Just what is the New Birth??***

- The easiest way to get a start is to think over what the “new” birth **is NOT!!**

A. Baptism is not the new birth. Acts 8:13, 21–23.

- Acts 8:13

Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

- Acts 8:21–24

²¹ You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. ²² Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.”

B. Church membership, being a part of the group, is not the new birth. Acts 5:1–11.

- Speaking of the act of Lying to the Holy Spirit Peter says:

5 *But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. ² And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles’ feet. ³ But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? ⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to **men but to God.**”*

⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who

heard these things. ⁶ And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

⁷ Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?”

She said, “Yes, for so much.”

⁹ Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” ¹⁰ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. ¹¹ So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

- **Just being a part of the group**, that we might call the Church, **was not sufficient**.
 - They **both agreed and subscribed** to Peter’s authority – but it **wasn’t enough!**
 - **Belonging and taking part in does not either equal or provide** salvation!

C. Reform is not the new birth.

- Romans 3:27 - **Boasting Excluded**

²⁷ *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.*

- Romans 4:2

² *For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.*

- And we **could go on and on...**
- God’s **casting aside** of works is **not basis for God’s favor after, or especially BEFORE** salvation!!