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## Ye Must Be Born Again

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Jesus tells us that the gates of heaven are closed to us unless we are born again. Therefore, we ask: Friend, are you born again? Church member, are you born again? If not, then you are lost. For Jesus says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

You may ask, "What is being born again?" Today there are a lot of misconceptions about the new birth. It is not baptism, for some were baptized and yet not born again (Acts 8:18-25). It is not joining the church, for some slipped in unawares (Galatians 2:4). It is not eating of the Lord's table, for some ate unworthily and it brought condemnation (1 Corinthians 11:29). It is not reform or trying to live better, "for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:24). It is not praying, for Jesus says, "Tis people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Matthew 15:8).

Someone may say if I try and do all I can, giving to the poor, visiting the sick, and be as good as I can every day, then surely I am born again (Matthew 25:41-45). No, we cannot be what we are not: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). We must have a change of heart. For God by the prophets says, "A new heart also will I give you" (Ezekiel 36:26).

"Ten, what is the new birth?" The new birth consists of a change of the heart from a life of serving self to one of serving the Lord. 'Tis comes when we feel remorse for our sinfulness and in faith look to Jesus for forgiveness. When a child is born, a new life comes forth, a new person in the flesh. So likewise, when we are born again, a new life in Christ Jesus after the Spirit comes forth. Therefore, it is called a birth – a new life in Christ Jesus. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

"When may I expect to be born again?"

The Scripture says, "Today, if ye hear his voice" (Hebrews 3:7). That means at any age, time or place, if you hear the call and respond, you can be born again by the Spirit.

"How long will it take? Must I not grow into the new birth?" No, we are born into the kingdom of God and that makes us children and heirs. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). 'Tis may take place the moment you surrender all and come to Jesus for pardon.

"How and when do we receive it?" God, who looks on the heart, sees your sincerity. He comes to you through the power of the Holy Ghost and creates within you a right spirit (Psalm 51:10). Thus, you are born again—a new creature in Christ Jesus by faith in Him (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Finally: "How may I know that I am born again?" Paul in Romans 8:1-10 teaches: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The Bible teaches the lost are dead in sin, condemned, and have an evil conscience. They are carnally minded, without hope, disobedient, and without God in the world. But, a born-again Christian is a

child of God, alive in Christ, saved, without condemnation, and has a good conscience. He is also spiritually minded, filled with the Holy Ghost and faith, and has a hope of everlasting life. His sins are blotted out by the blood of Jesus. His heart is filled with love and the peace of God which passeth understanding. He loves, desires, and has the power to do the Lord's will. He cherishes a hope beyond the grave, and the promise of a home in heaven. Could anyone go through such a change and not realize it? Hardly, for "the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16).

If you have not had this experience with the peace and joy it brings to the soul, do not rest, for you are trifling with God and your own soul. You must be born again.

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