

1: Are Catholics Born Again? | Catholic Answers

Why Must We Born Again? And if your first response to that statement is I know people like that, you may be totally blind to the deceitfulness of your own heart.

A person must be born again to enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, that you can only see, and enter the Kingdom of God, if you are born of water and of the Spirit: Well, briefly, Jesus came to the earth to restore union between God and man. That said, if Jesus needed to restore the union, it means that the union between God and man, was there once, but was broken. Let us therefore go back to the Garden of Eden, in order to understand the necessity of the new birth and the reasons why a person must be born again. The way of the flesh Throughout the ages, we see that people chose the way of the flesh, instead of the way of the Spirit. This started in the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve chose the fleshly tree of knowledge, of good and evil, rather than the sacred tree of life. God warned them, not to eat from the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, because if they would eat from this tree, they would die. But despite the warning of God, Adam and Eve chose to eat from the forbidden tree; the fleshly tree, and therefore God was compelled to pronounce the sentence of death upon them, and upon the whole human race. Adam was a living soul, born out of the Spirit. He was one with God dead for sin. But when he became disobedient to God; after he sinned, the death sentence came upon him, and therefore he who was created out of dust would return to dust. Before Adam sinned, his predominant characteristic was spirit, but after he sinned his predominant characteristic was flesh. Born of the flesh The sentence of death, that carnal disposition, was passed on to the entire human race. Because of the fact that we are born of the flesh, we cannot enter the Kingdom of God, in this fleshly state the state of a sinner. The natural man who is unspiritual cannot comprehend, nor receive the things of the Spirit of God: But the natural man receive not the things of the Spirit of God: Therefore a person must be born again in the spirit, to enter the Kingdom of God. Faith is the catalyst that brings us to an encounter with the Holy Spirit, Who regenerates us, so that we are born into the heavenly realm, just as you were once born into the earthly realm. The universal results of sin demands it Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned Rom 5: Unregenerate man is unable to understand or receive the gifts of God But the natural man receive not the things of the Spirit of God: Without the new birth everything we do, every impulse and action is defiled For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man Mar 7: Unless we are born again we have no escape from the judgment of God And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others Eph 2:

2: 4 Reasons why a person must be born again

Misconception: A person must be born again to gain salvation or to be a Christian. Fact: Christ's sacrifice provides salvation not only for those who are born again as the ones who will rule with Christ in heaven but also for the earthly subjects of God's Kingdom.

What does it mean to be born of God? The term born of God is found primarily in the book of 1 John. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. Why did Jesus begin talking about the wind in relation to being born again? Tree leaves move, plants bend, and we feel the wind touch our faces. Yet no one can catch it or restrain it. When wind blows, it changes everything it touches. So it is with the Spirit. Spiritual birth is an act of the Holy Spirit. He is invisible, yet whenever He moves, there are definite changes. So how does one become born again, or born of God? Jesus used an earthly metaphor to explain a spiritual idea. When a baby is born, a new life emerges that did not previously exist. The baby is a brand-new being who begins to grow to look like the parents. A puppy grows up to look like a dog. A calf grows to look like a cow. An infant grows to look like an adult human. So it is with those born of God. When we are born into the family of God John 1: When we are born of God, we have a new heart, one that wants to please God Ezekiel This does not come about by good intentions or white-knuckled effort. We please our new Father by surrendering to His Holy Spirit who lives within us. We allow Him to change our desires, our goals, and our will to conform to His Romans 8: As a baby grows to look like the parents to whom it was born, so do we grow to be more like our heavenly Father when we are born of God Philippians 3:

3: How To Be Born Again - a simple outline Bible study

The question logically comes, "Why does a person need to be born again?" The apostle Paul in Ephesians says, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (NKJV). To the Romans he wrote, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans).

Origin[edit] The term is derived from an event in the New Testament in which the words of Jesus were not understood by a Jewish pharisee, Nicodemus. Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. Hoskyns argues that it is to be preferred as the fundamental meaning and he drew attention to phrases such as "birth of the Spirit v. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, [see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently: Jesus explained to Nicodemus that this doctrine was in errorâ€”that every person must have two birthsâ€”natural birth of the physical body and another of the water and the spirit. The Apostle Peter further reinforced this understanding in 1 Peter 1: He is concerned, however, with the fact that the promise is not being fulfilled to the seed of Abraham referring to the Jews. The emphasis "from above" implying "from Heaven" calls attention to the source of the "newness of life". Stagg writes that the word "again" does not include the source of the new kind of beginning; More than personal improvement is needed. In the sermon entitled A New Birth he writes, "none can be holy unless he be born again", and "except he be born again, none can be happy even in this world. In the chapter, Nicodemus is puzzled and asks Jesus what he means by saying that "Ye must be born again". Ehrman says that this confusion is because in Greek the language of the gospel the word again is ambiguous. Ehrman says that this raises questions about the authenticity of the dialogue, the meaning of the words, and, therefore, the use of the phrase. In contrast, only about one third of mainline Protestants and one sixth of Catholics Anglo and Latino claim a born-again experience. Even with these early revivalists, the use of the term "born again" to describe this experience of conversion was still not widespread. Historically, the classic text from John 3 was consistently interpreted by the early church fathers as a reference to baptism. Catholic commentator John F. This phrase without the article , refers to a rebirth which the early Church regarded as taking place through baptism 1 Pet 1. Baptism gives the person the grace of forgiveness for all prior sins; it makes the newly baptized person a new creature and an adopted son of God 2 Corinthians 5: Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible spiritual mark character of his belonging to Christ. No sin can erase this mark, even if sin prevents Baptism from bearing the fruits of salvation. Given once for all, Baptism cannot be repeated" CCC The Holy Spirit is involved with each aspect of the movement of grace. Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high" CCC Pope John Paul II wrote about "the problem of children baptized in infancy [who] come for catechesis in the parish without receiving any other initiation into the faith and still without any explicit personal attachment to Jesus Christ" Catechesi Tradendae It consists of surrendering to the word of God and relying on it, but it also means, at a later stage, endeavoring to know betterâ€”and better the profound meaning of this word" CT The modern expression being "born again" is really about the concept of "conversion". But she also teaches that whoever is baptized must, through daily contrition and repentance, drown The Old Adam so that daily a new man come forth and arise who walks before God in righteousness and purity forever. She teaches that whoever lives in sins after his baptism has again lost the grace of baptism. In part, it reads: John saith, was not in Him. But all we the rest, although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things: The phrase consistently referred to baptism in the early Church. According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q 88, "the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption are, his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all of which are made effectual to the elect for salvation. God first sovereignly and efficaciously regenerates, and only in consequence of that do we act. Therefore, the individual is passive in regeneration, neither preparing himself nor making himself receptive to what God will do. Regeneration is a change wrought in us by God, not an autonomous act performed by us for ourselves. That comes with faith. Admit Him to your heart. Also, to be born again means to follow Romans Please help improve the article by presenting facts as a neutrally-worded

summary with appropriate citations. Consider transferring direct quotations to Wikiquote. June The term "born again" is used by several Christian denominations, but there are disagreements on what the term means, and whether members of other denominations are justified in claiming to be born-again Christians. A Catholic website says: Catholics should ask Protestants, "Are you born again?" the way the Bible understands that concept? Another of many examples is the Catholic who claims he also is "born again. However, what the committed Catholic means is that he received his spiritual birth when he was baptized" either as an infant or when as an adult he converted to Catholicism. First, classical Roman Catholicism teaches that regeneration occurs at baptism, a view known as baptismal regeneration. It is not somehow the automatic result of baptism. Second, it is common for many other evangelical branches of the church to speak of repentance and faith leading to regeneration. By contrast, Reformed theology teaches that original sin and total depravity deprive all people of the moral ability and will to exercise saving faith. Regeneration is entirely the work of God the Holy Spirit - we can do nothing on our own to obtain it. God alone raises the elect from spiritual death to new life in Christ Eph. This remains the common understanding in most of Christendom, held, for example, in Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Oriental Orthodoxy, Anglicanism, [51] Lutheranism, and in much of Protestantism. However, sometime after the Reformation, Evangelicalism attributed greater significance to the expression born again [52] as an experience of religious conversion Heb This same belief is, historically, also an integral part of Methodist doctrine, [53] [54] and is connected with the doctrine of Justification. With the voluntaristic type, rebirth is expressed in a new alignment of the will, in the liberation of new capabilities and powers that were hitherto undeveloped in the person concerned. With the intellectual type, it leads to an activation of the capabilities for understanding, to the breakthrough of a "vision". With others it leads to the discovery of an unexpected beauty in the order of nature or to the discovery of the mysterious meaning of history. With still others it leads to a new vision of the moral life and its orders, to a selfless realization of love of neighbour. Born again is a phrase used by many Protestants to describe the phenomenon of gaining faith in Jesus Christ. It is an experience when everything they have been taught as Christians becomes real, and they develop a direct and personal relationship with God. Sometimes the phrase seems to be judgmental, making a distinction between genuine and nominal Christians. Occasionally, the phrase seems historic, like the division between Catholic and Protestant Christians. Associated perhaps initially with Jesus People and the Christian counterculture, born again came to refer to a conversion experience, accepting Jesus Christ as lord and savior in order to be saved from hell and given eternal life with God in heaven, and was increasingly used as a term to identify devout believers. Time magazine named him "One of the 25 most influential Evangelicals in America. Colson describes his path to faith in conjunction with his criminal imprisonment and played a significant role in solidifying the "born again" identity as a cultural construct in the US. He writes that his spiritual experience followed considerable struggle and hesitancy to have a "personal encounter with God. Please come into my life. I commit it to You. There came something more: She says, "The instant and thoughtless panaceas of born-again Christianity will be seen as a vast sanctuary by millions of North Americans. It would be naive to think otherwise. Renatus The idea of "rebirth in Christ" has inspired [67] some common European forenames:

4: Do You Know the Truth About Being Born Again?

Nicodemus must have been stunned when Jesus said, "You must be born again." It wouldn't seem shocking if Christ had said that to Zacchaeus the tax collector or to the thief on the cross or to the woman caught in adultery.

What the Bible Says About When You Are Born Again I was speaking recently with someone who was looking forward to becoming a father. He asked me, "Is it hard to learn how to be a good father? How did you deal with that change in your life? First came the engagement, then some time later the marriage. During this time, talking about parenting helped prepare me mentally. A few months later, my wife became pregnant, and then we still had nine months before our child was actually born. For example, discipline was not an issue during the first year, and it was two years before we had to help him learn to get along with his new sister. Being a good father all at once would be impossible, but the Lord gives us a chance to learn slowly. An inch of growth may take a child half a year. It can take several years to learn to speak a new language or play a musical instrument. Two people can be married in a day, but the actual marriage of minds takes decades to accomplish. Changes in our spiritual life are also gradual. They take place one step at a time, and spiritual growth will be easier if we know that it does not take place in a moment. It is an ongoing process. Jesus said, "Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. For example, Peter describes it in seven distinct steps: New Knowledge Rebirth does not take place through a blind leap of faith, but through gradual education, study and enlightenment. Jesus said, "If you continue in My Word, Jesus said, "Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Being "childlike" does not mean being childish in our beliefs. Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil. For why should you die? Cease to do evil, learn to do good. It requires a struggle, an ongoing battle to overcome the old ways of life. Paul called this a struggle between the "flesh" and the "spirit. When this time finally comes, we can be called "born again. He cannot sin, because he is born of God. We know that whoever is born of God does not sin, but he who is born of God keeps himself and the wicked one does not touch him. A person who neglects to be useful cannot be born again, and cannot go to heaven. Jesus indicated that some Christians would not be saved because they lacked good works. A person is justified by works, and not by faith alone. New Loves Even more than faith and more than works, the power that causes a person to be born again is love. Peter tells us that we are reborn by means of loving and for the purpose of loving others. He who does not love his brother abides in death. He who does not love, does not know God, for God is love. Yet in all these things we need also to realize that it is the Lord who is working within us. These abilities are His merciful gift. He says, "I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you All this takes time, even a lifetime. Just as childbirth and growth require patience and endurance, so does being born again. Again and again, the Bible advises steadfastness and endurance if we wish to gain the promise of heaven.

5: What does it mean to be born of God?

A person must be born again to enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, that you can only see, and enter the Kingdom of God, if you are born of water and of the Spirit: " Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus said to him, How can a man be born when he is old? Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The Lord Jesus told us that a man cannot enter into the kingdom of God unless he is born again, and that anyone who is not reborn will be eliminated by God. As can be seen, this requirement of the Lord Jesus is of great concern for every one of us that believes in and follows God. Then What does it mean to be born again? Some brothers and sisters think: The Lord Jesus has borne the sins of us. We have faith in the Lord and get His redemption, which has brought us life, then we are born again. As long as we repent and confess all the sins we have committed one by one with bitter tears before the Lord, and accept baptism, the Lord will forgive our sins and bestow new life upon us, and then we will be born again. Is it really so easy for me to be reborn if I repent and confess my sins to the Lord? If so, why does the scripture record: From this we see that the Lord Jesus wanted us to pursue to be purified instead of merely confessing sins. Can we, such kind of old people bounded by sins, be reborn? What the scripture says came to my mind: Then, in other words, the true rebirth means that man has quit his sinful nature and obeyed Christ. These verses are sufficient to prove that believers in the present scene have not been reborn yet. Then how to get reborn? And what is the way to get reborn? Henceforth, I constantly examined the scriptures. I found in John 8: However, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: Weighing and considering these verses, I finally came to realize that if one wants to get eternal life , he must get the truth, and the truth of eternal life is brought to us by Christ of the last days. Thanks to the enlightenment from the Lord. I have understood what on earth rebirth is. Glory be to the Lord!

6: What Does it Mean to be "Born Again?"

By Yanxi. Speaking of being born again, I believe that all the brothers and sisters in the Lord know it and may think of the dialogue between the Lord Jesus and Nicodemus recorded in the Bible, "Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Ye Must Be Born Again! The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. What does it mean? Most people have religion, but very few people have ever been Biblically born-again. Unless you are born again, you absolutely cannot go to Heaven John 3: Man by birth is spiritually dead, which I will explain further in a moment. To be born-again is a miracle of God, by which Jesus Christ comes into your body to live, literally in the form of the Spirit of God. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Why does a person need to be born spiritually? The Bible teaches that man is created in the image of God Genesis 1: There is one God according to Deuteronomy 6: The Bible refers to this triune nature of God as the Godhead Acts Our earthly body is the tabernacle 2nd Corinthians 5: Our soul is composed of the heart to feel , the mind to think , and the will to decide. This is why humans have an inherent need for religion God. It is the spirit of man that makes humans totally different and unique from animals. Our spirit is dead in trespasses and sin the Bible says Yes, God created you, but He gave you a freewill to decide for yourself where you will spend eternity. God never forces anyone to accept Jesus as their Savior. He simply offers a warm invitation to anyone who wants to have their sins forgiven and go to Heaven. Salvation is a free gift Romans 5: God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. When Adam sinned, sin and death entered the human race. This is why humanity MUST be born-again. This is only possible through the Holy Spirit of God, which makes us alive again quickened the Bible says by faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior. The old man cannot be tamed. There is nothing good about the flesh. Rather, the new man which is Jesus Christ comes to indwell live within our body. I was born-again at age The Godhead indwells every believer. The Holy Spirit of God guides me, comforts me, teaches me, rebukes me, chastises me, convicts me, encourages me, empowers me, loves me, strengthens me, and so much more. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to do these things. This is why it is critically important for every believer to live in their Bible and make sure you have a reliable Bible€”I only use the faithful King James Bible. A person cannot understand the Bible without the presence of the Author, and God is the Author. Surely, no one can be born into this world again physically. There is no turning back the hands of time. Jesus is the Word of God John 1: The following statement sums it up pretty good This birth comes about only through faith in the Son of God. God came down to this earth 2, years ago and took upon Himself the form of a man. That man was the Lord Jesus Christ John 1: Jesus was born of a virgin Isaiah 7: Jesus never sinned even once 2nd Corinthians 5: Jesus died, was buried and rose again after three days 1st Corinthians Jesus shed His precious blood to pay for all our sins Colossians 1: Jesus is the Savior Who paid for our sins. Believe that Christ died and was resurrected, shedding His precious blood to wash away your sins. Forgiveness of Sins and Eternal Life are a Free Gift My dear friend, what if I were to offer you a brand new acoustic guitar as a free gift, in exchange for washing my car? That would be ridiculous. That is NOT a free gift, is it? In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: No one can be saved apart from the cross. Many people believe on Jesus, but they have left out the cross. To be born anew by the Spirit of God you must include the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus. That is the Gospel according to 1st Corinthians We repent of our unbelief, and from dead works of self-righteousness which cannot save Hebrews 6: Obviously, the person who believes has repented. Repentance unto salvation does NOT mean a change of life; but rather, a change of mind. When a man repents he believes. There is a popular false teaching in MOST churches today that says a person must try to stop sinning to be saved. Salvation happens when a person acknowledges their guilt of sin, and comes to

God on the basis of being a hell-deserving sinner; believing on Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, for forgiveness. Salvation is of the heart Romans Tell Jesus that you believe He died, was buried and rose again. It matters not exactly what you pray, just as long as you realize these two main truths: You are a guilty sinner in the eyes of a holy God for breaking His commandments! Jesus is the precious Savior who died on the cross for your sins, was buried, and bodily resurrected three days later! Dear Jesus, I know that I am a Hell-deserving sinner. I believe You are the only begotten Son of God, the Savior, who shed your blood to pay for my sins. That is all I am trusting in to get me to Heaven. I accept your free gift of forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Our part is only to believe. Salvation is not a matter of praying some special words. It was their faith in Christ and not their words, that brought salvation. Both men acknowledged their guilt of sin and turned to Jesus Christ for forgiveness. It is your faith that causes you to call upon Jesus to forgive your sins and take you to Heaven. God wants to save you more than you could ever want to be saved 2nd Peter 3: Just take God at His word and claim His salvation by faith. Believe, and you will be saved. No church, no lodge, nor any amount of good works can save you. Remember, God does the saving. God does the saving. You are a sinner. Therefore, unless you believe on Jesus Who died in your place, you will spend eternity in Hell. If you believe on Him as your crucified, buried, and risen Savior, you receive forgiveness for all of your sins and His gift of eternal salvation by faith. You say, "Surely, it cannot be that simple! My friend, believe on Jesus and receive Him as Savior today. Jesus is coming again. We better charge Hell and we better do something about the fact that people need to be born again. Salvation is very simpleâ€”we are sinners and Jesus is the Savior. Christ died, was buried and rose from the dead. Eternal life is a free giftâ€”freely given and freely received. Salvation is receiving; not giving. Our part is to acknowledge our guilt of sin and believe the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to be forgiven. The big issue is that we are all sinners, and that sin MUST be dealt with. The Word of God indicts all of us as guilty sinners.

7: You Must be Born Again - John - Nicodemus - Commentary

"You Must Be Born Again" Very little is known about Nicodemus, except that He was a highly educated, well to do ruler and teacher in the Jewish community, who came by night wanting to be taught by Jesus.

Jesus at once answers these questions; the answer being, as it frequently is, to the unexpressed thought comp. These miracles--in what relation did they stand to it? This Teacher--what message from God had He about it? Verily, verily, I say unto thee. The words are in the decisive tone of authority and certainty. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Chrysostom notes the two currents of interpretation in his day; and in our own day the opinions of scholars, whether we count them or weigh them, may be equally claimed for either view. There can be no doubt that the Greek word????? It is equally certain that St. John elsewhere uses it in the local sense "from above" only John 3: The dialogue was between One who was called and one who really was a Rabbi. The word actually used almost certainly conveyed but one sense, and it is this sense which the Syriac version, coming to us from the second century, and closely connected with the Palestinian dialect of the first century, has preserved. This version reads "from the beginning," "afresh," "anew. John wishes to express for his Greek readers, and the word used by him exactly does express it. That the Greek word has another meaning also, which expresses the same thought from another point of view, may have determined its choice. On "the kingdom of God," which is of frequent occurrence in the earlier Gospels, but in St. John is found only here and in John 3: Note on Matthew 3: To "see" the kingdom is, in New Testament usage, equivalent to "enter into the kingdom," John 3: The condition of the spiritual vision which can see this kingdom is spiritual life, and this life is dependent on being born anew. The common rendering makes Him use the same word, in the same verse, of the third person in the Trinity, and of a natural phenomenon. Pulpit Commentary Verses The revelation of earthly and heavenly things to one who knew that God was with him. New birth of the Spirit. How may we enter upon its further proofs? Others Baumlein have supposed Nicodemus to have said, "Does the baptism of John suffice for admission into the kingdom? At the same time, it may be proved that the rabbis regarded proselytism as a "new birth," and one produced or brought about by circumcision and baptism Wunsche, 1. Others, again, have put further words into the reply of Jesus, such as, "The kingdom of God is not in the miracles which I am working; it is in a state of things which can only be appreciated by a radical spiritual change" Lucke. Nicodemus was thinking of the kingdom of God evinced by miraculous signs; and Jesus points him to the inner reality rather than to the outer manifestation. Godet sees the Pharisaic position in the question of Nicodemus, "Art thou the Messiah? All these views embrace a large amount of possible conjectural truth; but they ignore the play upon the words of Nicodemus, which the answer of Jesus involves, showing that a sharp, clean retort followed the speech of the former. To the "we know" of Nicodemus, comes the "I say unto thee" of Jesus. To the general sentiment of Nicodemus Christ gives a personal application. In place of speculation concerning his own relation to God and to the kingdom, Christ searches in the heart of his questioner for spiritual susceptibility. Over against the general proposition about God being with the Worker of these signs Christ sets the practical truth and Divine possibility of any man seeing the kingdom of God. To the suspicion of Jesus being the Messenger and Minister of God, he opposes the supposition of being born from heaven, or anew. Moreover, John uses the idea of birth from God, or by his will supervening on the life of man, and the consequent conference upon it of a new beginning John 1: The great point on which our Lord insists is the Divine spiritual origin of the life of which he has so much to say. The Revised Version has placed it in the margin. If the expression had had no ambiguity about it, and merely conveyed the idea of a heavenly birth, his mistake would have been greater than it was. The Jewish rabbi ought to have been familiar with the idea of the "new heart" and "right spirit," and the marvellous and mighty change wrought in men by the Holy Spirit; but the spiritual idea had been overlaid by rabbinic ritualism, and all the hopeless entanglements of ceremonial purity which had been reacts to do duty for spiritual conformity with the Divine will. Archdeacon Watkins reminds us that the Syriac Version here gives the rendering "from the beginning," or "anew," and lays great stress on this solution of the ambiguity in the Greek word. The statement of Christ is very remarkable. A man must be born anew, must undergo a radical change, even to see

the kingdom of God cf. The true kingdom is not a Divine government of outward, visible magnificence, sustained by miraculous aid - a physical sovereignty which shall rival and eclipse the majesty of Caesar. When the kingdom shall come in its genuine power, the carnal eye will not discover its presence. The man born anew will alone be able to appreciate it. The Jews boasted that they were born of God John 8: There in public discourse he called upon all men everywhere to "repent," to undergo a radical change of mind, and that because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Neither repentance nor regeneration commended itself to the rabbinic mind as a necessity for one who was exalted by privilege and ennobled by obedience. The phrase, "kingdom of God," is not a mode of representing truth to which this Gospel calls frequent attention. Still our Lord to Pilate John In Matthew the whole of the mission of Christ among men is repeatedly portrayed as "the kingdom of heaven. This great utterance is a key to much of the history of the Church, and an explanation of its numberless mistakes. Moreover, it supplies an invaluable hint of the true nature of the kingdom of God. Aim, O soul, at the bodiless essence of the spirit world as thy inheritance. The two classes of ideas are fundamentally distinct. Philo contrasts the sensuous and the intellectual; Christ is contrasting nature and grace. Matthew Henry Commentary 3: When religion is out of fashion, there are many Nicodemites. But though he came by night, Jesus bid him welcome, and hereby taught us to encourage good beginnings, although weak. And though now he came by night, yet afterward he owned Christ publicly. He did not talk with Christ about state affairs, though he was a ruler, but about the concerns of his own soul and its salvation, and went at once to them. Our Saviour spoke of the necessity and nature of regeneration or the new birth, and at once directed Nicodemus to the source of holiness of the heart. Birth is the beginning of life; to be born again, is to begin to live anew, as those who have lived much amiss, or to little purpose. We must have a new nature, new principles, new affections, new aims. By our first birth we were corrupt, shapen in sin; therefore we must be made new creatures. No stronger expression could have been chosen to signify a great and most remarkable change of state and character. We must be entirely different from what we were before, as that which begins to be at any time, is not, and cannot be the same with that which was before. This new birth is from heaven, ch. It is a great change made in the heart of a sinner, by the power of the Holy Spirit. It means that something is done in us, and for us, which we cannot do for ourselves. Something is wrong, whereby such a life begins as shall last for ever. We cannot otherwise expect any benefit by Christ; it is necessary to our happiness here and hereafter. What Christ speak, Nicodemus misunderstood, as if there had been no other way of regenerating and new-moulding an immortal soul, than by new-framing the body. But he acknowledged his ignorance, which shows a desire to be better informed. It is then further explained by the Lord Jesus. He shows the Author of this blessed change. It is not wrought by any wisdom or power of our own, but by the power of the blessed Spirit. We are shapen in iniquity, which makes it necessary that our nature be changed. We are not to marvel at this; for, when we consider the holiness of God, the depravity of our nature, and the happiness set before us, we shall not think it strange that so much stress is laid upon this. The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is compared to water. It is also probable that Christ had reference to the ordinance of baptism. Not that all those, and those only, that are baptized, are saved; but without that new birth which is wrought by the Spirit, and signified by baptism, none shall be subjects of the kingdom of heaven. The same word signifies both the wind and the Spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth for us; God directs it. The Spirit sends his influences where, and when, on whom, and in what measure and degree, he pleases. Though the causes are hidden, the effects are plain, when the soul is brought to mourn for sin, and to breathe after Christ. Thus the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the natural man. Many think that cannot be proved, which they cannot believe. Jesus Christ is every way able to reveal the will of God to us; for he came down from heaven, and yet is in heaven. The knowledge of this must be from above, and can be received by faith alone. Jesus Christ came to save us by healing us, as the children of Israel, stung with fiery serpents, were cured and lived by looking up to the brazen serpent, Nu In this observe the deadly and destructive nature of sin. Ask awakened consciences, ask damned sinners, they will tell you, that how charming soever the allurements of sin may be, at the last it bites like a serpent. See the powerful remedy against this fatal malady. Christ is plainly set forth to us in the gospel. He whom we offended is our Peace, and the way of applying for a cure is by believing. If any so far slight either their disease by sin, or the method of cure by Christ, as not to receive Christ upon his own terms, their

ruin is upon their own heads.

8: John Do not be amazed that I said, 'You must be born again.'

As quoted earlier, a common doctrine teaches that, after a person believes, there is nothing left to do in order to be "born again." In particular, many folks believe that baptism is important but is not essential in order to become a saved child of God.

The law of that, as of all human nature, was that flesh ruled animal life, and animal life ruled spirit, and the whole man became carnal, bringing forth the fruits of the flesh. The law of the regenerate nature was that the spirit, born by the influence of the Divine Spirit, rose to a new life of communion with God, controlled the lower life, with its affections, feelings, and desires, and that these thus controlled became the motive power of the body; the whole man thus became spiritual, bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Note on 1Thessalonians 5: For them, then, as for all, it was no matter of wonder, it was an absolute necessity of their true life, that they should be born anew. Pulpit Commentary Verse 7. Nicodemus had revealed, by his expressions of countenance or unrecorded words, his surprise. This further explanation deepened the solemnity of the first assertion by a bold antithesis between the birth of flesh producing nothing but flesh, however high its culture, and the birth of spirit from the Spirit himself, the heavenly and Divine Originator of all genuine repentance, and the sole Cause of the new life. Nicodemus was clinging more and more eagerly to the old ideas of national privilege, of sacramental purification, of soundly taught principles and habits. He marvelled at such representation which took the heart out of all his previous training. The Messianic kingdom for which he had been looking and longing seemed to fade away in the clouds of an utter mysticism, and to vanish out of his power of recognition. Our Lord gently reproved the expression of his surprise, and reminded him of the previous utterance, "I said to thee, Ye," etc. Nicodemus had come in the name of others. Jesus replies, and reasserts the principles for the entire group of persons which Nicodemus might be supposed to represent. We must not fail to notice that, whereas in other parts of the discourse our Lord speaks in the plural first person, yet he discriminates himself from. He does not say, "We must," etc. He had no consciousness of personal need of regeneration, nor was he in the first case born as flesh from flesh. His flesh was itself the work of the Spirit. Matthew Henry Commentary 3: When religion is out of fashion, there are many Nicodemites. But though he came by night, Jesus bid him welcome, and hereby taught us to encourage good beginnings, although weak. And though now he came by night, yet afterward he owned Christ publicly. He did not talk with Christ about state affairs, though he was a ruler, but about the concerns of his own soul and its salvation, and went at once to them. Our Saviour spoke of the necessity and nature of regeneration or the new birth, and at once directed Nicodemus to the source of holiness of the heart. Birth is the beginning of life; to be born again, is to begin to live anew, as those who have lived much amiss, or to little purpose. We must have a new nature, new principles, new affections, new aims. By our first birth we were corrupt, shapen in sin; therefore we must be made new creatures. No stronger expression could have been chosen to signify a great and most remarkable change of state and character. We must be entirely different from what we were before, as that which begins to be at any time, is not, and cannot be the same with that which was before. This new birth is from heaven, ch. It is a great change made in the heart of a sinner, by the power of the Holy Spirit. It means that something is done in us, and for us, which we cannot do for ourselves. Something is wrong, whereby such a life begins as shall last for ever. We cannot otherwise expect any benefit by Christ; it is necessary to our happiness here and hereafter. What Christ speak, Nicodemus misunderstood, as if there had been no other way of regenerating and new-moulding an immortal soul, than by new-framing the body. But he acknowledged his ignorance, which shows a desire to be better informed. It is then further explained by the Lord Jesus. He shows the Author of this blessed change. It is not wrought by any wisdom or power of our own, but by the power of the blessed Spirit. We are shapen in iniquity, which makes it necessary that our nature be changed. We are not to marvel at this; for, when we consider the holiness of God, the depravity of our nature, and the happiness set before us, we shall not think it strange that so much stress is laid upon this. The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is compared to water. It is also probable that Christ had reference to the ordinance of baptism. Not that all those, and those only, that are baptized, are saved; but without that new birth which is wrought by the Spirit, and

signified by baptism, none shall be subjects of the kingdom of heaven. The same word signifies both the wind and the Spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth for us; God directs it. The Spirit sends his influences where, and when, on whom, and in what measure and degree, he pleases. Though the causes are hidden, the effects are plain, when the soul is brought to mourn for sin, and to breathe after Christ. Thus the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the natural man. Many think that cannot be proved, which they cannot believe. Jesus Christ is every way able to reveal the will of God to us; for he came down from heaven, and yet is in heaven. The knowledge of this must be from above, and can be received by faith alone. Jesus Christ came to save us by healing us, as the children of Israel, stung with fiery serpents, were cured and lived by looking up to the brazen serpent, Nu In this observe the deadly and destructive nature of sin. Ask awakened consciences, ask damned sinners, they will tell you, that how charming soever the allurements of sin may be, at the last it bites like a serpent. See the powerful remedy against this fatal malady. Christ is plainly set forth to us in the gospel. He whom we offended is our Peace, and the way of applying for a cure is by believing. If any so far slight either their disease by sin, or the method of cure by Christ, as not to receive Christ upon his own terms, their ruin is upon their own heads. He has said, Look and be saved, look and live; lift up the eyes of your faith to Christ crucified. And until we have grace to do this, we shall not be cured, but still are wounded with the stings of Satan, and in a dying state. Jesus Christ came to save us by pardoning us, that we might not die by the sentence of the law. Here is gospel, good news indeed. God so loved the world; so really, so richly. Behold and wonder, that the great God should love such a worthless world! Here, also, is the great gospel duty, to believe in Jesus Christ. God having given him to be our Prophet, Priest, and King, we must give up ourselves to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him. And here is the great gospel benefit, that whoever believes in Christ, shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and so saving it. It could not be saved, but through him; there is no salvation in any other. From all this is shown the happiness of true believers; he that believeth in Christ is not condemned. Though he has been a great sinner, yet he is not dealt with according to what his sins deserve. How great is the sin of unbelievers! God sent One to save us, that was dearest to himself; and shall he not be dearest to us? How great is the misery of unbelievers! The wrath of God now fastens upon them; and their own hearts condemn them. There is also a condemnation grounded on their former guilt; they are open to the law for all their sins; because they are not by faith interested in the gospel pardon. Unbelief is a sin against the remedy. It springs from the enmity of the heart of man to God, from love of sin in some form. Read also the doom of those that would not know Christ. Sinful works are works of darkness. The wicked world keep as far from this light as they can, lest their deeds should be reprov'd. Christ is hated, because sin is loved. If they had not hated saving knowledge, they would not sit down contentedly in condemning ignorance. On the other hand, renewed hearts bid this light welcome. A good man acts truly and sincerely in all he does. He desires to know what the will of God is, and to do it, though against his own worldly interest. A change in his whole character and conduct has taken place. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, and is become the commanding principle of his actions. So long as he continues under a load of unforgiven guilt, there can be little else than slavish fear of God; but when his doubts are done away, when he sees the righteous ground whereon this forgiveness is built, he rests on it as his own, and is united to God by unfeigned love. Our works are good when the will of God is the rule of them, and the glory of God the end of them; when they are done in his strength, and for his sake; to him, and not to men. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a subject to which the world is very averse; it is, however, the grand concern, in comparison with which every thing else is but trifling. What does it signify though we have food to eat in plenty, and variety of raiment to put on, if we are not born again? What does it signify though we are well able to act our parts in life, in every other respect, if at last we hear from the Supreme Judge, Depart from me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity?

9: Ye Must Be Born Again!

Ye must be born again!!! 1st Peter , " Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." We are born again by the seed of the Word of God.

Related Media June 9, It would be a tragedy to spend your life studying the Bible and yet end up perishing on judgment day. What a waste to be a Bible scholar and yet miss the central message of the Bible! James Boice Does Inerrancy Matter? When he had finished, a professor from a leading Protestant seminary stood up to counter what the pastor had said. The Gospels are contradictory at this point. Each of them has been written to correct the others. Boice added that it would be nice to think that such views are held only by a few liberals. But he cited a survey of over 7,000 clergymen in five major denominations. Boice wrote that booklet in 1970. I would guess that things have not improved much, if at all, in the three postmodern decades since then. But Jesus yanked the rug out from under his feet and said, in effect: You must be born again! If you die without the new birth, you will perish 3: But the verses that we are considering today also teach that "You need the new birth so that you can understand and respond to spiritual truth. But at this point, he had not been born again and so he was spiritually confused, in spite of his years of religious studies and devotion. Perhaps the apostle Paul a former Pharisee had talked with Nicodemus or knew about this story when he wrote 1 Cor. There is a fundamental divide between the physical and the spiritual 3: As we saw in Romans 5: 5: As they are, little babies are not born spiritually neutral, much less with an inclination toward God. As Jesus says John 6: 6: God must intervene to give new life. Otherwise, all you have is the flesh trying to improve itself. But the flesh can never give itself new life that comes only from God. It is absolutely essential that you experience the new birth 3: Scougal wrote that book in 1970 when he was 27; he died of tuberculosis when he was 37. He resolved to change. He denied himself every luxury; he wore ragged clothes; he ate no foods except those that were repugnant to him; he fasted twice a week; he gave his money to the poor; and he spent whole nights in prayer, lying prostrate on the cold stones or the wet grass. But he felt like he was putting a coat of paint on rotten wood. His outward deeds only hid his inward corruption. It told him that true Christianity is the union of the soul with God. It is Christ formed in us. After having undergone innumerable buffetings by day and night, God was pleased at length to remove my heavy load and to enable me, by a living faith, to lay hold on His dear Son. He made many trips to America and was used greatly in the First Great Awakening. In one of his final sermons, he said *ibid*. The effects of the new birth are unmistakable 3: It goes where it pleases. But you can observe its effects. See the curtains moving and the leaves rustling? So it is with the Holy Spirit. But you can see His effects when He brings the new birth to a soul. Where the Spirit works, the effects are plain to see. John wrote his first epistle to show the early church some genuine marks of salvation, so that they could be on guard against many false teachers. He who does not love abides in death. In other words, all whom the Spirit saves, He sanctifies. It takes a lifetime, but they progressively grow in holiness, without which no one will see the Lord Heb. Those born of the Spirit develop the fruit of the Spirit as they learn to walk in the Spirit: What do they enjoy most, when they can have their own way? Observe the manner in which they spend their Sundays. Mark how little delight they seem to feel in the Bible and prayer. Take notice of the low and earthly notions of pleasure and happiness, which everywhere prevail " . Then he asks his readers to ponder this question: Jesus has shown Nicodemus that there is a fundamental divide between the physical and the spiritual. Thus it is absolutely essential that you experience the new birth. Though you may not understand exactly how it happens, when it happens you can see the effects of the new life in the one who has been born again. The only way to understand spiritual truth is to believe the testimony of Jesus 3: Jesus makes two main points here: Religious learning is useless apart from the new birth 3: But now Jesus is telling him that this is the wrong approach. A person needs nothing less than new life imparted by the Spirit of God. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. As Jesus later rebuked the religious leaders John 5: Jesus is the infallible revealer of spiritual truth because He came down from heaven 3: If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into

heaven, but He who descended from heaven: But that was precisely the problem with the Jewish leaders: They did not see themselves as sinners who needed a Savior John 8: And so they rejected the true testimony of the only One who has come from heaven to earth to tell us how to be right with God. There are a couple of difficulties to try to resolve in these verses. Probably it was because in Jewish thought, true testimony is established by two or three witnesses. But since He is rebuking Nicodemus for not knowing these things, I think that He is referring to the witness of the Old Testament prophets. I think that Calvin is on target when he says that Jesus is referring to His manner of teaching. He used two earthly illustrations, birth and the wind, to explain basic spiritual truth about receiving new life from God. A third difficulty is how do we read and understand verse They contend that a later scribe may have dropped it to avoid the suggestion that Jesus was at that moment in heaven. It seems unlikely to me that Jesus would have told Nicodemus that He was currently in heaven as He spoke to him on earth. By His words in verse 13 Jesus is asserting that no one besides Him has ever ascended into heaven to be able to report heavenly truth on earth. He alone has come down from heaven. Thus Jesus uniquely understands and can reveal heavenly mysteries. We have that witness in the entire Bible, which tells us about Christ and points us to Him Luke Conclusion The late Bible teacher, H. Ironside, told of visiting a godly Irishman, Andrew Fraser, who had come to California to recover from tuberculosis. The old man could barely speak because his lungs were almost gone. But he opened his worn Bible and, until his strength was gone, he simply, sweetly opened up truth after truth in a way that Ironside had never heard before. Before he knew it, Ironside had tears running down his cheeks. Could you tell me where I could find a book that would open them up to me? Did you learn these things in some seminary or college? There with my Bible open before me, I used to kneel for hours at a time, and ask the Spirit of God to reveal Christ to my soul and to open the Word to my heart. He taught me more on my knees on that mud floor than I ever could have learned in all the seminaries or colleges in the world. Ironside, In the Heavens [Loizeaux Brothers], pp. As David said Ps. Application Questions If God gives us a new nature that cannot sin, why do we sin? Why is sin such an ongoing battle for Christians? See Romans 7; Gal. Look over the references to the new birth from 1 John in the message. Should we use these qualities to gain assurance of salvation see 1 John 5: Should a person living in sin have assurance of salvation? I just pray and God shows me the meaning. Cole, , All Rights Reserved.

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