

**Forgotten God: Forgotten Power**  
Corefellowship | June 2, 2011

**Key:** Our new birth is a gracious and needed act of the Holy Spirit where, once the gospel is preached, He imparts to us the life of Christ offered through the cross.

**REVIEW OF LAST WEEK**

The Spirit leads believers by speaking through the Bible, teaching us the Bible, reminding us of the Bible and helping us to apply the Bible to our everyday lives.

He doesn't usually tell us what to do in non-ethical decisions, but He powerfully guides us along as we continue to follow Him in becoming more like Jesus and growing more in love with Jesus.

**THE WORLD'S DESIRE FOR NEW BIRTH**

What people watch on TV says a lot about who they are and what they want.

Men watch action shows filled with courage and heroism – They want to be courageous, heroic, and they want to blow stuff up.

Women watch the Bachelor or Bachelorette - They want vibrant relationships,

Fishermen watch fishing channels, sports guys watch the same ESPN take 16 times in a row, lovers of cooking watch Rachel Ray

What you watch on TV says a lot about who you are and what you want.

What then do we see in the heart of those who love make-over shows?

Extreme House Makeover, Biggest Loser, Queer Eye for the Straight Guy

What is revealed in the heart of the people who love these shows?

There could be a myriad of reasons, but I think one lies at the heart: People love to see others gain a NEW LIFE, NEW START, FRESH BEGINNING.

The heart of all men yearns for NEW LIFE in some sense. We want to be made new and experience freshness in our lives.

The libraries are filled with self-help books, mid-day TV is packed with talk show hosts with funny mustaches, weight loss programs fly off the shelves, weddings are adored, graduations are celebrated, new born babies are cherished.

Yet so many live miserably. We love the thought of new life, but as the products of the world fail us, we begin to think new life is only a fantasy like the fountain of youth, a nice idea, but not a reality.

We love new life. We want new life. We yearn for new life. But it just may be too good to be true.

### **GETTING OUR TERMS STRAIGHT**

Tonight we will be diving into John 3 and also other parts of the Bible to build a basic understanding of this new life the Spirit of God brings to those who have faith in Jesus.

There isn't one term, but many

Born Again - John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23

Born of the Spirit - John 3:8

Born of water and Spirit - John 3:5

Washing of rebirth and renewal - Titus 3:5

Born of God - John 1:13; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18

Made alive - Eph. 2:5

Having God's Law put in our hearts and written in our minds - Heb. 10:16

New creation - 2 Cor. 5:17

Have an eye out for these terms and remember that the new life of Christ given by the Spirit is being spoken of.

### **READ JOHN 3:1-8**

Background Information

*Nicodemus* - Pharisee, member of the Sanhedrin, "teacher of Israel", overall super Jew. People bought his books, listened to his sermons, and read his blog, kept up with his tweets and were friends with him on Facebook. He was a big deal. He was the best of the Old System.

*At night* - 1) it was night, 2) symbolic of spiritual darkness

The passage centers on *what is needed* to enter the New Kingdom

## 1) THE NEED FOR NEW BIRTH

Jesus doesn't say being born again is a great idea or that it was very beneficial. He says that being born again is necessary.

I tell you the truth, *no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.* John 3:3

I tell you the truth, *no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.* John 3:5

You (plural; i.e. all the Sanhedrin) *must* be born again. John 3:7

The heart of the Bible **is not** *bettered life, nor is it recovered life, the life that Jesus offers is nothing less than new and transformed life for all people.*

Notice that Nicodemis is the best of the Old System. He is probably one of the greatest men of his day. He was religious and Jesus looked him in the eye and said, "You must be born again." Even Nicodemis needed new birth.

This makes complete sense when you know what the Bible says about Man's condition outside of the love and grace of God. Why do we need the NEW LIFE?

**We are blind:** The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4

**We were enslaved:** At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

**We love darkness:** This is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. John 3:19-20

**We are dead:** As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. Ephesians 2:1

**Every image the Bible could think of to show this one fact:** *our condition is far beyond needed repair, but we need new life.*

*We don't need repair; we need renewal.*

*We don't need to get cleaned up, we need to be cleansed by another.*

*A better life won't do because we are dead. We need new life.*

## **A Picture of a Dead Soul**

“He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father’s house, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ 30 “No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.” 31 “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.” Luke 16:27-31

No miracles, no persuasive teachings can change Man’s heart

**NOTE:** the rich man didn’t ask to be delivered from hell, he just wanted refreshment in hell

Not even the fires of hell can change the heart of men because those things don’t have the power to give new life.

*Men needs new life. It is necessary.*

## **2) THE WORK OF NEW BIRTH**

Two phrases John uses: 1) Born Again, 2) Born of water and Spirit

In the Greek there is no ‘and’, it more like water/Spirit

Some think it means 1) physical birth and spiritual birth, 2) others think it means water baptism...

### **Ezekiel 36:24-27**

**Water** = cleansing from defilement of sin

**Spirit** = made into new creations

The work of the Spirit in rebirth is to instantaneously cleanse us of our defilement and make us new by connecting us to the life of Jesus.

## The Work of Rebirth

### God Alone Brings Us This New Life

Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit. John 3:6-8

God's Work Alone Means:

*You cannot bring new life about by your will power*

*It doesn't come by signing a card, coming forward in a crusade or writing your name in a Bible.*

*This is not inherited from Christian parents*

*Your friends cannot give you new life*

*We cannot force people into New Life, but we are dependent on the Spirit*

**New Birth Needs the Gospel is Preached** - For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, *through the living and enduring word of God.* 1 Peter 1:23

**New Birth Always Brings Repentance and Faith In Jesus** - If rebirth is fire, then faith and repentance are the light and heat. They are distinct from the fire, but inseparable.

**New Birth is Instantaneous** - the grammar used in John teaches that being reborn is not a process, but an event. Also, other Scriptures speak of it as something that has happened in the past but has continuing effect.

### Jesus or the Spirit?

Christ is our life.

I am the way, the truth and the life - John 14:6

God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life - 1 John 5:11-12

The Spirit gives us life

It is the Spirit who gives life - John 6:63

Unless you are born of the Spirit you cannot enter the Kingdom – John 3:5

*The Spirit gives us life by uniting the believer to Jesus. Jesus is our life, and by the work of the Spirit we are connected to Him by faith. The Spirit brings us into the life of Jesus.*

### **3) THE RESULTS OF NEW BIRTH**

**New Nature** – We used to be enslaved to sin and have natures that were steeped in sin, but now we have a new nature by the power of the Spirit, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” **2 Corinthians 5:17**

This is why I don’t fear sharing the gospel of free grace, because those who are truly changed would never want to take the cross and make a license to sin

**New Love** – *We used to love darkness and despise the light but now we agree full heartedly with Paul, “What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. **Philippians 3:8***

I love to meet new believers for many reasons. One of my favorite reasons is to see the new and passionate love they have for Jesus.

**New Desire** – “I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.” **Philippians 3:10**

*Give me Jesus* is the cry of the believer

To the believer, heaven is only good because that’s where Jesus is.

**New Practice** – *Those who have been born again by the Spirit of God cannot go on making a practice of sin because they have a new nature in them. “No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. **1 John 3:9***

Christianity does not change the behavior of a person, it changes the heart.

Every other religion changes the behavior of a person by means of fear, philosophy or some other means.

The Christian changes from within and is not changed from without.

**New Secured Hope** – Those who have been made new by the Spirit have a new secure hope, “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.” **Ephesians 1:13-14**

New life given by the Spirit will last till death

Those who have been made new have been given eternal life, something that wont ever fade away or get lost

Where you are twenty years from now will either support or deny New Life in you.

### **THE OFFER/PLEA OF CHRIST TO BE BORN AGAIN**

Christ’s Plea to You (Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-7)

**How do I obtain this new life?** “Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” **Acts 2:38**