

N The New Birth

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

There are some precious Bible words we almost hesitate to use these days because they have been abused and misused throughout Christendom. Words like “Christian” and “Bishop” mean different things to different people, even though their Bible meaning has never changed.

Another term lately subjected to such abuse is “**Born Again.**” It has been so cheapened and downgraded by the world that now we must define terms. “*What do you mean that you are born again?*” Today, you are “born again” if you have had some life-changing experience. It is used in popular songs to mean “falling in love.” Hollywood superstars by the dozen profess to be “born again” — yet continue producing their wicked wares. Even Roman Catholics are using the term, “born again.”

Because the Lord Jesus Christ said we could not get to Heaven without being “born again,” it becomes vitally important that we understand the Bible meaning of the term.

WHAT BEING “BORN AGAIN” IS NOT.

A. The New Birth Is NOT Baptism.

Those who teach the doctrine of “Baptismal Regeneration” (all infant-sprinkling ‘churches’ and some immersing ‘churches’ like the Church of Christ denomination do!) use the following Scriptures as proof texts:

1. *John 3:5* — “...born of water...”

The context of this verse, especially *John 3:6*, shows that being “born of water” refers to the physical birth.

a. Born of water — “*that which is born of flesh is flesh.*”

b. Born of the Spirit — “*that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*”

2. *Titus 3:5* — “...washing of regeneration...”

Revelation 1:5 defines this washing — we are washed and cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

3. *I Peter 3:21* — “...baptism doth also now save us...”

A careful reading of this verse shows:

- a. Baptism is a “figure” (symbol).
- b. The literal washing of the body does nothing for us spiritually.
- c. Baptism is the *answer* (response) of a good conscience toward God.
How do we get a good conscience in the first place?? See: *I Peter 3:14-16*.

It is not the act of baptism which saves us; it is what baptism **pictures** that saves — i.e., the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

B. The New Birth Is NOT Reformation.

How often do people “turn over a new leaf”? Getting rid of a bad habit is always a good thing — but it is *NOT* the new birth.

1. Nicodemus had religion and a position of authority — but that wasn’t enough. See: *John 3:1,7*.
2. The rich young ruler kept the commandments (or so he thought) — but that wasn’t enough. See: *Mark 10:17-22*.
3. Saul (later, Paul) had every outward reason to be accepted by God — but that wasn’t enough. See: *Philippians 3:4-8*.

C. The New Birth Is NOT Some Religious Experience.

Many people equate their experience to real salvation.

1. Simon Magus had an experience — but that wasn’t enough. See: *Acts 8:9,13,18-22*.
2. Jesus warned of shallow, experience-oriented emotionalism. See: *Matthew 13:3,5,18,20,21*.

Note: Emotions are evoked when we are born again, and many people count their salvation as an experience. The important thing to remember is that the experience is *not* what saves — it is something which follows!



WHAT BEING "BORN AGAIN" REALLY IS.

A. The New Birth Is The Work Of God.

1. *John 6:63* – "The flesh (ourselves) profiteth _____."
The Holy Spirit _____ (makes alive).
2. *Ephesians 2:1* – "You hath _____ quickened."
3. *Ephesians 2:10* – "We are _____ workmanship."
4. *John 3:5* – "Except a man be born of water **and** of the _____, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

B. The New Birth Is Accomplished Through The Word Of God.

1. *John 15:3* – "Now ye are _____ through the _____."
2. *I Corinthians 4:15* – "For in Christ Jesus I have _____ you through the _____."
3. *I Peter 1:23* – "Born again by the _____ of _____."

C. The New Birth Is The Imparting Of A New Nature.

1. *II Peter 1:4* – We are made partakers of the _____.
2. *II Corinthians 5:17* – We are made a _____.

D. The New Birth Is The ONLY Means Of Entering God's Family.

See: *John 1:12,13.*

"Born . . . not of Blood – i.e. of human lineage (God has no grandchildren!)
nor of the Will of the Flesh – i.e. through works, reformation, etc.
nor of the Will of Man – i.e. through priest, pope, or pastor!

. . . but of God!!"

THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF THE NEW BIRTH.

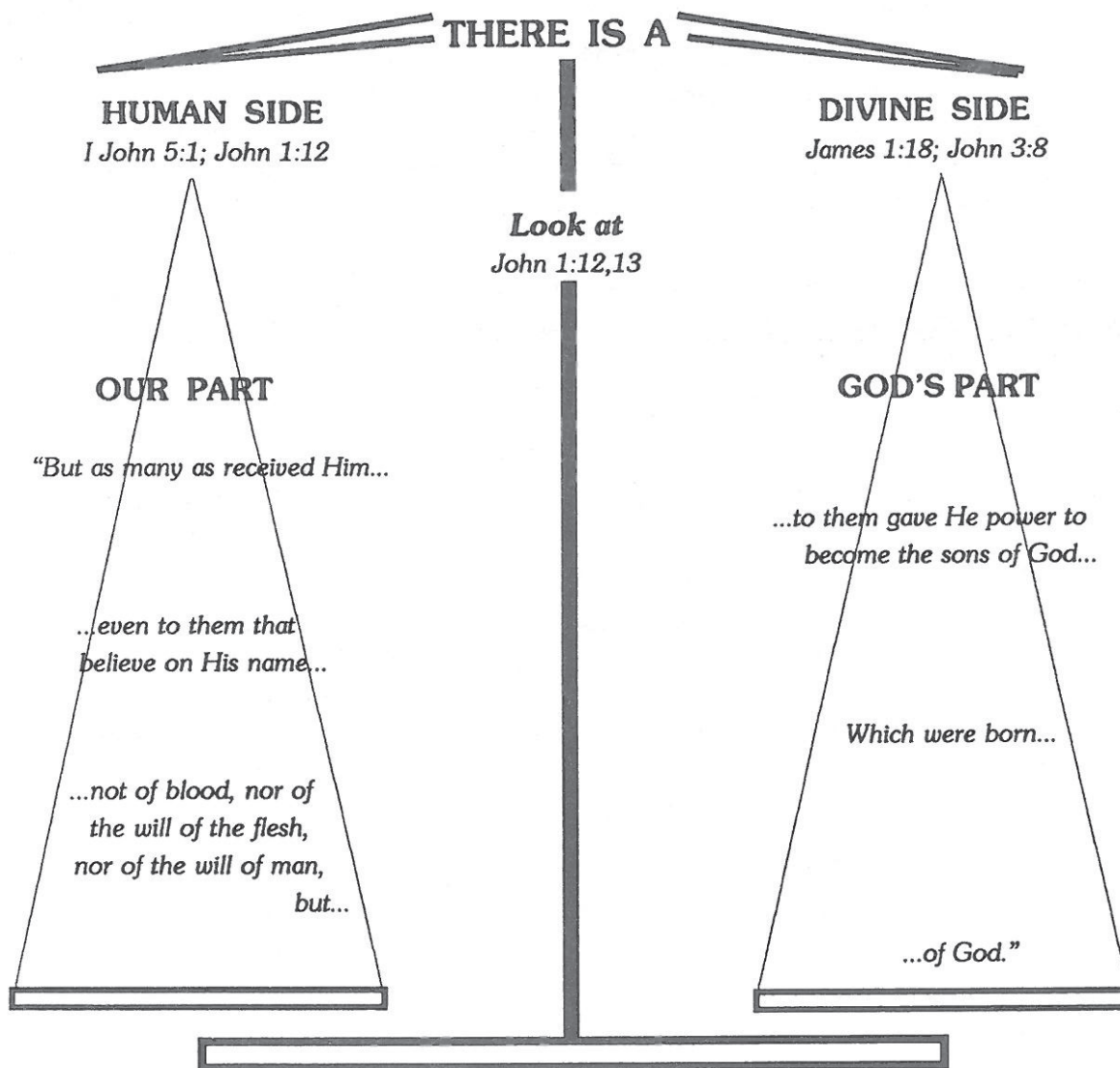
Write out: *John 3:3,7.*

HOW A MAN IS "BORN AGAIN".

As with our physical birth, there are three requirements for a spiritual birth:

- **A WOMB** – the human heart.
- **A SEED** – the Word of God.
- **A CONCEPTION** – the work of the Spirit, creating life.

While this miracle is entirely the work of God, it cannot take place until a man actually receives Christ.



READING ASSIGNMENT: Read the Book of *I Peter*.

MEMORIZATION: Try to memorize: *John 3:3*.