

# The REAL Meaning of "Born Again"

Nicodemus and Jesus, (John 3:1-8:)

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

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? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

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.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

We must be born again or born of the spirit to see or enter the kingdom of God. So what is it like to have been born of the spirit? Let's look again at Jesus' description:

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

No one today who claims to be "born again" fits that description. They can not move invisibly, like the wind. But Jesus could do that after His resurrection. He was able to move invisibly, and appear and disappear in front of His disciples. Jesus had not been resurrected as a mortal. He was raised with what the apostle Paul described as an immortal "spiritual body." He had been born again or born of the spirit.

Jesus explained to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

You can't be both at the same time; you're either flesh, or, you're spirit. They are two different things.

Jesus was the "firstfruits," the first to go from mortal life to immortal life, from flesh to spirit. When He returns those who have died "in Christ" will be resurrected. Then, like Jesus, they too will have immortal, spiritual bodies. They will have been born of the spirit.

In a letter to the Colossians, the apostle Paul described Jesus:

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."  
(Colossians 1:18)

Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23).

In a letter to the Philippians, the apostle Paul described the receipt of spiritual bodies at Jesus' return:

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:  
Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20,21)

Paul wrote about the bodies of the elect at death and at resurrection. When we die our natural, mortal body is "sown" or planted back into the ground, the grave. At Jesus' return those who have died "in Christ" will be resurrected with an immortal, spiritual body:

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:  
It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:  
It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." (1 Corinthians 15:42-44)

Not until we receive a spiritual body, at the resurrection at His return, will we be born of the spirit. Meanwhile in this mortal life we are begotten of the spirit . . . if we have received the holy spirit. We can never be born of the spirit without first being begotten of the spirit. But being begotten of the spirit is by no means a guarantee we will later be born of the spirit. Even after receiving the holy spirit it is possible to "fall away" or abort by our own choice or neglect:

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,  
And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,  
If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."  
(Hebrews 6:4-6)

We must choose to be led by the spirit:

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.  
For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."  
(Romans 8:13,14)

Both Jesus and Paul explained we must be born of the spirit - we must have an immortal spiritual body - before we can enter or inherit the Kingdom of God. Here is Jesus, again, speaking to Nicodemus:

"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" (Jesus, in John 3:5).

Paul also explained: as "flesh and blood" we can not inherit the kingdom of God: we must first receive an immortal, spiritual body, at Jesus' return at "the last trump":

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.  
Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,  
In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.  
For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.  
So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

Perhaps you're wondering, What does it mean to enter or inherit the kingdom of God? There are many verses about inheriting or entering the kingdom of God. Here are two:

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32)

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34)

What's that about? It has nothing to do with going to heaven. Those who received spiritual bodies at the "first resurrection" – at Jesus' return – will be immortal, so death will have no power over them. They will be with Jesus, ruling with Him here on Earth:

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:6)

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.  
And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:2-4)

Before anyone can inherit the kingdom of God, they must first receive an immortal, spiritual body, like Jesus had after His resurrection. They will receive that body at the first resurrection, at Jesus' return. Then they will have been born again or born of the spirit. That's the real meaning of "born again."