

“THE SPIRITUAL BIRTH”

Lesson 5 ☐ For week ending January 31, 2015

According to the teaching of Jesus it is an absolute necessity that a man be born again in order to see the kingdom of God. In ages past, one became a part of the kingdom of God simply by being born of Hebrew parents. After Jesus, it became necessary for a man to be reborn of the Spirit of God in order to be an heir of God's kingdom. This rebirth comes about as a result of one's belief or faith in Jesus.

KEY TEXT: “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” (John 3:3).

1. In His conversation with Nicodemus found in John 3:1-10, Jesus took the natural, visible shadow of the things under the Law – in this case, natural birth – and revealed the spiritual things that were to be after His sacrifice for sin. Discuss further why it is necessary to be born-again as you read I Corinthians 15:44-52 and I Peter 1:3,4.

• **John 3:1-10**

1 *There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.*

2 *This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”*

3 *Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

4 *Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?”*

5 *Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

7 *Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’*

8 *The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”*

9 *Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?”*

10 *Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?”*

• **1 Corinthians 15:44-52**

44 *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*

45 *And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.*

46 *However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.*

47 *The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.*

48 *As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.*

49 *And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.*

50 *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.*

51 *Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—*

52 *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

• **1 Peter 1:3-4**

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

2. The born-again experience is a process that takes place in three steps starting first with repentance. Repentance is the act of professing godly sorrow for something done wrong or left undone (II Corinthians 7:10). An Old Testament example of this is found in Psalms 51:1. King David's act of confessing his sorrow at having sinned and asking for forgiveness was repentance. This is the same message found in Acts 3:12-19. Notice Peter's instructions to the Jews that they must repent and be converted (regenerated or born-again).

• **2 Corinthians 7:10**

10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

• **Psalm 51:1**

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.

• **Acts 3:12-19**

12 So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?

13 The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.

14 But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

16 And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17 "Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.

18 But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

3. The next step is justification, which is the peace with God that is brought about by repentance (Romans 5:1,2). This justification comes about by faith in the fact that one's sins of which he has repented have been blotted out. Consider the way in which the sacrifices of the Old Testament foreshadowed the process of repentance and justification (Leviticus 1:1-4). Justification is the state of righteousness that is imputed to the believer for his faith (Romans 4:20-25).

• **Romans 5:1-2**

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

• **Leviticus 1:1-4**

1 Now the Lord called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying,

2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When any one of you brings an offering to the

Lord, you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock.

3 If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord.

4 Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.

• Romans 4:20-25

20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

22 And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him,

24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

4. The result of repentance and justification is regeneration—the process of a remaking or rebirth. At this point, the blood of Jesus does what the blood of bulls and goats could not do (Hebrews 10:4)—it transforms the old creature into a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17). Only those who are born-again will share in the kingdom of God (I Corinthians 6:9-11; Colossians 1:12-14).

• Hebrews 10:4

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

• 2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

• I Corinthians 6:9-11

9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,

10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

• Colossians 1:12-14

12 Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.