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THE NEW BIRTH
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INTRODUCTION TO THIS DIGITAL EDITION

This is a simple and short tract on the New Birth. The writer does not strike me as a theologian, but, this little message does have in it the ring of both sincerity and reality. -- DVM

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"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

"Marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again." -- John 3:7

Without the new birth, it is impossible to get to heaven, so if we plan on being there we "must" experience the new birth. Jesus made this very plain. He made no exceptions at all. When we read the context of our text, it may be seen that the Lord is talking to a normal man, who, as far as religion was concerned, had all he needed. He did not need more laws or creeds to follow, for the first verse of this chapter tells us that this man, Nicodemus, was a ruler of the Jews and a Pharisee, hence, had all the forms and ceremony needed in his day. As far as I can recall there is

nowhere in the whole Bible anything to indicate that Nicodemus was anything but a religious man. Yet Jesus said "Ye must be born again!"

Nicodemus became very puzzled at the statements of Jesus and could not conceive the thought of being born again. Hence, with that thought in view, I would like to give you a message that will, I trust, clear up some of the things about the new birth which seem so hard to understand.

There are three main thoughts I would like to bring to you, and they are as follows:

1. What is meant by the New Birth?
2. What are the results of the New Birth?
3. How may I experience the New Birth?

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1

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE NEW BIRTH?

In speaking of the new birth (which means being born from above) we are using a figure of speech which the Apostle John is pleased to use in explaining what happens when a sinner is made a "saint." Let us get it straight once and for all that we must allow for the use of different terms for the same thing when referred to by different people. For example, some may call the four-wheeled vehicle in which I ride, an "auto" then someone else may call it a "car" or still someone else may call it a "machine," yet they all mean the same thing, that is, my means of transportation. Let me illustrate further. In front of my home there is a road, which some may call a "highway," some may call it a "street," or some may call it an "avenue," yet they all mean the road which runs in front of my home.

With this thought in mind let us compare it with the new birth, (that being what the apostle chooses to call it) but Jesus calls the same experience being "saved" in Luke 19:10. The Apostle Paul calls the same experience "being justified" in Romans 5:1 and he also calls it being "a new creature in Christ Jesus" in 2 Corinthians 5:17. The Apostle Peter calls it being "converted" in Acts 3:19. Jesus also calls the same experience "regeneration" in Matt. 19:28. Isaiah one of the major prophets, in speaking of this experience called it "being pardoned" Isaiah 55:7.

So you see we have this same experience named in seven different ways, and many more could be cited, but there is no need, I trust, for that. Any of the above terms may be substituted for the new birth and mean just the same thing. One term may be clear to you but it might be clearer to use another term to explain it to someone else.

We may sum it all up with this statement: "The new birth is the transaction which takes place when a guilty soul comes to Jesus and through Grace has the guilt removed and is placed back in innocency." This really takes place in the "new birth." [More accurately, the term "justification" applies to the author's definition here. -- DVM]

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2

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF THE NEW BIRTH?

Since our text has been taken from the writings of St. John, let us proceed to find out what he gives us as the results of the "New Birth."

In I John 3:7-9 we find this experience gives us "Power over sin." Let us notice how the Apostle John words it: "Little children, let no man deceive you, he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this cause the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God."

I am sure by careful reading of these verses you will agree that the Apostle John believed in and preached a salvation above sin. Some of our good churches? would have us believe that we can be saved and still commit sin, but if the Apostle John knew what he was talking about, these people who insist on sinning religion are of the devil, and surely their religion will not support them, when they are called upon to change worlds. Beware, my friend beware! Many have been puzzled with the latter clause of this verse "For His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God," and will hide behind it as proof to "once in grace," but you can only claim this promise as you walk with God and keep His commandments.

We notice again as a result of the "New Birth" we have a "Hope" of some things which we were void of before. I John 3:2 tells us "That we are the sons of God," and not only that "but it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is." By this we have the hope of seeing Jesus again, and not only that but some day, bless God, we shall lay off this old body, for He says "We shall be like Him."

The Apostle John tells us further that "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." I John 3:3. This does not sound like we can be saved and go out and live like the devil. The apostle Paul in describing the things which would perish, or cease, in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians ended with these words, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." I Corinthians 13:13. Hence, we see the value placed upon the hope of a Christian. Hope is placed among the three remaining graces that abide.

Still another result of the "New Birth" is a love for the brethren: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I John 3:14.

Anyone who is truly born of God, will by all means love his fellow-men. This is the unmistakable evidence or result of the grace of God working in the heart of a man or woman who has found God. It is a miracle of Grace to see two people who have had trouble between them, kneel at the same altar of prayer, have Jesus come into their hearts and patch up the old argument

and be the best of friends. According to the Apostle John, anyone that does not love his brother, "Abideth in (spiritual) death." 1st John 3:14.

Hence we see that the "New Birth" produces some results, and if you claim to be saved, and there is no change in your life, something must be wrong for you cannot undergo this great transformation without it leaving its mark upon you.

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3

HOW MAY I EXPERIENCE THE NEW BIRTH?

Before we take up the process, let us notice a few facts.

(a) We shall never get it by education, for Paul was brought up at the feet of the greatest teacher of his day, and yet he was lost until he came in contact with Jesus Christ. Then there was that great teacher of the law, Nicodemus, who was also void of saving grace.

(b) We cannot get it by forms or keeping the law, for the great apostle Paul gives us some of his testimony in Phil. 3:4-6 telling of his former life before he met Jesus. Listen to his words, "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Hence, there must be some other way into the blessing.

I believe we are safe in saying the only way into the blessing is the New Birth, and this can only be experienced by coming to Jesus Christ, confessing our sins and believing on Him to save us. Notice some of the references as the Publican who could do nothing but smite his breast and say "God be merciful to me a sinner. And Jesus said, "That man went down to his house justified rather than the other," who was a Pharisee telling God how good he was. We have this promise from God that "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." I John 1.9. Thank God that it is so, for He is faithful.

Some have knelt beside a kitchen chair in their own home, confessed their sins to Jesus, and He forgave them right there, and they too went on their way justified rather than those who would not confess their sins. Then some have come to Jesus out in the wood shed, or the hay loft and many have come to Jesus around the altar in the church, but my friend, you must come to Jesus somewhere, tell Him you are lost, and need him to help you if you ever become a Christian. The reason so many don't get an experience that satisfies, is they fail to confess they have been in the wrong, and done that which is wrong.

God has made it as simple as possible, that is, just an open confession to Him, (not a priest or preacher) that you are guilty and need to be forgiven. That is simple isn't it, and yet so many will not do it.

(c) Next, we must walk in the light God gives us. 1 John 1:7 tells us "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with the other and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." So to get the experience we must repent, and to keep it we must walk in the light. Here is a place we must be careful for the devil can also give light, but we can always know when we are doing the will of God, and walking in His light by reading the Bible, for He has made it very plain in there concerning the way of Salvation. When we are in doubt as to whether or not to do a certain thing, it is well to check with the Word of God and by this we may always be on the safe side. Failing to do this often leads to foolish ideas and fanaticism.

(d) Next, we must get this experience by faith. I know this term has been abused and misused beyond measure, but still we must have faith in God that He will do just what He said He would do in the Bible. In I John 5:4 we read these words, "For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Hence we see that if we are to have the victory, it will take first, confession of our sins to Jesus, second, walking in the light which we already have and a willingness to walk in the light as God gives it to us, and third, we must have faith that God can do the work, will do the work, and does do the work as we meet the conditions.

Suffer an example from my own life. When I came to Jesus in a little tent meeting during a revival, I was kneeling at the altar. I had confessed my sins and promised God I would do anything He wanted me to do, but still the blessing did not come. Then some one started to sing that old song "Faith is the Victory," and soon I began to look up and as I had nothing to lose and all to gain, I placed myself without reserve into God's care and said I was claiming His pardon on the written Word (Bible) He had left us, and I tell you when I came to that point, it was not long until God honored my faith with the witness of the Spirit, that my sins were all washed away and that I was a Christian. Friend, when you have met the conditions then "Faith" must take hold of the promises, and God will answer.

Praise His name,
Charles G. Denniston

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THE END