

A New Leaf or a New Life



The big question is, “Have you been born again?” not, “Have you joined a church?” or, “Are you doing your best?” or, “Have you a religion?” but, “Are you twice-born?”

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” *John 3:3.*

Life begins with a birth. Physical life begins with a birth, and spiritual life likewise begins with a birth. We become members of the human family by birth, and we become members of the family of God by a birth — by being born again. There is no other way into the human family except by birth; and there is no other way into God’s family except by the new birth. Education will not do it. Joining a church will not do it. Reformation will not, and neither will making up your mind to do better. Even doing your best will not avail, and certainly turning over a new leaf will not gain you entrance into the family of God. “Ye must be born again.” *John 3:7.*

CHRISTIANITY IS CHRIST

Christianity is not religion. Christianity is life — the life of the Lord Jesus Christ introduced into us at the moment we are born again and reproduced in us moment by moment by the Holy Spirit. “I am come that they might have life.” *John 10:10.* “He that hath the Son hath life.” *1 John 5:12.* “To me to live is Christ.” *Philippians 1:21.*

NOT TRYING, BUT TRUSTING

Trying to follow Christ is not Christianity. Christianity is not imitation of Christ; it is the indwelling Christ who has done it all. He has finished the work of redemption, and there is nothing left for us to do. We are simply to receive and trust Him who said, “It is finished!” He shed His precious blood on the cross, and the work is all done, once and forever. Cease trying and begin trusting! (*John 3:16*).

HOW CAN YOU BE BORN AGAIN?

Simply, “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” see *Acts 16:31.* “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” *1 John 5:1.* You are born again by trusting a Person. The very moment you trust the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Saviour, He comes in and eternal life begins.

WHAT IS MEANT BY “BELIEVE”?

To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ means more than believing the historic facts concerning Him. Intellectual belief about Christ is not sufficient. “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” *James 2:19.* But they are not saved! The belief which accompanies salvation must

be with the heart. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." *Romans 10:10*

To believe on Christ and receive Him means to rely on Him alone. It is not Christ and the Church, or Christ and baptism, or Christ and my faith. It is not Christ and anything else. We are to depend on Him and definitely and deliberately receive Him. Believing on Christ means trusting Him so utterly that if He should fail there would be nothing left.

A FAMILY LIKENESS

When we are born into the human family we exhibit certain family characteristics which distinguish us as human. When we are born into the family of God we will, by the power of His indwelling Spirit, inevitably bear the family resemblance. We are blood kin to God. The precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, has brought us into this blessed relationship. Through Him we have become members of the family circle. There are certain unmistakable family traits which mark those who have been born again: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control (see Galatians 5:22).

You may belong to a church, or be a church officer; you may be very religious, and a great churchgoer; you may be active in church work and be doing the best that you can; you may be striving to live right and your outward life may be the acme of moral correctness; you may be looked up to, honored, and respected. But if you have not been born again, you are just as lost as if you had never heard of Christ.

Yes, you may even teach a Sunday school class or be a preacher of the Gospel; you may be gifted in prayer, and read the Bible, sing, shout, and feel happy. But if you have never been born again, you are still in your sins and a stranger to the Lord Jesus Christ (see Matthew 7:21, 23; also John 8:24).

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." *John 3:3*