

## What Does It Mean To Be Born Again?

The classic passage from the Bible that answers this question is John 3:1-21. The Lord Jesus Christ is talking to Nicodemus, a prominent Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin (a ruler of the Jews). Nicodemus had come to Jesus at night. Nicodemus had questions to ask Jesus about salvation. As Jesus talked with Nicodemus, He said, *"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."* Nicodemus replied, *"How can a man be born when he is old? Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"* Jesus answered, *"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."*

The phrase *"born again"* literally means *"born from above."* Nicodemus had a real need. He needed a change of his heart – a spiritual transformation. New birth, being born again, is an act of God whereby eternal life is imparted to the person who believes (2 Cor. 5:17; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 Jn. 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1-4, 18). John 1:12,13 indicates that *"born again"* also carries the idea *"to become children of God"* through trust in the name of Jesus Christ.

The question logically comes, "Why does a person need to be born again?" The apostle Paul in Eph. 2:1 says, *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins..."*. In Romans 3:23, the apostle wrote, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* So, a person needs to be born again; needs to be indwelt by God's Spirit and have a relationship with God.

How does that come to be? Ephesians 2:8-9 states, *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast."* When one is *"saved,"* he/she has been born again, spiritually renewed, and is now a child of God by right of the new birth. Trusting in Jesus Christ, the One who paid the penalty of sin when He died on the cross, is what is meant to be *"born again"* spiritually. *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17)!"*

If you have never trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, will you consider the prompting of the Holy Spirit as He speaks to your heart? You need to be born again. Will you pray the prayer of repentance and become a new creation in Christ today? *"Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God (John 1:12-13).*

If you want to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and be born again; here is a simple prayer. These words will not save you, there is nothing magical in them; anyone can repeat a sentence. It is when you believe with your heart and put your faith in Christ Jesus; that's what saves you. There is no magic formula in what you say or how you say it but it's your attitude and expression of your heart that really counts. This prayer is simply a way to express to God your faith in Him and thank Him for providing for your salvation.

***"Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank you for dying for the forgiveness of my sins and for offering me Your righteousness and Your resurrected life. I now accept by faith Your gift of salvation and I ask You to come into my heart and to be my Lord and Savior and my very best friend. Through Your Holy Spirit, teach me about Your love and grace and about the new life that You have given me. Please begin the work of making me into the person you want me to be. Amen."***

If you truly believe in your heart and you prayed this prayer, the Spirit of God has come to dwell within you forever and you have begun the great adventure for which you were created as a child of God. Now you and I are brothers or sisters in Christ. Welcome to Christ's body of believers. Welcome to the true church of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God is inside of you and not in buildings of wood and stone.