



the new birth

-by Kenneth Hagin

As you read the following passages of Scripture, keep in mind that Jesus, Himself, is speaking concerning the new birth.

JOHN 3:1-8

- 1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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?
- 5 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.
- 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.
- 8 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 everyone that is born of the Spirit.

MATTHEW 18:3

- 3 And (Jesus) said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

LUKE 13:1-5

- 1 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.
- 2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?
- 3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.
- 4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?
- 5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

FOR ALL HAVE SINNED

The first step to take in getting acquainted with God is to know yourself and your relationship to Him. And then to know what you can receive from Him.

You must realize your condition of sinfulness. The Bible declares, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). If you have been deceived by false religions into believing that you are not a sinner, it will be necessary to throw overboard this false religion. You know within yourself that you have sinned and have been condemned in your own conscience for many acts you have committed in life.

I JOHN 3:4

- 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

I JOHN 5:17

- 17 All unrighteousness is sin...

The Bible makes it clear that sin is transgression of the law. Anything which the Bible forbids is sinful. Lists of sins that damn the soul are plainly recorded so there can be no excuse for not knowing what the will of God is concerning sin.

MARK 7:21-23

- 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,
- 22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:
- 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

ROMANS 1:29-32

- 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
- 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
- 31 Without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
- 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

I CORINTHIANS 6:9-10

- 9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
- 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

GALATIANS 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

These Scriptures prove beyond doubt that God condemns all men as sinners. For all men outside of Christ commit in varying degrees some of these sins.

And if any man has committed one of these sins at any time in his life he has incurred the death penalty. He must accept Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour or be eternally condemned and lost, according to the Scripture which says, "...the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4); and according to Galatians 5:21 which we have just read, "...they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN

The key which unlocks all the promises of God is this: Jesus taught that a man must be born again.

In the Scriptures we read at the beginning of this lesson we saw these statements which came from the lips of Jesus:

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

The new birth is a necessity to being saved. It is a necessity in having the right relationship to God. It is necessary before one can claim the benefits of the Bible.

The new birth IS NOT...confirmation...church membership...water baptism...the taking of sacraments...observing religious duties...an intellectual reception of Christianity...orthodoxy of faith...going to church...saying prayers...reading the Bible...being moral...being cultured or refined...doing good deeds...doing your best... nor is it any of the other things some men are trusting in to save them.

Nicodemus, whom Jesus addressed concerning the new birth, possessed most of these qualities we have just mentioned. But Jesus said to him, "Ye must be born again."

The thief on the cross, and many others whom

Jesus forgave while on earth, were saved without these things. They simply did the one necessary thing--they became converted and born again by accepting Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and by repenting and turning to God with the whole heart as a little child.

Every man who is born again will automatically have the external evidences of a good life by virtue of the new birth. But there are millions, it is sad to say, who are trusting these things to save them. They really believe that these things are the evidences of a right relationship with God.

And millions will die and be lost without the new birth because they have been misled concerning the experience of being born again. There is no excuse for men being deceived, however, if they will read their own Bibles instead of listening to some religious teachers.

It is all important that we pay personal attention to our eternal welfare, and that we not trust the best of men in the matter. If we permit men to mislead us in eternal matters and are lost--it will then be too late to personally see after our welfare. Let's do something about it now!

Don't take the attitude that you cannot be deceived. Don't take the attitude that your church is the only right one and cannot mislead you. This may be true, but it would be wise to make certain by going to the Bible yourself, and seeing with your own eyes, and knowing from your own heart: That you are right with God--That you have the real new birth--And that you are living right with God every day.

There is no purpose in fooling yourself. That will get you nowhere. You are either born again--or you are not! You are either really saved--or you are being deceived into thinking you are, and you are lost!

If you are not getting answers to your prayers, it is either that you are not saved or you are doubting God. If your obstacle is doubt, you should quit it. If it is not doubt, it will pay you to examine yourself and see if you are really right with God. He is obligated to answer you if you are His child. If you have been saved, it may be that you have become cold in your experience, and that you need a reconsecration to God.

You know your own life and your true relationship to God. So get the facts settled--that you are a genuinely saved person and in present contact with God. Then you will be in the right position to receive what God has promised.

Culture, refinement and outward correctness of life, in the church or out of it, will not take the place of the new birth. The trouble, you see,

is in the heart.

Jesus said, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thought, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."
(Mark 7:21-23).

The trouble is in the heart--the inward man--the spirit. Merely to reform the "outward man" or the outward life will not save you.

An artist could put a coating of wax and the most beautiful colors on the outside of a rotten apple, but it would still be rotten at heart. One bite into it would be a bite into decay.

The fact is that out of Christ, every man is rotten in the heart. And mere culture, refinement, outward respectability, morality, and outward correctness of life apart from Christ are simply artificial and the practice of hypocrites who, as Jesus said were like whited sepulchers making clean the outside, but who were within full of extortion and excess, dead men's bones and all uncleanness. (See Matthew 23:25-28).

EVIDENCES OF THE NEW BIRTH

If one has been born again, what are the evidences of the new birth?

(1) You will be changed within the depth of your being. The "inward man", the spirit will be changed and made a new creation.

II CORINTHIANS 5:17-18

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.

Now if you have never been changed like this, within the depth of your being, in your spirit and made a new creature--then it is certain that you have never been born again.

(2) You will have the witness of the Spirit in your life that you are a child of God.

ROMANS 8:14-16

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

(3) You will have freedom from condemnation and from the law of sin and death. You will live and walk in the Spirit.

ROMANS 8:1,2,4,5

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death...
4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Paul talks about this down through the 13th verse in the 8th chapter of Romans, and also in the 5th chapter of Galatians, verses 16-26. I suggest you read it.

(4) You will be cleansed from all sin and delivered from the power and dominion of sin, as well as from the love of sin.

MATTHEW 1:21

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins.

I JOHN 1:7,9

7 ...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.
9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(5) You will be free from sin.

JOHN 8:31-36

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;
32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?
34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.
35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.
36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

ROMANS 6:1-18

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?
4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.
8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:
9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.
11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

ROMANS 8:1-4

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

I JOHN 2:29

29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of him.

I JOHN 3:7-10

7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 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.

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

I JOHN 5:1-4

1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

I JOHN 5:18

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

If you are born again and in Christ the following is true concerning you according to Scripture:

You have received power to become the son of God (John 1:12).

You have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts (Gal. 5:24).

Your sins are blotted out (Acts 3:19).

You are washed, sanctified, and justified (I Cor. 6:11 and Rev. 1:5).

You are turned from darkness into light; from the power of Satan to the power of God (Acts 26:18).

You have salvation (Romans 1:16 and II Thess. 2:13).

You are created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:22-24).

You are God's elect (Eph. 1:11 and I Peter 1:2-4).

You depart from all iniquity (I Tim. 2:4, 19-22).

Do not let men deceive you into thinking there is no such thing as the clean, holy, victorious life in Christ, secure from sin, the flesh, the world, and the devil.

Do not listen to men concerning such an important thing as your eternal welfare. Why not listen to the Scripture itself? It will not deceive you. It will always tell you the truth. If you want Biblical experiences, if you want faith in God, answers to prayer, prosperity, healing, health and happiness in God, you will have to conform to God and His Word as you receive it.

THE NEW BIRTH: WHAT IT IS HOW IT IS RECEIVED

The new birth is a "new creation" from above--the direct operation of the Word of God and the Spirit of God upon your life, changing you completely when you truly repent and turn to God.

This "new creation" is brought about in the following manner:

(1) Recognize that you are a sinner and lost; without God and without hope.

(2) Admit that Jesus Christ died on the cross to save you from sin by His own precious blood.

(3) Come to God, repenting of your sins and turning away from all sin, pleading the merits of the blood of Christ in the Name of Christ AND YOU SHALL BE BORN AGAIN. The Holy Spirit will then definitely make you a new creature, cleansing you from all sin by the authority of the Word of God and by the blood of Christ that was shed to atone for your sin.

(4) You must believe from your heart and confess with your mouth that God does forgive you of your sins and that He does cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

BELIEVE AND CONFESS

Now here are some Scriptures which will show you what you have in your authority to confess and believe.

JOHN 1:12-13

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

JOHN 6:37

37...him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Oh, what a basis for faith! There is no such thing as a person coming to Him and being cast out. Oh, no! Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

JOHN 3:14-21

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.
16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
18 He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.
20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.
21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

JOHN 3:36

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

And now I want you to notice another verse where Jesus is speaking,

JOHN 5:24

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

ROMANS 10:9-10

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

ACTS 3:19

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

And then, of course, we have the following classic text:

I JOHN 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

You have the intelligence to see what the Bible says for yourself. Again we warn you, do not listen to the interpretations of men who will tear apart the simple Scriptures and leave you confused.

They do not care for your soul or they would not seek to rob you of your true Christian experiences. If they had a love for you at all, they would at least permit you to believe the Bible just as it is. And they would encourage you to get the Bible experiences.

When they fight so hard to rob you of these benefits, you would be a fool not to wake up and see that they are agents of the devil in sending men to hell. It matters not that they are the most refined and wonderful religious men you have ever met, they are not ministers of God if they are robbing you of God's blessing.

Paul said, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Cor. 14-15).

THE WATER OF THE NEW BIRTH

We read that Jesus said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). In the 5th verse of that same chapter He said, "...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."

What is the "water" of the new birth? What does this water of the new birth mean?

Does this refer to being baptized in water; does that save you? No, that is not what He is talking about. The "Word of God" is the water referred to in John 3:5.

Jesus is not talking about being baptized literally, physically in water. The Word of God is the water of John 3:5. Now, let's prove that by looking through a number of Scriptures to see if it is so.

EPHESIANS 5:26

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it (referring to the church)

with the washing of water by the word.

JOHN 6:63

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

JOHN 15:3

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

JOHN 17:17

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

I PETER 1:23

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

JAMES 1:18

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Now, when one believes the Word of God, that he is a sinner, that Christ died to save him from all sin, that if he confesses his sins

to God and turns from sin with a whole heart and believes the Gospel--he is conforming to the Word.

The Holy Spirit will then transform his life by the power of the Word of God and by the blood of Christ.

The moment one does this--he is saved and born again.

We must believe it and walk accordingly. We must begin reading the Bible and praying to God. We must begin to walk and live in the Spirit and conform to the Word of God as we receive the light.

Being born again, becoming the child of God is of foremost importance. It is the key that unlocks all the promises of God to you. For when you become a child of God, then God's promises become yours.

