

Born Again!

The Miracle of New Spiritual Life

Church January 8, 2023

Part 2- The *Need* for the New Birth

Ephesians 2:1-10

- 1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,**
- 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.**
- 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.**
- 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,**
- 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**
- 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**
- 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**
- 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;**
- 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.**
- 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.**

*To the Glory of God the Holy Father; God the Holy Son; and God the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

Now last week, I told you that God has laid on my heart to begin the year of 2023 with a series of Sermons on the “*Miracle of the New Birth.*” So, if God is willing, for the next several weeks- we will take a “vacation” from our verse-by-verse “Journey” through the **Gospel of Matthew** to examine what the Bible teaches about this amazing Act of God.

Now last week, in the Introduction, we looked at **John 3** and the dialogue between Jesus and a Leader of the Pharisees named, Nicodemus. And I gave you

twelve Issues that verses 1-21 deals with and asked that you look at them during this past week so we can discuss them today and next week. So, **John 3:1-21**- is going to be the *primary* Passage that will sort of *headline* this entire Series. And I will periodically return to that Passage over and over as we go deeper into this Sermon Series.

Now the very first Issue that **John 3:3b** is where the Apostle John quotes Jesus as He communicates with this man, who is *supposed* to be an expert of the Old Testament. And in verse 3- Jesus tells this man (and us) about how vital the New Birth is when He said,

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

... and then again in verse 5- Jesus *repeats* the Command that everyone MUST be Born Again- but he uses different words, and He said,

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Now with all due respect to those deceived by the false Teaching of the Church of Christ- here in verse 5- Jesus was NOT commanding people to be baptized. And neither was He teaching what is called, “*Baptismal Regeneration*” which says that people getting wet in the baptismal waters is what brings about the New Birth. Jesus did NOT believe that and so, we shouldn’t either.

Also, Jesus was NOT talking about people being “baptized” with the Holy Spirit- as many Pentecostals falsely teach. These are all wrong and unbiblical Teachings that have been *fabricated* over the Centuries by well-meaning but wayward people. Here in verse 5- Jesus was simply using Old Testament Jewish terminology with a man, who was a Jew, and who was *supposedly* an expert on the Old Testament- to describe to him (and to us) the *importance* of every individual *personally* experiencing the Miracle of the New Birth- and to show him that this was God’s Plan from the very Beginning.¹ So, here in verse 5, Jesus is merely *repeating* the very SAME thing He said in verse 3.

And then at the end of verse 7- Jesus emphasized this very SAME Truth when He said,

... You must be born again.

¹ Most of the time, when Old Testament Passages are quoted in the New Testament- they are to prove to the Reader that the Subject being discussed was NOT created by the New Covenant- but is the way God has always said things were. And the fact that MOST Jews do NOT know this- proves that without the final, full, and completed Revelation of the New Covenant (the 27 Books of the New Testament) MUCH of what the Old Testament teaches is NOT being correctly and fully understood.

So, the *first* Statement from last week is proven by Scripture to be true:

The New Birth is *Commanded*

.. which means that *nobody* is in “Right Standing” with God unless and until they have personally experienced the Miracle of the New Birth.

And please allow me to say this another way. Nobody is saved; they are NOT forgiven; and they are NOT going to Heaven unless they have *personally* experienced the Miracle of the New Birth. And there are NO exceptions to this Truth. *Everybody*- Young or Old; Educated or Uneducated; Cultured or Uncultured; Male or Female; Jew or Gentile; Catholic or Protestant- every single human being, who desires to be forgiven and made Righteous; who desires to be in “*Right Standing*” with God; who desires to be part of Christ’s Church; and who desires to spend all of Eternity in the unspeakable Joys of Heaven- MUST be born again.

And that means that any Teaching; by any Person; or any Group; or any Denomination; or any Religion; that *denies* this Truth; or that seeks to *minimize* or *eliminate* this Truth- is *false*; and is a Tool of Satan to help keep Lost people- Lost. The New Birth is *commanded*; it is a *Requirement* in order to be forgiven and to be made Righteous; and to be what we call, “Saved”.

Now some of you went through the Class that I recently taught about the “*Ordo Salutis*”- which is a Latin phrase having to do with the “*Order of Salvation*”. And the “*Order of Salvation*” goes through each and every “Step” that God takes² in order to save unworthy Sinners.

And the *Ordo Salutis* begins in what is called, “*Eternity Past*”³ with the one, single “*Decree of God*”⁴ and it ends in “*Eternity Future*”⁵ with the glorification of the Saints. And it goes through all of the other 13 Steps in between these two that go into great detail about what the Bible teaches about how God saves Sinners.

Now I realize that most people have never even heard of the “*Ordo Salutis*” and as a Result- they see no Need to understand it. But that is one of the worst “cop-outs” you could ever give- because simply because you have never heard of something does NOT take anything away from how vital and important it may be.

The Truth is that far too many of the people who make up the modern American Church have lived during a Time of very shallow and/or very bad

² There are at least 15 separate Steps in the *Ordo Salutis*

³ “*Eternity Past*” is a phrase that has to do with a period before God created anything.

⁴ The single *Decree of God* is that He alone receives the maximum Glory by saving unworthy rebels by what He alone does for them.

⁵ “*Eternity Future*” has to do with the period after all things have been accomplished and the Redeemed are given glorified Bodies

Teaching. Many are NOT being taught at all. But even among those who are being taught- many of them are NOT being taught very well. And to prove my Point- please allow me to discuss just two verses- found in **2Timothy 4:3&4:**

**3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,
4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.**

Now this inspired Passage begins with the word, “**For**”- which we have discovered actually means: “Because”. So, when we back up to verse 2- we see that the Apostle Paul is instructing his “*son in the Faith*” Timothy, who was the young Pastor of the Church at Ephesus, back in the 1st Century- to “**Preach the Word**”. Not be creative; not discuss his visions; or his angelic Visitations; or his own personal Experiences. Paul tells Timothy to simply preach or “herald” God’s Word. And this is so important to Paul that he gave Timothy a very important and Solemn “Charge” back in verse 1 that says,

2Timothy 4:1

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

So, “*for the Sake of*” four very important things:

1. The Presence of God and Jesus Christ
2. The Judgment of both the Living and the Dead
3. The “Appearing” (Second Coming) of Jesus to this earth
4. God’s Kingdom

... and by giving Timothy this “Charge” Paul is saying that Timothy and his Ministry is fully *accountable* to God along the Line of these four Issues or with these four Issues in mind. In other words, these four things being believed; hoped for; and trusted in by the believers in his Church is what is at stake in Timothy’s Ministry.

Another way of understanding this is to say that the Ministry of a Pastor (Elder) is so eternally Important; so Serious; so Vital in the Lives of God’s people that Timothy (and every other Elder and Pastor) MUST realize that where people will spend all of Eternity is at stake with what he preaches; and how he lives his daily Life. So, Paul gave Timothy this “apostolic Charge” to forever “bind” Timothy (personally) and his Ministry to the anointed *heralding* of the biblical Truth. You really cannot get any more Serious than how Paul is here.

And because the Ministry (and Calling) of an Elder and Pastor is just that Serious- Paul then gives Timothy inspired Instruction on HOW he (and every other Pastor and Elder) is to carry out his Ministry in verse 2:

preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

... and even though there is much to say about this 2nd verse- I want to go past this to get to the Point I'm trying to make.

And so, AFTER Paul gives Timothy the apostolic Charge (verse 1) and AFTER he instructs Timothy on how he is to conduct his Ministry (verse 2)- he then begins verse 3 with the word, "For" or BECAUSE. So, WHY does Paul give Timothy this Charge? And WHY does he tell this young Pastor how to conduct his Ministry? BECAUSE...

... the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

Now I have been saved for almost 52 years. And in that Time-frame- I have heard this Passage preached and taught a hundred Times. And EVERYBODY says that the Time- frame that Paul is describing here in verse 3- is upon us here in America in the *last* part of the 20th Century and the *first* part of the 21st Century! In other words, they all say the same thing:

We are living in the Time that Paul speaks about here

.. and they base this on what verse 3 says:

- People in the Church not being able to ENDURE Sound Doctrine
- They will accumulate Teachers, who will preach things that "tickle the ears" of those in the Church

... in other words, Paul is *prophesying* here about a future Time-frame where there will be great Compromise; as well as great Sin; and Worldliness- **inside the Church among those who say they are saved.**

And this Compromise; Sin; and Worldliness will exist due to the fact that the "people of the Church" no longer desire to hear; and be taught; and believe what Paul called, "**Sound Doctrine**".

Now “*Sound Doctrine*” is simply another way of describing the Church- putting the various aspects of “Biblical Truth” together- to form a single, cohesive *Body of Teaching*- which represents the correct and full understanding of the Holy Bible. In other words- it is the ongoing; systematic development of a “*Biblical Worldview*” by the Leaders of the Church.

And Paul is speaking here as God the Holy Spirit is “moving” him to utter this written Prophecy that has become part of the Canon of Scripture. So, this is true; it is infallible and inerrant. So, this WILL come to pass. And as I said- MOST people would say that we are living in the time of the fulfillment of this scriptural Prophecy.

And I agree. But here is the catch. While *everybody* I have met over the last half-century agrees that we are living in the Time of the fulfillment of this Prophecy- I have NEVER met the first person- who would admit that this has been true in their own Lives! In other words, I know of no one- who would *personally* take *ownership* of this Prophecy and testify that they have either been a victim of what Paul describes here- and have been deceived by these kinds of Teachers; or they have been guilty of *wanting* and *enjoying* these “ear-tickling” Teachers; or they have actually been one of these false Teachers themselves.

So, while everybody says this Scenario Paul describes here is true about the modern, American Church, it is very hard to get anyone to confess that this Prophecy has been true in their own Lives- in one way or another

But you can’t have it both ways. If this Prophecy is as prevalent as people say it is- then we should have a literal sea of people, who have fallen into Deception by Teachers who tickled their ears; or we should have a sea of people who have *wanted* and who *enjoyed* those false Teachers for a time; or we should have a sea of people who have actually been some of those false Teachers themselves! And look, I realize that Pride simply won’t allow some people to confess this. Like I said- I’ve never met one person who would admit to being guilty of one of these three things. But the Truth is that we all have been one of these three things:

1. We have been *deceived* by false Teachers at some point in the Past
2. We have *wanted* and *enjoyed* false Teaching at some point in our Walk with God
3. We have been a false Teacher at some point

... or this Prophecy is NOT being fulfilled in our Day. Now I certainly believe that we can be forgiven for our Past. I have been forgiven for my Past. So, I really don’t care where a person has been- I only care where that person is going.

Everybody is coming from some Place- and the Place from where we are coming- is Bad. But thanks be to God- that we may be forgiven for our Past!

But I think it is both Healthy and Biblical for us to be able to admit where we have been wrong in our Past; and not act as though we have always understood things the way we do now. That isn't being "Spiritual". It is being Dishonest. And this has to do with the 2nd and 3rd Issue from last week:

Nicodemus SHOULD have known about the New Birth- but he DIDN'T

But the reason he didn't know about the New Birth is because Nicodemus had been- *his entire adult life*- one of those people who were believing falsely. But Nicodemus was also one who was also teaching falsely about Salvation. So, until this very night with Jesus- Nicodemus had been deceived. The Truth is that this Leader of the Jews was involved in a *perversion* of the Old Testament. The Pharisees had taken God's Word in the 39 Books of what we now call the "Old Testament"- and they had added to it; and they had taken away from it- until they Had, in effect- created another Religion.

And as you have heard me say many times before – there is NOTHING within 1st Century "*Pharisaical Judaism*" that will lead *anyone* to Salvation. Nothing. The Doctrine of the Pharisees cannot help bring about the Forgiveness of a single Sin; or save a single soul. It is *entirely* false; it is *wholly* "Man-made"; it is *completely* separate from what God had infallibly inspired in the Old Testament- and Jesus categorically condemned it.

And because the Bible says that Nicodemus was a Leader *within* this false Religion- that means that he helped to *perpetuate* the Lie. He himself was deceived- but he also helped to deceive others. And Jesus would have perfectly justified to cast him off. Yet, in His Mercy, God was dealing with Nicodemus. And even though he really didn't understand Salvation at all- God was drawing him to Jesus- so that he could repent and be saved.

So, here is what you need to know about me. I wasn't always so precise about what I believe and what I teach either. There is a reason why I am striving so hard for "*doctrinal Precision*" or to "*get the Gospel right*". You see, I was saved at a very young age. And I was very immature and very impressionable. "*Naïve*" is the word, I think. So, I was led astray by wicked people, who used me for their own personal gain. And part of the Guilt lies with the ones who *willingly* and *knowingly* deceived me. And they will stand before God one day to give an Account. But part of the Guilt lies with me. Because as I read and studied the Bible- I *should* have recognized false Teaching much *sooner* than I did.

Now I did finally recognize it. But it took years. But in the meantime- I also propagated the Falsehoods I was taught. And that isn't okay. So, I have gone to Churches and stood before the Congregation and begged Forgiveness for what I

taught at an earlier time in my Walk with God. I have gotten on the Radio and asked for Forgiveness. I don't know how to be any more Honest about it than that. Now I certainly don't think I am the only Pastor or Church Leader- who is guilty of this. But I am one of the few that will admit it.

And that is *why* this Church exists. That is *why* I am doing what I am doing here. I know that when people realize that some Leader in the Church has deceived them and led them astray- that is one of the reasons why people don't go to Church at all. And I could use that Excuse myself. I could give you some real horror stories about wayward Leaders and the Damage they cause.

But instead – I want to lead a Church where ALL of the Leaders are doing their level best to teach the Truth and NOT be Teachers that tickle *anybody's* ears. I don't want a single person in this Church to ever have to go through what my Wife and I have had to endure. And that is why I am so careful and so thorough in my Ministry. And I can also tell you that those in Leadership here- are *qualified* to be there.

Now whether you ever have the Courage to admit it or not- I know that the overwhelming majority of you have either belonged to a Church that was guilty of doing what Paul says here- and God has graciously forgiven you; and brought you here- or- you were actually one of the ones that did the false Teaching and God has graciously forgiven you and brought you here. But either way- God has mercifully raised up this Church to be known all around as a Church where the Truth of God's Word is taught and practiced. And God gets all the Glory for that.

And like Nicodemus- I also know that many of you are just as confused about the New Birth as he was. And one of the ways that this wonderful Miracle has become confusing to you- is in the fact that the New Birth has been looked at as simply another way of understanding Salvation.

Now it is true that the Miracle of the New Birth is *part* of Salvation. But it is also true that the New Birth is a completely *separate* "Step" or "Operation" in the overall "Process of Salvation"- that God performs- ALL BY HIMSELF!

You see, *some* Parts of the Salvation Process are carried out by the individual believer- as God empowers and enables him. Some Parts are carried out by God- *sovereignly*- all by Himself- without *any* Cooperation or even Agreement from us at all. And then there are other Parts of Salvation- that are a "cooperative Effort" as the believer *yields* himself to the ongoing Work and Will of God the Holy Spirit. And knowing which Parts are sovereign Acts of God alone; which Parts are Actions by the believer; and which Parts are *cooperative* Efforts by both God and Man- is vital if we are to understand God's Word and grow in both Grace and the Knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Bible teaches clearly and repeatedly that the New Birth is a sovereign Act of God- alone. God comes to the individual- *sovereignly*- BEFORE he is saved; BEFORE he asks or prays for it; and BEFORE he even wants it. And I will show you- as this Series progresses- that the Bible teaches that God comes to the individual and sovereignly gives him three things that he doesn't have:

1. **Eyes** that can behold the Glory of God in the Person of Jesus Christ
2. **Ears** that can hear the Gospel
3. A **Heart** that is soft; and one that has both the Ability and Desire to be convicted and repent of Sin; believe in Jesus and in His finished Work; and trust in the Truth of the Gospel.

Another way of understanding this- is learning what the Apostle Paul meant in the Passage that we heard read at the beginning of this Sermon. In verse 1 and the first part of verse 2- God the Holy Spirit "moved" infallibly on the Apostle Paul to say,

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked

Now the word, "**walked**" here is used to describe what we do in our normal, daily Life. So, before we were saved (formally)- we "walked" or we lived our normal daily Lives as being "**dead in your trespasses and sins**". And keep in mind- this is describing what we "WERE"- NOT what we "DID". So, this is NOT talking about individual Sins that we committed- but who we "were" in our fallen Nature. And the "State of Being"; or the "Condition of our Nature" before we were saved- was "DEAD". So we were NOT merely "spiritually Sick"- as so many teach today. That is NOT what the Bible says. We were NOT merely "Restricted"; or "Separated from God"; or "spiritually Impaired." Now we WERE all of those things. But we were MORE than those things. We were much WORSE than those things. And Paul went on to explain what being "Dead in Trespasses and Sins" looked like in verses 2&3:

2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

So, the Apostle says here that we "walked" or we lived our normal daily Lives...

- According to the Course of this World
- According to the Prince of the Power of the air (the spirit that is now working in the sons of Disobedience)

... and then the Apostle infallibly taught *more* about what being “Dead in Trespasses and Sins” looked like when he said,

- Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh
- Indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind

... and then he summed up what being “Dead in Trespasses and Sins” looked like by saying that when we were Lost- we were...

... by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Now the phrase, “by Nature” is what I want you to see. This phrase means that it was “Who we were” and NOT merely “What we were doing” that caused us to be underneath God’s Wrath. You see, “Who we were” has to do with our normal and natural Way of Life. So, this was NOT taught to us. We didn’t learn this in School. The Characteristics that Paul talks about here is the normal and natural “*default setting*” for all fallen creatures.

And that is what Paul meant when he said that we were “spiritually Dead”. We were stone-cold Dead as far as God and the things of God were concerned. In other words- before we were saved- we had NO “spiritual Life”. None. Why? We lost our spiritual Lives when Adam sinned.

Remember what God told Adam in **Genesis 2:16&17:**

... From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.

Now many Teachers will read this- and then say that, even though Adam sinned- God had Mercy on him and he didn’t die for almost 1,000 years AFTER he sinned. But that misses the entire Point. Adam died- *spiritually*- the second he sinned. But because he was made *directly* by God (without a Mother and Father); and because he was made in God’s Image and Likeness- it took almost 1,000 years for his Sin to kill him- *physically*.

But *spiritually speaking*- Adam lost his Life- the moment he sinned. He died- spiritually. And the Proof of that- is in how Adam later behaved and in how

he made Excuses for his Sin. And every single human born after Adam sinned is now shaped and formed in his mother's womb as "spiritually Dead."

And what do dead people need? Well, they DON'T need Commandments. They can't hear or love or obey Commandments. Why? They're dead. And they also don't need Instructions; or Rules; or Regulations; or Information; or Precepts. Why? They can't hear them; they can't love them; and they can't obey them. So, they don't. Why? They are spiritually Dead. So, what do dead people need? LIFE! They don't have LIFE and Life MUST be given to them- or they will never be able to hear and love and obey God's Commandments. NOTHING happens until Life is given. So, now read verses 4-7:

**4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),
6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**

Now, in the Bible- Salvation is equated with two other Things:

1. Birth
2. Resurrection

So, what is it that has the Power to give Life? Only two things:

1. Birth
2. Resurrection

We are given Life through our Birth or dead people ae4r given Life through Resurrection. Other than that- dead people ALWAYS stay dead. So, outside of the Miracle of Resurrection- the ONLY thing that produces Life- is a Birth.

So, when we were born- as natural humans- we were given "natural Life". And that is precisely why we NEED to be Born Again. Because until we are given new, spiritual Life- we cannot hear God; we cannot love God; and we certainly can't obey God. And that is why Lost people don't do any of that. None of them can do any of that. Why? They're dead.

Now please explain to me what you contributed to your own natural Birth. What did you “bring to the Table”; what did you “do”- that *facilitated* your natural Birth? NOTHING! Not *Something*- NOTHING! Did you *initiate* your natural Birth? No. Why not? You *couldn't*- you didn't have any Life. It wasn't *hard*- it was *impossible*. In the Natural- Death CANNOT produce Life. Ever. In any way. Okay, but did you *cooperate* with your Parents in your Birth? Did you *help* the seed of your Father unite with the egg of your Mother? No. But did you voluntarily *yield* to your natural Birth? Not at all. Why not? You couldn't- you had no Life.

And keep in mind that the “Gift of Life” that was given to you in your natural Birth- came from OUTSIDE of you. You didn't already have this Life. You were GIVEN Life. But it didn't *originate* from you. It had NOTHING to do with you- until it was *given* to you by God. And at your natural Death- the Breath of God- that He gave you at your natural Birth will go back to God. Why? Because it doesn't belong to you. If was a Gift that was loaned to you- but God owns it. And the writers of the Nicene Creed called God the Holy Spirit, the “Giver of Life”. And they were referring to both natural and spiritual Life.

So, because of the Fall- we have NO spiritual Life. So, before anything else can be done- we need to get new, spiritual Life. But wait a minute! Because we are *already* spiritually Dead- we can't *initiate* this new spiritual Life- anymore than we could initiate our natural Life. Life- all Life- both natural and spiritual Life- HAS to be *given* to us. We can't “*gin it up*”; we can't *originate* it or *initiate* it. We can't *cooperate* in it and we can't *yield* to it. There is absolutely NOTHING we can do to get this new spiritual Life. We can't ask for it; we can't pray about it; we can't seek after it; and because we are fallen and thus, spiritually Dead- we can't even WANT it!

And that is why the Miracle of the New Birth is a sovereign Act of God alone. And that is also why being Born Again has to come FIRST- BEFORE we realize we are Lost; BEFORE we are convicted of Sin; BEFORE we repent of Sin; BEFORE we trust in Jesus and in His finished Work; and BEFORE we love God; and BEFORE we strive to obey Him.

So, God comes to us- WHILE WE ARE STILL LOST; WHILE WE ARE IN OUR SINS- and God sovereignly gives us this new, spiritual Life. And in giving us this spiritual Life- our blind eyes are open; our deaf ears are unstopped; and our stony hard hearts are made soft and made both able and willing to believe.

And with those new eyes- we behold the Glory of God in the Person of Jesus Christ. And with those new ears- we hear the Sound of amazing Grace. And with that new heart- we realize that we are Lost and deserving of Damnation. And part of that new heart is the Gift of saving Faith. And with that wondrous Gift- we now

possess both the Ability and the desire to repent of Sin and trust in Jesus and in His finished Work.

And all of those things that we absolutely “DO”- are merely human *Responses* to the great and miraculous Work that God the Holy Spirit has ALREADY done in giving us new, spiritual Life. So, even though it is true that we ARE Convicted; and that we DO repent; and that we DO trust in Jesus- all of that is NOT something we *initiated*. Because God the Spirit has already given us new, spiritual Life- we simply *respond* to that Gift of Life. So, all of the Conviction; all of the Repenting; and all of the Trusting- is a normal and natural *Re-action* or a *Response*- to the mighty and effectual Work that God has already *sovereignly* carried out- in giving us new, spiritual Life! So, even in all of what we do- God gets ALL the Glory- because without Him giving us the Miracle of the New Birth- sovereignly and first- we would have NEVER done any of that!

And this is what Jesus meant when He told Nicodemus this in **John 3:6**:

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

Flesh CANNOT bring forth Spirit. So, striving to keep God’s Commandments; or getting wet in the baptismal Waters; or taking Communion; or going to Church; or singing Hymns; or getting smart about the Bible- WHILE WE HAVE NO SPIRITUAL LIFE- can no more bring about the New Birth- than we could bring about or natural Birth. Doing religious things can’t produce new, spiritual Life. We cannot initiate or originate our own spiritual Life. And we also can’t ask for it; we can’t pray for it; we can’t want it; or seek after it. God MUST initiate our New Birth- or we will remain Lost. But God has promised to grant this new, spiritual Life to ALL of those He has chosen to save- from before the Foundation of the world.

Now what I have just told you is 100% biblical. It is what the Bible teaches. And the Bible has always taught this. Yet what I just told you is one of the most despised and rejected and denounced and condemned Teachings that exist. No why is that? Why would anybody who is saved and who loves God- reject what the Bible clearly and repeatedly teaches?

More than most areas of the Bible- this Truth *eliminates* Man’ so-called “Free Will”. As we have seen- Man has NOTHING to do with the Miracle of the New Birth and people hate the fact that they are not in charge. Part of what it means to be “Fallen” is that we don’t merely want to rebel against God- we actually want to BE God! And so, even in Church- people want to be in charge. And so, when they begin to realize that the New Birth is a sovereign Act of God

alone- they immediately rebel against it- because this Truth robs all men from getting any Glory!

But that is precisely why we need to teach this openly; loudly; and completely unashamedly. People need to know that the so-called “Free-Will” that they have been taught about all their Lives doesn’t even exist. It is a Myth. It is a “made-up” Teaching that soothes the fallen soul of unsaved and lukewarm people. Now you DO have a “Will”. But the Concept that your Will is somehow “Free”- is a complete fabrication by people who *know* what the Bible teaches- but they don’t *like* what the Bible teaches.

God is the ONLY truly “Free” Being in the Universe. And by His Grace; and through His Mercy- God alone has determined that He will rescue some of those who are Lost- by what He alone does for them. And what begins that Process with us- is the Miracle of the sovereign Act of God in giving undesiring Rebels- new, spiritual Life. And Lord willing we will look even closer at this next week.

Amen. Let’s pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.