

# ChristReformationChurch

Tillamook, Oregon

[www.sermonaudio.com/crc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/crc)

[www.unholycharade.com](http://www.unholycharade.com)

[www.lightfordarktimes.com](http://www.lightfordarktimes.com)

## *The Gospel According to Matthew*

### *You Must be Born Again (Part 5)*

*May 19, 2019*

**Sermon Text:** Matt 15:10-20

**Scripture Reading:** Galatians 5:16ff

Mat 15:17-20 Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? (18) But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. (19) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. (20) These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”

We have been spending considerable time talking about the subject of *the new birth*, or *regeneration* as it is often

called. It is this subject that Jesus pointed Nicodemus to (John 3) – *you must be born again or you will never see the kingdom of God.*

Joh 3:3-5 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (4) Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” (5) Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

To “see the kingdom of God” is to be saved, to be justified by faith, to be made a new creation and thus one of God’s people. It is to be given the ability to see what unconverted people are blind to:

Joh 3:12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

Now, this morning I want to speak to you about the signs of the new birth. That is to say, we want to consider this question: *how can I know that I have been born again...or not?* This is the most important question in our lives – do I know Christ and does He know me? Am I righteous before God by the righteousness which comes from Christ?

Rome, as you may know, pronounces anyone who has this assurance that they are justified before God in Christ, to be “anathema.” The Roman Catholic false church holds people under its bondage by teaching that no one can have assurance that they are saved and therefore that they must keep on “doing” and being totally dependent upon “the church” to forgive their sins and to keep dispensing “grace” to them...or else. And even then, you are headed for purgatory to suffer some more until you have paid up in full. Rome is a false church. There is no good news in it. There is no salvation in it. Don’t ever be drawn into the notion that Roman Catholicism is just another denomination of Christianity. It is not of Christ at all.

We can have assurance that we are born again. This does not mean that you **MUST** know with certainty that you are in Christ – many Christians, especially initially, didn’t realize for

sometime that the Lord had saved them and this is not surprising:

Joh 3:7-8 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ (8) The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Nevertheless there are signs and evidences of the new birth which will always be present in a real Christian, whether he or she realizes it or not. Let’s look at two essential evidences of the new birth:

Col 1:1-14 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, (2) To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

(3) We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, (4) since we heard of your **faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints**, (5) because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, (6) which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it

and understood the grace of God in truth, (7) just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf (8) **and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.**

(9) And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be **filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, (10) so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;** (11) being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; (12) giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. (13) He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, (14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Christ said this about the OT Law:

Mar 12:28-34 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" (29) Jesus answered, "The most important is,

'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. (30) And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' (31) The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (32) And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. (33) And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." (34) And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Love for God, love for one's neighbor. That is the summation and essence of God's commandment. We can do all kinds of works, give all kinds of offerings, but:

1Co 13:3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

We see both of these evidences of the new birth in Paul's words here in Colossians chapter one.

## Love for the Saints

(3) We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, (4) since we heard of your **faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints**

And...

(8) **and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.**

People talk about “love” all the time. You see it on church signs: “A warm, loving place.” And preachers brag about it from the pulpit: “we all here at first church just love one another.” But usually it is fake. A sham. All you would need to do is be a fly on the wall of such places to find out in short order that there is anything but love reigning there.

Paul tells the Colossians that he has heard of their “love they have for all the saints” and of their “love in the Spirit.” This love is not a man-made love. It is “in the Spirit.” It is the inevitable companion of “faith in Christ Jesus.”

And notice that it’s target is specific: “for all the saints.” Think through this very carefully. Do you “love the saints”? Jesus said this about the world:

Joh 15:18-19 “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. (19) If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

And John said of false Christians:

1Jn 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

This last week I had occasion to look at a “happening church” website. They are really all the same, geared to appeal to the flesh:

- Come casually
- The sermons and service are short
- We have great music, ie, a performance
- Their history: we grew at a rapid rate...God led us to purchase land

These kinds of so-called churches are myriad today. They are lairs for evil. While they will talk and talk and talk about “love for one another,” the fact is that a genuine Christian will find themselves despised in such a place.

Why? Because the people are not born again. They don't know Christ.

Over the years many of you have seen this. Suddenly, it seems, someone who you thought was a fellow Christian and a friend, was just done with you. And you struggle to understand why. There is no apparent reason, though often they will make some kind of accusations which you know are false. Well, here is the real reason: they are not born again. They do not have "love for all the saints." Listen again:

(3) We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, (4) since we heard of your **faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints**

And...

(8) **and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.**

You can attend church religiously all your life. You can be baptized. You can claim to have faith in Christ. *But if you do not love Christ's people, you are not born again.* And if you are familiar with the "goings on" behind the scenes in most local churches and so-called "Christian" organizations, you know that love for one another is hardly the defining quality of such places and people. Don't be duped by people that tell you, "well we are all

just sinners in the church, we are all imperfect, but we just love one another anyway" in an attempt to dismiss the sin and hatred that characterizes such places. Christ's people recognize and love one another.

### Increasing in the knowledge of God

In a recent article I read on why Protestants are abandoning the gospel and joining Rome, the author listed as one of the reasons, an ignorance of sound biblical teaching and knowledge. And it is true that there is a real drought in the land when it comes to teaching of the doctrines of the faith. (Note the mega church model cited earlier: "Our sermons are short").

But a true Christian, a person who therefore has been born again, *will always be increasing in the knowledge of God.* Listen to Paul again:

(9) And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking **that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,** (10) so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work **and increasing in the knowledge of God**

There are other qualities and signs of the new birth in this passage as well – such as "bearing fruit in every good

work,” but let’s look at this matter of “increasing in the knowledge of God” for now.

This knowledge is difficult to describe and define. *It is not mere knowledge of facts, of theology, of doctrine, though this knowledge is important and is part of what Paul is speaking of.* Knowing God is to love Him, to be in vital relationship to Him as your Father. It is to love what He loves. It is, as it has been put: “walk with Him and talk with Him.” It is this business of “praying without ceasing” that Paul talks about elsewhere. It is living with the living God, experiencing His reality in your life.

Notice that Paul puts it this way in verse 9 –

*asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,*

In other words, all real Christians, all who are truly born again and thus indwelt by Christ’s Spirit, WILL be increasing in an understanding of God’s will and God’s wisdom. We see this elsewhere in the Bible:

Psa 143:10 Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!

Rom 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, **that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**

Heb 13:20-21 Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, (21) **equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight,** through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

See it? Now this is really an acid test. I know many, many people who claim to be Christians. But they obviously do not know the Lord. How do I know? Because they are unable and even unwilling to, as Paul puts it, “discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Let me give you some examples:

- They show no desire to be godly in their conversations, talking pretty much just like the world does
- When confronted with a truth from Scripture, they see it as foolishness
- They are unable to recognize false doctrine – they are the kind

who insist that the Pope is a godly man

- They break the law and yet have no conviction about doing so
- They do not really like Scripture. They consistently twist it so that its true meaning is distorted to fit their own sinful desires
- Pretty much anything goes for them in the worship of God
- In other words, the Bible remains foolishness to them

Paul tells us what should be happening in anyone who truly knows Christ:

Eph 4:11-15 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, (12) to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, (13) **until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,** (14) so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. (15) **Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,**

This growth will be present in everyone who has been born again. It

will not be occurring in the life of a false Christian. Have you been a Christian for some time? Do you see yourself growing in this respect? Are you increasingly able to discern a false gospel, a false church, or are you inclined to accept just about anything that claims to be of Christ?

Spiritual infancy is a dangerous place to remain. Every true Christian is going to grow through the ministry of the Spirit in them and the Word of God. If that growth in the knowledge and understanding of God and His Word are not happening, it is time to take a long hard look at whether such a person really knows the Lord.

Heb 5:12-14 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, (13) for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. (14) But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

See that? *“...those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”*

Have you known people who claim to be Christians but who seem to be clueless about discerning evil or false teaching? People who seem to be quite ready to listen to a stranger rather than to Christ?

leads to destruction for all who refuse to turn from it.

Joh 10:3-5 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. (4) When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. (5) A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

See it? They do not *know* the voice of strangers. They only know Christ’s voice. To know Him is to love and follow Him. To “know” a false teacher is to be dead in your sins, not born again. And if this be true, which it is, what does this say about the masses of people who claim to be Christians but who are readily following false shepherds rather than Christ? The answer is obvious, they are not born again.

We all must look to ourselves. Do we love Christ and His true people? Are we increasing in the knowledge of God and His will? If so, then it is a work of the Spirit in us and we are born again. If not, we are on that Broadway that