

How To Be



“Born Again”



Written By Rev.
John Marinelli

Copyright

2016-Rev. John Marinelli
P. O. Box 831413
Ocala Florida 34483

All Rights Reserved

Preface

This eBook is written to explain and clarify the Biblical truth of being, “Born Again.” We will examine the theological importance of being, “Born Again”, as well as the process that takes place.

We will look at the experience as a life changing event and search for the many benefits that overtake the believer. We will examine the new reality that makes up the daily life of those who have experienced new birth in Jesus.

We will answer the three most asked questions by skeptics:

1. Why is there a need for a 2nd birth?
2. What proof is there that it really happened?
3. How does it change the life of the individual?



Introduction

The recently released Pew Research Center Report By Stephen Mattson 05-15-2015 has revealed that Christianity within the United States is on the decline. Here are a few excerpts from his report.



Christians are freaking out and the fear mongering has begun — many seeing it as an apocalyptic sign of the moral downfall of our secular society coinciding with a theological weakening caused by “liberalism.”

Everyone seems to have an explanation of the data, and among Christians, the infighting has already begun, with most denominations rationalizing their growth, decline, or stagnancy by offering the same explanation: We’re theologically sound and remaining faithful to God while everyone else is getting it wrong.

In 1965 — an astounding 93 percent of the United States population identified as Christian. But again, the sixties were hardly representative of a “Christian” nation. The point is that while the percentage of Christians in America was near its highest — the moral state of our society was far from “Christian.”

In many ways, today’s America is more Christian than at any previous moment in its history! Slavery and segregation has been abolished, gender inequality is on the decline, the wage gap has decreased, church communities are more diverse than ever, and people’s rights and opportunities related to education, jobs, and opportunities are better than ever.

Evangelical churches added more than 2 million people to their ranks, up from 59.8 million in 2007 to 62.2 million in 2014. Meanwhile, mainline churches lost 5 million people. “As a result, evangelicals now constitute a clear majority (55%) of all US Protestants,” noted Pew.

In response, about one-third of American adults (35%) self-identified as evangelicals in 2014, nearly the same as in 2007 (34%). Meanwhile, Americans who self-identified as Christians dropped from 78 percent in 2007 to 71 percent in 2014. *(This is still a huge drop from 93% in 1965.)*

The Problem

Today, Christians are more likely to consider themselves “born-again” or evangelical. Half of self-identified Christians described themselves this way in 2014, up from 44 percent in 2007. This includes 72 percent of those in historically black Protestant churches, up from 67 percent in 2007.

More surprisingly, a rising share of adults in other Christian traditions self-identify as born-again or evangelical, including: mainline Protestants (27% in 2014 vs. 25% in 2007), Catholics (22% vs. 16%), Orthodox (18% vs. 16%).

By contrast, 15 percent of adults in evangelical churches do not identify as born-again or evangelical. Neither do 21 percent of those at nondenominational churches, or 10 percent of those at Pentecostal churches.

Some Protestant denominational families are quite divided on this measure, including Methodists (45% born-again or evangelical vs. 51% no), Presbyterians (42% yes vs. 55% no), Lutherans (33% yes vs. 63% no), Adventists (63% yes vs. 29% no), and Restorationists (66 yes vs. 29% no).

Christianity is the most adhered religion in the United States, with 70.6% of polled American adults identifying themselves as Christian in 2014. This is down from 86% in 1990, lower than 78.6% in 2001 and slightly lower than 73% in 2012. About 62% of those polled claim to be members of a church congregation.

It should be noted that some folks that claim Christianity may very well be Born of the Spirit but are not familiar with the term, “Born Again” We do not want to pre-judge any one group. Statistics are just that, a snapshot in time. Data can be misleading and should be looked at as a guideline only.

The United States has the largest Christian population in the world, with nearly 247 million Christians, although other countries have higher percentages of Christians among their populations.

The Evaluation

We have looked at Christianity as a religion. It is the only way that we can analyze it. However, the truth be known, being a Christian originally meant that you were a follower of Jesus, a disciple.

It was not a religion but rather a relationship. A convert to Christianity went through a time of repentance, a plea for forgiveness, and an acceptance of Jesus as Lord. Today, many churches offer a membership and boldly state that you can come just as you are, with no repentant heart, no plea for forgiveness and no need to live under the Lordship of Christ.

A Biblical Reality Check

Here's what Jesus said.

1. "If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." **Luke 14:6**

The Contemporary English Version translates this verse like this, "*You cannot be my disciple, unless you love me more than you love your father and mother, your wife and children, and your brothers and sisters. You cannot come with me unless you love me more than you love your own life.*" **Luke 14:6**

2. "And when He had called the people to Him with His disciples also, He said to them, whoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever will save his life shall lose it; but whoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." **(Mar 8:34-35)**
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." **John 3:3**

The Pew report tells us that there are a large percentage of evangelicals that do not identify themselves as, "Born Again." What happens to these folks?

Is there a different place that they will go when they die? According to Jesus, to see the kingdom of God, **you must be born again**. We know from the rest of the scriptures that there is a heaven, kingdom of God, and there is a Hell, a place of torment. It's either heaven or hell. Some will benefit and some will not.

Could it be that 51% of all Methodists, 55% of all Presbyterians, 63% of all Lutherans, 29% of all Adventists and 29% of all Restorationists will not see the kingdom of God?

The Pew report also says that 15 % of all Evangelicals and 21% of all nondenominational Christians do not identify themselves as, "Born Again" This report also says that 78% of all Catholics do not identify themselves as being, "Born Again".



The Question is Why Be Born Again?

The question is, are non "Born Again" Christians really children of God? I think it is important to examine why Jesus said, "You Must Be "Born Again" He was talking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews of that day. Listen to the story as recorded by John, the Apostle.

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, 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, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter 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 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

⁹ Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?”

¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹ Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven.^[a] ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in Him should not perish but^[b] have eternal life.

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. **John 3:1-16**

Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews. That would be the equivalent to being a Pastor or Bible Teacher today. He was a member of an established religious group. He was seen as a man of authority, wisdom and one who was educated in the things of God. However, like many religious leaders of our day, he lacked the simple truth that makes a person a child of God.

It’s not religion, being nice, doing good works, being smart, and wealthy or any earthly thing. Jesus qualified it by saying **you need a 2nd birth, that of the Spirit to see and enter His kingdom.** This can only happen by believing in Jesus who is the only begotten Son of God. The 1st birth is not eternal due to sin but the 2nd is eternal because of Christ. (See Romans Chapter 5)

Deception Rules The Day

Sixty-five percent of all Christians say there are multiple paths to eternal life, ultimately rejecting the exclusivity of Christ teaching, according to the latest survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.

Even among white evangelical Protestants, 72 percent of those who say many religions can lead to eternal life name at least one non-Christian religion, such as Islam or no religion at all, that can lead to salvation.

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, called the survey results "a theological crisis for American evangelicals," according to USA Today.

Majorities among white Evangelicals, white Mainline Christians, and Black Protestants who do not believe in the exclusivity of salvation say Catholicism and Judaism can lead to eternal life, Pew results show.

Smaller but still sizeable percentages (more than half) of white mainline Christians, black Protestants and white Catholics who say there are multiple ways to eternal life also say Islam can lead to salvation; among white evangelicals, 35 percent agree. And more than half of white mainline Christians and white Catholics who view heaven's gates as wide say Hinduism can lead to eternal life compared to 33 percent of white evangelicals and 44 percent of black Protestants.

Surprisingly, Christians also believe atheism can provide a ticket to heaven. Forty-six percent of white mainline Christians, 49 percent of white Catholics and 26 percent of white evangelicals who believe many religions lead to salvation say atheism can lead to eternal life.

Mohler called the findings "an indictment of evangelicalism and evangelical preaching."



The Bible Tells The Truth

All of these folks that view the path to heaven as wide go against Biblical truth. Here's what the bible says:

1. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12*
2. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6*

3. *I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. **John 10:9***
4. *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. **Revelation 3:20***

Jesus said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. **Matthew 7:13-14**

It hurts me to read about how many people that claim to be Christian are deceived and on the wrong path in life. I guess they believe that their church will save them or their good works or the fact that they are worthy in some other way to qualify for eternal life.

Before we deal with how to be born again...to experience a new or 2nd birth, it is important to look at why it is necessary and why Jesus is the only one that can get us to heaven.

Just ”One Way”

It is hard for most folks that are not “Born Again” to understand why there is just one way to God, yet it is true. There is only one way and that is through Jesus Christ. The Bible is our source to prove that the one-way doctrine is valid. **Acts 4:12** says, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

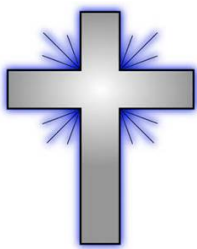
Here’s why it’s so important. Adam sinned against God and died spiritually. “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” **Genesis 2:16-17**

His creation account shows him being made of clay and God breathing into him the breath of life. He thus became a living soul. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” **Genesis 2:7**. When he sinned,

the breath of life was taken from him and he became a dead soul. He was truly the first of a race of the walking dead.

Life is always in relationship to God. It is His breath or Spirit that makes us alive. So, death passed upon all men for all sinned. **(Romans 5:12)** Their nature was now sinful. We see this in all of us and in our society.

The 2nd birth experience is by the Spirit. The Breath of Life is given to each repentant heart and their souls become alive to God. They become His children by birth.



Jesus is the only way to attain salvation. All the world religions cannot save us. Joining a church or specific faith cannot save us. It must be an acknowledgment of our sin, our cry before the throne of God for forgiveness, and our invitation for Jesus to come into our hearts and save us. His name is the only name that can get us through death into eternal life.

Here are a few scriptures that support the only “One-Way” doctrine.

1. ...there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. **(I Timothy 2:5-6)**
2. ...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved... **(Acts 16:31)**
3. 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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **(Romans 10:9-10)**

The skeptic would say, ”You mean to tell me that all the religions of the world are wrong and only Christianity is the one true religion?” Remember, Christianity is not a religion. It is a relationship born out of love between man and the one true and living God. There is no one true religion. Religion, in itself, will not get us to God. It is the blood of Christ that unlocks the door and our confession of faith in Jesus that makes it all happen. **(John 14:6)**

Why is Jesus the only way to God? ...Because God planned it that way. He set the penalty for sin, which was death. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.* (**Ezekiel 18:20**) In fact, Jesus was the slain Lamb of God before the foundation of the world. (**Ephesians 1:3-7**)

Jesus Himself said, as recorded in **John 14:6**, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh to the Father but by Me”. Christianity states that the God of the Bible is the only true God and salvation is only possible by accepting Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son as Savior and Lord. **II Corinthians 5:21** says, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Validation

God validated His Son as the only way in multiple ways so we could be assured that Jesus was indeed the only way to Him. Here are some to consider.

1. He claimed to be the only way as in John’s record 14:6 says but validation came through miracles that proved He was who He claimed to be.
2. Eyewitnesses saw Jesus’ miracles and validated them as authentic. Over 500 followers saw Jesus, after His resurrection, and watched Him ascend into heaven.
3. The prophets foretold of His coming, where He would be born, that He would be God in human flesh and lots more...all prophetic statements were realized in Jesus, even those like in Isaiah chapter 53 that were uttered hundreds of years before Jesus came.
4. God Himself validated Jesus as His sole pathway to Him. “While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him!”(**Mathew 17:5**)
5. The Apostles lost their homes, wealth, and even their lives preaching the gospel. Would they do that if it were a lie? I don’t think so. They testified to the truth and were willing to die for it if necessary. (Read Foxes Book of Martyrs)

6. Thousands of Believers, over several centuries have testified of how Jesus helped them and blessed them.
7. I can personally testify that I have seen the hand of the Lord in my life and communicate with Him daily. I know He is the Christ.

The provability that one man could fulfill all prophecies about a Messiah that God Himself said would come, (**Gen.3:15**), and perform fantastic miracles while here on earth, and be raised from the dead, and ascend into heaven while hundreds looked on is astronomical. But Jesus did just that...fulfilled everything that was foretold about the coming Messiah. He had to be who He said He was and therefore is truly the only way to God.

How To Be Born Again

It should be obvious by now that it is essential for anyone who wants eternal life to be, "Born Again." **Romans 10:9-10** will tell us how.

"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." **Romans 10:9-10**

Confessing Jesus is to acknowledge His Lordship and openly proclaim your allegiance. There is no secret society. That's why the scripture says, "With Thy Mouth."

Believing with the heart is different than with the mind. When we believe with our heart, it means to rely upon, adhere to and trust in. We are to wholly embrace the truth that God raised up Jesus from the dead after being crucified for the sins of mankind.

The power to save us and birth us into His kingdom as His child is in the fact that our heart felt belief brings us the righteousness of Christ and our open mouth of continual confession in Him as our savior actually saves us.

Remember what Paul wrote to the Romans in Chapter 5. He said, in affect, that Adam was the 1st man who fell into sin and took the entire race with him. Thus death passed upon all of us. However, Jesus was the 2nd Adam or man that was sent outside of the pollution of human sinful DNA via a virgin

birth to be the spotless Lamb of God and to be slain as a sacrifice for sin to abolish it forever. This is why the “New Birth” is necessary, to free us from the sin of the 1st Adam and propel us by spiritual birth into the Kingdom of God.

How Do We Know For Sure That We Are, “Born Again?”

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Romans 8:15-17

We who have believed can say that we are His children, without a doubt or any question in our minds. We can because the Spirit of God is continually bearing witness with our spirits. He leads us; He communicates with us, He teaches us and shows us truth and error. **That’s how we know for sure.**

If you have never seen the hand of God in your life or heard the spirit speaking to you, you might want to go back to God and repent of your sins, ask his forgiveness and ask Jesus to come into your heart and save you. Then receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior. This is the only way you can be born again.

How Does This Born Again Experience Change Us



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.

4But 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.

8For 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.

12*remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

13But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14**For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, **15**by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace, **16**and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

17AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; **18**for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

19So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, **20**having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*, **21**in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, **22**in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. **Ephesians 2:1-22 ASV**

Read this again. It tells you where you were or are now and where God takes you when you are Born Again. It is truly a life changing experience.

Benefits That Overtake Us At Our New Birth

The above scripture passage reveals 10 benefits that overtake the believer at his new birth. They are:

1. We experience God's great Mercy and Love...verse #4
2. We are made alive to God, given eternal life...verse #5
3. We were raised up with Christ and seated with Him in Heavenly Places.... verse #6
4. We receive His Grace or unmerited favor...Verse # 8
5. We are brought close to God by the Blood of Christ...verse #13
6. Jesus becomes our peace...verse #14
7. We gain access to God through His Spirit...verse #18
8. We are no longer strangers but fellow citizens and joint heirs with Christ...verse 19
9. We are becoming a spiritual dwelling for God...verse #22
10. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works that were established before we were saved so we could walk in them...v#10

Conclusion

We have looked at statistics that show trends and percentages of those in error. We have discussed doctrines like Jesus as the only pathway to God The Father. We have looked at benefits of being Born Again and why it is necessary to attain eternal life. We have seen how to be Born again through repentance, a plea for forgiveness and an invitation to Jesus to enter our hearts and be Lord over our lives.

There is only one thing left to do, decide if you are, "Born Again" or not. If not, go before the Lord and ask to be born into His kingdom. Then follow the teachings of this eBook.

The Butterfly is a great example of a sinner being transformed into a child of God. Check it out on the next page.





The Story of The Butterfly



The butterfly is a beautiful example of the Born Again experience. It is a new creation that came out of a metamorphic change that took place in the life of a caterpillar. The body of the 1st was changed into the body of the 2nd and it is totally different that the 1st. Thus is the butterfly, never to revert back to being a caterpillar.

This is what happens to us. We are changing ever so slowly until one day when we put off mortality and soar into the immortality of eternal life.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He cause His face to shine upon you and give you peace.

Other eBooks can be downloaded free at
www.ministryandmarketingservices.com