

The Essential Call to Spiritual Rebirth

Fundamentals Series

Bible Text(s) Used

John 20:19–22ⁱ; John 3:1–17; John 1:12–13ⁱⁱ; Numbers 21:4–9ⁱⁱⁱ; Romans 10:9–10^{iv}; Ephesians 2:8–9^v; Acts 2:38^{vi}

In this message, Pastor Mike continues the journey following Easter by helping believers understand the first and most essential step of discipleship: spiritual rebirth. Just as Jesus went first in everything—life, obedience, suffering, and resurrection—He now calls us to follow Him into new life. This new life is not something we achieve, but something we receive from God.

Jesus Goes First—We Follow

Using the example of Alexander the Great, Pastor Mike illustrates that true leaders go first. In the same way, Jesus stepped into our world, lived perfectly, and went to the cross before calling us to follow Him. The Christian life is not about being sent ahead alone—it is about walking in the path Jesus has already opened for us.

Reflection Question: Where do you sense Jesus inviting you to trust Him and follow where He has already gone?

The Necessity of a Supernatural Birth

Jesus taught that entering God's kingdom requires being 'born again,' which means a spiritual rebirth. Just as God breathed physical life into Adam, Jesus breathes spiritual life into believers through the Holy Spirit. This rebirth is not physical, but a transformation of the heart that comes from God. It is a new beginning from above.

Reflection Question: Have you personally experienced this inner transformation, or are you still seeking to understand it?

Clearing Up Misconceptions About Being Born Again

Pastor Mike addresses two common misunderstandings. First, being born again is not self-improvement or 'turning over a new leaf.' It is not about behavior modification, but heart transformation. Second, it is not only for those with obvious brokenness. Jesus told Nicodemus—a moral and religious leader—that he too must be born again. This shows that every person, regardless of background, needs spiritual rebirth.

Reflection Question: Are you relying on your efforts or background, or fully depending on God for a new heart?

Salvation Is Received, Not Achieved

Jesus pointed to the story of the bronze serpent in the wilderness, where those who looked in faith were healed. In the same way, salvation comes by looking to Jesus and trusting in Him. We cannot fix or save ourselves; we can only receive the gift of new life by faith. Salvation is not something we earn—it is something God gives.

Reflection Question: What does it look like for you to truly trust Jesus rather than trying to 'fix yourself'?

A Living Example: Martin Luther

Martin Luther, a deeply religious man, struggled to find peace with God through effort and discipline. When he finally understood that righteousness is a gift from God received

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through faith, everything changed. He described it as being 'reborn' and walking into freedom. His story reminds us that even the most devoted efforts cannot replace simple faith in Christ.

Reflection Question: Have you found peace in God's grace, or do you still feel pressure to earn His acceptance?

Grace: The Gift of Salvation

The heart of the gospel is that salvation is a gift of grace (unearned favor) received through faith. Unlike systems based on rules and performance, Christianity declares that Jesus has already done the work. Our role is to believe, receive, and respond. When we place our faith in Christ—His death and resurrection—we are made new.

Reflection Question: Do you live with the confidence of grace, or are you still striving to prove yourself to God?

Closing Thought

The invitation of Jesus is both simple and profound: be born again. This is not a call to try harder, but to trust deeper. As we look to Christ in faith, God breathes new life into us and makes us His children. Today, the same invitation stands—look to Jesus, believe, and receive the gift of new life.

i Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews,^[a] Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

ii 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

iii The Bronze Serpent

4 From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food." 6 Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. 7 And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. 8 And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." 9 So Moses made a bronze^[a] serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

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v 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

vi 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.