

YOUR SPIRIT

Over the next few months we are going to be covering in detail what it means to be born again. It may help you if you keep your newsletters together and follow through with me until the subject is complete.

Understanding and knowing the purpose of the new birth, as well as the importance of the function that takes place in the heart of every believer is so crucial. It has made a profound change as to how I think, speak and overcome sin in my life. The understanding has also helped make a tremendous impact in my relationship with Christ and fellowship with others. Not that I have arrived, but I press toward the mark of what God has called me to be in this life and that which is to come.

So let's begin by returning to **John 3:3**. "Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Notice **verse 5** where Jesus also added, "Unless one is born of water (referring to natural birth) and spirit (referring to the human BORN AGAIN spirit) he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

The human spirit comes with the natural body when we are born into this world. The word for spirit in **verse 5** should have been a small "s" not a capital "S" since the reference points to the human spirit that comes with the body in natural birth. If you have been to a funeral and seen a lifeless body, you know immediately the real person is no longer there. Now as we look back to **John 3:5**, the mention of the "spirit" is not referring to the Holy Spirit but the human spirit. Another good reference is **James 2:26** where it says, "For as the body without the spirit is dead."

The mentors that God put into my life that helped me with the understanding of Greek language shared this with me. The upper and lower case letters were brought into the bible when translated from the Greek writings to english. **The original manuscripts never came with upper or lower case, it was written in either all upper or all lowercase letters.** This is important to know when reading scripture! It becomes more difficult for the reader to discern which greek word is referring to the Holy Spirit and which is referring to the human spirit.

Remember, in the original manuscripts the same greek word (Pneuma) is used for Holy Spirit and human spirit, it is the **context** we must focus on to know which is being referenced.

I believe this has contributed a great deal to hinder the understanding of being born again. The scripture in **John 3:6** had confused me for a long time, until the Holy Spirit showed me the intent of the author. When he wrote, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The first word "spirit" should be capitalized as it refers to the Holy Spirit, and the second word "spirit" should be lower case as it refers to the human spirit.

Another example of upper and lower case letters used for Holy Spirit and human spirit, in **verse 5** we see reference to the human spirit in comparison to **verse 8**, where we see reference to the Holy Spirit. No one is born again in his physical body. It is his human spirit that is born again by the Holy Spirit. Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit. **Luke 1:34,35**. In **John 3:3** Jesus clearly stated you cannot see the kingdom of God, or even enter the kingdom of God (**vs 5**) unless one is born of the Spirit of God. (**vs 8** Holy Spirit)

The first thing that will help you to understand how a person is born again is to look at how the Bible defines man in scripture. You can see in **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Paul brings clarification to humanity as a tri-part being; spirit, soul and body. Please notice, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The first half of the verse paraphrased in the Greek says May the God of peace Himself sanctify (give each part clarity to its function). And the second half of the verse emphasizes that when we're in His presence at His coming each part has worked together in harmony to accomplish His will in us who are born again.

Digging deeper in this topic will assist us all as we persevere to change the way we think, speak and overcome sin in our lives. Next month we will continue building our understanding of what it means to be born again.

Love,

JANN T. BUTLER

byHisword



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