

Scripture Consulting Essentials

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Born from Above

Matthew 4:4:

But he [Jesus] answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Knowing that all Scripture is God-breathed and that mankind needs every word that proceeds from the mouth of God in order to live, we have come to appreciate the great value of the Scriptures for our lives. It is not from our own imagination or intellect that we learn about the new life made available by Jesus Christ's accomplishments but rather from the living words in the Word of God. We study God's Word by reading what it says (rather than engaging in private interpretation) so that we can understand and appreciate the perfection, purity, and integrity of His Word. Then we can separate the truth of God's Word from the errors of the world.

From God's Word, we learn about Jesus Christ and what God sent him to accomplish on our behalf. God does not want us to be ignorant of the gospel. He wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. The more we read and study God's Word, the more we come to appreciate all that God and His Son Jesus Christ have done for our redemption and salvation. Jesus Christ healed the sick, raised the dead, and cast out devils during his earthly life and ministry. He also taught the gospel about the kingdom of God and what his Father had sent him to accomplish for mankind. By his sufferings and death, his resurrection, and his ascension into heaven, he redeemed and saved those who believe in him.

John 3:1-7.

Verses 3 and 7: again: Greek: *anōthen* = from above.

Verses 5 and 6: spirit: Greek: *pneuma* = spirit.

What Jesus told Nicodemus was part of the gospel concerning the kingdom of God, which Jesus preached during his earthly life and ministry.

Jesus explained to Nicodemus the difference between the birth of the flesh, and the birth from above, which was to be born of the Spirit. The first birth is of the flesh and it produces a person of flesh with body and soul. That is one kind of life. However, the birth from above is of the Spirit and it produces a new spirit life. When a person is born of his earthly parents, he becomes a flesh creature with body and soul life. When a person is born from above of God, Who is spirit, then he has spirit born within him. It is a new kind of life by birth.

To be born again, or born from above, was not used by Jesus to refer to a change of attitude as it is sometimes used by people in our times. He used it of an actual birth – of spirit. Adam lost spirit life, and that death passed to all people. Jesus said that a person must be born from above, which is to be born of spirit, in order to see and to enter the kingdom of God. This birth from above was an essential for spirit life and for entering the kingdom of God.

Verse 8.

Verse 8: wind: Greek: *pneuma* = spirit.

The Greek word translated “bloweth” may also be translated “breathes.” Thus verse 8 may be translated:

The Spirit breathes where it wants to, and you hear the sound of it, but you cannot tell from where it comes and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

God is spirit, and His Word is breathed from Him. It is God-breathed. We can hear His words, but we cannot see Him, because He is spirit. Everyone who is born of God, Who is spirit, is also spirit. You can hear the evidence of it, but you cannot see spirit.

I Peter 1:18-23.

The Greek word translated “born again” in this record means “born again,” whereas the Greek words used in John 3 meant “born from above.” The birth by spirit is to be born again because it is a second birth, and it is to be born from above because it is from God.

Verse 23 says, “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.” This new birth of spirit is not corruptible seed but rather incorruptible seed. The physical birth is corruptible seed. It is subject to injury, disease, and death. However, the birth of spirit is incorruptible seed born within a person. It cannot be injured. It cannot get sick. It cannot die. It is eternal life.

I John 3:9.

The spirit born within a person is incorruptible seed and it cannot sin. The flesh part of a person may sin but not the spirit born within that person. These records are all dealing with the same subject, that is, the new birth of which Jesus spoke to Nicodemus.

John 7:37-39.

Jesus spoke on the occasion of the last day of this feast about the spirit, which he had also spoken about to Nicodemus on a previous occasion. Jesus spoke of it in terms of rivers of living waters flowing out of the midst of a person. That is a vivid mind-picture of the effect of the new spirit life. John 7:39 tells us that people who believe on Jesus Christ were to receive that spirit at some time in the future. However, it was not available for them to receive at that time because the holy spirit had not yet been given.

God, Who is the Holy Spirit, had in the past moved holy men of God to speak His Word, and His Son Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit. However, the gift of holy spirit had not yet been given to people.

The reason the gift of holy spirit had not been given at that time is because “Jesus was not yet glorified” as it says in verse 39. He had not yet suffered and died for mankind’s redemption and salvation. He had not yet been raised from the dead and made his ascension into heaven. The gift of holy spirit could not be made available until after Jesus Christ had fulfilled all these things and been glorified at the right hand of God in heaven.

Luke 11:13.

Luke 11:13 speaks of an occasion when Jesus Christ told the people about the heavenly Father’s intent to give holy spirit to those who asked. During his earthly ministry, Jesus taught the people about the gospel of the kingdom and what was to be made available by his accomplishments.

Baptized with Holy Spirit

Mark 1:8.

John the Baptist had been sent by God to prepare the way for the arrival of God’s Son who was to save mankind. John water baptized people, but he spoke to them about the one to come who would baptize with something greater than water, which was holy spirit.

John 1:29-34.

In verse 31, we see that John’s expressed purpose for water baptizing was to make Jesus Christ manifest to Israel. Verse 33 says that God, Who had sent John, was the One Who told John that the person on whom he would see the spirit descending and remaining would be the one who was to baptize with holy spirit. So John’s purpose for water baptizing was to prepare the way and to make known the one who was to baptize with holy spirit. It was not to establish a new law, nor to continue an old law of washings from the Mosaic law. It was to make known the one who would bring about the greater baptism with holy spirit, which would provide a much greater cleansing for people as well as new life.

Acts 1:1-9.

After Jesus had been raised from the dead, he spoke to his apostles about the kingdom of God and about the holy spirit with which they were to be baptized in the near future – not many days hence. Jesus also told them that they were to receive power when the holy spirit would come upon them. It would be rivers of living water flowing from the midst of them.

The Promise Became a Reality

Acts 2:1-4.

On the Day of Pentecost following Jesus Christ’s ascension into heaven, the apostles were all filled with holy spirit, and they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit (God) gave them the utterance, that is, the words to speak. For the very first time, people were born from above, born of spirit, filled with holy spirit, and they had the means to receive the utterance from God, Who is the Holy Spirit.

Jesus had been glorified, and then the new birth became available. The evidence in the natural realm that they had received the gift of holy spirit was speaking in tongues. It was the manifestation in the senses world which proved that they had received the spirit. It was rivers of living waters flowing from the spirit within them. It was proof that they were born from above with incorruptible seed. God gave them the utterance, and they spoke it.

Verse 4 says that the apostles spoke. They spoke by their freedom of will, but the words that they spoke were words that God gave to them. God did not make them do it. They had to be willing to speak the words of another language as God gave the utterance to them. The holy spirit born within the apostles gave them the ability to receive words from God. The people present on that occasion could not see the spirit, but they could hear the evidence of it as the apostles spoke in tongues.

Acts 2:5-18.

Peter explained that what was occurring on that day was something that had been foretold by the prophet Joel. God had spoken of a day in which He was to pour out His spirit upon all flesh, referring to all kinds of people. Not only would He pour out His spirit upon them, but they would also manifest it in various ways, such as prophecy and visions. Adam had lost spirit, and God had spoken by the prophet Joel of pouring out spirit on people in the future. On the Day of Pentecost following Jesus Christ's ascension, that promise became a living reality.

Acts 2:19-24:

Peter explained that Jesus had been crucified and slain but that those things had occurred according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. God had determined before what needed to be done for mankind's redemption and salvation. Adam had lost spirit life, and God determined what needed to be done so that He could pour out the gift of holy spirit on people.

Acts 2:32-33.

Verse 33: shed forth = the same Greek word translated "poured out" in verses 17 and 18.

After Jesus ascended to the right hand of God, he received the promised holy spirit from the Father and shed forth, or poured out, what the people were seeing and hearing on that occasion. They could not see spirit, but they could see the apostles and hear the manifestation of the spirit as the apostles spoke in tongues. They could not see the spirit, but they could hear the sound of it, even as Jesus had told Nicodemus.

Acts 2:38-41.

Peter told them to repent and to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. He did not tell them to be baptized in water. The greater baptism had come, and he told them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and they would receive the gift of holy spirit. From Romans 10:9, we understand that they were to confess the Lord Jesus and to believe that God raised him from the dead. Then they too would be born from above and receive the gift of holy spirit in manifestation.

It is also noteworthy that Peter did not tell them to wait to be baptized with holy spirit. Jesus had told the apostles to wait for it as we read in Acts 1:4. After the original outpouring of holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost, people no longer needed to wait. The gift had become available for anyone to receive.

Ephesians 1:12-14. Sealed with holy spirit.

Being born of spirit is an essential for eternal life and for entering the kingdom of God. Speaking in tongues is the manifestation or evidence of that new spirit life born within a person. It is the sound thereof. It is proof that a person is born from above with spirit life.

Today, people who believe in Jesus Christ are born from above with incorruptible seed. The holy spirit is born in them through the accomplishments of Jesus Christ our Savior. It is a gift from God.

We do not have to work for it or work to be good enough. God does not give it to us because we are good enough. God gives it to us because we need it. It is a gift which gives us the means to live better lives and to walk in fellowship with God and His Son Jesus Christ and to manifest God's power.