



Spickard on ...

Being "Born Again" ...

~Just What Does it Mean?~

"Most assuredly...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

...Jesus answered, Most assuredly,...

Unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God... Marvel not that I tell you, You must be born from above." - John 3:3, 5, 7.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit ...Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day were added unto them three thousand souls." - Acts 2:38, 41.

"And Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." - Acts 8:48a.

"Go ye therefore, make disciples of all Nations, baptizing them IN MY NAME."

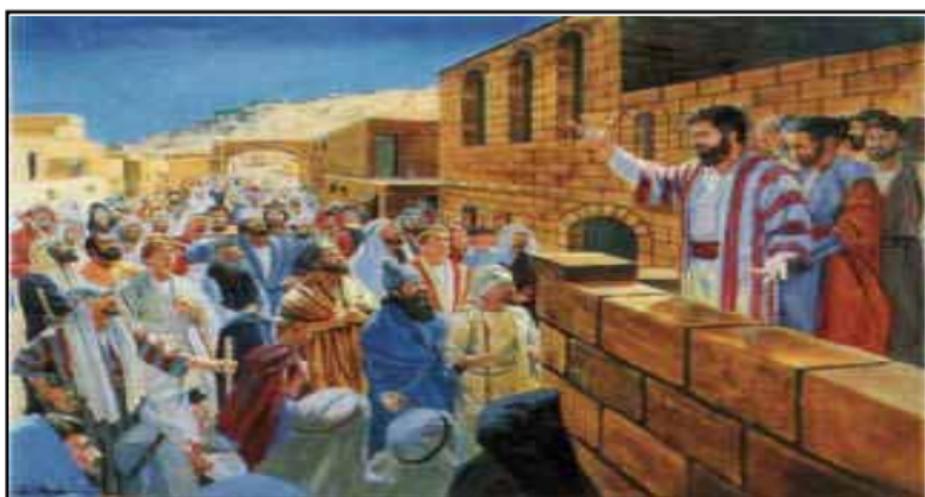
Matthew 28:19, the **Original Rendering** verified by Eusebius in his "History of the Church," circa 325 A.D., and corroborated by a host of other sources (see *Spickard...on Baptisms*).



< JESUS STARTLES NICODEMUS by telling him, a learned Elder in Israel, that he must be born from above, or born again! No amount of knowledge can be a substitute for the forgiveness of sins and the beginning of the birth of the NEW nature, a transformation of which the OLD nature is overcome and eradicated by faith.

Being Born Again ... in the First Century Church...

Being "*born of the water*" that Jesus told Nicodemus that one must do...is baptism in water. This is borne out with the very first preaching of Peter on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2.



^ PETER, ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST, must have preached the most inspired and anointed Message in the Bible ! How So ? Well, Peter and the disciples had just come out of the Upper Room... where, below left, they had just received and been filled with the Holy Spirit as promised by Christ. Jesus had told them "You shall receive power after the Holy Spirit is .. upon you to be my Witnesses..." Then it follows that the words of Peter must have supreme authority...as shown by the powerful results of that day wherein 3000 were saved !



There on display, were the works of the Holy Spirit where every man, no matter where he was from, heard in his native language, the miracle of the gift of tongues proclaiming the praises of God by the now-called Apostles. Thus, the people cried out in consternation, "*What does this... mean?*" At this juncture, Peter preached the most anointed and powerful message ever given. The signs and wonders of the Upper Room, combined with the anointing of Peter's words, caused a great conviction of sin upon those gathered, and the hearers cried out...

"Men... Brethren... What Shall We Do?"

What Peter told them at this point...is not what the popular Church informs its hearers today. Peter did not issue an altar call...he did not pass out literature...he did not lead them in saying the so-called "Sinner's Prayer." Moreover, Peter did not ask them to make a decision for Christ...nor did he tell them to accept Jesus as their Savior,...nor did he tell them individually to "let Jesus come into their hearts" or ...whatever that is....? No, Peter had the authority of the Keys of the Kingdom that Christ promised to him to have. This day, *this* day of Pentecost, which would never be another day such as this, Peter told them something different than what the popular Church and the trends of "easy-believism" involves. Peter told them, *first*, to repent! Following that...they were to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ....not as a symbol or act of identification with Christ...*but for the remission*, or forgiveness, *of sins*.... then they could receive the Promise of the Holy Spirit, the very same thing that they had just witnessed in the Apostles coming out of the Upper Room. Thus, they were born of water or *baptized in water*...and born of the Spirit, or *baptized in the Spirit*. Peter's preaching confirmed the words of Jesus that were spoken to Nicodemus. Three thousand hearers, that day, were *born again*, or *born from above*, by believing and obeying Peter's words. When is the last time the popular Church added to their ranks three thousand fervent believers who *"continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship,... in breaking of bread, and in prayers."* Obviously, the strategies and tactics the popular Church uses, do not give the same results as Peter had on the day of Pentecost. No,...in less than six months after a so-called Crusade, you can find just a few handfuls of "saved" people that have not backslidden into the world.

The New Testament Pattern

The pattern of Peter's message just wasn't for the hearers on the day of Pentecost. Once again Peter preached following the miracle at the Beautiful Gate at the Temple. Once again he preached repentance, conversion, or water baptism (for the forgiveness of sins)... *"that your sins may be blotted out,"* and *"refreshing...from the Presence of the Lord...sending Jesus Christ to you* (the birth or Baptism of the Holy Spirit). The message of Peter that day brought five thousand more Believers into the fellowship and doctrine of the Apostles. After persecution arose following the death of Stephen, Philip went up to Samaria, and evangelised there. The pattern was again, the same. The Bible says, *"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women"* (Acts 8:12). And again, Philip baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch in the same manner...(Acts 8:38), as a condition of salvation. The Apostle Paul was "saved" in the same way (Acts 9:18). Peter introduced the Gospel to the Gentiles in like manner (Acts 10:44-48). Paul baptized Lydia in the same pattern when she believed Paul's message (Acts 16:15), and again with the Phillipian Jailor (Acts 16:31-34). Note the Phillipian Jailor asked Paul what he needed to do to be saved as like the hearers of Peter in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. Paul's short response was to *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, and your family."* The rest of the text shows to believe on Jesus Christ is to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Again, Paul met disciples in Ephesus that knew only John's Baptism. Paul explained the Baptism of John was only for repentance. After hearing this, they were baptized in Jesus' Name (Acts 19:5).

A Brief Summary

It is shown throughout the Acts of the Apostles that there is only ONE method of salvation that was consistently done each and every time. Now, you may ask yourself in light of this body of evidence, why this teaching today is ignored, obscured, and cast aside by Church traditions and teaching... as it has been throughout all of the Gentile Church Era. Instead of the Biblical plan of salvation, others have been substituted to shipwreck earnest seekers of God. To God's credit, He has given Grace and bent over backwards to secure the salvation of His Elect despite the Apostasy, and the errors of the Gentile Church from the early Church model. The inferior means of gaining salvation that have been initiated throughout the Church Age are as follows : Salva-



^ AN ALTAR CALL at the 2004 Billy Graham Crusade in Kansas City, Missouri. The concept of altar calls is not found in the Bible. Instead of being truly "born again" as I have shown, Church Age converts have missed the "better way" and lack full assurance of their Salvation. Most of the so-called "converts" going up to the podium are already professing Christians. Why are they there? Some wish to have prayer for besetting sins in their life...such as drinking or smoking...Most are there for, however, to find **FULL** assurance and conviction of faith of their Salvation. They wish to be prayed with and experience the Promise of **full** assurance. Reader, I assure you there is no better way to achieve such **FULL CONFIDENCE AND ASSURANCE** in a Salvation experience than to be scripturally "born again." Look at the results of the New Testament experience of being "born again." You will not find anyone that is recorded in the Book of Acts that lacked the **FULL Assurance of faith in their "born again" experience!**

tion by good works; Salvation by faith alone; Salvation by 'calling on the name of the Lord;' The use of the "anxious seat;" Salvation by "praying through (a virtuous exercise)" and today's methods, which consists of one or more or all of the following:

- > Reciting the 'four Spiritual Laws.'
- > Asking Jesus to come into your heart.
- > Accepting Christ as your personal savior.
- > Making a decision for Christ.
- > Reciting the 'Sinner's Prayer.'

These methods or formulas seem rather convoluted and vague from the clear and concise teaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost. ***Equally remarkable*** is that ***none of these formulas or phrases are to be found in the Bible!*** None of these methods and formulas are **Biblical**! Indeed, these formulas for salvation are rather new and have been only developed in the last two generations or so. Indeed, most of these current formulas for salvation were devised by Billy Graham and his associates at *Christianity Today*...a mouthpiece of Mr. Graham. In the 1950's, they convinced the Southern Baptist Convention to adopt such measures. The previous method, "*praying through at the altar*," was deemed time-consuming, embarrassing, and unnecessary, as some needed to pray most of the night, as in other instances of Revival in the Gentile Church Era. Other Evangelicals followed, and in 1962, the Assemblies of God, the largest Pentecostal denomination did likewise, and since that time, the Church according to researcher George Barna is no different than the World in the example of their members! Why would Billy Graham want to change such things? Is such easy believism making a moral difference in our communities, our nation, our world? NO. The Enemy has been very busy working to undermine God's Word and substitute

For more information:
Spickard's Signs ...
of the Times

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his own. Just as the Serpent in the Garden..only one word will suffice, then another and another. We need Revival as in Nehemiah's day: a Return to God's Word...Only... JS