

Born Again

By David Feddes

Are you born again? That is perhaps the most important question that you can be asked. Are you born again? If you are not born again, says Jesus, then you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. You cannot even see the kingdom of God. But if you are born again, then you have a life in you that nothing can destroy or remove, a life that lasts forever. Another word for being born again is regeneration. Today we want to hear the words of Jesus himself about being born again.

¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

³ In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”

⁴ “How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!”

⁵ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

⁹ “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰ “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s only begotten Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God. (John 3:1-21)

I want to address five important questions about being born again.

- Who must be born again?
- Why is rebirth necessary?
- What happens in rebirth?
- How are you born again?
- What are results of rebirth?

Who must be born again?

First of all, who must be born again? The shorter answer is you! But *you* in two different senses. We use the word *you* to mean one person or a whole group of people. Greek has different forms for you-singular and you-plural, so we know when Jesus is addressing one individual or a group.

Jesus first says, "I tell you the truth," speaking to Nicodemus with the individual, personal *you* (John 3:3). A little later he says, "Do not be surprised that I said, 'You must be born again.'" There he uses the plural *you*. You as an individual person need to be born again, but also more broadly, "you all" need to be born again.

When Jesus says you-plural, he probably means that you, the Jewish people, need to be born again. There was a very common belief at the time among the Jewish people that all descendants of Abraham would enter the kingdom of God with rare exceptions. Those who were apostates and completely renounced the God of Israel, or those who were especially vile and evil sinners, would miss out. But everybody would enter God's kingdom because they were Israelites. They were children of Abraham. Jesus says, "You all and you individually cannot see the kingdom of God and you cannot enter the kingdom of God unless you are born again, born of water and the Spirit."

Remember who Jesus is talking to when he says, "You must be born again." He is speaking to the Right Reverend Professor Dr. Nicodemus. He is a ruler in Israel, a member of the Sanhedrin. He is one of the foremost religious teachers. Jesus calls him "teacher of Israel." Jesus is telling him, "No matter how learned you are, no matter how respected you are, no matter how affluent you are, no matter how important you are, you must be born again."

You might have expected Jesus to feel a little flattered that Nicodemus even showed an interest in him. Jesus is the son of a carpenter from a backwater town. Here one of the most prominent intellectuals and one of the most prominent leaders in Israel comes to him and says, "We can tell that you are from God." He even calls Jesus, "Rabbi." He says, "You are a teacher sent from God. You are doing miraculous signs. We are impressed. We know that God is at work in you." Jesus does not respond by thinking, "It is good that somebody so important recognizes something valuable about me." Instead, he comes right back at Nicodemus and says, "No matter who you are, you must be born again."

In the next chapter of John, Jesus says something similar to somebody quite different. He is speaking to someone who is much despised, a five-times-married Samaritan woman. He says that she can have living water and that she can have God's Spirit in her, a different way of

describing the same reality of being born again. The upshot, if you read John 3 and John 4, is that if you are the Right Reverend Professor Dr. Nicodemus, you *must* be born again. If you are a castaway who has gone through five failed marriages and whom everybody looks down on, you *can* be born again. No matter how respectable you are, you must be born again. No matter how sinful and despised you are, you can be born again.

So who must be born again? You, all of you.

Why is rebirth necessary?

Why is rebirth necessary? The short answer is that without it, we are dead. We are all spiritually dead in sin. The Bible says that over and over. “You were dead in your transgressions and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). “You were dead in your sins” (Colossians 2:13). We need something to make us alive because otherwise we are spiritually dead. We are helpless. We are hellbound. We cannot change the situation when we are dead.

Jesus says it another way. “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit” (John 3:6). He is talking mainly about human biological life. Biological life produces biological life. One body gives birth to a new body. It is a wonderful thing, a truth about God’s creation. But it is not the same as having eternal spiritual life. Flesh gives birth to flesh. The Spirit gives birth to spirit.

We have an additional difficulty. We are not just born with God’s created biological life and the goodness of the human body. There is flesh in another sense, in which our humanity is fallen and corrupted by sin. We need spiritual life, not just biological life. And we need something to break through our inborn corruption and opposition to God. We need the Holy Spirit to give life, not only our mother and father. Jesus said later, “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing” (John 6:63).

If you do not have God’s life put into you, you cannot see the kingdom of God, says Jesus (John 3:3). A little later he says, “Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). Cockroaches avoid light. Creatures of darkness do not like it when the light goes on. The only way we are going to appreciate and embrace and want to come into the light is if something happens to us that makes us stop being creatures of darkness and creates in us an appetite and a desire and a delight in the light.

Even if you did not understand some of the factors regarding spiritual death, flesh producing flesh, or sinners being addicted to darkness rather than light, you can still be sure you need to be born again. There are certain authorities who know far more about the spiritual world and eternal life than you and I do, and they say you must be born again. Biblical prophets, apostles, and Jesus himself make this clear.

When Jesus is talking with Nicodemus, he says, “You are Israel’s teacher, and do you not understand these things?” (John 3:10). Why is Jesus so dismayed that a teacher in Israel does not understand these things? Because Nicodemus should have understood the Old Testament prophets.

Jeremiah wrote of a new covenant where God imprints his law on the heart and brings forgiveness (Jeremiah 31:31–34). God said through Ezekiel, “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (Ezekiel 36:25-27). In the very next chapter, Ezekiel speaks of the breath of God, the wind of God blowing on a bunch of bones that are strewn there, and they come to life and become a mighty army.

Jesus is saying to Nicodemus, “Didn’t you read Jeremiah? Didn’t you read Ezekiel? You are the teacher of Israel, and do you not know what I am talking about when I speak of being born again, having life come out of what was only dead, having a new heart and a new Spirit?”

Jesus is talking to Nicodemus in light of what the prophets have said, but we also have what the apostles have said. The apostle Peter speaks of being born again into a living hope (1 Peter 1:3). He says, “For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God” (1 Peter 1:23).

James says, “He chose to give us birth through the word of truth” (James 1:18).

The apostle John writes in the Gospel of John, “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God” (John 1:12). The epistle of 1 John focuses on being born of God and how you tell whether you have been born of God.

Peter, James, and John speak of rebirth. So does the apostle Paul. We saw earlier how Paul speaks of being dead in sin and then God making you alive (Ephesians 2:4-5; Colossians 2:13). Paul also writes of "regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). Regeneration is the larger word for being born again.

So we have the prophets and apostles who speak of rebirth, and we have the heaven-sent Son of God and the Son of Man who says so to Nicodemus in John 3. You might wonder why Jesus emphasizes, “No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man” (John 3:13). There were ideas circulating in the Judaism of that day that certain people had gone to heaven and then come back to report on what heaven is like. Books like that still sell today.

Jesus tells Nicodemus there is someone who has come from heaven and can tell you about it. It is not those who claim to have been to heaven and back again. There is one who came from heaven, the Son of Man. He can tell you about heavenly things. But right now he has been talking to you about earthly things and you still do not seem to understand. So you are not ready for him to speak about the things of heaven yet. First you must get it straight that here on earth you must be born again.

Why is rebirth necessary? We are dead. Our flesh can only produce flesh. We love darkness. Moreover, the prophets, the apostles, and Jesus Christ himself say that rebirth is necessary.

What happens in rebirth?

What happens in rebirth? One thing that happens is that you receive new life, spiritual life, the life of God himself, the Christ-life. You do not receive new religion. You do not receive new ideas. There are important truths that Christianity reveals that people may not previously have known, but rebirth is not merely having new ideas. It is not even having new and improved moral guidance or ethical wisdom or commandments. Those things have their value and their place, but new birth is not new religion, new morals, or new ideas. D. A. Carson says it is new life, not a new leaf. It is good to turn over a new leaf in some area of life where you need to change, but small improvements in behavior are not what new birth is. It is a new life, the life of Christ himself by his Holy Spirit who comes into you and makes you alive.

That brings us to the next point. It is having the Christ-life within you, not merely recognizing something about Jesus. It is not looking at Jesus outside yourself, as Nicodemus did, and recognizing certain impressive things. Nicodemus says, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him” (John 3:2). He calls him Rabbi, the Aramaic word for teacher. He recognizes that Jesus is a great teacher. He recognizes the truth and reality of Jesus’ miracles and what those miracles point to: the fact that only someone from God could do such things. So Nicodemus recognizes Jesus as a teacher and miracle worker.

But Jesus does not say, "Thank you for the encouraging remarks." He says, "You must be born again." It is not enough to recognize the supernatural life of God in Jesus. It is necessary to have the supernatural life of God in you. Not simply to recognize what God is doing in Jesus, but to have the very life of God that is in Jesus Christ operating inside you as well.

What happens in rebirth is that we are born of God, not human decision. Jesus speaks of being born from above or being born of God. John writes, “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God” (John 1:12). This means that it is not first of all my decision that brings about new birth.

To put it another way, you cannot decide to be born again. You cannot make yourself be born again. Did you make yourself be born? It happened, but you did not bring it about. We cannot make ourselves be born again. It is an act of God, not a human decision. A human decision will follow when God works in you and takes hold of your will. But it is first of all a work of God, and then everything else flows out from that.

A final point about what happens in rebirth is that it is mysterious. I have been trying to explain what I can about being born again, but I am not going to pretend that it is easy to map out with neat points and a tidy diagram explaining exactly what happens, when it happens, and how it happens.

What does Jesus say? “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). The wind is not something you can fully understand. It is not something you can control. It

is not something you can even see. You can hear it blowing. You can see its effects when it moves things. There is this mysterious wind. You never actually see the wind itself. You certainly do not control it or understand what it will do next. Yet it is there and it is real. Jesus says, "So it is with everyone born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

The word for wind and the word for Spirit are the same word in the original languages. In Hebrew it is *ruach*. In Greek it is *pneuma*. The same word can mean wind, breath, or Spirit. So when Jesus says the wind blows wherever it pleases, we might expect him to say, "That is how it is with the Spirit of God." Instead, he says, "That is how it is with *everyone born of the Spirit*." When you are born of the Spirit of God and the breath of God is at work in you, you become something of a mystery.

You may even be a mystery to yourself because you do not know exactly how it happened or precisely when it happened. You are certainly a mystery to others. The Bible says, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them" (1 Corinthians 2:14). It also says, "The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment" (1 Corinthians 2:15). When you are born again, you become a mystery to people who do not know God. They may see that something has happened in you. They may not be sure where it came from or where it is going, but they can tell that something about you is different, even if they do not understand exactly how or why.

Even for you, after you have been born again, there may be mystery. You may not know exactly what led up to it. You may not know precisely when it happened. C. S. Lewis came to believe in God, which was a major step away from atheism, when he knelt and prayed, as he put it, "the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England." At that point, however, he was not yet fully converted to faith in Jesus Christ. Later something more happened. Lewis said that he was riding with someone to the zoo. When he left for the zoo, he did not believe that Jesus is the Son of God. When he arrived at the zoo, he did believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He was not even consciously thinking about it on the way. Somehow, during that drive, he went from not believing to believing Jesus is God.

That is one person's experience, but it illustrates the mystery. There is something that happens inside you. You cannot see the wind, but you know something is going on when the wind is blowing hard. The newness of rebirth is mysterious but evident. So what happens in rebirth?

How are you born again?

How are you born again? Let us step back from what happens to a born-again person individually and take a big-picture look at the human race. Remember, it is not just you individually who must be born again. All of humanity needs rebirth. Jesus did something decisive. He entered the human race. It is called the **incarnation**. He took on human flesh and blood. He took on full humanity and became one of us. By entering into the human race, the Son of God joined human nature to the divine nature. In doing so, he joined the life of God to the life of humanity.

Humanity has always been more interconnected than we sometimes realize. We are connected to one another in profound ways. When the life of God enters humanity for the first time in this unique way, it begins to spread. C. S. Lewis describes it in *Mere Christianity* as "good infection." Unlike a bad infection that spreads disease and death, this is life that spreads from person to person once it has entered the human race.

In one sense, the first and most important thing about being born again is that Jesus was born into the human race and brought the life of God into the life of humanity. In his death and resurrection from the dead, he brought his humanity into the glorious risen power of God. When people are born again, the resurrection life of Christ rises in them as well. That is why Peter says, "In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3). Jesus did the great, decisive work for the human race, joining himself to humanity and glorifying human nature in his own glorification.

How does that Christ-life come to individuals? Jesus says you must be "born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5). What does he mean by "born of **water**"? Many people read that and immediately think of baptism. New Christians are baptized with water, so perhaps Jesus is saying you need to be reborn by baptism and the Holy Spirit. But Jesus is not first of all talking about baptism as an automatic or mechanical component of being born again. There are some who teach that baptism is a sacrament of such a nature that by being baptized you inherently receive new birth, that baptism itself is when and how new birth happens. That is not what Jesus means here.

Jesus speaks of being born of water and the Spirit. We need to reflect on the fact that Nicodemus should have known what Jesus was talking about. Jesus was speaking from the prophet Ezekiel, where God says, "I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean and I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you and I'll make you alive."

So being born of water means being cleansed and forgiven. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more" (Jeremiah 31:34). It is Jesus cleansing and forgiving. Being born again and united to the life of God cannot happen where the barrier between us and God remains. Unless the barrier of sin is dealt with and the filth of sin is washed away, we cannot be united to the life of God. When Jesus speaks of being "born of water," he means that a cleansing takes place.

The blood of Jesus Christ brings about that cleansing. Jesus himself says that it is when the Son of Man is lifted up that people believe in him and have eternal life: "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14–15).

Along with the cleansing that comes through Jesus, there is the gift of the **Spirit**, the new heart that he gives us, the removal of the heart of stone, the dead heart, and the giving of a heart that is alive, that wants God, that cares about God, that desires God.

This brings about union with Christ. Union with Christ is expressed by Jesus when he says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;

apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). If you are outside of him, you are a dead branch. If you are in the vine, the life of the vine flows through each of the branches.

So the way you are born again is not that Jesus simply goes around zapping individuals one by one and suddenly they have life in them in isolation. Sometimes we use language about God implanting new life in you individually or causing his life to be in you, and that language is fine as far as it goes. But it is not merely a series of disconnected individual events putting life into separate individuals. Rather, each individual is grafted into the vine. When you are in union with Jesus, his life flows into you.

Another picture the Bible uses is that of a body and its head. Christ is the head, and all of his wisdom, the mind of Christ, and his life flow into the members of the body who are connected to him. Being born again is essentially being connected with Jesus and having the Christ-life flowing from Jesus through you by the Holy Spirit.

How does this union with Christ, this experience of new life, actually get started? How does it come about? The **Word** of God is the instrument God uses. Peter says, “For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, *through the living and enduring word of God*” (1 Peter 1:23). James says, “He chose to give us birth *through the word of truth*, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created” (James 1:18). So the Word of God is the agent God uses to bring life. It is like a seed that has life in it, and once it is planted, it sprouts. Jesus spoke of this in his parables about seed. The Word is how God ordinarily brings new life to people. When we are born of that Word, we are born of an imperishable seed.

Sometimes theologians distinguish between the external call, the Word going out publicly, when a congregation hears it preached or when there is public proclamation and witness to the Word of God, and the internal call of God. Hundreds of people may listen to a gospel message. Their ears pick up the sound waves. They may have some understanding of the words the preacher is using. But in that gathering there may be a person listening who knows it's not just the preacher talking; God is talking. He is not just talking to people in general; he is talking to me.

There was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth, who heard Paul speak, and “The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message” (Acts 16:14). That is what is meant by the internal call. The message goes out publicly in the external call. The light shines. But then there is the internal call, in which the Holy Spirit works in you and helps you know it is meant for you and enables you to experience something alive within you that may never have been there before.

Then what happens? **Faith**. You believe and receive Christ. “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God... born of God” (John 1:12). Faith believes and receives Christ.

I want you to notice that the actual rebirth is prior to belief. You have to be made alive before you can put your faith in Jesus, because a dead heart cannot respond. A dark heart will always avoid the light. I am not saying that there is a large gap in time between being born again and believing, because when you are born again you are going to believe. Sometimes there is no noticeable gap in time at all. But the one still brings about the other, even if they occur together.

You can believe only when the Holy Spirit of Christ makes you alive and sparks in you the ability to believe. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

Faith is believing and receiving Christ. If you do not have faith, that is a strong sign that you are not born again. You may have the beginnings of life and of seeking before you come to conscious faith. That can happen. Or there may be someone who grows up in a Christian family and cannot point to the exact moment when he came to believe in Jesus and love Jesus. That is okay. It is mysterious. We cannot always pin down the exact moment. But we do know that the only way to be sure of rebirth is that we trust in the Lord Jesus, that we receive him. In that way we know that it is the life of God in us bringing that about.

That is how you are born again. Jesus came into the human race. He became one of us. He died and rose again. He washes us with his blood. He gives us his Spirit, who regenerates individuals by uniting each of us to Christ and through the Word of God making us alive and drawing us to faith.

What are results of rebirth?

What are the results of rebirth? The epistle of 1 John is all about being born of God. Let me briefly highlight four signs or results of being born of God in that great book.

First, **faith**: trusting and believing in Jesus as Savior, the one who was lifted up as the snake was lifted up in the wilderness. “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” (1 John 5:1).

Second, **love**. “Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7). If you are reborn, if you have the life of God in you, then you love. “Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love” (1 John 4:8). When you have the life of God in you, you love God. You have the life of the Holy Spirit in you. You have the life of Jesus in you. Jesus loves his Father more than anything else. So when you have the life of Jesus in you, you love God, and you love people.

That love is expressed in **action**. “Everyone who does what is right has been born of him” (1 John 2:29). When you have the life of God in you, you act like it. Not perfectly, because many who are born again are still like babies, just beginning to grow. We may have a long way to go until Christ is fully formed in us. But Christ is growing in us. It makes a difference in your actions. It is not turning over a new leaf. It is a new life. It is not simply more determination to do good things, but God actually working in you to bring about good actions.

Fourth, **victory**. “Everyone born of God overcomes the world” (1 John 5:4). Satan is not too much for you anymore. Worldly pressures and fears of what might be done to you or what might be thought of you no longer dominate your life. You overcome the opposition of the world.

Jesus was talking to the Right Reverend Professor Dr. Nicodemus. He came to Jesus at night. Jesus said, “Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their

deeds were evil” (John 3:19). Meeting at night, in darkness, is not a good sign. Even so, Nicodemus did see something in Jesus.

If you read further, in John chapter 7, the leaders are criticizing Jesus and condemning him. Nicodemus speaks up and says, “Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?” (John 7:51). It was risky to speak up like that. Nicodemus was beginning to come into the light.

Then the Son of Man was lifted up on a cross. When Jesus was lifted up, Nicodemus decided he would rather be identified with Jesus than remain with his colleagues. He came into the open and went to Pilate to claim Jesus’ body to give him a proper burial (John 19:38–39). In the death of Christ Nicodemus must have recalled the words Jesus had spoken to him: “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:14-16). Nicodemus saw Jesus lifted up. Nicodemus came to Jesus for eternal life.

Born again

- Who must be born again? You!
- Why is rebirth necessary? Because we are dead in sin without it, and because Jesus and the apostles say we need it.
- What happens in rebirth? God puts his own life, the life of Christ, in you.
- How are you born again? By Jesus coming into our human race, by his Holy Spirit creating faith in your heart, by the Father speaking forth his Word and giving you that internal call so that you put your faith in him.
- What are the results? Faith, love, righteous action, and victory over the world.

Now back to the original question: Are you born again?

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Who must be born again?

- You, singular (3:3) individual person
- You, plural (3:7) Jews, world
- Right Rev. Professor Dr. Nicodemus
- Samaritan with five failed marriages

Why is rebirth necessary?

- All are spiritually dead in sin.
- Flesh can only produce flesh.
- Sinners love darkness, not light.
- Prophets and apostles say so.
- Heaven-sent Son says so.

What happens in rebirth?

- New life, not religion or morals
- Having Christ-life within, not just knowing Jesus is from God
- Born of God, not human decision
- Mysterious but evident newness

How are you born again?

- **Incarnation:** humanity united to Deity
- **Water:** blood-washed and forgiven
- **Spirit:** new heart and union with Christ
- **Word:** life-bearing seed, internal call
- **Faith:** believing and receiving Christ

What are results of rebirth?

- **Faith:** Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. (5:1)
- **Love:** Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. (4:7)
- **Action:** Everyone who does what is right has been born of him. (2:29)
- **Victory:** Everyone born of God overcomes the world. (1 John 5:4)

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