

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

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The Washing of Regeneration

I received a question by email this week concerning a recent issue of Simply Christ. The question seemed to be based upon the belief that only our spirit is born of God, therefore Satan can continue to work in our soul to cause us to sin. We then must go through the process of “*renewing the mind*” until we get to a place that we have victory over sin and Satan. The question was, “Can you show me where in the bible does it say our “Soul” got born again?”

It is true, the scripture never says our “soul” is born again. It is equally true the scripture never says our “spirit” is born again. In fact the scripture never specifies that a “part” of a person is born again. Jesus told Nicodemus “...**You must be born again.**” John 3:7. Peter says “God ...hath begotten **us** again...” 1 Peter 1:3, and John says “**Whosoever** believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...” 1 John 5:1. The new birth is always addressed concerning the person as a whole and not just “part” of the person.

This understanding that being “*born again*” speaks of the whole person is important lest we fall into the theological pit of trying to parcel out redemption. Such as, “Our spirit is holy, but our body (or soul, or mind, or nature) is sinful.” This sort of theology always negates the clear statements of the scripture. Without this sort of “parceling” we would be forced to take John at his

word when he says “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin...” | John 3:9, or as John again says, “*In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*” | John 3:10.

The key to understanding the “*new birth*” may best be found in Paul’s words to Titus. He said, “...according to his mercy he saved us, by the **washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.**” Titus 3:5. Notice that Paul speaks of the “*washing of regeneration.*” In this glorious work of “*regeneration*” (being reborn) there is a “*washing.*” If we speak of the new birth ONLY in terms of receiving a “*new spirit*” (which is absolutely true), we lose sight that there is also a “*washing*” that takes place when we are “*born again.*” It is evident that the “*new spirit*” we receive did not need to be washed. If it did, it was already polluted before God gave it to us. So what had to be washed in this “*regeneration*”?

The writer of Hebrews answers this question as he exhorts us to draw near into the holiest “...having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22. In this one verse two “*washings*” are described that take place when we are “*born again.*” “**Our bodies are washed...**” We may not understand how it happened, but it is certain that “*our bodies*” were washed from sin, its stain, and its guilt in the hour that we were born of God.

The other washing mentioned here is “...having our **hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.**” Our “*conscience*” spoken of here is defined as our “*moral consciousness.*” This speaks

of our inner most thoughts and feelings. In the “*new birth*” the “*evil*” moral consciousness is washed from us by the blood of Christ Hebrews 9:14, and God Almighty keeps the promise he made saying, “*I will put my laws **into their hearts**, and **in their minds** will I write them.*” Hebrews 10:16. Our conscience, heart, and mind are all made new when we are born of God.

What happens to our “*soul*” when we are born again? Peter answers this question, saying, “*Seeing ye have **purified your souls** in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: **Being born again**, not of corruptible seed...*” 1 Peter 1:22-23. Part of the work of “*being born again*” is that our souls were “*purified.*” We receive this new birth by “*... obeying the truth through the Spirit.*” “*Obeying the truth*” is to believe the “*the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*” Ephesians 1:18. It is the commandment of the Lord; “*Repent and believe the gospel.*” Mark 1:15. Our belief of the truth IS our obedience that causes us to be “*born again*” and our souls to be “*purified.*” These things and much more are ALL part of what it means to be “*born of God!*”

I cannot conclude this Simply Christ letter without briefly speaking of “*renewing the mind.*” Paul’s exhortation to “*be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*” Romans 12:2, IS NOT speaking of being transformed from “*sinning Christians*” into “*not sinning Christians.*” Those Paul wrote these things to were not sinners and they were not like the world. These were

“saints;” “holy ones,” the *“children of God.”* Only if they *“conformed to the world”* would they be like the world. The *“renewing of the mind”* these saints needed was in order that they be transformed into the *“ministers of Christ.”* This was the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God that Paul wanted them to discover. Perhaps we will touch more on this another day.