

New Birth: New Man

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[0 : 00] We spoke last week about the fact that the new birth is an instantaneous birth.

! It has also been described by others as a comprehensive birth or even a radical birth.

John Murray, the great Scottish professor and theologian, said that the new birth taught in John chapter 3 was the most relevant thing that Jesus ever spoke.

And if we think about that, that's really an amazing statement, even a startling statement. Jesus, of course, was the unique God-man. He spoke many relevant things. In fact, as God on earth, everything Jesus said was relevant. But Dr. Murray ascribes to John chapter 3 the most important, most relevant, and most explicit words ever spoken by our Lord. It would be impossible to comprehend how empty our lives would be if Jesus had not spoken these words that we've been studying. They are the key to understanding salvation, conversion, justification, sanctification, ultimately glorification. Dr. Murray went on to say that without the new birth, the great sermon on the mount would be unintelligible. Without the new birth, without a new heart, we could never love our neighbors, love our enemies, and so forth. We could never turn the other cheek or have any motive to do so. We would not go the extra mile without God giving us a new heart.

Never could we live out the commands of Christ without this divine, sovereign act of regeneration. It is the very act by which God breathes life into our soul and gives us a new heart. The new birth is comprehensive and radical because it involves the entire person. Being born again or born from above is not just some type of cosmetic birth that we can now put on display to show others. The Pharisees were good at that.

[2 : 47] They would even put makeup on to look gaunt and they'd been fasting and you know and they'd ring bells when they were going to drop money into the plate. The new birth is both dramatic and deep.

It produces change on the inside of a man or woman. And again, we look at John 3, verse 3, truly, truly, I say to you, this is true, this is true, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

And that in and of itself is a radical statement. It was certainly radical to Nicodemus, who had no idea what Jesus was talking about. And he should have, he should have known, which we'll talk about later.

Without a new spiritual birth that comes down to us from God, we cannot enter in. And in fact, we can't even see the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven.

Those terms I'm using interchangeably. We briefly touched on this last time, but let me expand our thought a little. A baby formed in the womb is formed with certain body parts.

[4 : 03] When the baby is born, it has two arms, two legs, two eyes, two ears, and so forth. These things are not developed in stages after birth.

It all takes place in the womb. In other words, it is a comprehensive birth. When the baby comes forth to the joy of the parents, he or she is a new creature in their life, a new creation.

It's the same way with the new birth. We are recreated as new creatures in Christ. Puritan Stephen Charnock, and I quoted him a few lessons ago, says that in the new birth we have produced a new man.

If it is real, it impacts every part of the new man. It touches the will, the conscience, even our affections.

All of these were corrupted by the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden. Every human that has ever lived, save for the Lord Jesus, has drunk from the poisoned waters of Adam.

[5 : 18] We studied this months ago in our lesson on total depravity. Now remember, total depravity does not mean that we're incapable of doing some good things. Humans do good things

from time to time.

But there's always room for us to do worse things than we already are doing. We've always got room to be even worse. But in the new birth, we are renewed by a total regeneration, a comprehensive regeneration.

It's not partial. All of the new man is redeemed by the blood of the Lamb through the grace of God Almighty.

Sharnock said that the soul will be perfect in heaven, and it is currently being beautified by grace in this life. Dr. Burkhoﬀ said this, regeneration is an instantaneous change of man's nature.

It affects at once the whole man, intellectually, emotionally, and morally. The great Dr. B.B. Warfield said, the new birth is a radical and complete transformation wrought in the soul by God the Holy Spirit.

[6 : 40] Now all this is nothing short of extraordinary. We said last time that the new birth is instantaneous, and this time it is comprehensive, and these things occur on the inside of us.

John Murray went on to say this, the new birth is a radical and all-pervasive change. It is a radical, pervasive, and effectual transformation.

It is a stupendous change because it is God's recreating act. It is the most comprehensive change that we will ever experience on earth.

We have great truths spoken to us from the prophet Ezekiel. In Ezekiel chapter 11, it is there he spoke very long ago, of course, of the comprehensive nature of the new birth.

In this chapter, God is speaking to the prophet, and this is what God said to him in Ezekiel 11, 19. I will give them one heart and a new spirit.

[7 : 51] I will put within them. He will put a new spirit in us. I will remove the heart of stone from the flesh and give them a heart of flesh.

This is a statement that is radical and comprehensive. The verse describes sovereign regeneration all the way back into the Old Testament writing of Ezekiel.

And this verse has many parts to it. He says, first, he will give the new man or new woman a new heart. At rebirth, we all receive a new nature, and that is exactly what a new heart is speaking of.

The new heart or new nature has new affections. It has new desires. It has new passions, new love, new hunger, new thirst.

And then God says he will put in us a new spirit that also goes inside the new man. The new spirit will be the governing power of the mind.

[8 : 59] At rebirth, God gives us new attitudes, new priorities, new inclinations, new ways of thinking, new patterns of thought. And that's why the Bible describes it as new creatures in Christ.

We are a new creation. And then God says he will take out the heart of stone. Prior to the new birth, in our fallenness, our hearts were as hard as a rock made of stone.

It is not difficult to understand what that means. Prior to the new birth, we're hard. Hard-headed and hard-hearted. It was as hard as a rock, as I said.

It was cold. It was lifeless. It was indifferent to others around us. It was unresponsive to the things of God and couldn't be. Paul talks about that in Romans chapter 3, about verse 10 to 18, you can read that.

Sad to think of it this way, but there are people every Sunday that sit in church with a heart of stone. We know there's tares among wheat, and the tares have hearts of stone.

[10 : 15] The new birth comes along, and God performs open-heart surgery. I have a little experience with that, having had triple bypass. In this spiritual surgery, God opens up our chest and removes the foul and hideous heart of stone.

The old heart had death imprinted on it. The new heart has life imprinted on it. So after removing this heart of stone through divine surgery, God replaces it with a heart of flesh.

That is a heart that's now living. It's alive to Him. The previous heart of stone was dead in God's thinking. He describes it as dead.

The new heart is alive. The new heart beats with a new rhythm. It is now living for God. It is responsive to the things of God.

It has a new love for God and reacts to the instructions of God. This is comprehensive because everything on the inside was removed and replaced with newness.

[11 : 32] It is literally a new heart. The old heart was set aside with its total depravity, with its radical corruption, and that's been removed.

The old heart was hard. The old church was hard. It was hard toward God. It was hard toward the Bible. It was hard toward the church.

It was resistant to the gospel of Christ. There was no love for Christ or the cross. There was no love for the saints of God.

It didn't even understand the cross as the place of propitiation, of appeasement, of satisfaction for the sins that we had committed.

In an instant of time, God took that old heart, He lifted it out, He set it aside, and He performed a miracle.

[12 : 33] I'm grateful to Steve Lawson. He provided this list. We've already discussed some of them. But he provides the following list of what the Lord gave us during the divine surgery on our hearts.

a new heart, a new mind, new affections, new love, new passions, new desires, new loyalty, and a new allegiance.

2 Corinthians 5.17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come.

God has given the new man the Spirit of God to take up residence inside of us. That's amazing. That's astounding. The Spirit of God comes to live inside us.

He has given us Christ to direct our lives. And He's given us new life in Him. We may not be yet what we're going to be in glory, but we're not the person we used to be here on earth either.

[13 : 43] At the new birth, we head in a completely new direction. When you were born again, you took upon yourselves new appetites. There's another passage in Ezekiel, this time in chapter 36.

It's almost a repeat of Ezekiel 11.19 in verse 26 of that great chapter. It begins with the word, I. That's a reference to God alone.

God is speaking. I. No one else can do this for you. The pastor can't give us new life. The teacher can't do it.

The evangelist can't do it. The church can't do this for us. You can't do it for yourselves. Only God can do this.

In Ezekiel 36.26, He says this, I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

[14 : 46] A repeat, almost verbatim. When God repeats it twice in the same book, that's pretty important. We see grace in those words.

He says, I will give you. That's the God of the universe. That's the king. I mean, we should be given to him. He's going to give to us.

I will give you. That is, this is a marvelous phrase of grace. God is the initiator. And it is all based upon His sovereign good pleasure.

It's His good pleasure that brings us to this point. He did not give us anything because we deserved it. He didn't give it to us because we worked for it.

He didn't give it to us as a reaction to something we said or something we did. He actually gives this to us in spite of us and not because of us.

[15 : 48] He gives it to people whose hearts are hard toward Him. He gives this to those who are at that moment in rebellion to Him. He gives this to His enemies who are at enmity with Him.

And that stretches all the way back into the garden. We were at enmity with God. Well, what do we deserve? We don't deserve a new heart.

The wages of sin are what? Death. Death. God could be totally just, totally righteous by striking us dead.

I mean, I'm sorry, this is probably one of the principal reasons I'm not God. I don't think I would have said I'm going to sacrifice my son for the power. I think I would have said I'm going to start over.

We're going to make a better model.

But He didn't do that. Instead, He gives us that which we do not deserve and which we can never earn.

[16 : 52] Never. In a thousand lifetimes. And it is all very personal. You notice how personal this is. He uses words like you.

I will give you something. Boy, that is personal. That is personal. Now, the King of the Universe, who I would imagine is quite busy ruling and reigning over all things, holding all things together by His Word, even down to the subatomic structures.

He's doing all this and yet He says, but I'm going to give you something. I'm going to give me something. That's astounding and astonishing.

And note, He gives this to us individually. This isn't done in a group. This isn't mass evangelism. He gives this out individually one at a time. Even the 3,000 that were saved in the book of Acts were saved individually. They were saved individually. And what did He give out that day?

[18:05] He gave new hearts. Gave new spirit. He took out the heart of stone and replaced it with the heart of flesh. That's astonishing. And then, listen in Ezekiel 36, 27, the very next verse.

And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and be careful to obey My rules or My commands.

Can we even wrap our minds around this fact? This is glory revealed. This is God writing our spiritual biography.

God did this to every man in this room who's been born again. And He puts His Spirit within us. Can any of us grasp this in fullness?

I don't think we can. In this life, I just don't think we can. If you can, please come up here and finish this lesson because you know a lot more than I do.

[19:14] His Spirit lives in us. That is more than I can ever hope for. That is more than I can comprehend. In the day in which we live, God puts His Spirit within every person who is regenerated, born again, born from above.

The Spirit comes and lives in us. You remember your Old Testament lessons and particularly the book of Leviticus. On the day of atonement, Israel could enter into the Holy of Holies within the very temple of God but they could only do that one day a year and only through one man, the earthly high priest.

And that whole ceremony, which actually took about 24 hours and there were a dozen or so washings and changing of clothes and sprinkling of blood and they claimed that blood was like ankle deep or up to the calves.

There were so many sacrifices, all this going on on the day of atonement. They put a rope on the high priest because if he did something wrong and he was struck dead in the presence of God, they couldn't go in after him.

They had to reel him out like a fish. They couldn't go in after him. And remember the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and they got drunk and went in and offered strange fire?

[20:48] What happened to them? They're gone. They're gone. Basically, they got struck by the Shekinah, killed instantly and I guess turned to dust.

And there's a poignant moment there because it says, and their father Aaron was silent. What do you say? What do you say about it? So, in our day, those reborn from God, those born again are walking around with the Holy of Holies inside us.

You ever think about that? You have the Holy of Holies. You have the temple within yourself. It's amazing.

And that didn't happen in the Old Testament. It didn't happen to Abraham, to Isaac, Jacob, Samuel, David, the list goes on. The Holy Spirit would come upon them, do a work, and leave.

In our day, the Spirit comes upon us that are born from above, never leaves us, never forsakes us. Absolutely astonishing.

[22:08] The glory of God has come to dwell within men and women who have been born again. And look at the result of that. It brings the gift of obedience.

It causes us to walk in His statutes. That is only possible with a new heart and the Spirit living in us. It won't happen any other way.

What about the person the Apostle John warned us about in the epistle of 1 John? That is a person who lives a life in habitual sin. He makes a practice of sin.

That person has never been to the operating table where God performs heart surgery. It doesn't mean we're sinless.

1 John makes that very clear. If you ever say you're without sin, you're lying and not telling the truth. But habitual sin, you've not been to the heart surgeon, the supreme heart surgeon.

[23:12] there will be people very active in the church on the day of judgment who will cry out to Jesus, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy or preach in your name and cast out demons in your name and do mighty works in your name?

That's a pretty active church member, isn't it? And Jesus looks at them and this is His response. I never knew you.

Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. He never says anywhere, I knew you, but I don't know you anymore. I knew you savingly, but I've cast you off.

He never says that. He says, I never knew you. when God puts His Spirit within us, we live in obedience to His commands. And that is not the perfection of our lives, it is the direction of our lives. Part of the new life is to live in holiness and part of that is to recognize that we haven't attained holiness. And that's why we often fail Him and we fall into disobedience and we fall into sin.

[24 : 38] Well, what do we do then? Well, a good place to start there is 1 John 1 9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I read one guy that I trust and he says, confessing sin, I think it's homologeo in the Greek, it's named the sin. He is faithful and just to forgive us that sin.

And then he goes on and cleanses us from all unrighteousness, even sins we've committed. We don't remember we committed them. We may not even realize we were committing them, but we were. He cleanses us of all unrighteousness.

And remember this, when a born-again believer sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

That word advocate is a defense attorney. We have someone to defend us. Now, I told the class yesterday morning, we will one day stand before the judge of the universe.

[25 : 55] And it turns out that our judge is our defense attorney. If you ever have to go to criminal court in Oklahoma or in federal court, it's pretty nice to have the judge be your defense attorney.

That never happens. But we have an advocate, a defender with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

And the Bible tells us there is an accuser. Satan, right? And he's accusing us. And you know what? He's probably not lying about us. He may be exaggerating a little bit.

Mike, you probably know some guys that exaggerate from time to time. Yeah, some bigger than others. But there's an accuser.

And he's not lying. When it comes to me, all he has to do is tell the truth. And the Father, I think, looks at Christ and Christ says, he's one of mine.

[26 : 54] And I think the Father says, I'm satisfied. I'm satisfied. As kind of preparing to close here, boy, we're getting out early.

I apologize, I'll go much longer next time. I'm really not comfortable with this lesson. I discovered that pretty late, too late to change it.

because for me, it all sounds like it's so neatly packaged. Well, you're born again and you get all these new things. And everything is perfect.

And it's not. We live in an imperfect world, don't we? But it sounds like it's really neatly packaged. You're reborn, you receive a new heart, you become a new man, and all that's true.

And everything's fine to that point until you go to your home in heaven. But that's not quite the way it works. Always remember, fellows, we live in unredeemed flesh.

[27 : 57] Our flesh has not been redeemed. We're going to get new flesh one day. Personally, I hope it's thin, but I guess we'll see. But we're going to take on new flesh.

And right now, we live in unredeemed flesh. flesh. We battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

And I've got to tell you, most of my battle, I think, I'm convinced, is the flesh. I think the world's out there, and I think the devil's out there. I know he's got demons. I had a guy, he was frequently telling me and others in here, Satan's attacking me.

Satan's attacking me. I mean, I heard his feelings. I said, you've never done anything so great that Satan's worried about you. And I got that from Dr. E.V. Hill, the great black preacher from Los Angeles, now with the Lord.

That wasn't original with me, but there's only one Satan, and he's got lots of demons, but it's the flesh, guys. And boy, let me tell you, Madison Avenue, do you know what I mean by that?

[29 : 06] Some of you guys are young, you mean the advertising industry. They know where the battle is joined. That's why you can't see a hammer for sale unless some woman in a bikini is selling it.

She wouldn't know what that hammer was used for. It's a fleshly fight. We are at war inside of ourselves. We have the unredeemed flesh and the Spirit of God.

Now, the Spirit of God is going to win, but it's going to be a fight to the end. To the very end. So, always remember, we are waging a battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I love what Dr. Zachariah said. I heard him just a couple weeks ago, and he said, he begins every morning, regardless of where he's at, hotel room, home, whatever, he gets up early, and he begins with repentance.

repentance. Anything he's done that has not been confessed, that's a good way to start your day. It's a good way to end your day, too, by the way.

[30 : 17] Repenting of anything that's hanging out there between him and God. This came to me last week in ways I would never have thought possible.

And I really am almost down to that I'm even talking about it, but I'm going to. The number one topic in the headlines of late in the United States of America is the killing of the unborn.

abortion. Now, we've had abortion legalized since 1973. Sixty-plus million babies have been aborted. But the governor of New York State stood up.

He had proposed a law that allows the aborting, that is a sanitized word for murdering, a baby, not in the first trimester, or the second, but in the process of being delivered.

Nine months, ready to come out. The water's broken. And under this law that was proposed by the governor, the baby can be killed without a criminal violation.

[31 : 51] law passed. And the governor and those in the state legislature supporting it gave the passage of the new law standing ovation.

Now, all this was reported in the liberal media. The liberal media. Vermont then followed suit, adopted the same law. some eight to ten states have it on the books to vote on.

Virginia, as you know, the governor there, who's also a pediatric surgeon, said not only should you be able to kill a baby on the day of its scheduled birth, but you should be able to, if the baby through a botched abortion is born alive, just put him in a closet, make him comfortable, put him on a pillow, and leave him there a couple of hours, he'll die.

No criminal violation should attach itself to that. This is absolutely amazing. It's amazing.

Last week, in New York City, a man beat his girlfriend, who was pregnant at the time. He beat her to death.

[33 : 10] She died, the baby died. The disc attorney in that borough of New York City charged him with two counts of murder.

The murder charge on the baby was tossed out by a state judge because he said, killing a baby in New York State is no longer a crime.

And he tossed it. let me tell you how strongly I feel. I could get emotional if I let myself. This great nation that I dearly love, you dearly love, has become the center of Baal worship in the world.

The centerpiece of Baal worship was the sacrifice of children to pagan gods. And I'll tell you, I don't get my theology from Rush Limbaugh.

I don't even listen to him that much, but I heard him the other day, and I wish I was recording it. I guess you could buy it or hear it online. But he said he's often asked by Republicans, by the way, conservative folks, if you, Rush Limbaugh, would soften your views on abortion, then Republicans would sweep everything.

[34 : 39] Because people are for everything else, mostly, but this is the one issue that keeps us losing elections. Why won't you soften it? Rush Limbaugh said this, because if you open this Pandora's box, one day we will be killing the born, which has now been proposed in a number of states and enacted in New York and Vermont, and that's a very short distance from killing, say, an autistic or a Down syndrome child, and after three years, four years, five years, maybe the mom's now a single mom, and she can't cope.

Let's get rid of that baby. And Rush Limbaugh went on to say, and then, what about the aged? What about the infirmed? What about handicapped?

And then he said, and I'll never forget this, he said, what about Christians? They're a stumbling block to progress. Boy, that's a chilling thought, isn't it?

That's a chilling thought. How could people enact this? Well, I'll give you the answer.

Because the people enacting such laws, regardless of their political affiliation, have hearts of stone. They have not had heart surgery, divine heart surgery.

[36 : 15] They don't have a heart of flesh. years ago, I read a passage in Ezekiel 7 5. Strange passage.

And I wonder if Ezekiel was talking about this day. I don't know that to be a fact.

But this is what the passage says, and God is speaking. Thus says the Lord God, a disaster, a unique disaster, behold, it is coming.

a nation that sacrifices its children is under the judgment of God. Judging is not coming.

It's here. And absent genuine and thorough repentance, any nation that does that will be destroyed.

And you look at the nations that did it in the Old Testament.

[37 : 20] Where are they at? All the kites and the ites and the malachites and the Jebusites and the Hittites and they're all gone. They're all gone.

I am convinced, if left unattended, we are witnessing the destruction of the United States of America and we can stop this only through heart surgery of the kind that only God can provide.

Only God can provide that. We need a genuine sweeping revival in individual hearts to see that this is a grave sin, others are grave sins, and we need heart surgery.

Thank you.