

OpenTheo

The Gospel & Being Born Again

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For The King - Rocky Ramsey

Continuing on the Gospel Foundations series, we discuss on this episode the concept of being born again. We provide scriptural evidence and we walk through what it means to be born again. This we must remember is all an act of God as we cannot force the spirit of God to act according to our wills for it says in John 1: 11-13,

"He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

I hope you enjoy the episode and it is edifying to you!

Key Texts:

- * John 3:3-8
- * 2 Corinthians 5:17
- * 1 Peter 1:3
- * Colossians 2:12-13
- * Colossians 3:1-4
- * 1 John 3:9-10
- * Ezekiel 36:25-27
- * Ezekiel 37:1-14

My guest joining me this week on the Sunday series is my brother Bryce. Bryce just finished his undergraduate degree in philosophy and hopes to get his MDiv. from a seminary after he completes his undergrad. He hopes to be a pastor shepherding Gods people one day.

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Transcript

God raising us with Christ, the newness of life being born again. New life. Not just life, a new life.

It's not based upon anything in you. It's not based upon your faith. It's based upon solely the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

Because the wind blows and we don't know where it comes from or where it goes. And Jesus says, "Such it is with everyone who was born of the Spirit." We can't put our finger on it because it's just like the wind. You can't grasp the wind in your hand.

In the same way you can't grasp the moment of your regeneration or being born again. Don't think I will even ask you to make Jesus Lord of your life. That's the most preposterous thing I could ever tell you to do.

Jesus Christ is Lord of your life. Whether you serve him or not, whether you bless him, curse him, hate him, or love him, He is the Lord of your life because God has given him a name that is above every name. In the name of Jesus Christ, every knee shall bow.

In tongue confess that he is Lord. Some of you will bow out of the grace that has been given to you. And others will bow because your kneecaps will be broken by the one who rules the nations with a rod of iron.

But I'll not apologize for this God of the Bible.

[Music] Psalm 72 verses 8 and 9. May he have dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. May desert tribes bow down before him and his enemies lick the dust.

Hello. Welcome to the 4th Kine Podcast. Wherever you're listening in, we appreciate you joining us today to hear about God's word, to hear some theology, to get to know the king better.

Who is that king if this is your first time and you're wondering, that king is the Lord Jesus

Christ. The king who has all power and authority in himself, imbued in him. Not something he earned, but something he just has in him.

So I read that text in Psalm 72 to highlight that this king was to have dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. And that the people would bow down before him and lick the dust before him. Insinuating that they are nothing before him.

That they are bowing down to him in submission because he has subdued them. So this is the nature of our great king. This is what was going to happen and what has happened.

It is happening. It is happening, exactly. So at all times Christ is winning the world to himself and has won the world and will win the world.

For he must reign until all his enemies are put under his feet. Exactly. So just keep that in mind that this is what the king is like.

He's going to have dominion over the whole face of the earth is the goal that we see laid out in scripture. That is the goal. So thanks for joining us.

Hope that was encouraging. And we continue on our Gospel Foundations series that Bryce and I have been doing on these Sundays. Last week we talked about reconciliation being reconciled to God.

And this is one of the facets of the good news of Jesus Christ. And we're going through all these different things because they are vital and a part of the Gospel. The Gospel can be thought of as a beautiful diamond with many different facets and each different one shining a different kind of light.

In a different way and a different angle. But nonetheless being just as beautiful as the last face. But in a different way with uniqueness to the entire diamond.

The entire thing. But it's one diamond. It's one Gospel.

Your spiritual gift is giving analogies. Thank you. That's true.

That is true. Am I one good analogy I think I've ever done? I know all of a sudden I have the gift. You really think I do get it in analogies? Yeah.

Thank you. Wow. I honestly don't think I'm good at that.

So it's crazy. Thanks for affirming me. Affirmations are so powerful in the community of God.

Yeah. That's really what it means to love. You must affirm.

Don't rebuke your brother. Just affirm him. Make him feel good.

24/7. Okay. We're just joking obviously.

But yeah. That's the Gospel is like a diamond. Yeah.

So we got some text. Do what? What are we talking about today? Oh yeah. So we got some texts continuing on this Gospel Foundation series about this week.

The new birth in Christ being born again. Another facet of the Gospel. So we talked about reconciliation.

Reconciliation last week. This week we want to hit on the new birth in Christ. So Bryce is going to read from John 3 for us to start us off.

And then we're going to continue building this argument through. Do some extra Jesus throughout the text. Yeah.

So this is your typical go to passage that most people use when they talk about being born again. And it's one of the most clear. And Jesus says this in John chapter 3. And we're going to read verses 3, 4, 5, and 6. And this is what it says.

Jesus answered him, that is Nicodemus. Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said to him, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born of water in the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That which is born in the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. I'm going to have to keep on going. Verse 7 and 8, sorry.

Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear it sound. But you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.

So it is with everyone who is born of the spirit. So you see here what Jesus is trying to teach to Nicodemus is just what John opened up his book teaching in John chapter 1, verses 12. It says, but to all who received his name who believed in him, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of the blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of the man, but of God.

This is a sovereign act of God and the Holy Spirit alone, not based upon anything in man, but based upon his grace alone. You can't even see the kingdom of God, let alone enter it, unless you're born again. You must be made new.

And Nicodemus's retort back to Jesus is, I am old. How can I be born again? How can I enter into my mother's womb a second time? And Jesus clarifies for him more that this is not talking about some sort of physical being reborn. It's not some sort of weird

reincarnation.

This is talking specifically about a spiritual being made alive spiritually, being born again spiritually. Our spirits are dead from birth, Ephesians 2.1, and you are dead in your trespasses and sins. When God said to Adam and Eve, "The day you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that day you will die." They did die.

They died spiritually. 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5 said that in Adam all have died. We are dead.

But we must be born again in order for us to enter into the kingdom of God. And this is exactly what Jesus is teaching to Nicodemus here. It's not based upon anything in you.

It's not based upon your faith. It's based upon solely the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. Because the wind blows and we don't know where it comes from or where it goes.

And Jesus says, "Such it is with everyone who was born of the Spirit." We can't put our finger on it because it's just like the wind. You can't grasp the one in your hand. In the same way you can't grasp the moment of your regeneration or being born again.

You can't catch up to it. You can't ever make it concrete enough. The reality can be concrete in your life obviously.

But you'll never be able to pinpoint an exact moment of the regeneration. Because it's a spiritual act and you don't know when it happens. And you can't predict the ways of God.

You can't allow this person seems receptive to the gospel. Therefore they must be born again. You can't predict these things.

You don't know who God is going to work powerfully in. A person can go from completely hating the ways of God straight into faith and new birth in Christ whenever God so pleases. And there could be a person that seems like they're coming along nicely and just fall away.

Like the parable of the seeds. There could be one that springs up very quickly but doesn't take root and is gone. But then there could be one that I've seen that grows fast or slowly grows.

You just don't know what God's going to do. So it is all an act of the Spirit, not an act of the will of man. Right.

So we've been in 2 Corinthians for a lot of these, 2 Corinthians 5. I'm going to read it again. 2 Corinthians 5, 17. "Therefore if anyone is in Christ he has a new creation.

The old has passed away, behold the new has come." Good reminder verse. I mean this verse is so rich and so many of the things we've talked about. The double imputation,

reconciliation with God.

The great transaction we talked about. The double imputation is just so clear here. So there's a lot of different things but what we want to hint at here is that this person that's in Christ that's been born again is a new creation.

Like the only person that can create something ex nihilo is God. So when we look at somebody that is a completely changed individual, no longer under dominion of sin, that is an act of God. That is something supernatural of the spirit of God to be born again.

So they are ontologically different now. They're a different creation in their spirit. That's what ontology means.

It's a new nature, new being. And that's kind of the point why I want to bring that up because it's that big of a difference. When we say somebody must be born again, that's why Nicodemus was incredulous to what Jesus was saying.

Because how could this take place? So I want that reality to sink into anybody listening and for Bryce and I as well. We need to always remember this, that God created ex nihilo afresh. He didn't just create ex nihilo all those years ago when God created the world.

6,000 years or whatever. He creates afresh faith in the hearts of men. He creates new souls all the time in the wombs of women.

He's in the creative act all the time. God is always creating ex nihilo and that is what being born again. That's why again Nicodemus was incredulous to it.

And why it's a powerful teaching and a good reminder of the good news of Jesus Christ. That when he comes proclaiming freedom from the captives, he's talking about taking a soul out of hell and giving them new robes, giving them new life. And so many people put this doctrine of regeneration or being born again.

They put it too much on the lap of the individual. But we really, what me and Rocky are really trying to push for here is that this beautiful doctrine is something that is solely done by God. That's all that Rocky was just mentioning.

It's something that he has sovereignly done and you see this even in 1 Peter, verses 3. It says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his that is God's great mercy, he, that's God, has caused us to be born again to a living home. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." So again, like we've always talked about, this doctrine is rooted in Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

There is no being born again and entering into the kingdom of God apart from the blood of Christ. Right? He's the foundation of it all. He's the gateway.

He's the door. He is the way, the truth and the life. But we have to recognize that it is

God who has caused us to be born again to a living hope.

We cannot look at ourself and say, "The reason I am alive right now is because I gave myself CPR when I was dead." That's not the point. It's not as if we are drowning in the ocean and somebody throws a life raft to us that we have to grab onto by faith. It's more akin to we are dead at the bottom of a pit, that God comes down or dead at the bottom of the ocean, and he comes down, lifts us up and he gives us new life.

He gives us spiritual CPR. And that's what you see in texts like Ezekiel 36 and 37 of a person who has a heart of stone is now given a heart of flesh. Where in Ezekiel 37, Ezekiel looks out and he sees a balance.

The balance. Exactly. That's the imagery right there.

That's like literally, so I would be remiss if I didn't mention in John 3, you have a direct allusion to Ezekiel 36, 25. I originally wasn't going to bring this up, but we probably should. Because I think it's really helpful.

This was really eye opening to me. It says in Ezekiel 36, 25, "I will sprinkle..." This is right before he's about to say he's going to give them a new heart, take out their heart so they can give them a heart of flesh. And he says, "I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be cleaned from all your uncleanness.

From all your idols I will cleanse you and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you." So, must be born of the water and the spirit. Exactly. That's what he's saying.

The water is the cleansing work of Christ that the spirit is applying to you and the secret operations of the spirit in your heart. And obviously the spirit is the one who's doing it. So, this is entirely the work of God.

This is something he's doing. He's done it. You are the dry bones in the valley and God is the one who pumps the flesh onto those dry bones and calls it to be a person.

Amen. So, yeah, kind of a tangent, but... No, it was good. Amen.

You're going to do a few more verses? Sure. I'm just going to read them. I'm going to do a whole lot of commentary because we need to wrap this up.

I want to keep these short. But Colossians, the book of Colossians also lays out this idea very well of being born again. Colossians chapter 2 verse 12 and 13.

"Having been buried with him in baptism in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead, and you who were dead in your trespasses in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive, together with him, having forgiven us of all of our trespasses." God raising us with Christ and

newness of life, being born again. New life. Not just life.

A new life. And this is also in chapter 3. This is also walkthrough where he says, "If then you have been raised with Christ..." This is 1 through 4. "Raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, set your mind on the things that are above, none of the things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ and God.

When Christ who is your life appears, then you will also appear within the glory." In the new life, you died. Not your physical body obviously didn't die because we can enter into new birth in this life. So our physical body doesn't die.

It is our spirit dying and being a new creation. Coming back, back, back to 5-7. Second Corinthians 5-17.

Right. Okay. Then you want to read your first on? Yeah.

In 1st John, verses 3. Sorry. Chapter 3 verses 9 and 10. It says, "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God.

By this it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother." So the reason that Rocky and I wanted to bring this verse up is this is a direct attack against the false teaching that there can be a person who is converted and is a Christian, but they're carnal. They're people who have no change in their life.

They're people who are one creation and they stay that same creation. Yeah. Right.

That's a direct affront against the gospel message itself because the gospel is something that does something. Yeah. And the other thing again is you being made a new creation.

You are not... Nope. There has never existed a Christian who is a "carnal Christian" who is just a carnal Christian. You go through periods of sin, yes, but that is a false doctrine.

Yeah. So we need to repudiate that. John repudiates that.

In 1st John, John 3, Paul repudiates it. In 2 Corinthians 5. Yeah. Sounds great.

These are abhorrent doctrines. Yeah. We cannot believe these things.

Exactly. Repent if you believe such things. Yeah.

And read God's Word and see the truth and say God's Word. Yeah. Turn to Christ.

Turn to Christ. Yep. And if you don't know Christ, repent not just of bad thinking, but repent of who you believe Christ to be.

Turn to Him and He will receive you with open arms. Yeah. If you would but repent and humble yourself before Him.

He's a willing Savior. Savior is willing to save. You can have this new life.

You can have this new life now. You really can be born again. If you turn to Christ, He is more than happy to sprinkle living water on you.

He is able to save to the uttermost. Exactly. So that's our encouragement to you if you're listening and you don't know Christ.

If you do know Christ, remember, think back to what God has done. Think back to when you were a different creation. If you grew up a Christian and you can't remember when you were a child, then that might be something that's harder to recall.

But it's a truth that was true nonetheless, that there was a point in your life when you were a different creation. But for those of you that were converted later in your life, remember, think back to that moment when you were a totally different person. Totally different being.

And God changed you and made you new. And I know Bryce and I can remember that because we were saved later on. I didn't start falling in Christ until I was 17.

And Bryce didn't until he was 18. 18, yeah. So a little bit about us, but yeah.

So I think that's it. Now, a reminder that on the website, I added some subscription only content. If you want to hear my book reviews, you can subscribe to that for as little as \$2 a month.

And you can hear, pick up those book reviews. And the website is for the king podcast at gmail. Sorry, for the king podcast dot com.

And you can reach me at for the king podcast at gmail dot com. I also added my calendly link at the bottom of the website on the for the king podcast dot com. And you can click on that and schedule an interview if you want to ever come on the podcast and you have something interesting you'd like to talk about.

So give me an email and schedule on there. And if you feel so inclined, you can donate cryptocurrency to the podcast on the link below as well in the show notes. But I think that's all I have to say.

So yeah. First Timothy one seventeen says to the king of the ages of mortal and visible, the only God, the honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Solely. They owe. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah.

[Music]