

A more complete understanding of the NEW BIRTH

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September 2, 2018

Today we are going to be talking about a deeper insight into what it means to be born again. In the previous two sessions we were talking about the new birth from the perspective of a physical new birth. We have thought that being born again is just a spiritual thing where our spirits are born again but there is no scripture in the Bible that talks about the born again spirit. You never see Paul's writings saying you are a born again spirit. No, Paul talks about the new birth from a completely different perspective. He talks about the new birth as a new creation and that new creation has everything to do with a physical creation that is made brand new. It doesn't find its power in its own ability but actually in God Himself.

What we have said in the previous sessions is that when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, he understood that Jesus said to him, "Nicodemus, you need to be born again." What he understood was that Jesus was actually telling him, "Nicodemus, you, as a person, a whole person, needs to be born again." From there the question is, "How is it possible? Is it possible for a man to go back into his mother's womb and be born again or born from above?" Then Jesus explained to him how these things take place.

I want to just lay a short foundation on how the justice of God works and I think we will have to repeat this many times. The justice of God is not punishment orientated justice where God finds justice in saying that if somebody has transgressed then God must punish that person. No, the justice of God does not address that. The justice of God has everything to do with what God originally planned for man and the life that He originally designed and wanted to give to man and to see that man experiences that. One thing we need to understand is that Jesus spoke to the Pharisees and said, "You are of your father the devil and he was a murderer of man from the beginning."

So, Jesus sees that man was basically murdered by the devil. Adam and Eve were basically murdered. It was a murder. When somebody is murdered, who is the guilty one? We can never impute the trespasses that those people go through in being deceived, in being led away, to them. Today in our justice system, in America it works this way in many states, they have the death penalty. If you have taken a life from someone, then it is like your life is going to be taken because it basically says that it is not just for a person to lose his life, to have his life taken from him. God comes with justice and what He says is, "I've had a dream for man that man would have eternal life and the murderer of man, which is the devil, came and brought lies to Adam and Eve. He deceived Eve and through the deception that was in Eve, Adam was also tempted and he took of what killed man.

It would be like going to somebody and say to him, "Listen, go and take the car that is in the driveway and you can go and safely drive it." But, you know that the brakes on that car don't work. Maybe someone has come and warned you saying, "The brakes on this car are not okay." But you come and say to someone that you want to kill, "It's okay. Take this car and drive it and it is just going to be fun. The brakes are actually okay. You are going to be fine." Then as you drive you find the brakes are not okay and then you die. The person who got in the car was definitely the disobedient one and he is guilty in the sense that he listened to the advice you gave. But, at the end of the day, those people got murdered. It was a planned murder. That is what the devil did. It was a planned murder and God has come and said that His people have, basically, been murdered. And they need to be born again."

We need to have a brand new life. Creation needs to be born again. But this birth that will take place will take place from the power of God. There's a lot to say about this and I can obviously not get into this in just this session today. It would be nice to have one week and just sit and share line upon line about these things. So there are many questions that can arise from this but what I want to say to you, and this is the foundation I want to lay: The justice of God is to restore man and bring what God had promised from before the world began into manifestation and fruition in people's lives. What God has promised from before the world began is eternal life. You've heard me say that many times and I just want to say that again to you: God was an eternal being. He had no beginning and no end and He wanted a friend in life.. a friend that shares in the same life.

He decided to create heaven and earth, make man on the earth and then make man alive. This living being which had the ability to die, which could die, He offered him a place where he could never die and that would then be to eat of the tree of life and live forever and so be one with God and be part of a God family where God shares His life where we are then the object wherein the love of God is being put on display... the generosity of God... the kindness of God... the love of God...the grace of God where it is put on display. When that doesn't take place and when man fell, God said, "I want to do what is right. I want to do what is just according to My original plan and I will have an immortal friend that I can share My life with and that I can fellowship with can have friendship with where we can share in the same life." And God did not give up on what He planned from the very beginning and He continued.

So, those of you who still think of God as a God of justice, where He has to punish in order to have justice satisfied and that punishment then designed toward the disobedient person, I want to tell you that is not how it works. Was there a punishment? Yes! The punishment was towards the murderer. That's where the punishment is and the punishment towards that being is eternal destruction. But, we who believe upon the Lord, will have eternal life. So, what God wants to come and do is He wants to bring forth a new creation, a creation that is not finding its power in itself but a creation that finds its power in the Holy Spirit. Glory to God!

I want to start off by giving the definition of grace and then we are going to look at John 1:12-16. We are just going to talk about what this grace is and what this influential power of God is and how this new birth works.

I want to start out this way: When we think of grace, we can never think of grace inside the parameters of a transgression of the law. Grace didn't come into existence the moment man sinned. Grace was something that has always been there. Grace can never end. Many times it is said that grace is a person. I can understand that one would say that but I would rather say that it is much bigger than just a person. Grace is the very power of God, the Spirit of God, the very life of God, where God brings into existence that which He has dreamt for our lives. That is what grace is.

Thayer's definition of grace: It is the merciful kindness by which God exerting His holy influence upon souls turns them to Christ and keeps them, strengthens, increases them in the Christian faith and knowledge.

Strong's' definition of grace: Grace is especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life including gratitude.

Grace is the divine influence upon a human's heart and the manifestation in the here and now. Grace is not God saying, "I am not looking at your sin. I am not angry with you." No, God doesn't look at man from a judicial point of view. He looks at man from the point of view of original design... His children, His own, the ones that He loves, the ones that He brings salvation to, the ones that He cares for. That's how He looks at man!

With that in mind, with grace being this influential power that actually has nothing to do with transgression of the law, I want us to look at a passage in **Luke 1**. This is about Mary Magdalene. She was a virgin. We are looking at grace in the life of Mary.

Luke 1: 26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, you that are highly favoured, the Lord is with you: blessed art you among women.

29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for you have found favor (grace) with God. The word, favor, there is actually the Greek word, charis, which means grace.

31 And, behold, you shalt conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.

Eventually, if you read on, Mary basically says, "Let this be done to me. Let it be to me according to Your word."

The focus here is Mary is a virgin. Sexually, she had done nothing wrong. Yet, God is now going to grace her. This grace is that she will be with child. So, we find that the grace of God is actually something that causes Mary to be able to partake of something that no man can do by himself. What woman, by herself, can be pregnant alone, without any man, without any seed? It is impossible! But here it says that you have found grace in the eyes of God or God will have grace on you.

Then she said, "How will I have this grace?" Listen to what happened: "The Holy Spirit will come over you and then you will be with child." What is the Holy Spirit? It is the very life of God, the very source by which all things are created. "And then a man will be formed inside the womb and He shall be the Messiah!"

So we see that grace, in Mary's case, has nothing to do with transgression. It has everything to do with God actually bringing forth something in her human body that she was not able to perform by her own power. With that in mind, we are going to look at the first chapter of John.

Remember, we are talking about the new birth. We are talking about having our physical bodies actually born from the Holy Spirit. I hope you can really start to see where I am going here.

John 1:

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Here we see that Jesus was called the Son of God because God was the one that formed Him in the womb of Mary and He was the Son of God as what Adam was the first son of God. If you go and look at the genealogy of Jesus, you will see in one of the recordings that it goes down to Adam and Adam is called the son of God because he didn't have a physical father but God actually formed him from the dust of the earth. So was Jesus formed from the dust of the earth. It says in Psalm 103 that we, humans, are but dust. So God came and He formed from the dust of the earth in Mary's womb, He formed a man and breathed into that man the breath of life. That man became a living soul which was Jesus that was born. Then that very same Jesus was born again! But the second birth that Jesus had was born from the dead. The Bible says, "This day have I begotten You." Then it refers in the second psalm, "When He raised Jesus from the dead."

So we find Jesus, being formed by the Father and brought forth as the Son of God. Then He died and was called the begotten of God. He was begotten out of the dead where there was no "Mary" involved but only God. In this birth where Jesus was born from the dead, we find that He has immortality. He cannot die. We find Paul seeing Him later on the road to Damascus as technically God in human flesh in the sense of that flesh has attained and known what it is like to have no beginning and no end. We know that Jesus' body had a beginning. The beginning was right there in Mary. But the body Jesus has now since it's been so unified with the life of God, that body has no beginning and no end. It transcends, it is greater than anything we could ever imagine or think. But that is what God has come to give us. It is a gift that no man can give or fathom. It's above human comprehension or what we could start to fathom but God declared it and now we are understanding it.

John 1:

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

So you can be born of blood but you can also have your body be born of God. You may say, "I don't believe that our bodies can be born of God!?" Let's read verse 14:

14 And the Word (the message of eternal life) was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

We are not going to go much deeper than that. I think that's about all that we are going to talk about today.

What he is saying here is, and if you can just take this nugget today I will so blessed and it will give you a lot to think about. Mary was graced. That grace was the influence of the Holy Spirit on her belief, the influence on her heart and the manifestation in life. What did the angel Gabriel come and do? The angel spoke to Mary a message. The word was, "You are blessed above all women!" She wanted to know what that meant. She said, "You will be with a child and this child will be the Messiah." She said, "How can these things be?" He said, "God has graced you!" She said, "How can it be?" It's almost like you get a kind of language like John with Nicodemus. He said, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and then that holy thing that will be formed in you will be born of God. In other words, God will bring forth something physical inside you... a physical human." So, what we see is that was called grace. You need to understand that. There was a divine influence upon the heart of Mary. She believed it and said, "Let it be done to me." Then the Holy Spirit influenced her life to a manifestation of something that she could never do by her own ability.

Who of us by our own ability can obtain to the immortality of the human body? No one! It is only by the grace of God. Can you see why it is important not to see grace as something that finds its definition in guilty or not guilty and God is being gracious and He isn't going to punish me? The definition of grace that is found inside the parameters of punishing and not punishing is weak grace. It is a very low understanding, small understanding, shallow understanding of what grace is. You don't need a transgression of a law in order for God to be gracious. When God decided to make a promise that He will give us eternal life, it was already grace. When He made the world, it was His grace. His Spirit that brought forth Adam was His influence. Amen. Then Adam did not believe and went to be under another influence which was not grace. Then God came and said, "I will still influence man!" And He graced Mary and by gracing Mary, He influenced humanity. Then He died and He rose again out of our death, out of our sin, and now He has a resurrected physical human wherewith He wants to grace us and give that same freedom to our bodies!

Let us read that again.

John 1:

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

You can have a life born of all those things and then you can have your life born from God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

What does that mean? The only begotten,...for those who haven't heard this, let's go to Acts 13 again. I know that this is repetitive but it is needed.

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God has fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again (So, it says that God made a promise. This Word was basically made flesh. How? In that God raised up Jesus again); **as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten you.**

Psalm 2:7 where it says, "You are My Son. This day I have begotten You," refers to the physical resurrection of Jesus. That is now the begotten Son. With that in mind, we go back to **John 1:14**

14 And the Word was made flesh (what word? That promise... the promise of eternal life.) **That promise was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.)** What is John referring to here? He is not referring to the birth that came from Mary. He is referring to this physical resurrected Jesus. He is referring to full of the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. "This day have I begotten You!" And then when we beheld, now listen to this, when we beheld the resurrected Jesus, this glorified human was full of grace. He was graced and who and what has happened to Him was full of a divine influence to us full of grace and truth. In other words, this resurrected Jesus is the one that is now the influential power to us where by we can then be graced.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. Now, what is he talking about there? We have defined that grace for grace as grace heaped upon grace. But that is not what it means. I remember teaching that as a Real LOT of grace... a big amount of grace. It is true that it is really a lot of grace. I've preached "really a lot of grace" as since Jesus came now God can be very gracious towards my sins in the sense of He will never, never, never be angry with me when I do something wrong and I am so happy that He is not angry with me. I want to tell you that God loves the world! Think that! Let's get anger out of our mind for a moment and let us just see what this passage is actually saying here.

He is saying that God came and He graced the world in raising Christ from the dead. The Bible says that Jesus grew in the grace of God. He grew in the influential power of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and in the manifestation of the life. Then this Spirit has influenced Jesus' heart so much that He believed that the Father would raise Him and then the Spirit manifested back in His body in raising Him from the dead, bringing forth a new creation begotten of God... not begotten of the flesh but begotten of the Spirit yet physical.

Now it says, that this resurrected Jesus was full of grace. He was full of the very same power that raised Him in manifesting that towards people.

Listen to this: **16 And of his fulness... of His fulness... have we all we received, and grace for grace.**

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him.

My goodness! There is another hour in that but what he is saying here is Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, was brought forth in a resurrected body. John says, "When we beheld that, we beheld the glory, the fullness of God, in a human body and of His fullness... Remember the Bible says in Colossians, **the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus BODILY.** That is very important.

Of his fullness... What fullness? *Of the fullness of God bodily*. The bodily fullness of God have we received influence. So what influences us? Bodily Godliness.. Bodily fullness!. What influences us is the fact that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus bodily and that He was bodily begotten into the fullness of God who is beyond time, beyond beginning or end. We find that now in a physical human body. Now he says that we have received of His fullness, grace upon grace or grace for grace. I think that is a correct translation there. It was grace for grace. That means Jesus was raised by the Spirit of holiness by God the Father to an immortal life and on account of that grace we are now graced. Because of that grace we are graced to having the very same life where we can have the confident expectation of a brand new life because of the bodily resurrection of Jesus. With that as a foundation we are now turning to that wonderful passage in 1Peter.

The justice of God is not retributive meaning He doesn't have to punish someone to redeem Him from His anger. Neither does the justice of God have anything to do with you trying to live a holy life to score points with God. Neither does it have anything to do with your having a consciousness of your sins and all those kind of things. The righteousness, the message of God's grace, was from the beginning! Grace didn't only come into existence when Jesus came. No, the grace that was promised, which is, "I will give you eternal life!", that grace came into manifestation with Jesus. Amen! God always had grace! There was no time when God did not have grace.

The thing with Noah, when you read Genesis 6, the Bible says, "Noah found grace in the eyes of God." Noah found that when he beheld God, he looked into the eyes of God and he found the God who wanted to save his life and prolong his life and not wanting him to die. That's what he saw. God spoke to all people and no one in his eyes or in his heart had any place for the voice of God and what God was actually saying. But Noah interpreted God's message as, "God wants to give me a dwelling place and He wants to dwell with me and He wants to be gracious towards me." When he saw God as a God that wants to influence to a brand new life and he believed that, what happened? God gave him the knowhow on how to build the ark and his life was saved.

Can you see that grace has nothing to do with God being angry or not angry but grace has everything to do with actually giving you another life ... or for you to continue to live and not die... actually to be born again. The whole world was to be washed away in the flood but then Noah, who was to be washed with the whole world, was not. He got another life.. a sign of the new birth... a type and a shadow right there.

Now we are going to look at the begotten.

1Peter:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

What does that mean? Let's go to verse 23: (We then) ***Being born again*** (So we are now experiencing a brand new birth... why?), ***not of corruptible seed*** (or a corruptible word), ***but of incorruptible, by the word*** (message) ***of God, which lives and abides for ever.***

What is he saying here? Church, this is technical but I want to tell you that this is the crux of the matter. This is what it is about for those who want to understand the Gospel. I believe this is what Paul was praying about. When he was praying in Ephesians and said, "May they understand the hope of their calling. May they understand the dimensions of the love of God. May they be wise in the knowledge of God." These are the things. I really believe that.

So what he is saying here is, "When Jesus was raised from the dead, a human was raised and we beheld how God graced Jesus to immortality in a physical body. And now from there we have the expectation, the hope, of the same. As we hope upon that, the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead we now receive it and now, all of a sudden, we have a brand new life. Our lives are changed now. We have a brand new source of life. We are begotten again because we are expecting to be begotten in our bodies in the resurrection. That's what he is talking about.

Let me put it this way: because Jesus believed the Father would raise Him from the dead that is why His life was the way it was on the earth. That's how He conducted His life .. according to that hope. In the very same now, assurance has been given to every man in that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, my friend! As we have that assurance our lives are conducted in a brand new way and the Spirit that will give birth ... let me put it this way by using a bit of a strange language here: The Spirit that will begotten us, our bodies, that will save our bodies to immortality from physical death, that Spirit is living in us, curing and healing our physical flesh today. That is why our physical bodies, our physical brain, can start to think thoughts we could never think about under just trying to be directed or being convinced that the Christian life is a good thing or trying to obey the law.

I found that as you study this and as we believe upon the resurrection something happens by the power of the Holy Spirit where your mind is enlightened, where the power of the resurrection starts to form neuro parts and patterns in your brain which would not have been possible outside of having this hope where we are graced to a brand new life. Glory to God! The thoughts of holiness that you can have by believing upon the resurrection you have never even thought of what you can think of in a matter of holy thoughts and what is possible and how blessed you are and the joy and the kindness and the goodness and everything that can be in your life.

There is a lot more to say but I feel to end off with this: We have had this idea that because Jesus was punished we are not going to be punished and the Father had to punish because He is just. Therefore He punished Jesus because He actually serves justice. Then He punished Jesus. Now we are very happy for the Good News that we will not be punished. Now our joy is the joy of knowing that no one is going to punish me. But I want to tell you that is not the joy of God because God doesn't have the joy of, "You know what? I am very happy because no one is going to punish me." God's joy is not the joy of, "No one is going to punish me!" So if your joy is the joy of, "No one is going to punish me", then I want to tell you that you do not have the joy of God! It's not the joy of God!

The joy of God is the joy that He is the eternal, immortal, having no beginning, having no end, having no defilement in Him at all! He is happy because He has that life in Him. He is happy because He is happy! He has the joy of a kind of a life that is of such high quality that it cannot be saddened. That is what He wants to bring forth in you. The only way it can take place is by gracing a human body and having that human body manifest as the only begotten. Then when you behold the resurrected body, that is full of grace and of the fullness which is the fullness of the Godhead bodily, we receive grace because Jesus was graced to immortality. That is grace for grace. Hallelujah! And thereby, we live! Amen! And that's how we live holy lives.