

# BRINGING THE WORD OF LIFE

## E-MAIL NEWSLETTER

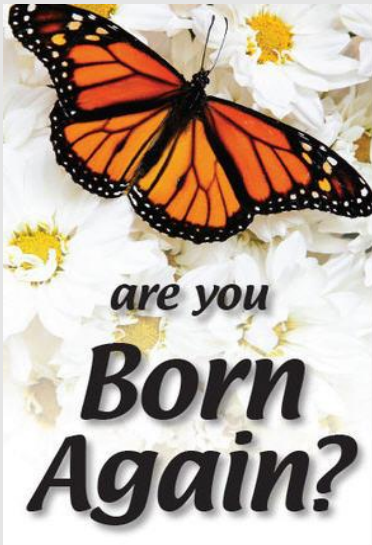
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'...that you may know that you have eternal life.' 1 John 5:13

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Issue: 1158

September 2015



Changed from an ugly caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly!

This transformation that takes place in nature is a good illustration of what happens when a person experiences the new birth.

## NEW BIRTH IS NEEDED

In God's eyes, our natural state is unattractive, too, since we are born in sin and formed in iniquity (Psalm 51:5). As we grow, we continue to live after the desires of the flesh and mind (Ephesians 2:3). This is opposed to God's purpose in creating us, and shows our need to be made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Only the new birth can give us new desires and a new life. The caterpillar does not become a butterfly by education, religion, or self-effort. Likewise, it is only by the miraculous metamorphosis of new birth that your life and mine can be made beautiful to God.

## NEW BIRTH IS FROM GOD

John 1:12, 13 state the facts of the new birth: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the [children] of God, even to

them that believe on His Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

**Only those born of a certain man have the right to be recognized as the children of that man. So only those who are born of God have the right to be recognized as the children of God.**

Thus it is that those who receive Christ as Saviour and Lord become children of God. To receive Christ is to have true repentance to God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## HOW ARE WE BORN AGAIN?

John 3:5 tells how we receive the new birth—"water and the Spirit." What the water signifies is plainly told in Ephesians 5:26. The water is the Word of God—the gospel of Christ preached to sinners like you and me—which, by the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit, produces the new birth. (See also 1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18.)

## WHEN ARE WE BORN AGAIN?

John 20:31 gives us the time of the new birth: "and that believing ye might have life through His Name." It is immediately upon believing that we receive life eternal.

**"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36).**

## YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN!

Nothing that we can do will enable us to "see" or "enter the kingdom of God." For this, the Lord Jesus says, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).

Without the new birth, we have no life toward God. By being "born again" through faith in the Lord Jesus, we receive everlasting life.

**"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).**

Without the new birth, we are "condemned already" (John 3:18). By being born again, we are freed from judgment (John 5:24). If you are to be eternally saved, it is absolutely necessary for you to be born again.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). *Moments with the Book*



## THE GREAT IMPERATIVE

*John Wesley preached so often on the text "You must be born again" that people asked him, "Mr. Wesley, why do you preach so often that we must be born again?" His answer was always the same: "Because you must be born again!"*



## What makes Christianity unique?

**Answer:** Is Christianity really unique, or is it just one of many roads on the path to Truth? Is Christianity truly unique among the many religions around the world? If it is, what makes it so? Unique among all religions, Christianity makes several claims that others do not.

**1<sup>st</sup>.** all other religions exhort man to reach up to God and grasp hold of Him through their own efforts. *Christianity is the only religion where God reaches down to man.*

**2<sup>nd</sup>,** other religions are systems of do's and don'ts to appease God; whereas *Christianity is a relationship with God.*

**3<sup>rd</sup>,** *Christianity looks to the Bible as the singular source of Truth.*

**Finally,** *Christianity is based upon truly the most amazing event in all of human history—the resurrection.*

*As to the first issue,* other forms of religion subscribe to a system of works—those we should do and those we should avoid—which will make us "good enough" to please God and merit His favor.

**Christianity, on the other hand, is based on the biblical principle that we can never be good enough to be in the presence of a perfect, holy God.**

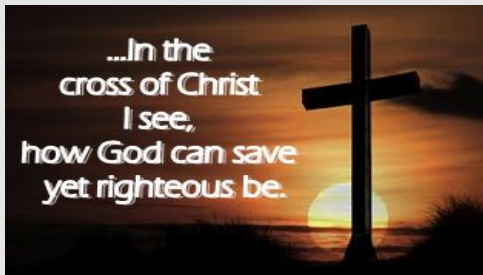
The Mosaic Law was given to mankind to prove to us that we can't keep it. **Galatians 3** describes the purpose of the Law. It is a "tutor" or "schoolmaster" to lead us to Christ because "...by observing the law no one will be justified" (Galatians 2:16).

The impossibility of keeping the Law is revealed in what Jesus called the “first and greatest commandment” in **Matthew 22:37**:

**“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”**

This would mean loving God with every fiber of our being 24/7, with never a thought for ourselves, an impossible task for anyone. But rather than condemning us as law-breakers and leaving it at that,

**God provided a substitute—Jesus Christ—who obeyed the Law perfectly for us. By faith in Him and accepting His work on our behalf, we are justified and made righteous.**



**Here is the crucial difference between Christianity and all other religions.**

*As to the second point, Christianity is not a religious system, but a relationship with God, one that He initiated and maintains. Christians believe that mankind was created specifically to have a relationship with God, but sin separates all men from Him (**Romans 3:23, 5:12**). Christianity teaches that Jesus Christ walked this earth, fully God, and yet fully man (**Philippians 2:6–11**), and died on the cross to restore the relationship that was broken by sin. After His death on the cross, Christ was buried, He rose again, and now lives at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for believers forever (**Hebrews 7:25**).*

The intimacy of this relationship is revealed in two poignant pictures.

Now no longer seen as law-breakers, we have been adopted into God’s own family as His children (**Ephesians 1:5**).

Even more intimately, believers are the very “body of Christ” of which He is the head (**Ephesians 1:22–23**), having been purchased by His blood (**Hebrews 9:12**).

**No other religion makes assertions that even begin to approximate this incredible truth.**

Another thing that makes Christianity unique is its source of information.

All religions have some sort of basis of information that outlines its beliefs and practices, but none have one source of information that makes the claims Christianity does about the Bible—it is the written Word of God, and it is infallible and inerrant and all that is necessary for faith and practice (**2 Timothy 3:16**).



Christians believe that the Bible is the inspired—literally “God-breathed”—Word of God and that its teaching is the final authority (**2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21**).

Though there are other religions that use prophecy, none are 100% accurate, as are those in the Bible, and none of them point to someone like Jesus who made incredible claims and performed incredible deeds.

Perhaps the most defining principle of Christianity that makes it truly unique in every way and provides its fundamental basis is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Within Christianity, the resurrection is vitally important, for without it, Christianity does not exist, and our faith is useless (1 Corinthians 15:14). It was Jesus' resurrection that changed the lives of the disciples.

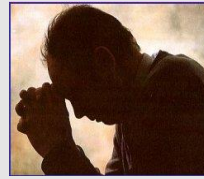
After Jesus was crucified, the disciples ran and hid. But when they saw the risen Lord, they knew that all Jesus had said and done proved that He was indeed God in flesh. No other religious leader has died in full view of trained executioners, had a guarded tomb, and then rose three days later to appear to many people.

**The resurrection is proof of who Jesus is and that He did accomplish what He set out to do: provide the only means of redemption for mankind.**

Buddha did not rise from the dead. Muhammad did not rise from the dead. Confucius did not rise from the dead. Krishna did not rise from the dead. Only Jesus has physically risen from the dead, walked on water, claimed to be God, and raised others from the dead. He has conquered death. Only in Christianity do we have the person of Christ who claimed to be God, performed many miracles to prove His claim of divinity, died and rose from the dead, and claimed that He alone is "the way the truth and the life" (John 14:6) and that no one comes to the Father except through Him.

*Got Questions*

## POINT TO PONDER



A man my go to heaven  
without health, without wealth;  
without fame or a great name;  
without a thousand other things,

**But he can never go to heaven  
without Christ.**

**'YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN'**

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