

Salvation Series : Lesson #3

The New Birth and Spiritual Circumcision

This lesson in regards to the series on salvation is a very crucial lesson in really understanding some of the things that happened to a person when they get saved. In this lesson we will deal with two subjects, the New Birth and Spiritual Circumcision. Both of these events take place within a person the moment that they are saved whether they realize it or not. Many say I didn't feel these things take place but none the less they still took place. Remember one of the main purposes of this series is to help a person understand exactly what salvation is and also to understand the effects of salvation on them personally.

The New Birth : (John 3:3-7)

Many people have heard the phrase "born again". This phrase comes from the word of God. Jesus in the passage we are looking at told Nicodemus that a man must be born again.

Verse 3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Verse 5 "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Now Nicodemus did not completely understand what Jesus was talking about. But now that we have the completed word of God and we are on this side of the death burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ we can understand what Jesus was talking about.

Why does a man need to be born again?

When we are born we are born sinners (Job 25:4 ; Psalms 51:5 ; Romans 5:12-15). As a result of sin we are spiritually dead. This is why in Ephesians 2:1 it says "you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins" (quickened is an old English word that means to be made alive). Now you were not physically dead when you were saved but you were spiritually dead.

Going back to the passage in John chapter 3 we will see that Jesus spoke of two births. One of them is a physical birth and the other is a spiritual birth. In verse 5 which is quoted above Jesus said you have to be born of the water and of the spirit. Now some will try to say that being born of the water is being water baptism, but it is not. If you will look at the next verse you will see that the word of God will interpret itself.

Verse 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Therefore the water birth is connected with the flesh and the spiritual birth is connected with the spirit. It makes since that the fleshly birth is connected with water because when a woman gives birth her water breaks.

So when a person is saved they are also spiritually born again. This process takes place immediately when a person is saved (**Ephesians 2:1-10**).

It is also important to note that being born again was not possible until after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (**1 Peter 1:3**). Therefore no one in the Old Testament was born again.

Spiritual Circumcision : (Colossians 2:9-13)

Before we begin talking directly about spiritual circumcision we must show that man is a 3 part being. This is shown for us in **1 Thessalonians 5:23**. From this verse we see that man has a body, a soul, and a spirit.

What is the soul?

The best explanation that I can give you is that the soul is the real you. It is inside your body and has a shape of its own. Remember that when a person dies the body goes back to dust (**Genesis 3:19**). The spirit goes back to God who gave it (**Ecclesiastes 12:7**). So the soul is the part of you that goes to heaven if you are saved and that goes to hell if you are lost. That is why the word of God says “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (**Mark 8:36**). And to show that the soul has a bodily shape remember that the rich man who went to hell in Luke 16:19-31 had a tongue, eyes, body, memory, and concern for his lost brethren. Therefore the soul is the real you.

In the passage from Colossians we see that as a part of salvation something is circumcised and that this circumcision is done by God. Note the following phrases from the passage.

- “the circumcision made without hands” (**vs 11**)
- “putting of the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (**vs 11**)
- “through the faith of the operation of God” (**vs 12**)
- “and you being dead in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;” (**vs 13**)

What actually takes place during this circumcision?

In verse 13 we see that before salvation we are said to be dead in the uncircumcision of our flesh. So the soul is stuck to the flesh before salvation, this is why in the Old Testament you will see the phrase “if a soul touch any unclean thing” (**Leviticus 5:2**). The soul could touch an unclean thing because it was attached to the flesh.

When a person is saved God takes and does an operation, note the passage said the circumcision without hands and the operation of God, and divides the soul from the flesh. The soul is still inside the flesh but it is not connected to the flesh. This is what is meant in verse 11 when it says putting of the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. You don't lose your physical body when you get saved but you do put it off of the soul.

This is why the word of God talks about a new man or an inner man being on the inside of a saved person (**Colossians 3:9-10**). This also helps us with two verses, **1 John 3:9** and **1 John 5:18**. According to these verses it says that whosoever is born of God does not sin. Now if you have been saved any length of time you know that you still sin every day. So what do these verses mean? They are talking about that new man on the inside doesn't sin as a result of the spiritual circumcision the soul is separated from the flesh and it doesn't sin the flesh does. This is also what **Ephesians 4:30** means when it says that you are sealed until the day of redemption. Your soul is sealed as a result of this spiritual circumcision.

Note also that this event is connected directly with salvation. In verse 12 it says we are risen with him through faith, aren't we saved by grace through faith? In verse 13 we see that we are quickened with him and forgiven of all trespasses. This is a reference to when we are born again. Therefore this process occurs the moment that we ask God to save us.

We are not going to discuss eternal security in detail here but as you can see understanding spiritual circumcision is a key to understanding why you cannot lose your salvation. Even though you sin in the flesh that cannot cause you to lose your salvation because your soul is sealed and does not sin, therefore how could you lose it?

Two key things that are results of salvation are the fact that a person is born again spiritually and spiritually circumcised the moment that they are saved.

