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HOW TO BE BORN AGAIN

BILL SUBRITZKY

DEDICATION

*To my dear wife Pat,
who has been such a faithful helpmate
over many years*

The Scripture quotations in this publication are from The New King James version.

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ONE

What Does it Mean to be Born Again?

1. IT MEANS BEING RECONCILED WITH GOD

In the first book of the Bible, Genesis, we read that God created this earth and formed man out of the ground and gave him the breath of life.

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7)

Thus God made Adam and put him into the Garden of Eden to tend it and keep it.

“Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.” (Genesis 2:15)

God gave Adam the right to eat every tree out of the Garden excepting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” (Genesis 2:16-17)

Next we read that Eve was created, was tempted by the serpent to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She encouraged Adam to do so also, thus she and Adam disobeyed God so that He sent them out of the Garden of Eden.

“therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man, and He placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.” (Genesis 3:23-24)

God and man were now separated and man no longer had direct fellowship with God. Previously God walked in the Garden of Eden and fellowshiped with Adam and his wife. This could no longer happen because of man's disobedience.

The Bible tells us that we are all in the likeness of Adam. Thus man's disobedience, that is sin, separated him from God.

2. GOD'S ANSWER

God's answer has been to send His Son, Jesus Christ, who was born of a virgin, lived and walked on this earth until the age of 33, then after 3 1/2 years ministry He was nailed to a cross near Jerusalem and died a cruel death. Why was this so? Because we are all sinners and the only way the penalty for sin can be paid is by the shedding of blood. By the act of dying and shedding His blood on the cross, Jesus Christ enabled us to be reconciled to God. He has closed the gap between God and man so that we can be reconciled to God.

3. JESUS EXPLAINS WHAT WE MUST DO

There was a man of the Pharisees called Nicodemus who was a ruler of the Jews and he came to Jesus by night. He said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."

We read the answer of Jesus:

"Most assuredly I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

Nicodemus could not understand this. He said, "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, 'Most assuredly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I say to you, 'You must be born again.'

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:4-8)

Jesus is speaking of a radical experience. When we are born into this world, we see everything through natural eyes and our understanding is a natural understanding. Although we are all the offspring of God, we do not become His sons and daughters until we receive the Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus Christ said that we must be born of the Holy Spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit must enter us.

This happened to the disciples of Jesus Christ on the Sunday night of His resurrection. The disciples were assembled in a room with all the doors shut because they feared the Jews. And suddenly the resurrected Jesus Christ came and stood in their midst and said, "**Peace be with you.**" Then He breathed on them and said to them, "**Receive the Holy Spirit.**" (John 20:22)

We have seen previously in Genesis 2:7 that God, having formed man from the dust of the ground, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being. However, he did not receive the Holy Spirit. Now we see the miracle of God after Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. He breathed on his disciples and they received the Holy Spirit.

As we will see later, any person who turns from their sins and turns towards God and who desires to receive the Holy Spirit will receive the same gift.

Jesus Christ also mentioned that it was necessary to be born of water. The Bible speaks of the washing of the water of the Word. Water and the Word of God are often equated together. It is the Word of God entering our heart which gives us new life and that is why Peter was able to say,

"having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever." (1 Peter 1:23)

We need to believe in our hearts that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and confess it with our mouths in order to be born again. At the same time we should be ready to receive the Holy Spirit.

This is what Jesus meant when He said, "**You must be born again.**"

Our natural mind is against God. We are born with a mind that is not subject to the law of God.

“Because the carnal is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.” (Romans 8:7)

Our natural mind does not receive things that God tries the miracle of God after Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. He breathed on his disciples and they received the Holy Spirit.

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Our natural mind does not receive things that God tries to speak to us about because they seem foolishness to us. This is because they require spiritual discernment.

“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14)

The natural mind is against God and until we are born again we do not understand the things of God. The Bible remains a mystery to us. We cannot read the Bible properly unless we have received the new birth in Jesus Christ.

I well remember in the years before I was converted, even though I was a churchgoer, I had great difficulty in reading the Bible. I would read one verse, then a second, then a third verse and would forget what I had read in the first verse. The Bible just did not make sense to me. There appeared to be many contradictions in it. This was because I was trying to understand it with a mind that was not born again.

One evening at the conclusion of a meeting in my home where I had chaired a meeting of a number of church representatives in our district, one of them waited until all the others had left my house. He then turned to me and said “Bill, unless you are born again, you will never understand the Word of God.” I was filled with indignation. I was a churchgoer, a member of the Synod in our church, Vestryman, Chairman of the Stewardship Council of our Diocese and here was a man telling me I needed to be born again to understand the Word of God. Suddenly I realised he was right, I did not know how to read the Bible, nor could I understand it properly. The seed of that man’s word was sown in my heart and a number of years later I humbled myself before God, became like a little child and was born again of the Spirit of God. My life was radically

transformed.

4. TO KNOW THE LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE OF GOD

Being born again means that we begin to understand how much God loves and accepts us.

If there is anything that we lack, it is self-acceptance. We cannot really come to terms with ourselves until we know the love of God. Again we can only really come into that love when we are born again of the Spirit of God and know His love and acceptance for us.

“to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:6)

The thrilling truth is that no matter how much of a sinner we really are, Jesus Christ died for each one of us and has given us acceptance with God. He is only waiting for us to turn to Him and receive that acceptance by being born again of the Spirit of God.

TWO

Why do I Need To be Born Again

Deep within us all there is a knowledge that there is a Creator of this world. We cannot look at the marvels of nature, the beauty of creation, the pattern and order of things without acknowledging that there is a Mind behind it all. Look at the pattern and order of the stars, the regularity of the tides, the regularity of the appearance of the sun each day, the times of the moon. Look at the beauty of the flowers and look at the way in which our own bodies have been made. Doctors never cease to marvel at the way in which we have been created. We could go on and on.

“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20)

The Bible tells us that we are without excuse because if we are truly honest with ourselves, we will recognise that there is a Creator of this world.

Until we come into fellowship with this Creator, then we will never be complete as a person. The Creator of this world has revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ who walked on this earth and who died and rose again that we might have fellowship with God. We need to be born again so that we may know true fellowship with God. We can then begin to understand the Word of God, His plans for our life and the meaning of life itself. Within all of us there is a hunger for the

truth and this hunger can easily be met by God as we turn to Him with all our heart. However, there is only one way to God and that is through His resurrected Son, Jesus Christ.

” Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’ (John 14:6)

Buddha is dead, Confucius is dead, Mohammed is dead. None of them have been resurrected like Jesus. However, Jesus Christ was seen by upwards of 500 persons after His resurrection from the dead and we have many reliable eye witnesses accounts in the Bible of His resurrection. Most of all, those of us who are born again know the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, for Jesus Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to us as our Comforter, Helper and Strengtheners. You too can know the presence of God in your own life and being by the Holy Spirit.

THREE

Some Common Questions About Being Born Again

1. WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN WHO HAVE NOT REACHED THE AGE OF UNDERSTANDING?

Jesus made it quite clear that they are under God’s protection.

“Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 18:10)

When a child reaches the age of understanding (and this can differ with each child) then it will be time for that child to make its own decision about being born again.

2. WHAT ABOUT THE HINDUS, BUDDHISTS AND OTHERS LIKE THEM?

As we have already seen, every man knows about the eternal power and Godhead because they can be seen in the things around us. If we elect to change the glory of God into an image made like birds, four-footed beasts and creeping things and turn from that knowledge of God, then God will judge us accordingly.

“and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” (Romans 1:23-25)

The Bible says that God **“will render to each one according to his deeds.”** (Romans 2:6)

“eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality, but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness - indignation and wrath.” (Romans 2:7-8)

Thus there will be a judgement of God in respect of our understanding of Him. if we have heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ then Jesus said:

“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him - the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.” (John 12:48)

If we have not heard of Jesus Christ, then we will be judged by our attitude towards God. If we elect to worship birds and animals instead of the one true God, if we elect to do wrongdoing instead of good, then God will judge that person accordingly. Thus the Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist who has never heard of Jesus Christ will be judged by his walk with God.

“tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory, honour, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” (Romans 2:9-10)

The Bible says there is no partiality with God. He will judge us by our walk with Him whether we know Jesus Christ or not.

“For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified.” (Romans 2:12-13)

Therefore the Bible gives a solemn warning. Everybody knows there is a God and will be judged by his or her walk with God. if we have heard of Jesus Christ and the gospel of Jesus Christ, we will be judged by our reaction to that gospel. If we have not heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ then we will be judged by our walk with the one God of whom we all have knowledge.

It is therefore no excuse for us to say, “what about the Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim?” The Bible makes provision for them. The real question is “What about you?”

3. WOULD I BE A HYPOCRITE IF I TURNED TO GOD NOW?

One of the greatest tricks of the devil is to tell us we are not worthy of God's grace and mercy. It may be we have lived a long life as a sinner, or even in a way that we have thought has been good but we are being challenged by God to surrender to Him and be born again.

On many occasions I have had to visit the dying and when I have gently put before them the need to be born again and to know Jesus Christ as Saviour, the reaction has sometimes been, “But I would be a hypocrite if I turned to God in that way now. I have lived my life my way. Why should God hear me now?”

We must understand that God's ways are not our ways. He offers us salvation as a free gift and without any conditions. It is never too late to be saved.

“Again, when I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, If the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall

surely live, he shall not die. **None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered against him, he has done what is lawful and right, he shall surely live.** Yet the children of your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' But it is their way which is not fair!

When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die because of it. But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is lawful and right, he shall live because of it.

Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.'⁰ house of Israel, I will judge every one of you according to his own ways."
(Ezekiel 33:14-20)

As we read the above words, we suddenly realise how different God's ways are from ours. A man can live a good life and even follow Jesus Christ all of his life, but if he turns into wickedness just before he dies then he could lose his salvation. On the other hand a wicked person can turn to Jesus Christ on his death bed and if he makes an act of true and full repentance and turns his life over to Jesus Christ, then he can be saved. In the eyes of man this is not just, but as God says, His ways are not our ways.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts."
(Isaiah 55:8-9)

One of the major events recorded in the Bible concerning a sinner turning to Jesus Christ just before his death is the story of one of the two thieves who were nailed to crosses beside Jesus Christ. While one of the thieves blasphemed Jesus, the other said, "**Lord, remember me when You come Into Your kingdom.**" (Luke 23:42)

The forgiveness of God was immediately apparent for Jesus said, "**Assuredly I say to you, today you will be with me In Paradise.**" Even at that very last moment before his death, the thief repented, turned to God, and Jesus said he would be saved. It is never too late!

This is why we need to be born again. Without the born again experience we cannot understand the ways of God because spiritual things are spiritually discerned. You may be about to take your last breath as you read this book but it is not too late to enter the Kingdom of God.

4. BUT I DONT DO ANYBODY ANY HARM AND I LIVE A GOOD LIFE

This is perhaps one of the most dangerous excuses thought up by the devil which prevents people being born again.

If we can enter the Kingdom of God and receive the gift of eternal life only by living a good life and doing good works, then it was unnecessary for Jesus Christ to come and die for us on the cross. What we are in effect saying is that it was not necessary for Jesus Christ to come and die for my sins. I could have entered the Kingdom of God whether or not He came and died for me. I only need to lead a good life and do good works.

Nothing could be further from the truth. It is a complete denial of the work of the cross of Jesus Christ. It is a denial of the fact that we are sinners and that we need salvation through the cross of Jesus Christ.

His Word also provides an answer:

"Therefore you, O son of man, say to the children of your people: 'The

righteousness of the righteous man will not deliver him in the day of his transgression, as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall because of it in the day that he turns from his wickedness, nor shall the righteous be able to live because of his righteousness in the day that he sins.” (Ezekiel 33:12)

It is clear that our own righteousness and doing of good works will not deliver us from sin.

“But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags,” (Isaiah 64:6)

In the eyes of God our own righteousness and good works are as filthy rags unless they are based upon faith in Jesus Christ.

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)

Therefore the only answer for us is to come to the Cross of Jesus Christ, acknowledge Him as our Lord and Saviour and be born again. Then our good works should follow our faith in Jesus Christ, not the other way around.

5. BUT I GO TO CHURCH REGULARLY.

Going to church will not of itself make us a Christian. Christianity is a heart transaction and there needs to be a conversion experience and a change of heart take place within us. We do this by turning from our sins and asking Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Saviour.

I sat in a church for over twenty-five years without coming into true repentance and receiving Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. Someone has said that going to church does not of itself make you a Christian any more than being born in a stable makes you a horse!

Once we come to the age of understanding we must make our own decision whether or not to follow Jesus Christ with all of our heart. There must be a transaction that takes place between ourselves and God. This can only be accomplished through His grace as we turn to Him. If church membership could of itself give us salvation, then we could go to church without ever coming into a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ, of His love for us and of His death and resurrection.

Church membership is essential because we need to be built up and to be taught about Jesus Christ. However, our relationship with God is a personal one through His Son, Jesus Christ, and can only come about when we are truly born again of water and of the Spirit of God.

6. BUT I BELIEVE IN GOD

Believing in God does not make you a Christian.

“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe - and tremble!” (James 2:19)

From this sarcastic comment of James, it can be seen that even the demons believe and tremble but that does not make them Christians. There is only one way to God and that is through Jesus Christ.

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” (John 14:6)

Jesus Christ is the stumbling block of all religions. As He is the only one way to God He

proves a stumbling block to those who will not believe that He is the Messiah.

“but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.” (1 Corinthians 1:23)

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

‘Behold, I lay in Zion, a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame, Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious, but to those who are disobedient, ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.’ and ‘A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.’” (1 Peter 2:6-8)

There can never be any union take place between Christian faith and other non-Christian faith in Jesus Christ. He will always be the stumbling block to those who will not profess that He is the risen Christ.

7. BUT MY PARENTS WENT TO CHURCH

Somebody has said ‘God has no grandchildren.’ We are not a Christian because our parents were Christians or because we were brought up from childhood in a Christian church. Each one of us must find our own personal relationship with Jesus Christ and this can only occur as we are born again.

8. BUT I PRAY REGULARLY

The question is, “To whom are you praying?” Unless you have the Holy Spirit within you then you cannot be praying to the one true living God because it is only through Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit that we have access to God.

“For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” (Ephesians 2:18)

We can only come to God through the blood of Jesus Christ.

“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.” (Hebrews 10:19-20)

We had better be sure we are praying to the one true God and not to another god. We can only be sure of this when we are truly born again of the Spirit of God. Then and only then can the Holy Spirit witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:16)

9. BUT I READ THE BIBLE

Obviously when we are Christians we love to read the Bible. However, many people have read the Bible without being Christians. There have been many theologians who acknowledge that they are atheists, but who have read the Bible and have produced works which have set out to destroy the truth of God.

Even Karl Marx at the age of seventeen wrote a thesis on part of John’s gospel. We are told that many great theologians agree with much of what he said, but although he read the Bible, Karl Marx never claimed to be a Christian. Reading the Bible is not enough, you must be born again.

10. BUT I TALK ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Many people talk about Jesus Christ as a great prophet, teacher, leader etc. without acknowledging Him as the Son of God. Many non-Christians quote the words of Jesus Christ with approval, especially about feeding the hungry, the poor and those in need, or quote His other actions with approval, but without accepting Him as Lord and Saviour. Thus talking about Jesus Christ is not enough; we must be born again.

SUMMARY

All of the above questions are not real questions. They are just excuses.

The real question is, do you know where you would go tonight if you died? Would you go to heaven or to hell? That is the question.

“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:11-15)

FOUR

Barriers To Being Born Again

1. DELIBERATE SIN

Deliberate sin can be a barrier to being born again. The Bible paints an awful picture of those who have turned from God and gradually sunk to a lower and lower level.

We see this picture painted in the book of Romans.

“Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.

Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not

fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness, they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful.

who, knowing the righteous judgement of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.” (Romans 1:24.32)

Here we see the downward slide was by sin. There is first the worshipping of the creation rather than God, then women turning to women and men to men, following sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness and the great list of sins named above.

The sad thing is that those who practise such things not only do the same but approve of those who practise them.

It is a terrible moment when God has to give people up to their vile passions.

Scripture is very clear that we can lose our inheritance by practising certain sins. This is set out in the following scriptures:

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.

Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” (Ephesians 5:3-5)

“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (Galatians 5:19-24)

The wonderful news, however, is God's love. He demonstrated His own love towards us that even while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

We remember the earlier example of the criminals that were crucified on either side of Jesus Christ. One of them blasphemed Him, the other rebuked Him saying, **“Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?”**

“And we Indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this Man has done nothing wrong.” (Luke 23:41)

Then the man turned to Jesus and said, **“Lord, remember me when You come Into Your Kingdom.”**

Even while he was in his last extremity and about to die, that criminal turned to God through Jesus Christ. The answer Jesus gave him is true for all of us.

“And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.’” (Luke 23:43)

Such is the grace and mercy of God. No matter how great a sinner we are and no matter how late the hour, it is still not too late to be born again.

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39)

2. INDIFFERENCE

One of the greatest barriers to our being born again is sheer indifference. We go through life without thinking about what will happen at the end of our life. We are indifferent to death until that time approaches. We put it out of our mind, we do not want to hear about it. In today's world most funerals are conducted at a crematorium, often with just a poem being said without spiritual content. Man wants to avoid death, not to hear about it. He wants to saintise it, put it to one side.

Many times I have been asked to visit those who have terminal cancer. Often I find extreme anger on their part. “Why should this happen to me? I am still too young to die. I thought I had many years to live.” At least those people have the chance to hear again the Word of God and repent and turn to Jesus Christ, but many do not have that opportunity. Jesus gave the example of the master who did not know what time the thief would come.

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him.” (Matthew 24:44)

None of us have a lease on life. Every breath which we have is a gift from God and we do not know which will be our last breath.

With the onset of television, many people are watching the “idiot box” many hours each day. Their mind is away in a fantasy world and they give no consideration to future life. They deny the tugging of the Holy Spirit on their heart and it is only when the death of a relative or a close one occurs, or some marriage breakup happens, or some financial crisis hits them that they are temporarily shocked back into reality. Even the search for truth is often easily given up and the mind becomes filled with other matters, blocking out the inevitability of physical death which must come to us all.

3. THE OCCULT

The explosion of the occult during the past decade or so has been one of the features of modern civilization. On all sides people are turning to the occult for answers. From ouija boards through to dungeons and dragons, to spiritism, horoscopes, seances, rock music, drugs and all types of books on the occult, people are being immunised against the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Even involvement in lodges such as the Druids Lodge, the Freemasons and similar activities, mean that the Holy Spirit is quenched. Men will always look for answers other than the Word of God.

The frightening thing is that involvement in occultic activities can mean that we are surrounded by occult powers which we do not understand. These spiritual powers blind us from the true Word of God. This is why God expressly forbade the involvement of His people in these things.

“There shall not be found among you any. one who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witch- craft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.” (Deuteronomy 18:10-12)

In the appendix of this book you will find an occultic checklist and if you have been involved in any of the matters listed under that list, you should renounce them.

4. DOUBT AND FEAR

The spirit of doubt is a strong spirit in our civilization today. Our media contains so many distortions of the truth that people doubt even those things which are true. Similarly fear finds an expression in many of us, sometimes as a result of marriage breakdowns, bad home life, or many other experiences such as shock. However, God has His answer; if we turn to Him we find that:

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7)

5. BLOCKAGE OF MIND AND SECULAR HUMANISM

Our education system has taught us to be independent of God and to deny His existence. Many of us have been conditioned in our mind not to believe in God.

I have found on occasions when praying for people that they need to be delivered from the spirit of blockage of mind or secular humanism or both. Secular humanism teaches us to rely upon ourselves and not upon God and makes us self-centred.

While education has its merits, it will certainly not of itself lead us to God. In fact much education is anti-God. It is not surprising to find these words in the scriptures:

“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)

FIVE

How Do I Know That I Need To Be Born Again

In this chapter I will highlight some of the symptoms which show that we need to be born again. However, I would point out that in some of the instances they could relate to born again Christians who have lost their zeal for the Lord and have turned away from God. In that event, they will need to recommit their lives to Jesus Christ.

1. URGE FROM GOD

We should feel an urge or a desire to respond to God. Even as you read this book, this urge may well have come upon you. The Bible makes it clear that nobody can come to Jesus unless it has been granted to him by God.

“And He said, ‘Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.’” (John 6:65)

It is not our decision to go to God, it is God who calls us in His grace and mercy.

Many are called but few choose to be chosen. Few elect to make the choice to take up the Cross of Jesus Christ and follow Him. This is a fact that must be clearly recognised.

“For many are called, but few chosen.” (Matthew 20:16)

We can be called of God to make a decision to follow Jesus Christ, but still turn away and miss out on being chosen by God.

2. WE LACK A PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST

Being a Christian is not an intellectual experience, it is having a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ. I well remember the night I was born again. The very next morning I found that I could pray to Jesus Christ and talk to Him as a friend. His reality was clear and beyond all doubt. If you lack that personal reality in your life and knowledge of Jesus Christ in this way then you could well need to be born again. Jesus said:

**“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.” (John 10:27-28)**

When we come to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ, we begin to hear His voice by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that we would hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will tell you things to come.” (John 16:13)

As we draw nigh to God He will draw nigh to us. He will begin to speak with us and commune with us by the voice of the Holy Spirit. Obviously we need to belong to a church which also is walking in Jesus Christ so that we can discern what we believe is from God is in fact from Him and not from the enemy.

3. WE FEEL SEPARATE FROM GOD

God is not the one who moves, we are the people who move. It is our sins which separate us from God and until we turn from those sins then God will remain distant.

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, That it cannot save, Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.”

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:1-2)

If we feel that Christianity is a bore or we are getting nothing from going to church, or the Bible is meaningless to us, then it can well mean that we have not been born again of the Spirit of God. We may have had an intellectual experience with God but not a heart experience. The Bible says that **“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”**. (Matthew 12:34)

“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.” (Matthew 12:35)

If our heart is full with the love of God and a knowledge of His presence as should be the case when we are born again, then we will be a changed person and the Word of God will become alive to us. Fellowship with other Christians will become a joy and we will never want to stop witnessing about the love and goodness of God.

4. IF WE LACK THE KNOWLEDGE OF ETERNAL LIFE

One of the great blessings about being a born again Christian is the certainty that we go to be in an eternal life with God after our physical death. If we lack the knowledge of this and we do not know what will happen to us after death, then we do not have eternal life in our hearts. Jesus said:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.” (John 8:51)

Jesus was not speaking of physical death but of spiritual death. The Bible speaks of a second death. The first death we have is the physical death when our spirit leaves our body. The second death that can happen to us (if we do not follow God and are not in His Kingdom) is spiritual death. It is separation from God.

This is why Jesus said that He gives His sheep eternal life and that they shall never perish, nor shall anyone snatch them out of His hand. The born again experience gives us the certainty of eternal life with God.

5. LACKING THE POWER TO WITNESS

If we do not have the power to witness about Jesus Christ to others, then it may well be that we have never been born again of the Spirit of God. I went to church for many years but I could never tell others about Jesus Christ. In fact as I did not blaspheme I never used His name. I had no personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Until 17 years ago I was not converted and born again, so therefore I lacked the power of witness in my life even though I went to church. Immediately after being born again my sole desire was to tell others about Jesus Christ. Until then I had not allowed the Holy Spirit to enter my life.

6. LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When we are born again we come into an immediate knowledge and certainty about the Third Person who is present on this earth and who is called the Holy Spirit. The Bible calls Him the Comforter, the Helper and the Teacher. Jesus said that it was necessary that He went away so that the Helper could come.

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I

do not go away, the Helper will not come to you, but if I depart, I will send Him to you.” (John 16:7)

**“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement;
of sin, because they do not believe in Me: of
righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more,
of judgement, because the ruler of this
world is judged”(John 16:8-11)**

As we can see, the function of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of sin, of the need for right standing with God and the fact that there is a day of judgement. He is the one who draws you to Jesus, who tugs upon your heart strings and calls upon you to respond to the call of God. He is the one who shows us the sin in our lives and convicts us of that sin.

When we decide to follow Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, then we invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts and He becomes a real person who comforts and strengthens us and teaches us as we read the Word of God. As we grow in Jesus Christ we become more aware of His presence. Thus we begin to know about the anointing of God (see my book “The Secret of God’s Anointing”).

Six

How Call I be Born Again

1. WE MUST COUNT THE COST

There is a cost involved in being born again. The Bible tells us to count that cost before we decide to follow Jesus.

“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it ~ lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’

Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?

Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:27-33)

Becoming a Christian is not simply joining a club. It is a decision to take up a new way of life and become like Jesus Christ Himself, a revolutionary. This does not mean that we set out to pull down fleshly governments but that we decide to adopt a radically changed life-style in the sense that Jesus Christ is now going to become Lord of every part of our life. Hence we need to consider the cost that is involved and be sure that we are prepared to pay the price. Once we have made that decision and never turn back, then we will begin to understand the job of being a Christian.

There is no “cheap” or “easy” grace. That is, we cannot expect God’s favour to be upon us if we do not actively turn from sin and obey the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. BECOME LIKE A LITTLE CHILD

Having considered the cost we then need to become like a little child in our approach to God. We need to put aside all prejudice, arrogance and pride and humble ourselves before God.

“And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.’” (Matthew 18:2-5)

Our education will not get us into heaven, nor will our works of themselves. Jesus has pointed out that we need to humble ourselves like a little child if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven. Jesus Christ shocked His disciples by washing their feet before He went onto the cross. Peter objected to this but Jesus said that if He was not allowed to wash the feet of Peter then Peter would have no part with Him. Peter quickly agreed to the washing, not only of his feet but also his hands and his head. Jesus then said:

“You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” (John 13:13-15)

Satan fell because of pride. Pride is the greatest enemy to our coming to know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. Jesus has given us the example of humility.

3. REPENTANCE

Repentance does not mean being sorry for our sins, but rather turning completely from them. It is a 180-degree turn. It is a decision to turn from sin, not a feeling. When Jesus met Paul on the Damascus Road he spoke words which very clearly described the meaning of repentance:

“to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” (Acts 26:18)

Repentance is therefore turning from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. When we turn from darkness to light it means we allow the light of God fully into our lives and we turn away from all the darkness of sin.

John the Baptist, who was six months older than Jesus Christ and came as the forerunner to proclaim the coming of the Lord, preached the message of repentance. Among the first messages that Jesus preached were the words, **“Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”**. **(Matthew 4:17) Repentance involves a complete change of heart, not just an emotion.**

In the story of the Prodigal Son, the young man left his father’s home after receiving his inheritance. He went and squandered it. When the son came to himself as he lay among the swine and wanted to eat their food, he said:

**“I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father I have sinned against heaven and before you,
and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’”**
(Luke 15:18-19)

And the next words we read are:

“And he arose and came to his father.” **(Luke 15:20)**

He decided to repent and go back to his father. He in fact did something, namely he arose and went to his father. This shows the decision needed for repentance.

On the other hand we are told that Judas, who betrayed Jesus Christ, was remorseful after he saw that Jesus Christ had been condemned. He brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders. However, he was not repentant and therefore could not know God’s forgiveness. In his remorse he went and hanged himself.

Remorse is a feeling, repentance is a decision. Repentance is where our will meets the will of God on the Cross of Jesus Christ. We place our will under God’s will and decide to follow Jesus. That is true repentance. No matter how we feel we make the decision and follow it.

We need to get on our knees and confess our sins to God. It is good to do this aloud and as we confess them the devil begins to flee from our life. We should do this from our heart. Tears of conviction may well flow. We need to forgive others, especially our parents and those who are closest to us. Lack of forgiveness on our part is the greatest barrier to a true walk with God. He has forgiven us of all our sins and therefore we must forgive others. We must renounce all involvement in the occult, all wrong forms of sexual activity, all lying, cheating, immorality of all descriptions. The more repentant we are, the more we open ourselves to the Spirit of God. We can confess our sins directly to God through Jesus Christ because there is only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. On occasions it is good to confess our sins or trespasses to one another.

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”
(James 5:16)

Whichever way we do it, it must be a heartfelt decision to turn from sin, to bring all the darkness out into the light so that the darkness flees. As we do so we will begin to know true deliverance from the power of sin.

4. RENOUNCE

Having confessed those sins, we then need to renounce them. That is, we need to turn absolutely from them and say that we do not want them in our lives and renounce them in the

name of Jesus Christ.

5. GOD'S GRACE

In all of this we must remember the grace (favour) of God. It is through His favour that we have been saved through faith which God gives us. As we truly repent and turn from sin and turn to God, we find that the gift of God's faith and favour begins to operate in our lives.

If you have followed the above steps, then you are now ready to be born again. In following the above steps you may already know the infilling presence of God upon you, but in any case, we should remember the condition of entry into the Kingdom of God set out in Romans 10:8-10:

**“But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart’(that is, the word of faith which we preach):
that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.” (Romans 10:8-10)**

Thus, as we confess with our mouths the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in our hearts that God has raised Him from the dead, we will be saved.

6. ARE YOU READY?

If so, could I have the privilege of suggesting a simple prayer which you might like to follow as you go on your knees:

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to you in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. I come a sinner and I now renounce all of my sins. I confess the sins of (name those sins) and I utterly renounce those sins in the name of Jesus Christ. I absolutely turn from them. I especially renounce any involvement in the occult (if you or your parents or ancestors have been in Freemasonry or Druids Lodge you should especially renounce that involvement). I renounce all the works of the devil.

I believe Jesus Christ came into this world, born of the virgin, that He walked this earth, that He was crucified on a cross and that He died in order to cleanse me from all sin, to reconcile me to You, Heavenly Father, and that through His precious blood He bought me back from the hand of the devil. I believe He paid the total penalty for all of the sins I have ever committed and that through His blood I am cleansed, redeemed and sanctified, that is set apart to God, and justified, that is just as if I had never sinned.

I believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day and is seated now at the right hand of God. I turn to You, Lord Jesus. I turn away from the power of darkness to the power of light, from the power of Satan to the power of God and I ask You, Lord Jesus, to come into my life by your Holy Spirit. I surrender absolutely to You and I confess You as my Lord and my Saviour.

As you complete this prayer, you may well feel the peace of God descending upon you. It is good to stand to your feet and begin to thank God and praise Him for His goodness. You will start to realise the certainty of salvation in your heart and the fact that God has forgiven you and reconciled you to Himself through Jesus Christ. The joy of God will begin to flood your heart.

7. WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

On the day of Pentecost when Peter was preaching to the Jews and they were convicted in their hearts of their sins, they asked Peter and the rest of the Apostles,

“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

(Acts 2:37)

The response of Peter was, **“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”** (Acts 2:38).

You have now repented and now you need to be baptised in water if this has not happened to you before.

(a) Water Baptism

Jesus Christ gave us the example of the need for water baptism as He Himself went under the waters of baptism. Even though John the Baptist argued with Jesus when Jesus asked John to baptise Him and said:

“I have need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?” (Matthew 3:14)

The response of Jesus was:

“Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.” (Matthew 3:15)

Thus Jesus Christ gave us the example of the need for water baptism. When we undergo the waters of baptism, we fulfil what should have already been accomplished in our heart. Water baptism is the outward manifestation of the transaction which has taken place in our hearts as we have given our lives to Jesus Christ. In undergoing water baptism we identify with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection.

As we undergo the waters of baptism, we recognise that our old lives have died and we are rising to a new life in Jesus Christ and that we are no longer the slaves of sin.

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.” (Romans 6:3-6)

Most cultures recognise the power of water baptism in one form or another. They recognise that it is a cutting off from the old life. For example, in India where I have seen many come forward to make a decision for Jesus Christ, there is often no real difficulty in their home life until they undergo the waters of baptism. It is then that the real cutting off point occurs because their Hindu brothers and sisters recognise that this is a complete cutting off from the old life. Many times they disown the relatives who undergo water baptism. They may even throw them out of their homes. Thus there is a real price to pay to be a Christian in that land.

Water baptism is an act of obedience towards God. It is good for it to be carried out publicly before other believers with the candidate testifying about God’s life-changing power in his or her life.

(b) Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father. He had already breathed on them on the Sunday night of His resurrection when they received the Holy Spirit. (John 20:22) Now He was telling them to wait for the promise of the Father so that they could be endued with power from on high. (Luke 24:49) We see those same commands set out in Acts chapter 1, verses 4 and 8 when He promised that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them.

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

They duly waited a further ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven and then on the day of Pentecost the power of the Holy Spirit fell upon them and they spoke in tongues. Peter explained that Jesus Christ, being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, had poured out this which they now saw and heard. (Acts 2:33).

I advise readers to read my book on “How to Receive the Baptism with the Holy Spirit” so that you can come into the full empowering which God offers.

SEVEN

The Result of Being Born Again

There can be many results and reactions as a result of the born again experience. I would suggest some as follows:

1. REALITY OF JESUS CHRIST AND GOD HIMSELF

We should come into an immediate certainty of the reality of God and Jesus Christ. We should have an ability to pray to God through Jesus Christ and know that our prayers are being heard.

The day after I gave my life to Jesus Christ, as I looked around I found that I had never seen the trees so green, the grass so beautiful or heard the birds sing in this way before. I had never seen the sky so blue and I suddenly realised that I was looking on the earth with new eyes. The experience was a living reality to me.

Not all of us may have the same immediate experience because we will all react in various ways, but I found that I could immediately pray to God and that Jesus Christ was very real. I believe this should be the immediate outworking for any believer.

2. WE WILL KNOW THE PEACE OF GOD

Among the last words which Jesus Christ spoke to His disciples before He went onto the Cross were:

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give

to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:27)

Among the first words which He said to them after His resurrection when He met them on the Sunday night in the closed room were, **“Peace be with you.”** Then He repeated those words and said, **“Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” (John 20:21)**

When we are truly born again of the Spirit of God, then the peace of God enters us and we know that we are reconciled to God. All our sins are washed away and the peace of God is upon us.

3. WE KNOW THAT WE ARE A NEW CREATION

All the old things have passed away and all things have become new.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

We will sense that we are a new creation in Christ Jesus. All things will, in fact, become new to us.

4. WE WILL KNOW THAT WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf. be reconciled to God.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

God has appointed us ambassadors of reconciliation, that is we are to go out and speak about Jesus Christ, leading people to Him so that they know that they are reconciled to God.

5. WE WILL WANT TO LIVE FOR GOD ONLY

We will indeed realise that Jesus Christ lives within us and we will want to obey Him and His commandments as we read the Word of God.

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

6. THE BIBLE WILL BECOME REAL TO us

Here again, we have to exercise our power of decision and decide to read the Bible. As we do so we should ask God to help us and especially to enlighten us on His Word. We should begin to read the Bible in a methodical way so that over a period of time we read it right through. Even the parts which initially appear to be dry we will find that God will begin to pour His power and Spirit over so that we find that we can read them easily. There are many good Bibles on the market today which are written in modern English and are easy to understand.

Some of us find that we really want to devour the Bible because there is so much God tells us. God puts a hunger in our heart to read His Word and we should obey that hunger and not allow other things to interfere. As a matter of practice I have found that it is good to read a certain

number of pages out of two portions of the Old Testament each day, similarly out of the gospels and out of the epistles in the New Testament. As I do this on a regular basis I find that I can read the whole of the old Testament in three months, the gospels in 14 days and the book of Acts to Revelation in about 21 days. This may not be the pattern for others but I have found over the past 17 years that I have been greatly blessed as I have done this.

Consider carefully how many hours you are giving to television and other interests. The best time of the day to read the Bible is right at the beginning of the day while you are fresh. It is important that you set aside some time each day to read the Word of God and feed your spirit through that Word.

When you are born again your spirit becomes alive. It now wants to fellowship with God. It is no longer dead and one of the ways in which your spirit can fellowship with God is by reading His Word.

No matter how many times you read the Bible, you will find something fresh and new in it for you. It is also good to get hold of The Foundation Series of Dr Derek Prince which provides an excellent foundation in understanding the Word of God.

EIGHT

Fellowship with Believers

The Apostle Paul testifies of the command that he received from the Lord and delivered to the Church, namely that we should eat the bread which represents the body of Jesus Christ and drink the fruit of the vine which represents the new covenant in His blood:

“For 1 received from the Lord that which 1 also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat, this is My Body which is broken for you, do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

It is therefore necessary for us to come together with other believers on a regular basis and carry out this command of Jesus Christ.

We find that the early Church obeyed this command:

“Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.” (Acts 20:7)

The early Church commemorated the shedding of the blood of Jesus and the breaking of His body as the Lamb of God on the first day of the week.

In the book of Hebrews we are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:25)

As we examine the first letter to the Corinthians, especially chapters 12, 13 and 14, we realise that we have become members of the Body of Christ and that it is necessary for us to meet together so that the gifts of the Holy Spirit can be used and confirmed.

One of the great mistakes which Christians make is to give up on fellowship with others. They decide they do not like the Church or that it is not good enough for them, or for some other reason they will not continue in fellowship. They then open themselves to attack from the enemy through pride and deception. The Bible tells us to submit to one another:

“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud. But gives grace to the humble.’ “ (1 Peter 5:5)

Jesus Christ described himself as the Good Shepherd, that there would be one flock and one shepherd.

“I am the good shepherd, and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice, and there will be one flock and one shepherd.” (John 10:14-16)

If we stray away from the flock then we open ourselves to the attack of the enemy who comes to kill, steal and destroy.

I have found many Christians who have left the fellowship to which they belonged and no longer attend any church. Invariably I have found that their Christian life is weaker and, worse than that, many of them have come under many forms of deception. I know that in my own life, my safeguard in walking in the Spirit is that I am submitted to those who call me to speak in their assemblies or to speak as an evangelist in a particular area, as well as being involved in my own local church. I am always careful to listen to any person who has something to say concerning the ministry God has given me, whether that person be young or old. We can always learn something. One of the major safeguards which I have in my own ministry is the love and wisdom which God gives through others.

It is therefore necessary for us to fellowship in a church which knows Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, believes the Word of God and acts upon it.

The Joy of Believing

Jesus Christ describes Himself as the true vine with His Father as the vine dresser and ourselves as the branches which should bear fruit.

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch In Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.” (John 15:1-2)

Among that fruit is the joy of God.

“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” (John 15:11)

The joy of God is a special type of joy, it is a sense of deliverance from sin and its power and the joy of knowing that we are reconciled to God.

As we grow in our born again experience then the fruit of the Holy Spirit begins to grow in our life. This is described in Galatians 5:22-23:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

1. WE KNOW THAT WE ARE A SON OF GOD

When we are born again of the Spirit of God then we know we are a son (or daughter) of God.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” (Romans 8:14-16)

We recognise that we are sons because God has sent forth the Spirit of His son into our heart. We are adopted as sons and daughters of God through Jesus Christ.

“And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” (Galatians 4:6-7)

2. WE BECOME AN OVERCOMER

The power of sin in our lives is defeated.

When we are born again of the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit comes within us and the scriptures clearly point out that greater is He within us than he who is in the world.

“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

We have received the power to overcome sin in our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit and we should consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God.

“Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”

(Romans 6:11-14)

3. DELIVERANCE

Sometimes even though we have tried to crucify the flesh, there is still something within us which is restless, tormenting and evil. Even though the Holy Spirit has come and is living within us, something may still be oppressing us. For this reason we may need deliverance from evil spirits and we should accordingly seek this. I have expounded more fully on this in my book, “Demons Defeated.”

4. POWER TO WITNESS

As we have said already, once we are born again of the Spirit of God, we become witnesses for Jesus Christ. We should no longer be afraid to go out and tell the world about Jesus Christ. We should be open to witness concerning His goodness and forgiveness in our lives to all of our friends. Of course we should operate in God’s wisdom as we do so. He will give us that wisdom.

Jesus Christ has commissioned us to go forth and make disciples of others.

“Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen”

(Matthew 28:18-20)

This is a glorious opportunity to serve God. As I have discussed earlier, in order to operate fully in the power of the Holy Spirit we should be baptised with the Holy Spirit.

As we read the Word of God and it acts as a mirror in our lives, many changes will begin to take place. In particular we will find some of our ideas to be completely different from God's ways.

1. JESUS SAID LET OUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE MEN

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

We should not put our light under a basket but on a lampstand.

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.

But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:32-33)

As we confess Jesus Christ before men then He confesses us before God and the angels. On the other hand if we deny Him before men then He denies us before God and the angels.

2. WE SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE LORD'S SUPPER WITHOUT PUTTING THINGS RIGHT WITH OTHERS

Jesus said:

“leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:24)

We may have to go out and make reconciliation with many whom we have hurt in the past or have failed to forgive.

3. WE MUST NOT ALLOW LUST IN OUR LIVES

Jesus said we have already committed adultery in our heart with a woman if we look upon her with lust.

“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28)

4. DIVORCE

When both husband and wife are born again, then divorce should not take place in such a marriage. It is a sin against God and although He can and does forgive, it is quite contrary to His commandments for the born again believers to be involved in divorce. It means that sin has entered the marriage.

If you have been divorced prior to becoming a Christian, then you should be aware of God's forgiveness and not be under condemnation. I have emphasised that divorce should not occur in the born again, spirit filled marriage, where both partners are walking with God, but obviously there are occasions when one of the partners may turn from God and violence and other actions ensue. This does not mean that the other partner needs to suffer physical violence or abuse in

those circumstances.

5. OATHS

We are told not to take oaths.

“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’

But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool, nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black.

But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’ and your ‘No’, ‘No’. For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” (Matthew 5:33-37)

There is nothing wrong in affirming something legally, but the scriptures do not permit the taking of oaths. This especially applies in such lodges as Freemasons where some very strong oaths are taken.

6. WE ARE TOLD TO TURN THE OTHER CHEEK

“But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also,

If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give

to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.” (Matthew 5:39-42)

7. WE ARE TOLD TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES

“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be

sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love

those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?” (Matthew 5:44-46)

8. WE ARE TOLD NOT TO DO OUR CHARITABLE DEEDS BEFORE MEN, THAT GOD WHO SEES IN SECRET WILL REWARD US OPENLY

“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father In heaven.

Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.” (Matthew 6:1-4)

9. WE ARE TOLD NOT TO PRAY LIKE THE HYPOCRITES

Standing in the synagogues and the corners of the streets and not to use vain repetitions.

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

But when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.” (Matthew 6:5-7)

10. WHEN WE FAST WE ARE TOLD TO DO IT IN SECRET

“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” (Matthew 6:16-18)

11. WE SHOULD NOT LAY UP TREASURES ON EARTH

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;

but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

All of these things add up to seeking first the Kingdom of God.

These are some of the radical changes which we find will affect our lives as we are born again and believe the Word of God.

In understanding the above commandments of Jesus, we must, of course, recognise that in order to fully understand them we must be led by the Holy Spirit.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” (Romans 8:14)

Jesus has become wisdom from God for us.

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption -” (1 Corinthians 1:30)

And the Holy Spirit gives us wisdom in every circumstance. For example if somebody asks you for money and they intend to take it away and spend it on alcohol and waste it completely, then obviously you would wait upon the Holy Spirit as to the wisdom of giving in those circumstances.

Summing up, the born again, spirit filled believer should obey the words of God.

“but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’” (1 Peter 1:15-16)

But the power of the Holy Spirit will guide us from the Word of God so we can fulfil this requirement.

When the Pharisees were testing Jesus, they asked Him what was the great commandment in the law.

The reply of Jesus was:

“Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.’” (Matthew 22:37.40)

Jesus added a new commandment that we should love one another.

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” (John 13:34)

The above scriptures provide a new foundation for our walk with God through Jesus Christ.

ELEVEN

Marks of the Born Again

Christian

1. THE BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN DOES NOT COMMIT SIN HABITUALLY

If we do sin, then God forgives, but we should do our best to abstain from sin. If we have sinned, we should confess our sins to God.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all righteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

2. THE BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN BELIEVES THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST (MESSIAH) BORN OF GOD

“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.” (1 John 5: 1)

3. THE BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN PRACTICES RIGHTEOUSNESS

“If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practises righteousness is born of Him.” (1 John 2:29)

4. THE BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN LOVES THE BRETHREN

This means laying down our lives for one another as Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.

“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.” (1 John 3:14)

“For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,” (1 John 3:1 1)

Everything else may change around us, the world may change, but the Word of God never changes.

5. THE BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN IS AN OVERCOMER

He overcomes the world and its attack. He does not allow the world and its desires to overcome him.

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith.” (1 John 5:4)

6. THE BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN KEEPS HIMSELF PURE

He does not deliberately sin and takes care of his every thought and action.

“We know that whoever is born of God does not sin, but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.” (1 John 5:18)

If we fall into sin then we can call upon the name of the Lord for deliverance.

“For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:13)

APPENDIX

OCCULT CHECK LIST

Have you ever had personal experience with or engaged in or practised or participated in or sought healing through or been involved with or used or worn or trusted in any of the following: (Please tick)

- Abstract art (under hallucinogenic stimulus)
- Acupuncture
- Amulets (tigers claw, sharks tooth, horseshoe over door, mascots, gold earring (man), talisman (magic picture))
- Ankh (a cross with a ring top used in satanic rites)
- Apparitions
- Astral travel
- Astrology
- Augury (interpreting omens)
- Automatic writing
- Birth signs
- Black arts
- Black magic (involving hidden powers for bad ends)
- Black mass
- Blood subscriptions (pacts)

- Cartomancy (using playing cards)
- Chain letters
- Charming or enchanting (attempts to use spirit power)
- Charms and charming for wart removal
- Chinese astrology
- Clairaudience (ability to hear voices and sounds supernormally - spirited or warnings)
voices alleging to be that of dead people giving advice
- Clairvoyance (supernatural sense perception)
- Clairvoyance (ability to see objects or events spontaneously or supernormally above their normal range of vision - second sight)
- Colour therapy
- Concept therapy
- Conjuration (summoning up a spirit by incantation)
- Coven (a community of witches)
- Crystal ball gazing
- Crystals
- Death magic (where the name of the sickness plus a written spell is cast into coffin or grave)
- Demon worship
- Disembodied spirits
- Divining rod or twig or pendulum
- Dowsing or witching for water, minerals, underground cables or finding out the sex of an unborn child using a divining rod, pendulum, twig or planchette.
- Dream interpretation (as with Edgar Cayce books)
- Dungeons and dragons
- Eastern meditation/religions - Gurus, Mantras, Yoga, Temples
- Ectoplasm (unknown substance from body of a medium)
- Enchanting
- E.S.P. (extra sensory perception)
- Findhorn
- Floating trumpets
- Fortune telling
- Gothic rock music
- Gurus
- Gypsy curses
- Hallucinogenic drugs (cocaine, heroin, marijuana, sniffing glue etc)
- Handwriting analysis (for fortune telling)
- Hard rock music - Kiss, Led Zeppelin, Rolling Stones, (most rock groups)
- Heavy metal music - AC/DC, Guns and Roses (all heavy rock)

- Hepatoscopy (examination of liver for interpretation)
- Hex signs (hexagrams)
- Horoscopes
- Hydromancy (Divination by viewing images in water)
- Hypnosis
- Idols
- Incantations
- Iridology (eye diagnosis)
- Japanese Flower Arranging (Sun worship)
- Jonothan Livingstone Seagull (Reincarnation, Hindu-ism)
- Kabbala (Occult Lore)
- Karma
- Levitation
- Lucky charms or signs of the Zodiac or birthstones
- Magic (not slight of hand but use of supernatural power)
- Mantras
- Martial arts (Aikido, Judo, Karate, Kung fu, Tae Kwan Do etc.)
- Matthew Manning
- Mediums
- Mental suggestion
- Mental telepathy
- Mental therapy
- Mesmerism
- Metaphysics (study of spirit world)
- Mind control
- Mind Dynamics
- Mind mediumship
- Mind reading
- Moon-mancy
- Motorskopua (mechanical pendulum for diagnosing illness)
- Mysticism
- Necromancy (conjuring up spirits of the dead)
- Numerical symbolism
- Numerology
- Occultic games
- Occult letters of protection
- Occult Literature, eg The Greater World, The 6th and 7th Book of Moses, The Other Side, The Book of Venus, Pseudo-Christian works of Jacob Lorber, works by

Edgar Cayce, Aleister Crowley, Jean Dixon, Levi Dowling, Arthur Ford
 (The Overt Worship of Spirit Beings), Johann Greber, Andrew Jackson Davis,
 Anton Le Vay, Ruth Montgomery, John Newborough, Eric Von
 Daniken, Dennis Wheatley. Such books should be burned, regardless of
 cost*

- Omens
- Ouija boards
- Pagan fetishes
- Pagan religious objects, artefacts and relics
- Pagan rites (Voodoo, Sing sings, Corroborees, Fire walking, Umbahda, Macumba)
- Palmistry
- Pk (parakineses - control of objects by the power of the mind and will)
- Parapsychology (PSI) - especially study of demonic activity
- Pendulum diagnosis
- Phrenology (divining/analysis from the skull)
- Planchette (divining)
- Precognition (foreknowledge of the occurrence of events)
- Psychic healing
- Psychic sight
- Psychography (use of heart-shaped board)
- Psychometry (telling fortunes by lifting or holding object belonging to the enquirer)
- Punk rock music
- Pyramidology (mystic powers associated with models of pyramids)
- Reincarnation
- Rhabdomancy (casting sticks into the air for interpreting omens)
- Satanism
- Seances
- Self hypnosis
- Significant pagan days
- Silva Mind Control (SMC - Psychorientology)
- Sorcery
- spells
- Spirit knockings or rappings
- Star signs
- Stichomancy (fortune telling from random reference to books)
- Stignata (wounds that may or may not bleed)
- Superstitions (self or parents or grandparents)
- Table tipping

- Tarot cards (22 picture cards for fortune telling)
- Tea-leaf reading
- Thought transference
- Tk (telekineses - objects move around room, instruments play, engines start ...)
- T.M. (Transcendental Meditation)
- Trances
- Transmigration
- Travel of the soul
- UFO fixation
- Uri Geller
- White magic (invoking hidden powers for "good ends")
- Witchcraft
- Yoga (Involves Eastern demon worship)
- Zodiac charms, birthdates
- Zodiac signs

*** Acts 19:19**

“Many of those who had practiced their magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totalled fifty thousand pieces of silver.”

1 Timothy 4:1 says

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons . . .”

The following, therefore, is a list of **non-Christian religions and cults** which fall into the above category,-

Ananda Marga Yoga Society, Anthroposophical Society (Eurythmy, Rudolf Steiner, Waldorf Schools); Astara, Bubba Free John., **Buddhism**; Children of God (Family of Love); Christadelphians; Christian Science; Church of the Living Word (John Robert Stevens, “The Walk”); Church Universal and Triumphant (Elizabeth Clare Prophet)., Confucianism; Divine Light Mission (Guru Maharaj ii); Druids Lodge; ECKANKAR (Paul Twitchell); **Enlightenment** (heightened awareness, nirvana, satori, transcendental bliss, god-realisation, expanded consciousness, altered perception of reality, cosmic consciousness, etc); Esalen Institute (Michael Murphy); e.s.t. (Erhard Training Seminars); Foundation faith of the Millennium (Robert de Grimston); Foundation of Human Understanding (Roy Masters); Freemasonry; Gurdileff/Subud/Renaissance (Esoteric Christianity); Hare Krishna; **Hinduism** (Karma, reincarnation, avatars, Bhagavad-Gita, Yoga, T.M.); Holy Order of MANS; Inner Peace Movement; International Community of the Christ/The Iarnilians; **Islam** (including Sufism and Black Muslims),, ichovah’s Witnesses (Dawn Bible Students),, Krishnarnurti Foundation of America; Meher Baba (Sufism Reorientated Inc.); Mind Sciences; Mormans (Church of the Latter

Day Saints); Mukatananda Paramahansa (Siddha Yoga Dham Centres); Neo-Gnosticism; **New Age Movement**, Nichiren Shosbu/Soka Gakkai (NSA Lotus Sutra); Rastafarianism; Ratanalms; Religious Science; Rev. Ike (Frederick Eikeren Koetter); Rev. Sun Myung Moon (Moonies, Unification Church); Rosi-crucianism (AMORC); Sathya Sal Baba; Scientology (L.Ron Hubbard, Dianctics); Self Realisation Fellowship; **Sharmanism**, Shintoism; Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship; **Spritualism/Spiritism**, Sri Chimnoy; Swam! Kriyananda; Swami Ram!; Swami Vivekananda (Vedanta Society); Swedenborgianism; **Taoism**, Theosophy; Urantia; Unity School of Christianity (Charles Myrtle and Lowell Fillmore); World Wide Church of God (Herbert W. Armstrong, "The World Tomorrow", "The Plain Truth"); Yogi Bhajan (Sikh Foundation/3HO Foundation); Zen.

Do you hold resentments toward any person or persons? Are there people in your family or elsewhere with whom you have had bad relationships?

From what you know of your family background, have any of your parents, grandparents or maybe your great grandparents, been involved in occult skills and activities? Will you submit to Jesus Christ for Him to be your Saviour, your Master and your Deliverer?

Will you renounce Satan and all his works of darkness in your life? Will you renounce all rebellion and resentments? Will you renounce every cult that denies the Blood of Christ?

Will you renounce all psychic and occult abilities and allow Christ to take them out of your life?

Will you renounce the heresy of reincarnation, and every philosophy which denies the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Will you forgive everyone against whom you have held bitterness and resentments? (This is not for their sakes, but for your sake - God will help you if you are really willing).