Second Steps

For centuries, Satan and his armies of enlightened thinkers and thugs have been selling the idea that the spiritual aspect of human beings does not exist. People that still believe such things are belittled and marginalized with the pejorative label, insane. Folks that talk regularly with God, their invisible friend, are mocked as hyper-imaginative talking to their unreal friend(s): “Puff the Magic Dragon”, “Harvey”, the invisible rabbit, “Casper”, and more. Or they are hallucinating: “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty”. You don’t believe in Ghosts, do you?

Failing to convince some that they are delusional or insane, Satan markets subtle substitutions. On the one hand, a cold dead fleshly intellectual life replaces genuine spirituality: Christianity is marketed as being about education, and/or intelligence. On the other hand, mythical extremes of false tongues, and lying miracles, both done in the flesh, are sold as the real deal. Thus, by promoting extremism on the left and on the right, Truth is trampled underfoot.

Worse yet, our own “conservative” theologians keep on trying to convince us that this is not true: even though these are the exact words of the Bible with nothing added. This is the second blessing, some of them say, deflecting.

NO! NO! NO! This is the first blessing. This is salvation itself. This is the baptism of Jesus, Who, baptizes with the Spirit and fire. This is what it means to have a living relationship with the Father and the Son, by the power of the Spirit.

“If therefore you, evil rulers, had known to give good gifts to your children: how much more, The Father out of Heaven will give [the] Holy Spirit to them [if] they ask Him?” — Luke 11:13

Real spiritual life begins with prayer, not the recitation of a memorized chant: it is thus the beginning of regular conversation and communion with God… it is simply talking honestly and normally to our best friend and constant companion, the Spirit.

“The Spirit Himself testifies to our [human] spirit that we are children of God.” — Romans 8:16

This is the heart of what it means to be a Christian. Christianity is not a matter of choosing a favorite among several world philosophies and religions. Christianity is a relationship with the Living God, that provides proof of its reality through the power of the Spirit.

“You are not in flesh, but in Spirit; if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now, if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they are not His.” — Romans 8:9

So, without the active presence of the Spirit in your life, you cannot be a true Christian; at best, you can only be a said Christian, someone who talks a good fight, but who is really empty on the inside.

This denial of spirituality is even carried to the extreme of describing Christ himself as having two physical natures: for, that is exactly what the word nature means… physical. We even exchange the idea of God’s essence for His substance; completely ignoring the fact that the very word, substance, means physical. But:

“God [is] Spirit. His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and truth.” — John 4:24

Thus, in spite of all its naysayers, the spiritual dimension(s) to life, the spiritual realm is very real. As a consequence, you must be begotten from above, or, if you prefer, born again; both mean the same thing and interpret the same Greek words: however, begotten emphasizes God, the Father’s active participation.

“In response, Jesus said to him, Amen, amen, I tell you, unless someone would be begotten from above, they are not able to see the kingdom of God.” — John 3:3

“Jesus [said], Amen, amen, I tell to you, unless someone would be begotten out of water and Spirit, they are not able enter into the kingdom of God.” — John 3:5

“… for, thus God loved the world; so, He gave His only-begotten Son; that all believing in Him would not be destroyed; but, would have eternal life: for, God did not send the Son into the world that He would judge the world; but, that the world would be saved through Him.” — John 3:16-17

So, if you are not begotten from above by the time you are thirteen, you enter puberty and adolescence in real trouble. You are not a Christian. You have no real prayer life. You have no Friend with whom to talk about the mysterious changes that are taking place in your body. You have no coping skills. When the raging hormones strike, you feel alone; you may be ashamed to talk to your parents: how would they be able to understand anyway? … they are too old, you will think. There is nothing like being able to talk to God about your fears, problems, and questions…. If you are begotten from above, you will have the One Friend — Father, Son, and Spirit — Who created you; Who knows and understands everything about you; Who is available at any time of night or day; Who is a great listener and never critical. So, you need to become begotten from above as soon as possible in life.

On the other hand, if you are eighty, or ninety, or over one-hundred: it is never too late to start. At least you will have help throughout your remaining years.

If you belong to a church that fails to emphasize this new birth, this begetting from above: you need to find a new church.

As a result of this incredible shortcoming in modern churches: many are living in unnecessary incredible pain.

You must be begotten from above. This is the baptism of Jesus.

No matter what words you used to express your pain: this is its first root cause. You need to establish constant communication and communion with God. The way you do that is through prayer.

You have got to ask for the Spirit. Keep asking every day until you get an answer. Don’t let anyone tell you that this is a psychotic delusion. Don’t try to reduce Christianity to a fixed set of intellectual ideas. Don’t believe that you can find Christ by being smart or becoming well educated. Christianity is all about joining the family conversation with God.

<http://www.lutheran-hymnal.com/lyrics/tlh098.htm>

“Nicodemus told Him, How is a person able to be begotten, being old? They are not able to enter their mother’s belly a second [time] to be begotten, are they?

“In response, Jesus [said], Amen, amen, I tell to you, unless someone would be begotten out of water and Spirit, they are not able enter into the kingdom of God. That having been begotten of the flesh is flesh. That having been begotten of the of the Spirit is spirit. You should not wonder that I said to you, it is necessary for you to be begotten from above. The wind blows where it wishes. You hear its sound; but, you had not known [for a fact] from where it comes, [or] where it goes. So are all being begotten of the Spirit.” — John 3:4-8

This is an abnormal miraculous heavenly spiritual birth; in which, through prayer, the Holy Spirit of God begins to dwell within us and communicate with us, teaching our human spirits about Jesus and the Father, mostly from the Old Testament. This kind of evidence is not magic: it requires an active and sometimes painful prayer life… prayer is a toilsome process… not a walk in the park.

You must be begotten from above by the power of the Spirit: this happens only through earnest prayer. We are horror stricken that these truths have been lost to the churches for so many years: first through the falsification of the Spirit’s true work; and then through the denial of the Spirit’s true work. One way or another our world is rapidly becoming a spiritually dead world.

Please pray for the gift of the Spirit in your life: then listen and obey. The Spirit wants to teach you the Bible, mostly from the Old Testament, and the meaning of communion. He does not care if you speak in tongues. He does not want you to be led away by superstitious false-miracles.

Be well!

[[1]](#footnote-1)

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