

## COMPLETE CHRISTIANITY – PART 1

John 3:3 ... “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

Before we begin this 3-part series, please understand the title. It does not read: “Perfect Christianity.” We will explore in this series, the three principle components of your relationship with God. If all three of these components are present in your life, then you are experiencing complete Christianity. There are yet other things beyond the three principle components that enhance your relationship with God even more, but we will focus on the three principle ones. Let’s start with: SALVATION.

This will be obvious to most readers, but we cannot ignore it, because not only is it a principle aspect of your relationship with God, it is the first and most important. You are not, nor can you claim to be, a Christian if you have not been born-again. Seems simple, right? But this is a fundamental truth that some churches and most cults ignore or even condemn. From time to time, people criticize Protestants for inventing the term “born again.” The Catholic church has historically not said much about being born-again. However, our verse today quotes the actual words of Jesus. When you look at the same verse in the Greek language in which John originally wrote it, the part translated in the King James version as: “born again,” reads: “born from above,” a reference to being re-born spiritually through God.

The Bible does not claim that when you accept Christ as your personal savior that you re-enter your mother and are born again physically. But that is exactly why some people scoff at this verse, which is why we sometimes need to look at the Bible’s original language to fully understand. Being born again is a spiritual experience, not a physical one. Being born again is the foundation upon which your relationship with God is established. You can claim to be a Christian because your mother was a believer, you can do all kinds of wonderful volunteer work, you can help the poor, you can attend church every time the doors are open, you can play in the church band. But, unless you personally are born-again, your efforts will not earn you a place in heaven.

If you need to be born-again, the step is simple. Tell God that you have sinned and regret your sins, and with God’s help you will not commit those sins again (which is called repentance). Ask his forgiveness (which he will give you immediately – if you are sincere). And, accept Jesus as your Lord, which means that you relinquish control over your life and surrender that control to him. The born-again experience happens when you acknowledge that Jesus died on the cross to pay for your sins. In the next part in this series we will address worship.

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