

Nurturing the New Life



Born Of God (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we draw near to the close of another week. Today I'm going to continue and complete the theme we've been studying this week, "Born of God." I do trust that my talks on this theme have been helpful to you.

In my previous talks I've explained that the decisive act which produces the new birth is personally receiving Jesus. Yesterday I described the new kind of life that's thus produced within us and that life is Jesus Himself imparted by the Holy Spirit. We looked at a number of statements, for instance, that Paul made. He said, "For me, to live is Christ..." How simple that is and how profound. "For me, to live is Christ..."

And then he said, "I'm crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me."

And then, writing to the Colossians, he said, "You died. When Christ died, you died. His crucifixion was your crucifixion. His burial was your burial." That's the negative and yet, he said, "Your life is now hidden with Christ in God." You have a hidden life, a life the world doesn't see, you understand.

And then he goes on to say, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory." Just pick out those simple words: "Christ... is our life." That's what comes from the new birth.

And then, in Romans, Paul explains this life is ministered by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead." The old, carnal sinful life has come to an end. It was crucified. It was buried. "...But the Spirit [capital "s," the Holy Spirit] is life [on the basis of Christ's] righteousness [imputed to us]. So the Spirit comes in and ministers to us the new life which is in Jesus.

Now, in the natural order, when a baby is born, when a new life comes into a human family, that life requires proper nurture and care in order to grow and become strong and healthy. If you don't feed the baby, if you don't care for the baby even if it was a beautiful healthy baby when it was born it will ultimately cease to live. The same is true in the spiritual order. The new life produced in us by being born of God requires proper nurture and care. So, in my talk today, I'm going to explain just how to nurture and care for that new life

that comes through the new birth.

Over the years it's been my privilege to help many, many people who have newly been born of God. And I don't know that there's any greater privilege than that. Over those years I've come to see from experience and observation that there are four main priorities for such a person a person who has been born of God. And I will list them for you now in what I consider to be order of importance.

First, appropriate spiritual nourishment, which is God's Word.

Second, keeping in touch with the life source, which is, in one word, prayer.

Third, confessing our faith openly, and

Fourth, fellowship with other believers

I'm going to state them again: first, appropriate spiritual nourishment, which is God's Word; second, keeping in touch with the life source, which is prayer; third, confessing our faith openly; and fourth, fellowship with other believers.

Now, to help you practically I'm going to say a brief word about each of these priorities. First of all, appropriate spiritual nourishment, which is God's Word. In Matthew 4, verse 4, this is what Jesus says:

> "It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

In the Bible, bread is taken as an example of man's staple basic diet. And so, Jesus says, the staple basic diet of every child of God, born of God is the Word that comes out of the mouth of God.

And there are appropriate forms of diet for various stages of spiritual growth. First of all, for those who are newly born, God offers milk, something that can be taken even by an infant and easily digested by an infant. 1 Peter, chapter 2, verses 1 and 2, Peter says this:

> "Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."

Notice the key phrase, "...long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow." It's the milk of the Word of God; the simple, basic truths and teachings of the Word of God really such as I'm bringing in this talk today, by which you can grow and become a strong healthy child of God.

However, for the mature, for those who are spiritually advanced, God has solid food. And the writer of Hebrews speaks about that in Hebrews 5, 13 and 14:

> "For every one who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. [As long as you can only take milk you are still spiritually a babe.] But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil."

God has more than milk. But you have to grow up to the point where you can receive it. How do you become able to receive it? The writer of Hebrews says very clearly: "...because of practice [such people] have their senses trained to discern good and evil." It's a matter of practice. It's a matter of regularity. It's a matter of studying God's Word and learning to divide the word of truth rightly. If you don't do that, you'll remain a spiritual babe.

Then let's look at the second priority: keeping in touch with the life source by prayer. There's some very short and potent words of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 and 18:

> "...pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

It's God's will for you to do two things: to pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks. Let me give you some very simple basic advice about prayer in case you have problems with it. First of all, you can pray without ceasing. You can pray all the time. You can pray anywhere. You don't have to have a set form of words, you don't have to have a particular environment, you don't have to be in a particular posture. All those things may be good but they are secondary. You can pray without ceasing. And, in everything give thanks. You can join your praying with giving thanks, that's very important. Don't come to God simply with a shopping list and call that prayer. Always begin by thanking Him and acknowledging Him. The more you thank Him, the closer you come to Him, the more you thank Him for what He's already done, the more faith you have for what you believe He's going to do.

Then submit your will and plans to God. Seek His guidance and help. Commit your needs to Him and again never separate praying from thanking. Let me say that again, it's very important. Begin by thanking and acknowledging God. Submit your will and plans to God. Seek His guidance and help. Commit your needs to Him. And never separate praying

from thanking.

The third great priority for those born of God is to confess our faith openly. In Matthew 10, verses 32 and 33, Jesus says this:

> "Every one therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."

You see, the way we respond concerning Jesus on earth determines the way that Jesus in heaven responds concerning us. And we're only given two options--there's no third option. We either confess Him, acknowledge Him openly, declare our relationship to Him or we deny Him. If we confess Him, He will confess us. If we deny Him, He will deny us. It's extremely important that in a quiet tactful way you communicate to those around you the fact that you believe in Jesus. That He is your Savior, He is your Lord, you're living for Him. You don't have to be a preacher. You don't have to be a Bible thumper. But you do have to confess Him.

And then the fourth priority is fellowship with other believers. And this is related to our confession. In Hebrews, chapter 10, verses 23-25, the writer says this:

> "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering [you confess, you keep confessing, you don't waver, you don't go back], for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

Notice the emphasis on one another: "stimulate one another to love and good works," "encourage one another." You can't do that in isolation. You need to encourage others, you need to be encouraged by others. The key to that is not forsaking our own assembling together. Have a place of worship and fellowship to which you are committed and be regular in your attendance at it. Now, if because of circumstances you are cut out from fellowship, God will make that up to you. But if it's your own stubbornness and obstinacy, God will not make that up to you. Listen to the words of John in his first epistle, chapter 1, verse 7:

> "but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Notice that fellowship is related to two vital things: walking in the light and being cleansed by the blood. If we walk in the light, we will have fellowship one with another. If we're out of fellowship, we're out of the light. And then it says, "if we walk in the light we are cleansed by the blood continually." I put it this way: the blood only cleanses when we're in the light. If we get out of the light into the dark, we lose the cleansing of the blood and the evidence that we're in the light is that we have fellowship one with another.

So bear in mind those four priorities for those who are born again: first of all, appropriate spiritual nourishment, God's Word; second, keeping in touch with the life source, prayer; third, confessing our faith openly; and fourth, fellowship with other believers.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll be sharing with you on another rich and exciting theme from the Word of God. My special offer this week is my Self Study Bible Course. Have you ever longed really to get to grips with the Bible and find out for yourself what it says? My Self Study Bible Course is designed for that very purpose. The only additional equipment you will need is a Bible and a pen. Countless people have written to say that it has helped them in a way that no other book has and it can be for you the way that you learn to feed on God's Word.

Also my complete set of talks this week on "Born of God" is available in a carefully-edited 60-minute cassette. Stay tuned for details.

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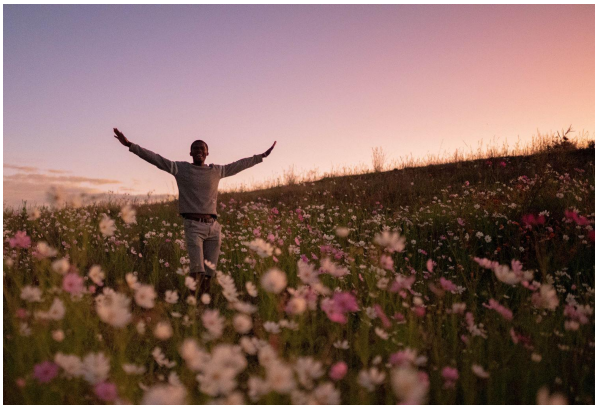
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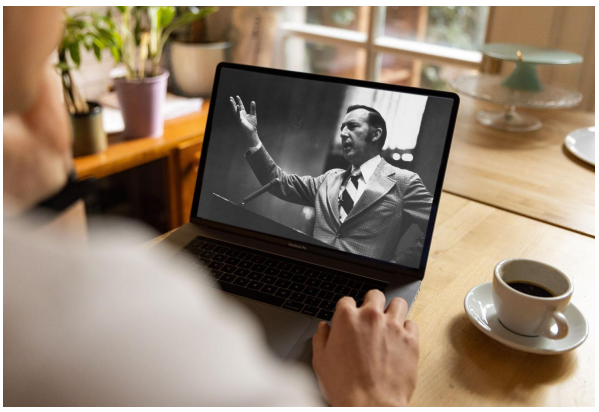
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