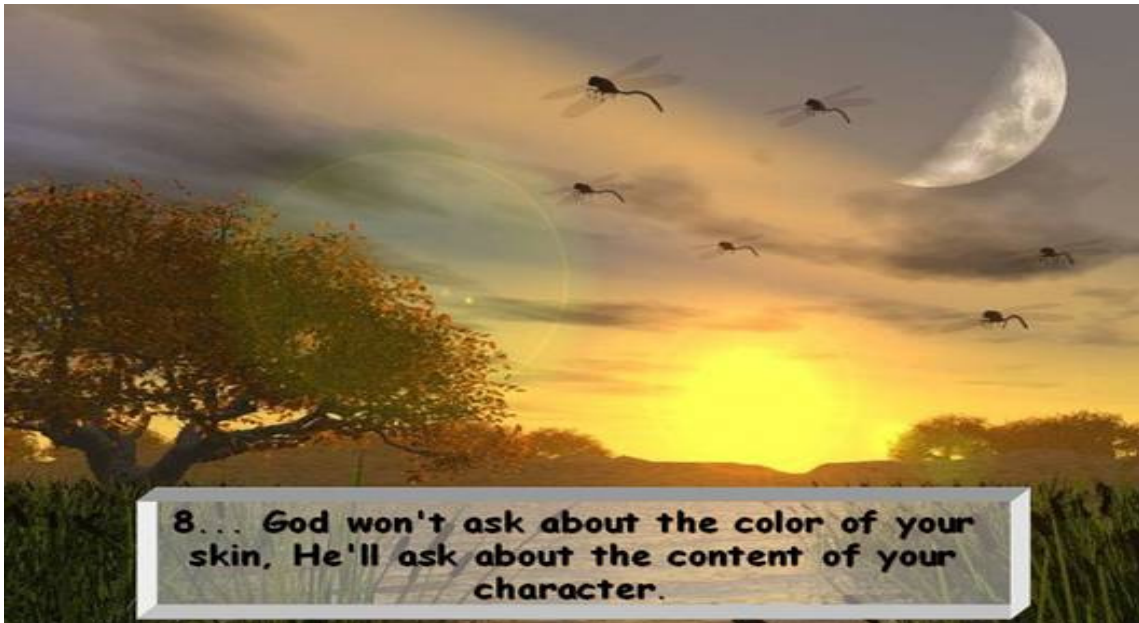


Are You Born Again

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2
34 **Graham F. Watts, Sr.**

5

6 **VISION:** To hear the midnight cry, "The bridegroom comes, go out to meet
7 Him" (Matthew 25:6) and become like Him when I see Him as He is (1
8 John 3:2).

9

10 **MISSION:** Purify myself even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3) to be glad,
11 to rejoice, give honor to Christ and be ready for the marriage of the
12 Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

13

14 **VALUES:** Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4), be without
15 fault before God (Revelation 14:5), be perfect even as my Father in
16 heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48), wear the Lamb's fine, clean and
17 white linen (Revelation 19:8) do righteously (1 John 3:10) and walk
18 humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

19

20 **OVERALL AIM:** Studies presented here unveil Bible knowledge to
21 inquiring minds to prompt the following inquiries: "Are our feet on
22 the rock of ages? Are we one with Christ as He is one with the
23 Father" (John 10:30 in Evangelism, {Ev} 199.1)? Am I crucified with
24 Christ (Galatians 2:20)?

25

26 **PURPOSE/REASON FOR/WHY**

27
28 This study teaches about Bible-based conversion to Jesus Christ.

29
30

31 **OBJECTIVES/WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH**

32
33 At the end of this study, the reader has tools for assessment of
34 conversion to the Way of Christ.

35
36

37 **SIGNIFICANCE: SO WHAT**

38
39 “...No one [will] see the kingdom of God... [without a] born again
40 experience” (John 3:3 & 7, NIV). It is that simple! “If any man [of
41 Genesis 5:2 is] in Christ ...a new [creation comes about], old things...
42 pass away; behold, all things... become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

43

44 **BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

45

46 Nicodemus, Pharisee and member of the Jewish ruling council had a
47 rude awakening at his night visit with Jesus. Christ set aside the
48 flattery of this religious scholar and recommended the new birth
49 experience. Imagine the tingle in the ear of this learned theologian
50 when he heard: “You must be born again” (John 3:1-3). Membership
51 and/or leadership in the institutional church is not automatic
52 membership in the heavenly church (Psalms 102:19). The most
53 sorrowful thought of all is that people who attend and participate in
54 earthly church services may have a form of godliness without a real
55 connection with God (2 Timothy 3:5). This background provided the
56 impetus for the study question that follows.

57

58 **STUDY QUESTION**

59

60 How can a person be born again, i.e., experience new spiritual birth
61 by conversion to the Way of Jesus Christ?

62 **ANSWER SOURCE: HOLY BIBLE**

63

64 1. "[The] **born again** [experience begins by beholding Christ as Savior]
 65 **...through the living and enduring word of God"** (1 Peter 1:23 NIV). When a
 66 person studies or hears and receives and believes God word, that
 67 word begins an inward transformation (read 2 Timothy 2:15; Romans
 68 10:17; 2 Thessalonians 2:13 & Luke 7:29). Hence, people become
 69 clean through the written words of Jesus recorded in the Scriptures
 70 (John 15:3) because His words are filled with spirit and life (John
 71 6:63). Through His words people escape those who teach and live in
 72 error (read 2 Peter 2:18 and 2 Timothy 4:3-5, NIV) if they live by
 73 its truth (John 3:21, NIV), which John describes as eating the
 74 flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God (John 6:54).

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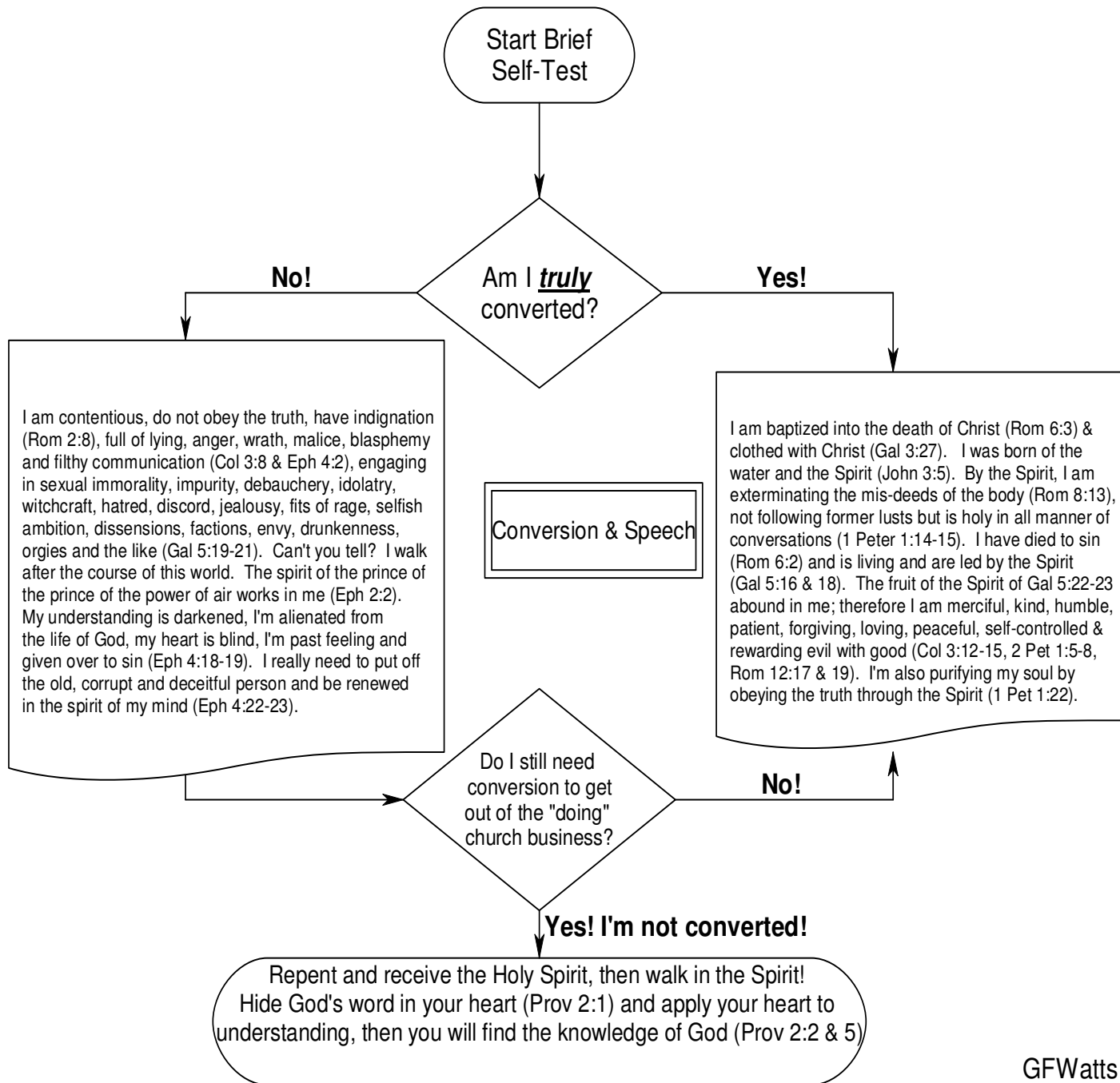
76 2. The] **born again** experience blooms like the seed that fell on good
 77 soil (Matthew 13:8 & 23) and received water (Ezekiel 17:8) by
 78 **exercising faith in Christ as savior**. "...S/he that comes to God
 79 must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that
 80 diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). When asked, "What must we do
 81 to do the works God requires? Jesus answered, 'The work of God is
 82 this: believe in the one [God] has sent'" (John 6:28-29). "...The
 83 Holy Scriptures... [a.k.a. the Word of God] make [us] wise unto
 84 salvation through faith... in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). It
 85 teaches that Christ offered Himself as an unblemished sacrifice to
 86 God for humanity; thus by His shed blood for forgiveness of sins
 87 and God acceptance of His sacrifice as an atonement for sins,
 88 reconciliation and forgiveness have been set up for every repentant
 89 sinner (read Hebrews 9:14; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:18-
 90 19; Romans 5:6-8). Repentance triggers direct deposit of
 91 forgiveness of sins to our account in the bank of heaven. Truly,
 92 the "...Scriptures [are]... profitable for... righteousness" (2 Timothy
 93 3:17), teaching the righteous how to inherit life eternal (Matthew

94 25:46) and testifying of Jesus, who came from God to give eternal
 95 life to all who believe on Him (read John 5:39-40; 3:15-16; 17:2).

96
 97 3. The **born again** experience is celebrated by voluntary consent to
 98 **baptism by water AND the Holy Spirit** (John 3:5, NIV; Mark 1:10
 99 NIV; Luke 3:21-22 NIV). God's formulary for kingdom candidates has
 100 an outward water component followed by an inward Spirit component.
 101 Titus puts it this way--"He saved us through the washing of rebirth
 102 **AND** renewal by the Holy Spirit..." (Titus 3:5, NIV). Peter puts it
 103 this way--"Repent and be baptized... in the name of Jesus Christ for
 104 the forgiveness of sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy
 105 Spirit" (Acts 2:38 & 3:19). The sinner first "produces fruit in
 106 keeping with repentance... for the forgiveness of sins," confesses
 107 sins and seeks baptism (read Matthew 3:5-6 & 8; Mark 1:4-5 NIV).
 108 In turn, Christ sanctifies and cleanses repentant sinners with the
 109 washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5:26), **THEN** the repentant
 110 sinner follows-up by being buried with Christ in water baptism by
 111 immersion (Matthew 3:16, NIV; Mark 1:9-10; Acts 8:34-39),
 112 signifying baptism into the death of Christ that as He was raised
 113 from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, s/he rises to
 114 walk in newness of life" (read Romans 6:3-4). This outward
 115 demonstration of faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus coupled
 116 with reception of the Holy Spirit is the beginning of life as a new
 117 creature in Christ (read 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:5-7). Hence
 118 forth, the repentant sinner is elevated with Christ to seek those
 119 things which are above by setting his/her affections on eternal
 120 realities instead of earthly temporalities (read Colossians 3:1-2).

121
 122 4. The **born again** experience is a daily walk in the Christ way of life
 123 (read Ezekiel 36:26-27; Hebrews 8:10-12; Romans 8:1, Galatians
 124 5:16; 1 Corinthians 15:31). This daily walk can be summed up this
 125 way: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I,
 126 but Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I

127 live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself
 128 for me" (Galatians 2:20). And if peradventure we once walked in
 129 the Christ way of life and now have ceased doing so, then Paul's
 130 advisement follows: "Come back to your senses... and stop sinning..."
 131 (1 Corinthians 15:33, NIV). A brief self test follows! By taking
 132 the test you can determine if you have been born again.



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133
 134
 135

136 **ANSWER SOURCE: SACRED WRITINGS:**

137

138 We are pursuing answers to the question: How can a person be born
 139 again, i.e., experience new spiritual birth by conversion to the Way
 140 of Jesus Christ? More answers follow!

141

142 1. **The born again person must go beyond mere profession of faith.** It
 143 is not enough to identify with a denomination and attend church.
 144 **"A profession of faith does not make men Christians.... "** (Counsels
 145 to Parents, Teachers and Students, {CT} 433.2). **"Nothing but**
 146 **holiness will prepare you for heaven.** ...Experimental piety alone
 147 can give you a pure, elevated character and enable you to enter
 148 into the presence of God who dwells in light unapproachable. **THE**
 149 **HEAVENLY CHARACTER MUST BE ACQUIRED ON EARTH OR IT CAN NEVER BE**
 150 **ACQUIRED AT ALL.** ...Prepare for eternity with such zeal as you
 151 have not yet manifested. Educate your mind to love the Bible, to
 152 love the prayer meeting, to love the hour of meditation and above
 153 all, the hour when the soul communes with God. Become heavenly-
 154 minded [i.e., Colossians 3:2] if you would unite with the heavenly
 155 choir in the mansions above" (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. Two,
 156 {2T} 267.2).

157

158 2. **The born again person must experience "...A complete, [not partial,**
 159 **but complete] moral renovation... [that is] wrought by the Holy**
 160 **Spirit.** We must have [from Christ] the love of God with living,
 161 abiding faith. Every sincere and earnest seeker will **become a**
 162 **partaker of the divine nature** (read 2 Peter 1:4). [As the] soul...
 163 [is] filled with intense longing to know the fullness of **love which**
 164 **passes knowledge; ...[we] advance in the divine life... [enabled]**
 165 **to grasp the... ennobling truths of the word of God... [and**
 166 **constantly] beholding, [we are] changed ...to reflect the likeness**
 167 **of [the] Redeemer"** (5T 105.2). "Fight the good fight of faith, lay
 168 hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast

169 professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Timothy
170 6:12).

171
172 3. "...[The born again person receives] truth into the heart, [which]
173 begins the work of [refinement and sanctification of life and
174 character]" (Fundamentals of Christian Education {FE}, 256.2).
175 "The power of the truth to sanctify and ennoble appears... in the
176 lives of those who believe it..." (John 17:17; Testimonies for the
177 Church, Volume Nine, {9T} 22.2). "Those who want to know the will
178 of God, who does not desire to follow their own will and judgment,
179 will be easily entreated. They will be ready to discern the right
180 way" (The Upward Look, {UL} 339.3). And "When God and Christ abide
181 with us, 'The spell of a stronger, a perfect mind will be over us;
182 for we have a living connection with the source of all-enduring
183 strength. IN OUR DIVINE LIFE, WE SHALL BE BROUGHT INTO CAPTIVITY
184 TO JESUS CHRIST. WE SHALL NO LONGER LIVE THE COMMON LIFE OF
185 SELFISHNESS, BUT CHRIST WILL LIVE IN US. His character will be
186 reproduced in our nature. Thus shall we bring forth the fruits of
187 the Holy Spirit..." (Christ's Object Lessons, {COL} 61.3). "THE
188 HUMAN HEART, GIVEN UP TO HIM, WILL BECOME A SACRED HARP, SENDING
189 FORTH SACRED MUSIC" (Selected Messages Book 2, {2SM} 253.3).

190
191 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS: In this study, we examined how a person can be
192 born again. Through our study, we discovered that conversion
193 requires beholding Christ as Savior through the living and enduring
194 word of God, exercising faith in Christ as Savior, celebrating
195 entrance into the new life by water and Holy Spirit baptism and
196 walking daily in the Christ way of life. These four steps go way
197 beyond mere religiosity—church attendance, profession of faith and
198 works, but include a complete moral renovation by the Holy Spirit as
199 truth is received in the heart. Because it is of little redeeming
200 value to engage in Bible Study merely for information, subsequent
201 paragraphs follow that may kindle your interest.

202

DISCUSSION: WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?

204

205 “The day of the Lord is near [and] it will come like destruction from
206 the Almighty” (Joel 1:15 NIV & Revelation 22:12 NIV). “Therefore
207 ...prepare to meet your God...” (Amos 4:12, NIV), who is not willing that
208 any should perish but that believers inherit eternal life (John
209 3:16). “Let the wicked forsake his/her way and the evil [person]
210 his/her thoughts; let [them] turn to the Lord and He will have mercy
211 on [them] and... freely pardon” (Isaiah 55:7, NIV). “[This is God’s
212 way of passing on the blessings of eternal life to] those who wash
213 their robes that they may have the right to the tree of life and may
214 go through the gates into the city [of God]” (Revelation 22:14, NIV).

215

216

CONCLUSIONS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

218

219 Ask yourself, “Where do I want to spend eternity?” If you have not
220 received the baptism of repentance for remissions of sins past, then
221 seek it immediately. Perhaps you have been baptized but you are like
222 those believers whom Paul met at Ephesus and Peter and John met at
223 Samaria. These brethren received baptism in the name of Jesus, but
224 when Paul asked the Ephesians, “Have you received the Holy Ghost
225 since you believed”? They replied, “We have not so much as heard
226 whether there [is] any Holy Ghost” (Acts 19:1-2). In contrast, Peter
227 and John did not ask but prayed that the Samaritans might receive the
228 Holy Ghost (Acts 8:15). The new-birth experience is incomplete
229 without baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:4-5). In this life, we can
230 live the new life in Christ when we receive power that accompanies
231 the descent of the Holy Ghost upon us (Acts 1:8).

232

233

234 **CALL TO ACTION: WHAT SHALL WE DO!**

235

236 If you have not been born again, "...Repent and baptize... in the name of
237 Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins..." (Acts 2:38, NIV). If
238 you have been baptized but lack the Holy Spirit, then ask God for
239 "laying-on-of-Holy-hands" (read 1 Timothy 2:8; Acts 8:17; 9:17-18 and
240 19:6) by a servant chosen by Him (Acts 9:10-15) "[who] will not be
241 hasty in the laying on of hands..." (1 Timothy 5:22 NIV).