

Gospel of John IV Begotten of God & Born Again

(John 3)

Fred R. Coulter

John 3 is a very important chapter, and it is one of those chapters from which the doctrine that is heard of in 'Christian' circles of being *born again*. This is where it derives its meaning, and understanding. The general concept of being *born again* is that if you open your heart and you accept Jesus into your life, then you are *born again*.

However, the Bible definition of *born again* is entirely different than what the normal understanding is for those in a Protestant denomination would mean.

I want to show, through a study of this section, plus the Greek words involved, that the only way you can understand the meaning of *born again* or *begotten* is through the context. That's where the confusion comes. Another thing to keep in mind is that outside of 1-John 1:3, John—who wrote the Gospel of John, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd John and Revelation—is the only one to use the term *born again* as it's translated in the English.

When we go through this section in the Gospel of John, chapter 3, we're going to see some very important things. If we understand it this way: God has inspired the Scriptures for us, and everything that is given is for a reason, and there is a purpose for it. The reason that these things are contained in the Gospel of John mainly is because they were not contained in the other Gospels. They are very important lessons for us.

John 3:1: "Now, there was a man of the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews." This tells us something important; Nicodemus was:

- a ruler of the Jews
- a Pharisee
- of the political part that ran Judea
- he sat on the Sanhedrin; on the councils
- he helped make the decisions for the whole Jewish nation under the Roman rulership

Verse 2: "He came to Jesus by night..." He didn't come by day because he didn't want to be seen. Of course, we know that later on Nicodemus was one who became converted, and helped Joseph of Arimathea to bury Jesus Christ.

"...and said to Him, 'Rabbi, **we know that You are a teacher Who has come from God...**'" (v 2). He didn't say, 'I know.' He said "...we know..." I

think that is one of the important things that the book of John is teaching us—and we will see this in almost every chapter.

When we get to John 6, I will bring a sermon on *That Prophet!* Remember that in John 1 they came and asked John the Baptist, 'Are you the Christ? Are you *that Prophet?*' It shows they were looking for Christ. Remember in John 2 that the disciples came and said, 'We have found the One Who is called the Messiah.' Here in John 3 we have the same thing again. Nicodemus says, "...we know..." which says they have discussed it and understood certain things.

You don't come and make a statement unless you're pretty sure of something. Example: There was this man who had a semi-truck and in the truck he had a printing press, and he used it to print counterfeit \$20 bills. Unless you had evidence, unless you had investigated, unless you had discussed it, you wouldn't arrest this man.

We have almost the same thing here: In this particular case the Pharisees, obviously, had discussed Jesus. Why would they send to John the Baptist and ask, 'Are you the Messiah?' if they hadn't discussed the times, if they hadn't understood the prophecies.

John says, "...we know that You are a teacher *Who* has come from God, because no one is able to do the miracles that You are doing unless God is with him" (v 2). That's quite an admission! That's really quite a statement.

What did the Pharisees say of Jesus healing in Matt. 12? *Well, He does this through the prince of the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the demons!* When they said that, that's why they were warned of committing the unpardonable sin, because they *knew* Who He was. They *knew* He was a teacher sent from God!

Did Jesus answer the question and say, 'Well, you know that's nice, I'm glad you finally got the clue, Nicodemus. Come on, join our church and come on in here and we'll have a great time.' *NO!* He didn't! Jesus answered Nicodemus entirely differently. As a matter of fact, He didn't even answer him at all. But He taught him something.

Verse 3: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly...'—amen, amen; verily, verily *or* so be it, so be it. Amen is very important when you look at this way: Every one of the books of the New

Testament are closed with 'Amen' with the exception of Acts, James and 3-John. Those three do not close with 'Amen,' which indicates that there is something left out that God deliberately left out. And I think God deliberately left it out because that was not necessary for salvation, particularly, but it was to help conceal, I feel, where the 'lost' ten tribes were.

I think that the information went on from there; remember, it is written: the Acts of the apostles. After you get through about Acts 7 and into the calling of Paul in Acts 9, all the rest of it is mostly all Paul's ministry. So, it could be 'the acts of some of the apostles, and mainly the Apostle Paul. It ends right there in Acts 28 with no 'Amen.' There is something missing, and there are no Scriptures for us.

So, 'Amen, Amen' is a definite, profound, important, emphatic statement by Jesus. Notice how Jesus answers Nicodemus:

"...I say to you..." (v 3)—'amen amen lego soi'—we'll see all the way through that that is used by Jesus.

"...unless anyone is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man who is old be born?'" (vs 3-4). This shows more than just a thought or a spiritual expression.

"...Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born?" (v 4). This shows that it was a process. This shows that Nicodemus understood the statement *being born again was actually a process likened to physical birth!*

Verse 5: "Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly I say to you, **unless anyone has been born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.** That which has been born of the flesh is flesh; and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit'" (vs 5-6).

What does *born of water* mean? Most people think it means to be baptized, but it doesn't. No, it does not mean baptism. There are some who think it does. It could allude to it, but let's look at the situation concerning baptism.

- What is baptism?
- We're going to see that baptism is not a birth, but a death.
- What does it mean to be *born of water*?

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we,

as many as were **baptized** into Christ Jesus, were baptized **into His death?**" (vs 1-3). Baptism is a *burial*.

Verse 4: "Therefore, **we were buried with Him through the baptism** into the death..." It is a burial!

This next statement is where they get that Baptism is a birth, "...so that, **just as Christ was raised from the dead** by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should **walk in newness of life**" (v 4).

- When you are raised out the watery grave, are you still flesh? *You sure are! None of us are spirit!*
- What is the newness of life we are to walk in? *We're to:*
 - ✓ *walk according to Jesus Christ's laws and commandments*
 - ✓ *walk according to the Bible, the Word of God*
 - ✓ *walk according to the Spirit of God in our heart and mind*
- Has our flesh been changed? *No, it has not been changed!*

Baptism is a death!

During my ministry I have preached this both ways: that, yes, unless you be born of water that that does mean baptism. When I preached that, several came up to me and said, 'It doesn't really look like that is so.' And they pointed out some of these Scriptures. What is the answer? *It is contained right here in John 3; Christ makes it very clear!*

"...**unless anyone has been born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.** That which has been **born of the flesh is flesh;** and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit" (vs 5-6).

- born of water and Spirit
- born of flesh is flesh

How is a baby born? *When the baby is developing in the mother, it is encased in water! When does birth come? When the water breaks!*

You are literally born of water, because the human baby, unless there was water and the elasticity of what God has created for the birth canal to open and everything, plus the baby being covered with this goop—and some have more than others—that is like grease and is very, very hard to get off, that makes the slick in water.

When the baby is born, it's literally born of water; it's literally flushed out as if you would have a muscle action or a mechanical action to flush the

new baby out. I think that's what it means to be born of water, because of the next parallelism:

"...that which has been **born of the Spirit is spirit**.... [Then Jesus defines what it is that is spirit]: ...Do not be amazed that I said to you, "It is **necessary**..." (vs 6-7)—'dei'—*obligatory, mandatory*; however you want to put the strong emphasis on it. In other words we could use the example: *You MUST come to the pay window to be paid!* If you don't come to the pay window and get your check you won't be paid. That's pretty strong. Where are you going to get your check? *At the pay window; no other place!*

Exactly the same way, Jesus said, "...It is necessary for you to be **born again**. The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know *the place* from which it comes and *the place* to which it goes; so *also*... ['houtos'] ...is everyone who has been born of the Spirit.'" (vs 7-8). If you are born of the Spirit, you are different, completely different!

- you are a different form
- you are a different composition

Because He said, v 6: "That which has been born of the flesh is flesh; and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit"—two different things. So, we're talking about to be born anew, *to be changed from flesh to spirit*. We see this by the definition of the context in what Jesus said.

Verse 9: "Nicodemus answered and said to Him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'You are a teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things? Truly, truly I say to you, We speak that which We know, and We testify of that which We have seen; but you do not receive Our testimony. If I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?'" (vs 9-12).

So, it just gives kind of a teaser of how great eternal life is going to be. It's so great that if Jesus told them some of the things that went on in the spirit world—in other words, that level of living—that he wouldn't believe it. He couldn't even believe what Jesus told him: "...that which has been **born of the Spirit is spirit**...."

Verse 13 is a key, important verse and, obviously, Jesus did not say this. This was written by John in about 85-95 A.D.

Verse 13: "(And no one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, Who is in heaven.)" This is telling us that at the time that John wrote this, that

- the Son of man is now in heaven
- He was the One Who came down out of heaven and went back to heaven
- no one else is there
- Could it be that there were those who were talking about the *born again* experience?
- Could it be that there were those who were talking about people, when they die, go to heaven right then?

There was an account of this little Oriental boy and he got killed—someone came in his house and stabbed him—and they were trying to explain to the class about it. It happened to be a little Christian school. The teacher explained that God had a special purpose for him and now he's in heaven. They dismissed the class for recess and went outside and here was a rainbow in the sky and they were told that 'the little boy put the rainbow in the sky so that we would know that everything is all right.'

It just makes you wonder what was going on back there in John's day. What was being taught? Remember, when you follow this up with the Epistle of First John:

- we have those who are the antichrist
- we have those who have gone out of the Church
- we have those going around deceiving saying that they knew Christ, and didn't and didn't keep His commandments

All those things, if we keep it in mind as we study this, makes the Scriptures come alive considerably more.

Let's look at the word that is used for *born*: The root word in the Greek for *born* is 'gennaō'—*of a man, to beget, become the father of*.

Let's look at an example of how 'gennaō'—by its context—could not mean in any sense *a birth*. We have this word used in the Greek all the way through, which then is a past tense form of the verb 'gennaō.' In the Greek the spelling of the word changes dramatically with the use of the tense. Letters can be added to the front, they can be added to the back, and the whole spelling and everything can be entirely different.

Matthew 1:2: "Abraham **begat** Isaac..." We know for sure that Abraham did not *born* Isaac. Who gave birth to Isaac? *Sarah!* Here it means of a man *to beget*; of a woman it means *to bear, to give birth*. That is normally used with another word that is called 'tikto.' When you use your *Interlinear* and you go back to *Strong's Concordance* to look up the word, and you wonder why the spelling is different?

In English we don't have the same thing. We do in a certain sense; for example: the word run:

- run
- running (we put an ending on it)
- ran
- we have run, ran, run

In the Greek it goes many different ways, and all of these different spellings mean the different tenses, and one of them we'll see is very, very meaningful when it gets down to talking about the birth of Jesus Christ.

Look at the words:

- **begat/begotten**—'gennaoo'—the root or the stem is 'genn.' Whenever you go to Strong's Concordance and you see what is a verb, you will see it listed with the 'omega' at the end, or the double 'oo.' Every verb in its root form ends this way.
- **birth**—'gennesis'—notice the similarity in the word, even though its spelled differently.

Verse 18: "And **the birth**... ['gennesis'] ...of Jesus Christ was as follows..."

- born of woman—'genetos'—and used with the other word

Let's see the use and meaning of these words:

Begotten—it is used in the context, which tells us the use of it. This is when Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant:

Verse 20: "But as he pondered these things, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to *be* your wife, because that which **has been begotten** in her is of *the* Holy Spirit.'"

Born—Matthew 2:1: "Now, after Jesus **had been born** in Bethlehem of Judea, in *the* days of Herod the king, behold, Magi from *the* east arrived at Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is the One Who **has been born** King of the Jews?....'" (vs 1-2). Here is the word 'texto,' with a different sense of it; this shows the birth of child of a woman.

Verse 4: "And after gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ **should be born**"—'gennatai'; a little bit different spelling

With English we just add another word, should be, could be, etc. But in the Greek they just change the spelling.

Let's look at some other areas that I think

are really inspiring. Let's go to the account of Jesus' birth and when Gabriel came to announce it. This is what really excited me when I first learned Greek sufficiently enough to understand what it meant:

Luke 1:28: "And after coming to her, the angel said, 'Hail, you who are highly favored! The Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women.' But when she saw *him*, she was *greatly* perplexed at his message, and was considering what kind of salutation this might be. Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found grace with God; and behold, **you shall conceive**...' (vs 28-31). That's an entirely different word in the Greek.

"...you shall conceive in *your* womb and give birth to a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called *the* Son of *the* Highest; and *the* Lord God shall give Him the throne of David, His forefather; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob into the ages, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.' But Mary said to the angel, 'How shall this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?' And the angel answered *and* said to her, '*The* Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and *the* power of *the* Highest shall overshadow you; and for this reason, the Holy One **being begotten**...' (vs 31-35)—'gennomeon.'

It means a lot when you understand the Greek, and is the only case of this being used in this tense in the whole Bible. It is the present passive participle nominative singular neuter. That doesn't mean anything to you unless you're a real English expert. But it means, with this kind of spelling and this kind of word, **was being conceived in her at the time that the angel was speaking**. In other words, we have a Greek word that God inspired to be used that means **that which is being conceived in you is of the Holy Spirit!** So, right at the time that the angel Gabriel was talking to her was when the conception took place.

If it would have been a future tense of the word it would have been a different spelling, a different form of 'gennaoo.' This means that right at that time Jesus was *being conceived* in Mary's womb.

I don't know about you, but those kinds of things get me all excited, because it gives a little more meaning and understanding; a little more depth to it.

You will note that in the case of the birth of Jesus, Gabriel is the angel that has been used for that whole event. **Gabriel was the one who:**

- brought the 70-week prophecy of the

coming of the Messiah (Dan. 9)

- came and spoke to Zacharias
- came and spoke to Mary

Apparently, Gabriel was in charge of the whole operation having to do with the prophecies of Christ.

It would make you think and conclude that Gabriel would have a significant part in the second return of Christ.

Michael the archangel stands up for the people of Israel. In other words, whatever it is that is done spiritually—and I don't know what kind of spiritual battles are going on—but we get an inclination out of the Bible that there are spiritual battles and angels are fighting demons and so forth, from the book of Daniel and Revelation. Michael is that one who stands for the children of Israel. So, he's in charge of whatever the battles are for Israel.

It makes you wonder what is going on right now with all the things that are transpiring. But Gabriel is the one who carried that out for God the Father in relationship to the birth of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 19:12 is where you will find that the word could be translated *born* or *begotten*, with equal force. As you study through these different words or just look at them—whether you understand them or not—and you can recognize the difference in the spelling; you will see that the words are used in all the tenses for either *begotten* or *born*. But you have to discern it out of the context.

Obviously, from John 3 we're talking about *that which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit!* To be composed of spirit is far different than just saying you repent and you receive Christ and so forth.

Matthew 19:12: "For there are eunuchs who were born..."—'egeenethesan'—born incapable of reproduction from birth. But when were they really incapable of reproducing? *From conception!* You could say that they were conceived this way in their mother's womb, or they were born this way from their mother's womb, and each would be correct.

We now know that when conception occurs and the cells unite and then there's the multiplication of cells by the dividing of the existing cells, that in just a very few hours after conception the sex is determined. If the sex is determined, and that is the fourth division of the cells. You have:

- the uniting of the cells
- one division
- two division
- three division
- fourth division

It's 16 cells, and the sex of the new person is already decided. If they are going to be eunuchs from birth, chances are there is something wrong with the genetic inheritance; so, at conception you have the problem. It could be either one. In this case, in Matt. 19:12.

"...that way from *their* mother's womb... and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. The one who is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*."

John 9—here is a very interesting rendition of this in the way that it was said. You will see the word 'gennaoo' used in each case.

John 9:1: "Now, *as Jesus was* passing by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him..." (vs 1-2). I've read over this I don't know how many times just studying the Bible, and it never really struck me until I was studying for this sermon.

"...saying, 'Rabbi, **who sinned, this man or his parents**, that he was born blind?'" (v 2). Did you catch the significance of that statement? What sin could a person, at conception, possibly do? *I cannot answer that!* That's one of those I'm going to file back in the unanswered questions. At conception how can a person sin? *I don't know; I couldn't tell you!* But that's what they asked Jesus.

Verse 3: "Jesus answered, 'Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; rather, *this blindness came* so that the works of God might be manifested in him.'" Here was a person born blind, deliberately born blind, by God, so that Jesus Christ would heal him at this particular time. That's what I derive from the sense of what's being said here. There are certain things that God has done just to show the glory of God.

But in each case you will notice that the word 'gennaoo' is a little bit different. Go all the way through John 9 and it talks about the one who is born, the one who has been born, and so forth. And it is talking about the birth of this man in every case. It's not talking about a conception alone.

Acts 13—as we put these Scriptures together we have a distinct difference between *begotten* and *born*. This is talking about the Apostle Paul teaching about Jesus Christ, and he was preaching the things that he was taught.

Acts 13:30: "But God raised Him from *the* dead. *And* He appeared for many days to those who had come up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we are

announcing the Gospel to you—the promise made to the fathers—that God has fulfilled this to us, their children, having raised up Jesus; as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are My Son; **today** have I begotten You’” (vs 30-33). That is referring to the begetting of Jesus. We’ll see the difference in Heb. 1. We see exactly the same word used; exactly the same expression.

(go to the next track)

BEING BEGOTTEN of GOD

We find the same expression has been used referring to Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 1:4: “Having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘You are My Son; **this day I have begotten You**?...’” (vs 4-5).

It’s interesting that in this particular case the *King James* translates it *begotten*. The reason they had to translate it that way is because the context absolutely dictates it.

“...And again, ‘I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me’? And again, when He brought the **Firstborn**...” (vs 4-5)—‘prototokin’—‘proto’ means *the firstborn*. The second half of this word, ‘tokin’ is a form of ‘tekin’; ‘proto’ means *the first*. Here, even God, in describing the birth and conception of Jesus Christ: “...**this day I have begotten You**...”

Then when He has brought His Firstborn “...into the world, He said, ‘Let all *the* angels of God worship Him’” (v 5).

What happened at the birth of Christ? Remember that the shepherds were out in the fields, and the angels were singing glory to God, and the shepherds went on down and found Jesus. That’s when Jesus was *born*. So, you see the difference between *begotten* and *born*. This makes a very clear distinction.

What we’re doing in going through and studying each one of these—this may be a little more technical than people may like to study their Bibles, but what we’re showing you is really showing you how to take a topic and study all the way through *very thoroughly* so you can completely understand it.

1-John 2—we’re going to find here the Apostle John uses the word ‘gennaoo’ in its various forms that give us an understanding of what he’s talking about.

1-John 2:29: “If you know that He is

righteous, you *also* know that everyone who practices righteousness **has been begotten** by Him.” When we go back to where John wrote about being born anew, here we have the proper English translation.

Here again, 1-Peter 1 in the *King James* has translated it as *begotten*. Peter is writing this:

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered...”—in the dispersion. He was not writing to Gentiles. He was writing to those of the ten lost tribes who were in the dispersion in:

“...in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit... [when you receive the Holy Spirit] ...unto obedience and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, **has begotten us** again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead” (vs 1-3).

There’s no way that they could have translated that as *you have been born again*. They translated it: “...**has begotten us again**...” And the word in the Greek is ‘anagennesas’—a *re-begetting*.

Most of us have understood from the teaching that we have had in the Church of God that to be *born again* means *to be born of the Spirit*. What I’m doing is going through and showing all the reasons why in the Bible that that is true. Many times people just hear something and they accept it without really going through and proving it. That’s how I got myself in trouble. I believe that when I was told, ‘Don’t follow me except as I follow Christ.’ I was told, ‘Prove it to yourself, don’t believe what I say.’ And that’s how I got myself in trouble.

When I did that that put me crossways between a person and God. I’d rather be crossways with a person than with God. The Bible says, ‘It’s a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.’ Besides, that’s how cults are started. Cults are started because people do not follow Christ, they don’t prove it in their Bible, and then someone gets the authority and they just start running things they way they want to run it and it becomes a true cult. They always end up going out someplace away from everybody, setting up a little communal thing and a little fort and pretty soon everyone is running around with guns. The true answer to that is this:

- the Old Testament is the conduct for the

carnal society

- the New Testament is conduct for *converted Christians*

The Bible tells us, as converted Christians, we are to love our enemies, turn the other cheek in our own personal lives. Submit to the powers that be. That's why Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If it were of this world, My servants would fight.' When the Kingdom of God comes, we're going to fight with Christ. **But:**

- now we're not to take up arms
- now we're not to go out and fight and kill

Even though in the carnal world that's what should be done. That's why in hearing a program called *The Gospel Time Bomb* it was clear to me, as I was listening, those were cults being described. What happens to them?

- they all set aside the Bible
- they all set aside the love of God
- they all set aside following Christ

That is, 'Follow *me* and *my* interpretation!'

What I'm trying to do in this, going through in such detail—though it's a little laborious in some cases—I hope it will show you how to study and check and prove thing *for yourself*. Because when it gets down to the crunch—and there's always going to be a crunch—you know because *you know!* You don't have to depend on anybody else. You don't have to say, 'Well, so and so says...' You *know* because you studied it in your Bible. No one can take that from you.

- if we're all loving God
- if we're all following Christ

Then what authority needs to be exercised? *None!*

What is the whole ultimate thing that God wants us to do? *To be ruled by Christ!* If we are ruled by Christ and stay within the grace of God, then you don't need to exercise authority. That's how everyone of these groups get off. They don't teach the people to follow Christ sufficiently that they can have faith to follow Him. They teach them enough about 'religion' so they become dependent upon their leader. When you become dependent upon the leader—for your thoughts, for your attitude, for what you do—then he must exercise authority and you have a *carnal religion*'; you don't have a spiritual religion.

I hope you can see the difference. That's why, at this point, I detest any arguments at all. I will walk away from it. It will get angry and shut my mouth and leave the room. That's how I feel about

it. That's why it's such a pleasure to come here on the Sabbath and go through what we're going through, because I want you to be able to stand on your own two feet before God and have faith before God that you *believe what you believe*, because Christ authored His Word and it is true, and you live by it! If I can't do that and teach you that then I have totally failed.

1-John 2:29: "If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone... [referring to a person] ...who practices righteousness has been begotten by Him."

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" (vs 1-2).

Here's another interesting thing: Once a child has been conceived, it is called a child or a babe. Remember the account when Mary came to Elizabeth and she was pregnant six months with John the Baptist? It said, 'The child/babe leaped in her womb.' We are counted from begetting the very children of God, though we are not yet born!

When we are *born again*, then 'we will see Him as He is, for we will be like Him.' That tells us what it means to be *born again*.

Verse 3: "And everyone... [referring to a person] ...who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure. Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.... [Whoever transgresses the Law sins, for sin is the transgression of the Law] ...And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him **does not practice** sin..." (vs 3-6).

We have to put everything in context. 'If we walk in the Light as He is in the Light; and if we confess our sins...' (1-John 1); if we are walking to Light, we are confessing our sins, and He is faithful to forgive us our sins. If we say we have no sin we are a liar.

But technically, if we are coming to God and confessing our sins daily, then we are not *practicing* sin, because God is looking at us as He looks at Jesus Christ Who didn't sin.

"...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; **the one who practices righteousness is righteous**, even as He is righteous"

(vs 6-7). The same Greek word as in v 4, ‘poion’

Verse 8: “The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. **Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin...**” (vs 8-9). *The King James* says ‘whomsoever is born of God does not commit sin. Technically, that is a true statement. If you have been *born again*—literally from flesh to spirit—you cannot commit sin. But that is not what it means.

A man handed me a paper *What Does it Mean to be Born Again?*, and started off with that one and it was not a correct statement for what we’re talking about: being *born again* or *begotten*.

Verse 9: “**Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because** His seed...”—‘sperma’ Whose seed? Whose sperma? Who is the Father? *God is the Father!*

The ‘seed of eternal life’—the ‘sperma’—from God the Father “...*of begettal* is dwelling within him, and **he is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God**” (v 9).

- Are you able to practice sin?
- Actually live in and practice sin? *Can’t do it!*
- Do you sin? *Yes, you do!*

But you don’t *practice* and *live in* sin! There’s a vast difference.

Could you, with the knowledge that you have, continue the rest of your life and just reject the Sabbath, the Holy Days and just go on out and do as the world? *You might try! You might give it a good whirl!* But you cannot do it **IF** you have God’s Spirit! You cannot practice it. That’s God’s way of bringing people back.

That’s why people, who have been in the Church of God, go out and backslide into the world—if you really sit down and get close to them—those things really bother them. One of these days, God is going to lead them to repentance because if His seed is there they cannot practice sin, “...because he has been begotten by God” (v 9).

I want to show you something that’s very interesting with the wordage of God and the seed, etc.

- ‘**ek**’ means *out from the Father*. He has been begotten by *the sperma—the seed—out from the Father*
 - ‘**ho theos**’—*word for God*
- but:

- ‘**tu theou**’—the word for *God*—in the possessive sense in that it comes from, belongs to

What difference does that make? Because it gives you the flexibility of the language, you don’t have in the English, and it tells us *Whose seed this is*. It is God’s seed because the ‘ou’

- in ‘autou’
- in ‘tou’
- in ‘theou’

all connect to show that the action comes from God.

“...His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him...” (v 9)—‘auto’ for the one who has been receiving. We know that this seed—‘sperma’—comes from God and His seed remains in the one who has been begotten. Therefore, *they cannot practice sin!*

That’s a little bit of basic Greek. I don’t expect you to totally remember it, but when you see the ‘ou’ you understand who it belongs to, and we’ll see it in other things as we go along.

This helps us explain conscience, and Christian conscience is different than the conscience of the world. The conscience of the world will feel bad, especially when it’s caught. When it’s caught it will devise every means possible to make it right.

I hope that makes things a little clearer as we go along, but that’s part of knowing just a little bit of Greek. You don’t have to know much, but it will help you when you’re studying.

Verse 10: “By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from *the* beginning—that we should love one another; not as Cain, *who* was **of**... [‘ek’—something happened spiritually from Satan to Cain] ...the wicked *one*, and murdered his own brother. And what was the reason that he murdered him? Because his own works were wicked, but his brother’s works were righteous” (vs 10-12).

We know that John is talking to human beings. He’s writing this letter to them, and he says:

1-John 4:7: Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God...”—‘ek tou theou’—love comes out from God.

Romans 5:5: “And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed because **the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us.**”

1-John 4:7: "...and everyone who loves... [‘ek tou theou’] ...**has been begotten** by God, and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God because God is love. In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent **His only begotten** Son into the world, so that we might live through Him” (vs 7-9)

1-John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ...” It’s obviously talking about human beings. No one has ascended to heaven. Christ is the Firstborn of the dead—it’s talking about people.

“...**has been begotten by God**... [‘ek tou theou’] ...and everyone who loves Him [God the Father] Who begat also loves him who has been begotten by Him.”

I hope that makes things a little clearer. Notice the last word **Him**—‘autou’; which goes back to ‘tou Theou.’ That’s how you can put a lot of those things together. What it does, it makes the Scriptures very crisp; very precise, and really helps give you a lot of understanding when you can realize that this is what it’s talking about.

When we have been begotten of God we have a Holy conception from God uniting the spirit of our mind with the Holy Spirit of God. That is the *begettal!* We will see what is the birth:

Verse 2: “By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. Now then, **everyone who is begotten by God overcomes the world...**” (vs 2-4). IF you have been *born again*, you’re no longer flesh! You’re not of this world!

“...and this is the victory that overcomes the world—our faith” (v 4).

BEING BORN AGAIN

Rev. 1:5 gives us a definition. As I have explained, this must be understood in its context. There are certain things that you can understand just standing by itself. But when the same identical Greek words are used, then you have to understand by the context and definition of it.

Revelation 1:5: “And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, **the Firstborn** [‘protokos’] **from the dead...**” To be *born again* means *to be born from the dead; resurrected!* Was Jesus born of the flesh once? *Yes, He was!* When He was born of Mary, He wasn’t born from among the dead—was He? *No! Absolutely not!*

Colossians 1:12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light; Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love; in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins; Who is *the* image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation**” (vs 12-15).

- What does this mean?
- Was Jesus the firstborn of all of God’s creation? *No!*
- What is the most important creation that God is working on right now? *Salvation is creation!*

Jesus was the firstborn of that process, because we have to:

- walk as Jesus walked
- live as Jesus lived

It is Christ *in us* the hope of glory; so the phrase of all creation is the Firstborn of all those who are being created through the process of salvation.

Verse 16: “Because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by Him and for Him.** And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist. And He is the Head of the Body, the Church; **Who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from among the dead...**” (vs 16-18). To be *born again* means that you must be *born from the dead!*

Romans 8:29: “Because those whom He did foreknow He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that **He might be the Firstborn among many brethren.**” The firstborn implies everything.

- Who receives the inheritance? *The firstborn!*
- Did Jesus Christ inherit the universe? *Yes, He did!*
- Do we share that inheritance with Him? *Yes, we do!*

We saw that Jesus Christ was the Firstborn from the dead, and we know that’s a resurrection. We know that 1-Cor. 15 talks about the resurrection of Christ, and if Christ be not raised you have no faith or hope. But since He is raised we do have faith and hope.

1-Corinthians 15:42: “So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; **it is raised in glory...**” (vs 42-43). That is true! All

human beings, when they die, they just come to a pitiful end in dishonor; they all return to the dust!

“...It is sown in weakness; **it is raised in power**” (v 43). I’ve often wondered: What would it be like, from God’s point of view, to see the resurrection occur. We won’t be able to see it from God’s point of view, but that is going to be a spectacular event, when that last trumpet blows and they’re all raised in Christ!

Verse 44: “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” That becomes very clear—doesn’t it?

Verse 45: “Accordingly, it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living soul... [fleshly] ...the last Adam *became* an ever-living Spirit.’” But He was not made an ever-living Spirit until the resurrection; *the Firstborn from among the dead!*

Verse 46: “However, the spiritual *was* not first, but the natural—then the spiritual.” See how this ties in with John 3 where it says ‘that which has been born of the flesh, is flesh; that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit; that which has been born of the water and that which has been born of the Spirit...’ It follows right along:

- natural/spiritual
- flesh/spiritual
- natural body/spiritual body

Verse 47: “The first man *is* of the earth—made of dust. The second Man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are all* those who are made of dust; and as *is* the heavenly one, so also *are all* those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the one made of dust... [this physical body] ...**we shall also bear**... [future] ...**the image of the heavenly One**. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the Kingdom of God*...” (vs 47-50). That’s what Jesus said: ***Unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God!*** The Greek there is ‘adunatai’ meaning *it is impossible* to see the Kingdom of God unless you are *born again*.

It’s backed up right here, that “...flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye...” (vs 50-52). How quickly can an eye twinkle?

“...at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and **the dead** shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.... [that’s when you will be *born again*] ...For this corruptible must put on

incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then **shall come to pass**...” (vs 52-54)—‘genesetai’—the root being ‘gene.’

“...the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?” (vs 54-55).

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 3:1-6
- 2) Romans 6:1-4
- 3) John 3:1-7, 6, 9-13
- 4) Matthew 1:2, 18, 20
- 5) Matthew 2:1-2, 4
- 6) Luke 1:28-35
- 7) Matthew 19:12
- 8) John 9:1-3
- 9) Acts 13:3-33
- 10) Hebrews 1:4-5
- 11) 1 John 2:29
- 12) 1 Peter 1:1-3
- 13) 1 John 2:29
- 14) 1 John 3:1-12
- 15) 1 John 4:7
- 16) Romans 5:5
- 17) 1 John 4:7-9
- 18) 1 John 5:1-4
- 19) Revelation 1:5
- 20) Colossians 1:12-18
- 21) Romans 8:29
- 22) 1 Corinthians 15:42-55

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-John 1:3
- John 2
- Matthew 12
- Acts 7; 9; 28
- Daniel 9
- 1 John 1

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 7-28-14
Corrected: 12-29-14