

Dear Paul,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know what we thought of the term, "born again Christians."

We believe that the term "born again" (Strong's #1080) is not a correct translation in every case in which it appears in scripture. For example, in the context of John 3:1-13, verse 3, "born again" should be translated "begotten," meaning conception, not birth, since one's spirit birth (in heaven) will take place when one dies. Therefore, we prefer to use the term "spirit begotten" Christians rather than "born again" Christians.

What does it mean to be a spirit begotten Christian? In 2 Corinthians 5:16-18 and Galatians 6:15-16, we learn that anyone who desires to sacrifice his will in order to walk in the path of Jesus is a "new creature." The path the spirit begotten Christian walks is not easy. The Apostle Paul talks about his struggles in Romans 7:15-25. He tells us this "new creature," begotten of the Holy Spirit, desires to serve God, but the old nature still serves sin. Battling this dual nature is the struggle of each true Christian. And the battle continues until death. Nonetheless, Paul also says, "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14) "Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." (1 Corinthians 9:26-27)

Paul tells us in Romans 12:1-2. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." To be able to be transformed the spirit begotten Christian must give up his time, wealth, whatever he has and put it on the altar of sacrifice to be used in the Lord's service. By so doing, the Lord rewards him with the transformation process. This change, or metamorphosis, comes from within. God's laws become written in his heart. As the new creature grows, the spiritual qualities of love, mercy, and compassion also grow. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5) The old human nature is sacrificed. The transforming process begins when the Christian gives his life to the Lord and it continues until the end of his course.

If these spirit begotten ones remain faithful to their covenant of sacrifice they will achieve spirit birth when they die and become part of the heavenly body of Christ that will bless the world of mankind in the future age to come. (See Micah 4:1-5 and Isaiah 35.)

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio