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Born Again

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By **Dag Heward-Mills**

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Published By Dag Heward-Mills on Smashwords

Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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Chapter 1

What it Means to Be Born Again

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again

John 3:1-3, 7

In this passage, Jesus had a discussion with a man called Nicodemus. Jesus was at home one night when Nicodemus came to Him. Nicodemus was a very important person in town. The Bible says he was a ruler of the Jews, a master of Israel, a leader in the synagogues. Nicodemus went to see Jesus at night, so that all the people who respected him would not see him.

This prominent Jewish leader said something to Jesus, which prompted Him to give an interesting reply. Nicodemus told Jesus that he recognized Him as a great man of God.

Jesus saw right through him and replied, "You must be born again. You are a good person. I know you pay tithes and fast often. You are a Pharisee, and a ruler of the Jews, but you still need to be born again!"

Now, the questions we have to ask ourselves are these: Why did Jesus tell Nicodemus that he had to be born again? Why did He launch out into this sermon?

The word "born" means "to be produced or created". Therefore, to be "born again" means "to be produced or created again".

There are lots of people doing all sorts of religious things. These things look "Christian", but they are not. Such people are not born again. There is no religion that requires a person to be born again. All the major religions of this world give instructions for following certain rules of conduct. There is, however, no religion that claims an inner new birth. Christianity stands alone in this claim!

To understand what it means to be born again, we can look at what being born again is not! To understand the Bible better, I often try to view the opposite of what is written. This can be very revealing. For example: "...Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

The opposite of this is: "...Do not seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall not be added unto you." It is as simple as that. If you do not seek first the Kingdom of God, you cannot expect God to give you the things you

need. So, to understand the concept of being born again, we are going to look at twenty things that are NOT the same as being born again.

Twenty Things that Are Not the Same as Being Born Again

1. Admiring miracles

Whenever there is a miracle worker, large crowds gather. These crowds are often not stable crowds; they only gather for a reason and for a season. But it is sad to say that many of them are not born again.

When Jesus himself organized miracle crusades, large crowds gathered but when he began teaching certain hard truths, he was deserted by all, except the twelve disciples (John 6).

A deep admiration for miracles is not the same as being born again.

2. Befriending "men of God"

Nicodemus got acquainted with Jesus and became His friend. In the same way, there are many who have become friends of pastors and men of God. Jesus did not say, "Except a man has a pastor as his friend…"; He did say, "...except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

3. Sending money to church

Sending money to church is not the same as being born again. Some people have given money to churches for many years, but that is not a substitute for being born again. It will not result in the giver receiving special treatment at the gates of Heaven. Though it is good to give to God, no matter how much money you contribute to the church, you still need to be born again.

4. Joining a church

A person may join a church by registering as a member of that church and still not be born again. I have been in church all my life but I did not get born again until I got to form three in Achimota Secondary School in Accra, Ghana. In a "religious" country such as Ghana, you could easily be a member of a church, and not be born again.

5. Playing a role in church

It is possible to play a prominent role in church without being born again. For instance, during an altar call in our church, some choristers responded to the call to give their lives to Christ. They were members of the choir, but were not born again. A person who is not born again may get involved in church activities and even become a priest. There are priests standing behind the "sacred desks" in

many churches who are not even born again! Playing a role in church is not the same as being born again.

6. Praying everyday

Praying everyday is not the same as being born again. When I was a child, I approached a priest and asked him, “Sir, how can I go to Heaven?”

He said, "My son, pray 'Hail Mary' three times a day, and 'Our Father' once a day, and you will go to Heaven."

I thanked him, and began to pray everyday, reciting The Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary.

Oh, how I prayed! But, that was not the way to salvation! I diligently followed my priest's instructions but I was still not born again.

You may be very religious, but if you are not born again, you will die and go to Hell.

7. Reading the Bible

Reading the Bible and quoting the Scriptures is not a guarantee of salvation. You may be able to quote the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. This does not mean that you are born again. There are even theologians who have doctorate degrees, but are not born again.

8. Being baptized

Baptism is not the same as being born again. Jesus Himself commanded us to be baptized, but He said baptism should follow salvation.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..

Mark 16:15, 16

You have to believe before you are baptized. It has become the tradition to baptize children when they are eight days old. How can you believe when you are eight days old?

Baptism is immersion in water: a sign to the person being baptized and to all witnesses, that he is now born again. The "old man" of sin goes down into the water and the "new man" recreated in Christ emerges.

We say baptism is a sign, because when you are born again, nothing actually happens physically for those around you to see. So being baptized becomes a physical sign of what happened inside.

9. Being confirmed

In some churches, a person is baptized by the sprinkling of water on him when he is an eight-day-old baby. It is expected that when he grows up he will come back to the church to confirm his Christianity. This is what is known as confirmation.

I think that what really happened is this: At some point in the development of Christianity, people felt that they were "big-shots"; too big to be immersed publicly in water. It was humiliating for them to be put into water publicly, so I believe it was arranged for people to be baptized as children. Then, when they grew up, they were confirmed. The result of all this is a lot of confirmed unbelievers on their way to Hell. Being confirmed is not the same as being born again.

10. Taking Holy Communion

Taking Holy Communion is not the same as being born again. It does not matter how much of the communion wine you drink, or the bread you eat. Taking Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper is actually meant for born-again Christians, who eat the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of Christ's death. However, it is now common to find Reverend Ministers serving communion to die-hard sinners who are on their deathbeds, approaching the gates of Hell.

A whole crate of wine and a big loaf of bread which has been left in the Cathedral until it becomes "holy" may be served to a sinner but it will not take him to Heaven.

11. Being in a Christian family

Being in a Christian family is not the same as being born again. I was brought up in a "Christian" family. I was baptized as a baby, and then confirmed later. I was also given a Bible and a hymn book by my godmother in England, but it just gathered dust on the shelf. I was in the church with my family for years until I became born again; there was a definite point in my life when I got born again.

I find that those who are a bit older or more orthodox are surprised (like Nicodemus), when they are told they must be born again. They have been devoted "Christians" all their lives, probably singing all the hymns, songs and doxologies they know. If after serving the Lord sincerely over the years, some young man comes along to tell them that they need to be born again, I can understand their surprise. All the same, a "Christian" upbringing is no substitute for being born again.

12. Using Christian jargon

Using Christian jargon is not the same as being born again. Examples of these are: "Praise the Lord", "Hallelujah", "Glory", "Be blessed", and "Amen, brother!"

I have worked with people in various Christian groups, sometimes with musicians. There are times I have felt that some of these people were not really born again. I doubted if they were really Christians, yet they were so rich in Christian jargon. When they met you, they knew exactly what they were supposed to say.

13. Denominationalism

Denominationalism, or "Churchianity", is not the same as being born again. Being a member of one of the great denominations of our day does not make you a born-again Christian.

You may be in the Lighthouse Church, but be an unbeliever. In the same way, you may be in the Methodist Church, but simply be a Methodist unbeliever.

The Catholic Church is a very powerful denomination, which I really respect. In my estimation, other churches are not as devoted and as charitable as the Catholic Church. When I was in the medical school, I had the opportunity to learn first-hand about the Catholic Relief Services. They offer wonderful social, medical, and relief services. God bless their hearts for all their efforts.

However, it is my duty to inform all Catholics that they must be born again. Being part of your great denomination does not mean that you are born again. Sorry!

14. Being a moralist

Being a moralist is not the same as being born again. There are some people who are very moral, but having good morals is not the same as being born again.

For instance, there are some people who would never break their marriage vows. I once spoke to an unbeliever, who belonged to an occult group. He told me he had been married for 17 years but had never been unfaithful to his wife, even though she could not have a child. This is a test many born-again Christians may not be able to pass. You would find that men would commonly divorce their barren wives in order to have a child. But listen, being such a moralist does not mean you are born again.

I congratulate you for your morality. I respect you for the fact that you never commit adultery or fornication. I am glad that you do not read pornography or chase prostitutes, but I must still inform you that you must be born again!

Nicodemus was a moralist, that is why he was so surprised when Jesus told him that he needed to be born again.

15. Being principled

Being principled is not the same as being born again. Some people are very principled and will not cheat you, even if they have the opportunity to do so. Sometimes in examination situations, people cheat; but such principled people will not have anything to do with it!

I have found it more difficult to bring to Christ, someone who is principled, has good morals, but who is not born again! Hard-core sinners are more aware that they need God.

A very principled person sees no reason why he must be saved. His excuse is often, "Why? I am a good person, why should I change?"

There are principled doctors who are not even born again, who simply refuse to involve themselves in the practice of illegal abortion. To them, abortion is murder. Yet, even such principled doctors need to be born again.

16. Being respectable

Being respectable is not the same as being born again. Indeed, you may have appeared respectable for years. All your life you may have been singled out and given leadership responsibilities.

Perhaps, you are a person in authority now. You could be the President of a country, a parliamentarian, a Minister of State, a King, a Chief, a headmaster or headmistress. Such positions are held in high esteem. Do not be deceived. That respect accorded you does not mean you are born again. Jesus says to the President, "Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again."

17. Being popular

Being popular or famous is not the same as being born again. I remember that in Achimota Secondary School, there was this particular boy who was extremely short. Whenever he walked in or out of any school gathering, there was a great uproar, as everybody cheered him on. He was a very popular guy but he still needed to be born again! You may be popular. People may hail you wherever you go, but you still need to be born again!

There are some popular politicians. In spite of their popularity they must still be born again! People may like you. Everybody may be pleased with you. Yet, being liked is not the same as being born again.

18. Obeying a new set of rules

Being born again is not the same as obeying a new set of rules. When you join a club, such as an Old Boys' Association or a Keep Fit Club, you may be presented with a new set of rules, their guiding principles. My wife's school, Wesley Girls' High School, has as its motto: "Live pure, Speak true, Right wrong and Follow the King". This set of rules may be your guiding principle. Dear "old boy" and "old girl", you still have to be born again.

There are also people who are rich in wise sayings. In Ghana, one of our popular wise sayings can be translated as, "The animal without a tail is protected by God". The deeper meaning of this is, "God takes care of the fatherless". How wise and impressive this sounds!

Throughout your entire life you may be guided by these nice sounding phrases. However, Jesus says to you, "Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again."

19. Being a good spouse

Being a good wife or a good husband does not mean that person is born again. You may love your husband, look after him, submit to him, support him and pray for him but it does not mean you are born again. You may be living happily together, but it does not mean you will go to Heaven. Such people are often surprised when you tell them to be born again.

They will say, "Look at me! What is wrong with me? I am a good person, and this is my happy wife. We are living happily ever after."

I must say that there are some good non-Christian husbands, but whether you are a good spouse or not, you have to be born again!

20. Being rich or poor

Being rich or poor is not the same as being born again. Being poor in this life is all the more reason why you must be born again. Your poverty and suffering in this life should not deceive you into thinking that there will be peace after death.

If you are very rich and everything is going well, you may think you don't need to add anything to your life. Jesus says to the rich and the poor alike, "Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again."

In Luke 16:19-31, we read about the rich man. He was a fool, not because he was rich, but because in his rich state he did not acknowledge God. Often, rich people forget about God. Do not be just a rich man; be a wise and rich person.

Read about what the rich man said when he suddenly found himself in Hell - he became an evangelist, longing to send a message to his brothers so they would

not join him in Hell!

Chapter 2

Hell Is Real

One reason why we can believe in the existence of Hell is that Jesus Himself preached more about Hell than many other subjects! For example, in the book of Luke 16, Jesus recounts the story of the rich man and Lazarus in graphic detail.

Notice that this is no parable. In fact, Jesus began by saying, "There was a certain rich man..." In other words, there existed a particular person, not a figment of His own imagination. It goes on to say that the rich man died, and was buried.

“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments...” (Luke 16:23). Note that though his body had been buried, he could still see, hear and feel tormented. All this was happening in a particular place - a "place of torment" (verse 28). These events actually occurred somewhere. And that place is real.

Hell is real, and it is not a reform school. According to Mark 9:44, it is a place: “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Our Judge Himself warns us about Hell and its unimaginable horrors, and offers us a wonderful and better alternative: Heaven. He said:

...I go and prepare a place for you...that where I am, there ye may be also

John 14:3

The Great Mystery

Many people known to us have died: friends, relations and loved ones. Where did all these departed souls go? Can anyone tell me where our ancestors are right now? Did they just slip into their graves to “rest in peace”? Or did they vanish mysteriously elsewhere?

As medical students working at the Accident Centre, we could encounter up to ten fatalities from one road accident alone. It was very distressing, and made one wonder where all these souls were going.

When a man dies, his spirit leaves his body. Without the spirit the body is dead. When Jesus died on the cross, the Bible makes us to know that He yielded up the ghost. This means that He gave up the spirit. His spirit came out of His body.

Likewise, we learn in the seventh chapter of Acts that when Stephen was being stoned to death, he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." We can see here that when a man dies, his spirit moves from one point to another. The spirit cannot be affected by physical death. Although the body itself decomposes and returns to dust, the spirit lives on eternally. But where do their spirits go?

Beyond the Grave

I have seen people die on the wards very often. You can almost see their spirits coming out of them as they gasp for their last breath. One minute they are alive, the next minute...they "pop off". Gone! Let's go beyond the grave and find out where they went. You see, according to God's Word, there is an appointment we must all keep after death.

...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement

Hebrews 9:27

Basically, this judgement is a time for separation: Christ (our Judge) takes His own (those who have yielded their lives to Him) to Heaven, and casts the rebellious sinners into Hell.

...and HE SHALL SEPARATE THEM one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats

Matthew 25:32

Talking about unrepentant sinners, Jesus said:

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal

Matthew 25:46

There are only two destinations beyond the grave: Heaven and Hell. The spirits of those who were righteous in Christ go to be with the Father in Heaven, while the spirits of those who rejected Jesus will be cast down to Hell. There is no third destination called: "Purgatory". Here, a soul is supposed to be kept for a while, until he is purged from his sins and carried to Heaven. That is just another lie of the devil!

Dear friend, there is more to life than marriage, money and your retirement home. I know a man who has a special bank account for his burial. He has everything planned out carefully to the last detail. Others have given elaborate instructions concerning their coffins and their graves. But that is where their plans end. Little do they realize that they are going beyond the grave!

Automatic Candidates for Hell

My wife Adelaide and I have tried to set a godly example in our home, doing our best to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

But right from their infancy, we observe to our amazement a naughtiness which could not have come out of a godly atmosphere of love and peace. Who taught them to be so stubborn and disobedient? Who taught them to lie? Where did they pick all this from?

The Bible explains that sin came into the world through Adam, who was the father of the entire human race. When he sinned, he passed on that sinful nature to all his descendants like a hereditary disease: a family trait.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned...

Romans 5:12

Sin is a family trait of the human race. This is why you don't have to teach a child how to lie. He just lies naturally. It comes automatically. Children steal and cheat automatically. They're self-willed and disobedient by nature. It just happens. And you did the same thing when you were a child, because we are all born in sin. We take after our forefather Adam. That is why the Bible says:

For ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God…

Romans 3:23

Adam's sin turned men into natural born sinners, which resulted in a death sentence being passed on all men. This makes us all automatic candidates for Hell.

In other words, every unsaved soul is bound to end up in Hell, from the President to the poorest man in the village. So you see, it's very easy to arrive at this fearful destination. Even if we just sit down, doing nothing (just minding our own business), we will still end up there. It's automatic. Our "Adamic" nature ensures that.

Now, we know from God's Word that the wages of sin is death: everlasting separation from God (Romans 6:23). Another word for "wages" is payment or salary. Your salary is your entitlement what you are entitled to. This means what you get for what you've done. What we get for being sinners is eternal separation from a righteous God. That is why man in his natural condition is considered spiritually dead, instead of being spiritually alive to the things of God. Spiritual death is the result of man's sin.

Have you noticed that all over the world the dead are separated from the living? Even cemeteries are usually located out of town to separate the living from the dead. Think about all your loved ones who have died in the past. In spite of all the love you had for them, you could no longer share your home with them because they had developed a condition called "death".

They were buried in the graveyard, out of sight. And you left them there, because their condition made it impossible for you to have fellowship with them. That's exactly how it is with God. Spiritually dead man is separated from a Holy God. Unless he is born again spiritually, and reconciled to God through Christ, man is headed for Hell. God's Word explains it simply:

Therefore as sin came into the world through one man, and death as the result of sin, SO DEATH SPREAD TO ALL MEN [no one being able to stop it or to escape its power] because ALL MEN SINNED.

Romans 5:12, Amplified Bible

Jesus, in His compassion for mankind, urged men to believe on Him and to flee from sin so that we would not perish but have everlasting life. Unfortunately, most people have not accepted this invitation, and have died in their sins, passing away into Hell. Alas, multitudes have literally poured into Hell over the years. Multitudes? You mean masses of people? Yes, I'm afraid so.

Enter ye in the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and MANY THERE BE WHICH GO IN THERE AT.

Matthew 7:13

Why Men Go to Hell

As a teenager, I regularly attended church and gave offerings, but I never heard anything about being born again. Never! Instead, I was made to understand that if I recited three "Hail Marys" and The Lord's Prayer once a day, I would make it to Heaven. However, if I had died, I would have perished in Hell, in spite of all my good intentions. What a shame! Ignorance is sending more people to Hell than we imagine. I mean, people are simply not in the know!

Today, many churches are full of sincere people seeking God. But without the proper teaching from the pulpit about God's plan of salvation, many churchgoers will be disappointed at the last trumpet.

Speaking of the Jews, Paul testified that they indeed had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

For BEING IGNORANT of the righteousness that God ascribes (which makes one acceptable to Him in word, thought and deed), and seeking to establish a righteousness (a means of salvation) of their own, they did not obey or submit themselves to God's righteousness.

Romans 10:3, Amplified Bible

It is no wonder Isaiah says:

Therefore my people are gone into captivity, BECAUSE THEY HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure...

Isaiah 5:13,14a

Nobody in their right minds would go to Hell if they really knew what it was all about. After all, most people want to serve God. That is why they practise religion. Actually, religion is man's search for God. But Jesus is the only way to God. Anyone who desires to do business with God can only do so through Jesus (John 14:6; 1Timothy 2:5).

What is God's prescription for finding Heaven and avoiding Hell? Jesus said: "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

My dear friend, YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN! There is no other option. You must receive Christ as your personal Saviour.

Being born again is not a new idea being propagated by some young churches. It is a fundamental, biblical instruction given by Christ to everyone! I know of course, that many people are sincere, but mistaken. I am sad to say that sincerity alone will not save anybody.

I also believe that every single Christian (especially pastors) will give account to God, for withholding vital information about the reality of Hell from others.

If souls are perishing because of ignorance, then those with knowledge will definitely be held accountable.

Chapter 3

The Description of Hell

You might ask, "If there is such a place as Hell, then where exactly is it?"

According to God's Word, Hell is beneath us. Its specific geographical location is underground. Isaiah says: "Hell from BENEATH is moved…to meet thee..." (Isaiah 14:9).

In a book I read, a man of God gives a very vivid testimony about dying and going to Hell. He had been stricken with an incurable heart disease, which kept him bedfast most of the time. The illness got worse till he knew he was dying. He had been baptized and had been going to church all his life, but was not saved.

When he died, he felt his spirit (his real self, the inner man) coming out of his body. He could see his lifeless body on the bed. Then he began to go down into Hell. As he went down into the pitch darkness, it became hotter and hotter. When he could go no further, a fearsome, beastly creature emerged from the darkness. The foul, demonic monster grabbed his hand to receive him. Then it began to pull him through the thick darkness towards the unbearable heat.

Suddenly, a voice boomed from above. He did not understand the language. But the hand released him immediately, and his spirit sort of floated back up to the earth and into his body. This happened two more times, and each time his spirit was released to go back into his body.

Some months later his heart failed again, and he died. But this time he was born again. When his spirit came out of his body, he began to go up instead of down. This was sheer bliss; a totally different experience from his descent to Hell. Just then, he heard a voice saying, "Go back to earth! Your work is not done!"

I believe this testimony by this Minister, because it lines up with Scripture. In Isaiah 14:15, the Bible talks about being "cast down to hell." So does Psalm 55:15. And while Ezekiel 32:27 talks about going down to Hell, Paul is even more specific in the fourth chapter of the book of Ephesians:

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

Ephesians 4:8-9

Hell is in the lower parts of the earth. Just think about it. So all this "descending" and "going down" leads somewhere after all. It leads to the lower parts of the earth!

Hell is not (as some have foolishly supposed), a gathering of all departed Rock and Reggae stars for an endless "jam, though there are many "wailers". In fact,

the only thing that is close to singing in Hell is groaning, weeping and gnashing of teeth!

Hell cannot be just a state of mind. To dismiss it as an empty threat would be very risky indeed. Hell actually exists. It is a tangible, physical place and its location is down under; in the lower parts of the earth. Even as you read this, some people that you know are crying for help that will never, ever come.

Different Departments in Hell

The souls of men who die without Christ are not just flung into Hell indiscriminately. Yes, in the midst of the darkness, torment, pain, screaming, and all the horrors in the furnace, there is some order. Hell is divided into different areas, for different classifications of people.

1. The entrance

First, there is a sort of “reception" area.
Hell from beneath is moved...to MEET thee at thy coming...

Isaiah 14:9

When the perished soul arrives in Hell, he is probably met by the most repulsive, foul-smelling, reptilian beasts at the gates of Hell. Then he is assigned to the part of Hell where the punishment most fits the crime.

2. The levels

For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the LOWEST hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains

Deuteronomy 32:22

Notice the expression "lowest hell", is the superlative of the word "low" as in:

Low
….....Lower
…….LOWEST
The levels are not the same. There is a progression here. One level differs from the other. Now let us look at it again this way:

Low Hell
……Lower Hell
……..LOWEST HELL

So you see, there are different levels in Hell and the lower the level, the greater the torment.

God is a just God, with a fairer sense of justice than all of us put together. Therefore, the severity of the punishment will be proportional to the sins committed. For example, those who have caused the death of so many people through wars, murder and witchcraft, may get a more severe punishment than perhaps, pickpockets or petty thieves.

Even in our earthly legal system there is a sense of fairness in the administration of justice. We pronounce different judgements for different crimes. Even our prisons have different areas, solitary confinement and so on. That is probably the way it is in Hell. There are various departments reserved for different groups of people. Now, let us discover what classes of people are predominant in Hell.

Hell: A "Big Shot" Society

Observe from the Scripture below that Hell has become the permanent address of many chief ones and kings of the nations.

Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even ALL THE CHIEF ONES OF THE EARTH; it hath raised up from their thrones ALL THE KINGS OF THE NATIONS

Isaiah 14:9

This refers to kings, emperors, presidents, statesmen, film stars, business tycoons. These are the high and mighty in the society, the wealthy and the influential, the great leaders in history, the chief ones of the earth! Basically, Hell is a “big-shot” society.

This is not to say, of course, that there are no poor people there. However, the well-known disregard for the things of God by many rich people, has over the centuries populated Hell with them. While the Bible makes it clear that the poor are generally rich in faith, not many noble people have chosen the way to salvation. With all the comforts of affluence, the rich and powerful see no need for God.

No wonder Jesus said the rich would find it hard to get to Heaven; because of the deceitfulness of riches.

So where are all the heads of state, pop stars, great philosophers, business magnates and other famous world figures who have died?

Well, according to the Bible most of them are in Hell. And, while we hold state funerals for them and erect monuments in their honour, the old-timers of Hell will be saying to the newcomers:

...Art THOU ALSO become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? THY POMP IS BROUGHT DOWN to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee

Isaiah 14:10, 11

Those who are far from God in this life will still be far from God after death. Unfortunately, our glowing tributes will not change their destination. Neither can their wealth or their achievements buy them a place in Heaven.

It should not be surprising then, that Hell's roll call will sound like a "Who's Who" of the rich and famous.

Hell is Expanding

Hell is currently undergoing some major rehabilitation and extension works. What for? In order to cater for the multitudes who, alas, are streaming in.

Therefore HELL HATH ENLARGED HERSELF, and OPENED HER MOUTH WITHOUT MEASURE: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it

Isaiah 5:14

The mouth of Hell is probably the main gate of Hell. It is being enlarged! It is being worked upon. How alarming! This means Hell is expecting much more human traffic!

Preparations are being made for those who are not Christians. This should make you sit up! This should also make the church of God sit up. It should shake us out of our slumber. It should make everybody sit up, especially those living in sin.

Escape from Hell

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

Hebrews 2:3

How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? Salvation is a great thing. If your boat capsizes at sea and you find yourself floating on the sea, you will wonder how you can be saved? But if a helicopter is dispatched to rescue you, will you not be grateful for such a great salvation on the sea? However, if

you refuse to go on board that helicopter when it gets to you, there is no way you can be saved.

In the same way, Jesus Christ was sent by God to this earth, to save man from perishing in Hell.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have life everlasting

John 3:16

How can you be saved if you reject this great salvation offered you?

Is a Transfer Possible?

One big-shot found himself in Hell (Luke 16:23). From a distance he saw a former hustler relaxing in Heaven. This man was undoubtedly surprised to find himself in Hell and conscious, even after death. In his desperation, he sent a telex to Abraham asking for a possible transfer! But Abraham explained to him that transfer out of Hell was not going to be possible! Hell is a permanent situation! As the anguish of this man worsened, he sent another telex asking for a drop of water, not even a glass of water.

Abraham's response is stated clearly in the Bible: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Luke 16:26).

Dear friend, make sure you do not get into Hell, because once you are there, there is no way out! As you read this, ask yourself: Am I headed for Hell? Or am I headed for Heaven? Are you going to burn in the fires, flames, and fumes of Hell? You have a chance now to escape from Hell! Take this chance and give your life to Christ. Simply and sincerely accept Christ as your Saviour now.

Chapter 4

Seven Steps to Salvation

Step 1: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

The first step to this great salvation is to acknowledge that you are a sinner. You must know that no matter how good you are, you are not good enough to save yourself.

Step 2: “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

The second step is to understand that you will pay for your sin with your life. You must know that you deserve to die; you are condemned to death.

Step 3: “For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

The third step to salvation is to know that God loves the world. He saw His children perishing, going down to Hell, and He tried His best to lift them up.

Step 4: “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12).

The fourth step to salvation is to receive Jesus Christ. Experience will show you that people do not necessarily receive the good things that are given to them.

A born-again Christian is someone who has personally received Jesus Christ into his life and is determined to live a life controlled by the Word of God and under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

Step 5: “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9, 10).

The fifth step to salvation is to believe in Jesus with your heart and to confess Jesus as Lord. You don't need to confess all your sins because you will not remember everything, but you need to confess them generally. Again, in order to become born again, a person must do two important things. First, he must believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...

1 John 5:1

Secondly, he must invite Jesus through prayer, to come into his heart or his life. You will find a model prayer at the beginning of this book.

When a person says this prayer and means it from the bottom of his heart, the Spirit of God will then come upon him, and into his heart. Thus, his inner being will be born or produced again. God gives him a new heart and spirit altogether.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them

Ezekiel 36:26-27

With that new spirit, he becomes a "new man" or a "new creature", and is ready to live a "new life". This new life is possible because a born-again Christian is actually a new person with a new heart. To be born again is as simple as that. Believe in Jesus. Ask Him into your heart. Confess Him as Lord. And you will be born again.

Step 6: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17).

The sixth step to salvation is to know that the Kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom; it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The faith we have found is not about meat and drink. It is a spiritual experience. God is trying to make you develop into a righteous and spiritual person.

Step 7: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

The seventh step to salvation is to sacrifice your life for Christ. The way to follow Jesus is to deny yourself, say "no" to yourself and to take up your cross. You've got to lose something. You must change when you come to Christ. That is the price of salvation.

Chapter 5

What You Must Know Now that You Are Saved

Now that you are born again, it is important to fully understand your new life in Christ and to build up on what God has begun in your life.

You have now received these blessings from the Lord:

1. All your sins past and present ones are forgiven by Jesus' sacrifice. Your future sins will also be forgiven if you confess them: 1 John 1:9.

2. You have received eternal life: John 5:24.
3. You are now a child of God: John 1:12.
4. You are now a new creation in Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:17.

5. Your name is written in Heaven in the Lamb's Book of Life: Revelation 21:27
6. You will go to Heaven, the New Jerusalem: Revelation 21:23-24.

What You Must Know about Water Baptism

1. Baptism comes from the Greek word *"baptiso"* which means "immersion": Matthew 3:16

2. Water baptism is a command to anyone who becomes born again: Mark 16:15-16.

3. Water baptism is a direct act of obedience to Christ's instruction: Mark 16:16.

4. Baptism is an open declaration of our new stand in Christ: Galatians 3:27.

5. We identify with the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in baptism: Romans 6:4.

What You Must Know about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost

What is the baptism of the Holy Ghost? The baptism of the Holy Ghost is an experience the believer receives after being born again. It is a promise from God to all those who believe in Jesus Christ. John the Baptist gave witness of Christ before His baptism that He would baptize us with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Matthew 3:11.

1. What happens when a person receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

The initial sign that you are baptized with the Holy Ghost is that you speak in tongues: Acts 2:1-4; Acts 19:6.

2. Who can receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

Anyone who is born again can receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues: Mark 16:17.

3. How to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost

a. Firstly, you must be born again. This is the most important qualification: Mark 16:17.

b. Secondly, you must desire the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:38-39.

c. Pray and ask God to baptize you with the Holy Ghost: Luke 11:13.

d. Exercise your faith by speaking out in tongues: Acts 2:4.

e. Sometimes it is helpful to get a senior Christian to assist you by laying hands on you and praying along with you: Acts 19:6.

f. Once you start speaking in tongues, don't stop it. Keep on praying!

The Bible describes the speaking of tongues in two ways. First it is a river that flows out of your belly: John 7:37-39. It is also a stammering tongue: Isaiah 28:11.

What You Must Know about Why Every Believer Must Speak in Tongues

1. Speaking in tongues is a promise to every believer: Mark 16:16, 17.

2. Speaking in tongues helps you to pray according to the will of God:

Romans 8:26, 27.

3. Speaking in tongues builds you up to become a strong and powerful Christian:

Jude 1:20.

4. Speaking in tongues is talking to God directly in a language only He understands: 1 Corinthians 14:2.

5. Speaking in tongues gives your spirit the opportunity to pray: 1 Corinthians 14:14.

6. Speaking in tongues makes your spirit pray best about things concerning you:

1 Corinthians 2:11.

7. Speaking in tongues makes you pray for a long time, as you are not limited by language, vocabulary and how to express yourself: 1 Corinthians 14:14.

8. Speaking in tongues is a better way to express thanks and appreciation to God: 1 Corinthians 14:16, 17

9. Speaking in tongues makes you more aware of the power of Christ: Acts 1:8.

10. Speaking in tongues makes you become more conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit in you as you continue to communicate with God in tongues: John 14:16-17.

What You Must Know about the Bible

1. The Bible is God's Word to mankind: 2 Timothy. 3:16, 17. You must desire the Word: 1 Peter 2:2.

2. God's Word gives us direction for our lives: Psalm 119:105. Be determined to be a doer of the Word: James 1:22-25.

3. The Word of God helps to change our thinking and keeps us from the bad habits of our past: Psalm 119:9.

4. God's Word will make you a strong believer: Acts 20:32. You must have a daily quiet time to read the Bible: Joshua 1:8.

What You Must Know about Prayer

1. It is important to spend some time with God in prayer every day:

1 Thessalonians 5:17.

2. Prayer builds you up in your faith: Jude 1:20.

3. Every Christian should pray at least 30 minutes daily when he begins the habit of prayer. You should move up to praying for an hour as you grow in your daily prayer habit: Matthew 26:40.

4. Prayer helps you to overcome temptations: Matthew 26:41.
5. You can pray about everything: Mark 11:24.
6. You can accompany your prayer with fasting sometimes: Matthew 6:17, 18.
7. Your prayer should include these important aspects of prayer:
a. Adoration. Praise and worship God for who He is and for what He means to you: Matthew 6:9; Psalm 103:1-3.

b. Confession. Confess your sins to obtain God's forgiveness and healing: 1 John 1:8,

9. Confess your faith by declaring or speaking out your faith in God's Word:

Romans 10:10; Mark 11:23; Philemon 1:6.

a. Thanksgiving. Thank God in all circumstances: 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Thank God for the things He does in your life: Psalm 106:1. Thank God in advance for what you have asked from Him but haven't seen yet: Philippians 4:6.

b. Supplication. Ask God for everything you need: Matthew 7:7. Ask Him for things concerning other people: 1 Timothy 2:1, 2.

What You Must Know about Fellowship

1. You must go to church regularly: Hebrews 10:25.

2. You must make friends and move closely with other Christians:

1 Corinthians 15:33.

What You Must Know about Witnessing and Soul Winning

1. We must tell our friends about what has happened to us in Christ:

John 4:28-30, 39.

2. It is an important public declaration that shows that you are not ashamed of Christ before men: Romans 1:16.

3. It is our responsibility as Christians to tell others about the truth: Matthew 28:18-20.

4. You must bear fruit: John 15:16.

What You Must Know about Your Role as a Church Member

1. Your first role in the church is that of a faithful attendee: constant, regular, reliable, dedicated and committed: 1 Corinthians 4:2.

2. Your second role in the church is that of a stable Christian. You must be planted in a local church and be established there: Psalm 92:12, 13.

3. Your third role is to support the church financially, by giving tithes and offerings: Luke 6:38; Proverbs 3:9, 10.

4. Your fourth role is to make your talents and gifts available to the church:

1 Peter 4:10.

5. Your fifth role is to know your pastors, love and respect them, believe in them, and pray for them: 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13; 2 Chronicles 20:20; Hebrews 13:18.

May you be rooted and grounded in Christ until He comes again!

One prayer can change your life...

PRAY THIS NOW

If you want to be born again, you must ask Jesus to come into your heart and life. You must say a prayer like this and mean it from the bottom of your heart:

"Lord Jesus, I come to You as a sinner, lost and condemned to Hell. I repent of my sins and ask for your forgiveness.

I believe with all my heart that You died on the cross and rose up again for my sins.
I open my heart to You and receive You as my Lord and personal Saviour.
Please take control of my life and make me what You want me to be.
From today, I am Yours and You are mine. Thank You, Father for this wonderful gift of salvation, Amen."

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