

Our Firm Foundation on Everlasting Life

An understanding of the joys and privileges of the one who has entered into “Everlasting Life” should bring the highest of all highs on earth. A sense of our relationship as children of the Creator of the Universe like a good parent and child relationship should cause us to do our very best to please and honor our loving Father and provider. Everlasting life is not just a future ‘pie in the sky’ promise of life forever in heaven after our earthly bodies die, it is the key to our joy, peace and contentment on earth and begins with our ‘new birth’ experience.

GOLDEN TEXT: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

SCRIPTURE TEXTS:

Daniel 2:1,2; Romans 6:3,4,22; Galatians 3:27; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Matthew 19:29; 25:45,46

DANIEL 12:1,2

1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, and the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even unto that same time: and at that time thy people shall be

delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

ROMANS 6:4,22

4 Therefore we are buried with Him in baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

MATTHEW 19:29; 25:45,46

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or

wife, or children, or lands for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

45 Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.

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

JOHN 4:14

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

INTRODUCTION:

When does Everlasting Life and our citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven begin? Receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues is only the first confirmation that the new creature in Christ Jesus has indeed been born. That new creature is born into **everlasting life** and thereafter will never die but may receive reward or punishment based upon its own response to God's known will.

This has many wonderful benefits to us, and also responsibilities. A Bible-based understanding of our new status as possessors of Eternal or Everlasting Life as new creatures in Christ Jesus, as citizens of the kingdom of heaven, will result in our living life to the fullest and most fulfilling here on earth before going on to our rewards in heaven and on the new earth.

Just as you may be at the same time a son, a father, a husband and a businessman, you become at the same time a New Creature in Christ Jesus, have come from death into Eternal or Everlasting Life, and a citizen of the



Kingdom of Heaven!

1. WHEN DID THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN OPEN TO MANKIND?

Many people feel confused when they read Jesus' words in Mark 9:1 and Luke 9:27 that some of those THEN present would not see death until they saw the kingdom of God coming in power and He still has not appeared in either the catching away of His bride, called the Rapture, or His Second Coming. But Jesus also said, "...*The kingdom of God is within you,*" (Luke 17:21). The Apostle Paul adds, "*For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power,*" (1 Corinthians 4:20). When the Apostle Peter, under the unction and anointing of the Holy Spirit stood before the crowd of well over 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, preached the first Holy Spirit anointed sermon of a regular man, he turned the key, promised to him by Jesus in Matthew 16:19, and some 3,000 who believed that message, repented of their sins, were baptized in Jesus name and received God's confirming gift of His Holy Spirit, walked, nay ran, into the Kingdom of heaven, thus fulfilling Jesus' prophecy. This was clearly the fulfillment that Jesus' hearers of Mark 9:1 and Luke 9:27 that some of those THEN present would not see death until they saw the kingdom of God coming in power.

2. WHEN DOES OUR EVERLASTING LIFE BEGIN?

a) *When that person is born of the water and the Spirit.*

"...*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*" John 3:5. Jesus was already talking about how to be born again and makes the above statement in answer to a direct question asking how one could be born a second time. Throughout Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, He repeatedly referred to being "born again" which indicates a new creature of a new person taking the place of the old. The birth of the water mentioned therefore refers to water baptism, not natural birth and the birth of the Spirit refers to spiritual birth or the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Many teachers, full of the good intention of bringing us into a holy standard of living, mistakenly teach that even though you are born into the family and kingdom of God, you can be lost for the least sin and may use scriptures like "*For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven,*" Matthew 5:20, "*But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh saints.*" (Ephesians 5:3) and "*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance: ...*" (Hebrews 6:4-6).

The Bible is quite clear in teaching that when a person is truly born again, he is no longer a sinner by nature. The idea that we are "sinners saved by Grace" is true only in that we were sinners before we were saved. Sinning was our nature then. But when we become new creatures in Christ Jesus, we are no longer servants of sin. If there is no new life in Christ, then no new birth took place.

As with natural life, eternal life actually begins with conception, that point at which the egg of our souls is fertilized by saving faith. But as with the natural conception, the egg is hidden within and the seed of the word, sometimes with great opposition, battles to reach it. The spiritual conception, like the natural is generally unseen. By the Grace of God, one person witnesses to the lost soul and plants a seed of faith which may not even be apparent for months or years.

b) *When God confirms salvation with the Holy Spirit.*

.....Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (*Acts 2:38*).

Therefore we are buried with Him in baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life...(Romans 6:4).

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (*2 Corinthians 5:17*).

Thus, when we have believed, repented, been baptized into Christ and received the Holy Spirit, we are no longer the old sinner, but a new creature, a citizen of His heavenly kingdom, with desires to please our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

3. WHAT IS THE MARK OF THE NEW CREATURE?

a) A changed lifestyle.

"...old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (*2 Corinthians 5:17*).

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (*Ephesians 4:24*).

Whenever a person is truly born into the kingdom of Heaven, the old "sin nature" dies and our nature becomes one which enjoys doing the right, the holy, the good things which we know are pleasing to our new master and Lord. The drunkard never touches another drink, the harlot becomes a model saint, the confirmed gambler ceases his gambling and becomes a good provider for his family, 1 Timothy 3:9 and 1 Peter 3:3 both speak of the women wearing "modest [that which sets apart least] apparel" and not to count on the wearing of much gold to make them stand out, but that the thing that should make them stand out is their "chaste conversation," "the hidden man of the heart." (*1 Peter 3:1,4*) and their "meek and quiet spirit". The same is true of men. It is not a "hope so" thing that maybe a person's life will be changed, it is a sure thing. Citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven will not only dress modestly but their faces tend to glow with holiness that people can actually see. There is a feeling of peace and contentment that accompanies them and can be felt when one is around them. They remain unruffled and confident in the face of adversity, like a shelter from the time of storm because they have the peace of the Comforter within and knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose," (*Romans 8:28*).

4. HOW RADICAL IS THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE NEW CREATURE?

a) A complete reversal of direction.

The Bible is quite clear in declaring that when a person is "Born Again" of the water and the Spirit, he or she "enters the kingdom of heaven," as a new creature with a Christ-like nature and that thereafter he or she does, will and must live above sin. That will become his or her inner or real nature. If that is not true of the new life he or she lives, then the evidence says he or she has not yet become a new creature, a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven, and is not yet truly "Born Again!" So let any who insist that they can live as they did before they "were saved" be branded for what God's Word says they are - servants of sin and therefore not real born again believers.

Galatians 5:16-24 teaches us quite clearly that if we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, then goes on to list twenty sins that are evidences of our old nature, the life before Christ which should not be a part of our new nature, and states that there are more. Then the FRUITS of the Spirit-filled life are listed. What a

difference! LOVE, by its truest meaning, that of caring and deep concern for the well-being of those loved.; JOY, that is deep-seated and content in the knowledge that the life being lived is in and in full harmony with the Kingdom of God; PEACEful in the knowledge that all things work together for good because his steps are "ordered of the Lord" (*Psalms 37:23*); LONGSUFFERING because he dies daily to his own will and comfort; GENTLE because he desires to hurt no-one; full of GOODNESS because he is filled daily with the goodness of God; possesses great faith because he knows Him in whom he has placed his trust (*2 Timothy 1:12*); MEEK in the realization that but for the grace of God, he could be in the gutter or the prison with the worst derelict; TEMPERATE because he controls his body and keeps it under subjection (*1 Corinthians 9:27*) since "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts," (*Galatians 5:24*).

So how radical is the change? Just let a person grow a little cold and indifferent to the things of God and see how quickly he begins to lust, envy, pick faults, concoct false doctrines to justify himself, hate those who do not honor and respect his wishes. It requires a real miracle to change the old nature into the new creature. The old nature must die and be buried! If it is not buried soon after death, it begins to stink.

b) A servant of Satan to a servant of God.

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God..." (Acts 26:18). *"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light,"* (Ephesians 5:8). *"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son,"* (Colossians 1:13).

Even those who teach that we are "saved" by the Grace of God and "belief" in or on Jesus and nothing else, still speak of becoming "new creatures in Christ Jesus," even while declaring that the belief is what "saves" and that it is not vital to salvation to live a changed and holy life.

How ridiculous! The new creature is nothing like the old being. *"...old things are passed away; behold all things are become new,"* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

"...Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are..." (Romans 6:16-18).

SUMMARY:

Do you have to be poor and miserable, seeing all your sinner friends enjoy "life" while you can't do the "fun" things so that when you die, you will inherit eternal life? Or does eternal life begin now? The fact is that eternal life begins at the moment of the new birth! If you are really born again, your desires, change and many of the things you used to enjoy, you now have no desire for. Instead, you enjoy feasting on the word of God and drinking the new wine of the Holy Spirit. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* 2 Corinthians 5:17