

# Real New Birth

by Dai Patterson

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*Dai Patterson emphasizes the necessity of a genuine new birth through Jesus Christ for true spiritual transformation and entry into God's kingdom.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:21, Matthew 18:3, Matthew 19:25, Mark 10:15, Luke 1:34, John 3:3, John 3:14

**Topics:** "Perseverance Of Faith", "Gods Sovereignty"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal story about a friend who faced trouble and difficulty in his church. Despite feeling weighed down and ready to give up, the preacher's friend was encouraged by his three-year-old daughter to keep going. This story serves as a reminder to all believers to persevere in the face of challenges and not be distracted. The preacher emphasizes the importance of relying on the life of God within us to enable us to keep going and trust that God knows what He is doing.

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## Transcript

There's not one of us in this room who should now go home and complain, because all his ways are just. He has placed you where you are. You may not have chosen to be in the place where you are.

You didn't choose your mum and dad. Had you had the chance, you may have chose differently, but you didn't have that opportunity. You live where you live.

You're with the people that you're with. And you must, you must accept that as being the Lord's will and purpose for your life, and rejoice in it. And trust God that there you are.

And bless the name of the Lord that he's placed you there, because he's placed you there in wisdom and in faithfulness. Don't kick against it. Don't complain that you wish this was different or that was different.

Let God change you, so that you can go into the circumstances no matter what they are. And even those who others might think are in the best of circumstances, I guess you've got things that you wish were different. Don't kick against any of it.

Give thanks to the Lord. You ascribe greatness to him. His greatness has ordained it so, that you should be in that home, in that place where you are.

And if your mum and dad don't love the Lord, rejoice even in that, and pray for them, and love them, and care for them, so that they see something in you that they don't see, maybe in the rest of the family, and

God start to move upon their hearts. Amen. Now, you take that home with you.

Lord, I'm going to believe that you're faithful to me, that you're true to me, that it's not an injustice that I'm in my circumstances, and I wish I was in somebody else's. Well, you're not. Glory be to God.

Now, somebody else wanted to sing. What did you want to sing? Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my voice. It's not in here, but I guess we all know that.

Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my voice. Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my voice. O my God, I trust in thee, that I may not be ashamed.

We're going to break bread at the end of the evening, so it is... Genuinely, I am not going to be too long. Okay. And I want to tell you this to start with.

I used to have an ambition. I haven't got it anymore, but I used to have an ambition. And this was it.

I once had in my mind this, that there was going to be a day, one Saturday, probably January, February, when I was a young man, around sort of 18, 19 or something, when I was going to come out through the arches at Cardiff Arms Park, dressed in the red shirt of the Welsh international rugby team. And I was going to come out as captain. And I was going to lead the Welsh 15 onto the... You can't call it the Holy Groom, but it's almost like that to many Welshmen, of Cardiff Arms Park.

And there, I was going to lead the Welsh 15 in singing the national anthem and in front of 70,000 people packed into the stadium of Cardiff Arms Park, I was going to lead the Welsh to a fantastic victory over the English. And not only that, but I had great visions of myself, kind of playing the position of Scrum Half. Because I used to think that Chris Morgan, I don't suppose any of you would remember Chris Morgan, would you? Wally? You must be getting on, Wally.

But Chris Morgan, oh, I used to watch Chris Morgan play in the Welsh international rugby season. And then Gareth Edwards came onto the scene. And then Barry John came onto the scene.

And oh, I watched that ball flicking out of the Scrum to see them dinking and running. And there I was, I could see myself now scoring the final try. Mum and Dad there.

All my brothers there. All the neighbours, the street. Cheering.

I'm a local hero. Yeah. I would have loved that.

Oh, I would have loved that. Boy. Yeah.

I had another ambition, too. To play the violin. But not at the same time as I was leading the rugby 15.

You might be sad to hear that I achieved neither of them. But I used to watch the rugby internationals. I used to love them.

I never really liked watching soccer very much. Sorry to all you ardent football, soccer fans. But I used to love watching the rugby.

And I guess I admired somebody like Gareth Edwards. I used to watch him and he could take the ball from the Scrum and he could swing it along to the line. And he could throw the ball 20, 30 yards.

I used to think, what was that? And he could score up to a few minutes and he could push them off. And he could sidestep and he could kick. He was great to watch.

And I thought, if only I could be like Gareth Edwards. Boy, that would be something. Yeah.

Maybe you had a kind of a similar ambition. Maybe some of you fellas, you wished you could be like Maradona. I don't mean like Madonna, I mean like Maradona.

And you know, you could kind of play like he does. Although in my day, I reckon, and I still reckon, Pele was better than him. Well done, lads, well done.

We're all the sort of people of being able to do that. And I guess most of us at some stage have great ideals about being like somebody, having the skill and the talent of a superstar. It could be for you, you may think, rugby? It could be something entirely different.

But whatever it would be, I guess you thought, if only I could be like that. And I guess it's impossible, isn't it? I discovered I didn't have the skills of a Gareth Edwards. I didn't have the abilities of a Barry John or a Chris Morgan.

And that was it. And I certainly couldn't play the violin like Yehudi Menwin. In fact, I can't play it at all.

So that is. But I used to think like this. Perhaps you don't, but this is how I used to think.

If somehow I could get the skill, the talent, the ability of a Gareth Edwards in here, I'd be able to do it. I mean, I could be coached by Gareth Edwards or Barry John. And they could say to me, well, look, guy, this is the way you do it.

You see, you hold the ball like so. And you've got to be rightly balanced. And then they could teach me all this stuff.

But if I don't have the skill, the natural skill of a Gareth Edwards or whoever in here, it's all a waste of time. I just couldn't do it. I might learn and pick up bits and pieces and so on, but I wouldn't really ever be capable of playing like they played.

So, my ambitions have died. I don't regret it very much. I wondered one day if maybe Jim could have fixed it for me, but there it is.

I guess I'll never do it now. And I'm aware of this. I've talked to some of you people in this room.

And I know that there are some of you sitting here who have a fear that's in their heart. They're afraid that they're going to go back home and they're going to go back to normal everyday living, to the routine of school, college, office, whatever it be. And somehow, what you may have received this week maybe just being in the atmosphere of a conference like this, excuse me, this week, you're afraid you're going to lose it.

And afraid that somehow it's not going to work. Now, I want to tell you as plainly as I know how that unless you have had a real and a genuine and a proper new birth from above which only God can give you, you will find when you get home that it will not work. I'm telling you that now.

I'm telling you it won't work. Not unless you had a genuine and a real new birth. Now, let me explain to you what I mean.

Jesus Christ never ever came to set up a religion. There are people in this room who come from all kinds of different backgrounds. I know that a large number of you come from what I call fellowship circles.

But I know that there are some of you who attend a Pentecostal church. Some of you attend a Methodist church. Some attend a church of England.

Some of you probably do not attend anywhere on a regular basis. But you're here. There you are.

And you've got to understand this. This is fundamental. That Jesus Christ never ever came to set up a religion.

He came that men and women should be born again. He approached, or rather a man approached him. This gentleman approached the Lord Jesus and he came to him at night time.

He came at night simply because he did not want to be seen. Because he was a religious man. And religious men and women don't normally like to be seen to be in need.

They are supposed to be okay. But this man came to Jesus Christ by night. And he was not only a religious man but he was a leader amongst religious men and women.

And of course that was his trouble. He was religious. Most of us have been brought up under some form of religion.

Most of us. You have been brought up either to go to a church where a form of religion is practiced. I'm not saying that that's wrong.

I'm just saying that that's what most of us are used to. We've been brought up in that. But you must understand that Jesus Christ never came to make you religious.

He didn't come and insist that you go to church three times a day on Sunday, twice in the week and to the youth fellowship. And if you don't, you're a rascal and you'd better watch out. He didn't.

So I want to ask you, what do you think Jesus Christ really has come to do? And do you think he's done it in you? And this religious man who came to the Lord, he came by night. He called him rabbi, which means teacher. So he recognised that Jesus had something that he didn't have.

And of course Jesus Christ was not a rabbi in the proper sense of the word. He was not born in the rabbinical family. He was not a teacher amongst the Jews.

But this man called him that because he knew he had something. So he approaches Jesus and he recognised that he was of God, from God. Because he said to him, I know that no man can do the things that you do except he be from God.

You might believe that. I know that Jesus Christ came from God. I would guess that most of you, if at all of you believe that, Jesus Christ came from God.

Alright, that's what this man recognised. And Jesus, in the wonderful way that he has, did not make any reply to that man's comment. You would have thought it would have been the polite thing for Jesus to

object to him.

Well, Nicodemus, because that was his name, you're quite right. That's exactly right, I have come from God. But he didn't.

In fact, he ignored his comment. And you might think, oh, is that cheeky? Why doesn't Jesus at least be polite? Because Jesus is not in the business of being polite. I don't mean that he's discourteous, but truth is what matters to Jesus Christ.

He didn't say to this man, oh yes, Nicodemus, that's quite right, yes. I've come from God, you're quite right, well then, ten out of ten, and send him back home. He had something to say to this man that was going to forever affect his life.

And I want to say to you that what I'm going to tell you this night is going to forever affect your life, one way or the other. Because you this evening are going to go out of that door, either with a certain knowledge, I have been born again, from above. God has given me a new birth.

Or you're going to go out of that door religious. Okay, now you might think, oh, he's coming on a bit strong. Well, it's the last note, isn't it? And I feel I've got to tell you the truth.

Because I don't want you to go home with a blessing. What? No, I don't. I don't want you to go home feeling good.

No, I don't. I don't want you to go home thinking, oh, what a wonderful time. I shall write this, and we'll keep in contact.

No, I don't want that either. Oh, then I hope you do. I hope that you will think about one another.

And I hope that those of you in your house who said that you would pray, for those who stood up earlier, will do that. But that's not what I want. I want you to know what Jesus Christ really has come to do.

And it amazes me when I read my Bible, that the person that Jesus first speaks to about being born again was not some rotten, false dropout. He wasn't some guy who was an alcoholic along the hippie trail, or somebody who was popping pills or something, or living down the road in sin. He was religious.

And you might be that. You might just be like this man. Oh, yes, I believe in Jesus.

I believe. I'm a good church-goer. I'm a good fellowship-goer.

I am. You'll notice if you read the story, Jesus didn't say to him, now Nicodemus, listen, I know you've been a good boy so far. He didn't say to him, well done Nicodemus, you've ruled amongst your people and I'm very pleased about that.

He said to this man, straight off, no messing about. He didn't kind of lead up to it. He said, Nicodemus, you've got to be born again.

How about that? That's the way to talk to people. That's Jesus. And he used the word must.

I say unto thee, you must be born again. He didn't give him any choice in the matter. And God doesn't give you any choice in the matter either.

I want to tell you, you must be. I'm not telling you you ought to be. I'm not suggesting to you that it would be good to be.

I'm saying what I know to be truth. You must be born again. All right? And this is what Jesus then said.

Oh, if you don't know where we are, we're in John chapter 3. Of course, you all do that, don't you? You all must have known that. I wonder how many of you would say, if you had to, I didn't, did I? Well, you ought to know that. Listen, let's read it.

We're now in verse 3. Verily, verily, I say. How about that for good, straight talking? There he is. I say unto you, Nicodemus, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Now, you and I are meant to see the kingdom of God. I don't understand that. That don't make sense, sorry.

I mean, I can go to Buckingham Palace, and I can go into Buckingham Palace and say, you know, morning to Her Majesty, and you can see where the kings of England have sat, and you can see their throne, and you can understand a kingdom in that sense. But how do you see the kingdom of God? Well, you can only see that kingdom when you've been born into it. I've never seen the kingdom of... I can't think of a kingdom.

Somebody tell me a kingdom. Come on, quick. Who? No, the kingdom of Nepal.

I've never seen the kingdom of Nepal. But Nepal's got a king. And there's a kingdom there.

And the king rules in that kingdom. But I've never seen it. I don't know whether I ever will.

But I've never seen it. And I've never seen the king of that kingdom. But Jesus did say that the man who is being born again, he can see the kingdom.

All right? And apart from that, you cannot see the kingdom of God. You may believe in its existence. You may say, oh yes, I accept it's there.

I don't quite know where it is, but I believe it's there. But you can't see it. So, Nicodemus replies, and he says to Jesus, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Well, that's a question.

Answer it, can he? No. So, Jesus is not talking about natural, physical birth. You, all of you, sitting in this room, without exception, you've all been born.

You've, all of you, had a mum. And you were inside mum's womb and after nine months of happy bliss, you were born. You came into this world yelling and screaming, complaining and moaning, wanting to be fed and watered and clothed, and ever since then, mummy has been doing it for you.

She's been looking after you, isn't she? But never again will you become a little baby and return there, to that womb, and be born again. Never. So you understand, and of course, you all understand it, it is as plain as the nose on your face, that you can only be born once, physically, only once.

So when Jesus says, you must be born again, he's talking about a different kind of birth. All right? Verse five. Jesus now answers this man's confusion.

He says, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Now did you notice that? It's not just seeing, it's entering in. And of course, the only way to really see is to enter in.

I mean, I've seen Buckingham Palace from the outside, but I've never entered in to Buckingham Palace. I've never gone and had a good look around and said, oh look at that, that's where the Queen sleeps. Look at that.

And look at that, that's where Charles does his writing. And, Charles, you know, Prince Charles. And, I mean, I've never gone into the dining room.

Well, I suppose they've got a kind of, you know, a table thirty feet long, and it's all, it's made of solid mahogany and golden canvas. I mean, I don't know actually what it must be like, but I've never been in there. And, you and I must realise that you've got to enter into God's kingdom.

Which means if you want to go into God's, you've got to forsake every other kingdom. This world, in other words. Because, really, there's only one, one of two kingdoms to which you belong.

You belong to God's kingdom, and you see it and you're in it, or you're in this world's kingdom. Now, this world's kingdom has got lots of little kingdoms. There's the kingdom of Nepal, and there's the kingdom of China, and the kingdom of Russia, and the kingdom of Japan.

They may never be called that, but, you know, they've got countries there, and there's somebody who rules it. You, if you happen to be born, well, like, oh, they've gone. Sing and See, the two lassies from Vietnam.

I mean, they were born in the kingdom or the country of Vietnam. I've never been there. Well, that's where they came from.

And that's the kingdom that they knew. You and I have got to be born of water and of the Spirit in order to enter into the kingdom of God. And then, you become a member of that kingdom.

Now, by your first birth, you're a member of the kingdom of the United Kingdom. Well, we're called the United Kingdom, aren't we? England, sorry, Wales, England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. There you are, the United Kingdom.

We've permitted you to join us. We're the United Kingdom. We're very pleased about it.

Nice to have you. But we're now the United Kingdom. And I was born a member of that United Kingdom.

I can see it. I mean, I've been to quite a number of parts of it. I've entered into it.

I'm part of it. I can even vote in it. I've got some say in what goes on.

Not very much, but I've got some. And God wants you in His kingdom. Oh, I want to ask you, listen, are you a member of God's kingdom? Do you see what Jesus said? He didn't say to Nicodemus, Nicodemus, are you a member of the local Methodist church? He didn't say to him, now Nicodemus, do you go to the assemblies of God? He didn't say, now Nicodemus, do you belong to a royal Christian fellowship? He said, Nicodemus, you've got to sing God's kingdom.

You've got to enter into God's kingdom. And that's only possible by the new birth. You've got to be born again in order to be in God's kingdom and a member of it.

Alright. In verse 7, same chapter, Jesus said to Nicodemus, He said, why do you marvel? Marvel not that I said unto thee, you must be born again. It must have absolutely staggered this man.

I guess something must have happened in his face. He must have kind of gone, what's he talking about? And maybe all of a sudden, he's thinking, what's he talking about? And Jesus must have seen it. He said to him, what are you marveling about, Nicodemus? Marvel not that I said unto thee, you must be born again.

Why do you think it's so marvelous? What's amazing you about it? You can see that you have to be born into this world's kingdom. You can see that, can't you? You can see that, can't you? You wouldn't be here if you didn't get born. And you won't be in God unless you've been born into it either.

Marvel. This is God's way for every one of us. In verse 9, Nicodemus answered and he said to Jesus, How can these things be? Can somebody tell us where else in the Gospels, and I'll give you a hint, in Luke's Gospel, there's only 24 chapters, so you've got a good chance of getting it right, where somebody else said something almost similar.

Not quite, but almost similar. If you don't put your hand up. Leaders, you're excused.

You know, come on. We've only got one hand up. Who else? Somebody else said something almost the same.

How can these things be, said Nicodemus? This person said, How can this be? Aha. I don't know. One, two, three, we're getting there.

Four, four, five, this is getting exciting. Come on, come on, come on. Jo, did you have your hand up? I thought you were tickling somebody's head.

Right, come on, give us the answer. Good. Thank you.

Right, did you hear that? Say it again. Mary. Mary.

I'll read it to you. Luke chapter one. If you were starting at 24 and moving backwards, it'd take you a long time, wouldn't it? Listen to this.

In chapter one of Luke's gospel, first, oh, where shall we start? Well, I want to go back a bit first. In verse 27, it speaks about a virgin named Mary. The angel came and greeted her.

She was troubled in verse 29. The angel said in verse 30, Now don't you fear, Mary, for you've found favour with God. And then she speaks about this son she used to have, and she's told, And you shall call his name Jesus.

He shall be great. He shall be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and of his kingdom. There shall be no end. And then Mary said to the angel, How shall this be? She knew it was impossible.

Naturally speaking, it's impossible. You all understand that, don't you? You know that Mary, the virgin, could not have a son because God had ordained within the context of marriage that there should be union between a man and a woman and the children are born naturally from the seed of the man and the seed of the woman. You all know that, don't you? Okay.

So Mary knew that too. And she said to the angel, How shall this be? And this is the answer that the angel gave her. In verse 35, this is what she was told.

The Holy Ghost or the Holy Spirit. The same one that Jesus is speaking about in John chapter 3 where we're reading The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. A miracle.

Now, that I want you to think about like this as a picture. It actually happened. I don't mean that it didn't happen.

I believe, really believe, that there was a woman called Mary that she was a virgin that she had a son called Jesus Christ who was the Son of God. I believe that. I don't know whether you do.

I mean, you've been led to believe it. You've been told you ought to believe it. I really believe it.

He was born that way, okay? Now I want you to think about that as a picture. That the only way in which he could be brought into this world was by a miracle. And the only way that you can be brought into God's kingdom is by a miracle.

It's not going to be because you're going to sit there and say, I'm going to be born again. Oh, yes I am. And you kind of, no, no, no, you won't be born again unless God does it.

Mary could have said, you know, well, okay, then I'll really work at it, you know, I'll kind of really think about it and I'll, I mean, what a stupid thing. She'd still be there, wouldn't she? You're thinking, I must have this son. No, no.

God came and did something. He did it in that woman's body. God has got to come and do something in you by His power.

For we read that the power of the highest shall overshadow thee. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. Now that's what God's got to do.

He's got to come upon you and create in you that new life so that you become born again. It's got nothing to do with having water sprinkled on you. It's got nothing to do with going down into a big pool or a lake or a pond or a river or a stream.

Nothing at all. It's got nothing to do with somebody coming along and laying hands on you and praying for you called a bishop or a minister or a vicar or a priest or something. It's got to be God.

And Mary knew it. She said, how? And the angel said, the Holy Ghost. He's come upon you.

And that hand that shall be born from your womb, God will create there. And God is going to do that in your life, my young friend. Else, I want to tell you something about yourself.

You will have a religion. I want to tell you about your religion. It'll be powerless.

You might have a good form. It might have a... The outside might be nice. You might put your Sunday suits on, you know, or you might put your nice dress on, and you might toddle off to church, you know, like we all do.

And there you go. And you might sit in the pew. You might kind of, you know, put your Sunday smile on.

And you might sing a hymn. And you might even be able to say, Hallelujah. Oh, wonderful, wonderful.

Yes, you might. And it'll be all very nice. And we might even be impressed and think, oh, what a spiritual young man.

What a spiritual young lady. But look at it. God has not done that thing that he alone can do and must do.

You've never been born again. You've never become inside a new man or woman. All right? But you have a form.

You'll have something that other people can see, but it won't be of God. All right. Now, um, if you drop your eye down then to the 14th verse of the chapter, Jesus is still talking to Nicodemus.

All right? He's still talking to him. And he speaks about something that at first seemed completely strange. He talks about Moses.

And he says to Nicodemus, now listen, Nicodemus, you know that Moses lifted up a serpent in the wilderness? A snake? Yeah. Well, let me tell you the story. Shall I? He made this snake of brass and he stuck it on the end of a long pole, like that.

And it was up along the end and it was made of brass. And the reason why he made it was because God told him to. And God had told him.

The camp of Israel, where all God's people were gathered, was full of snakes, serpents. And they were being bitten and poisoned to death. The serpents were there because of their rebellion and their idolatry.

All right? They didn't kind of just happen to camp upon a bunch of snakes. Nobody could be the stupidest to go and park their caravan or they'd tend on a bunch of snakes. These were there because the people of Israel had disobeyed the Lord, were living in idolatry and God sent the serpents amongst them.

And they were being bitten. And many died. And Moses went to God and he called out to the Lord and he said, Lord, won't you do something? And God said, Moses, take a pole and on the end of the pole you make a brass snake, a serpent.

And he did. And he put it on the end and he held it up like that. And everybody who looked to the serpent, the brass one, was healed.

If they didn't, they died. And they didn't kind of just glance at it, you know, oh yeah, and carry on. They had to look at it earnestly.

They had to really look at it with expectation. They had to look at it and realise, if I look, God will heal me. God will get rid of the poison out of my system.

Because the poison was running through their veins, destroying the nervous system, which is what snakes' poison normally does, or it attacks the heart, either one. I don't know what kind of snakes they

were, but they either destroy the nervous system or they get to your heart, or they stop the muscles working and you can't breathe, so you can't do that and you die. But however, the only way for them to live was to look expectantly.

Because running in their beings was a poison. And they were going to die. You know, I want to tell you something about yourself that you may not have discovered.

And you may not like me telling you, but there it is. You've got a poison running in your system too. It's called sin.

It's a poison. And it's running in you. And it will kill you.

Because the wages of sin is death. It will kill you. And you have to have the poison dealt with.

You've got to have it taken out. It's got to be removed from your system. So, all the bitterness and the filth and the foulness and all the criticism and the anger and all the self... and all the criticism and the anger and all the selfishness and the lust has got to be got out of your system.

And the only way is to look. Now, you don't have to go looking to any kind of a serpent, but you've got to look to the Lord Jesus Christ to do this thing in your life. To so come upon you that he deals with the sin in your life and brings you to a new birth.

Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. Even so, he said, must the Son of Man... He's talking about himself. He must be lifted up.

And, whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. That is what being born again really means. That you have taken out of you the life of sin and of death and all that that means and you receive eternal life.

A quality of life that enables you to live above all that's in this world and would corrupt you and draw you and win your affection and overpower your life and destroy you. It is not possible for anybody to really know victory and power in their life unless they've been born again. You might manage a short-term success thing.

You know, these days you can go and listen to tapes and they guarantee that they can get you off smoking. And you can go to Weight Watchers and they guarantee that you can lose so many pounds in so many weeks. And, all these kinds of things are allowed.

And, you can alter some of the outward things that you do. Yes, you can. I know people who've given up smoking.

They're not Christians, but they stopped. I know people who've given up drinking. They weren't born again, but they gave it up.

So, those outward things you can get rid of. Don't, don't think, will you, that people can't unless they become Christians. Yes, they can.

But there's nobody who can get the poison out of the system unless God does it. Unless He wonderfully comes upon you and gets you clean inside and gets it right out of you and gives you a new birth, a new life. That's what He's got to do.

In the course of this week, I've talked to one and the other. I've become aware of this, that there are some of you in this room who are afraid. One or two have said to me, I'm almost afraid to go back because I'm somehow aware that I'm going to fail.

Somehow I'm almost convinced it's not going to last. Yeah. Now, someone said that to me.

Who they are, that's none of your business, is it? It really is only theirs. But that's what they said to me. I wonder whether you're feeling like that now.

Lord, it doesn't feel real. It doesn't feel real. I want it to be real.

I want to know that I've been really born. If I said to you, Mark, did you have a real first birth? Have you really been born? Yeah. I mean, what a stupid, dumb question to ask anybody.

Have you been born? You're sitting there. He can talk to me. He's alive.

And you know, what a stupid question to ask, right? What's the matter with you? You're going simple. Careful what you say. Common sense, isn't it? And that's how God wants it to be.

Your first birth is to be a picture of the second one. It's to be so real that if someone says to you, were you born, Fred or Bert or Henry? Are you really real? Poor guy, he's come from down the road somewhere. Of course I'm real.

Look, I've been born. That's how it's got to be. You've got to know that God has done such a work in you He's come upon you.

He's got the poison out of your system. He's given you a completely new birth. And you know, I'm alive.

I'm living. In here. God is a real living God.

In here. To me. So all reality forms and ceremonies drop away.

Yeah. That's the way Jesus Christ talked to this man. Nicodemus, this is what you've got to have, my good friend.

And apart from this, you can't see nor can you enter into God's kingdom. He could have said, I've been born a Jew. We've got special privileges.

Yes, maybe you have, but in this, Nicodemus, you can't see nor enter into my kingdom unless you've been born again. And it's that and that alone, my dear young friend, that's the only thing that will keep you when you go back. That's the only thing that will keep you.

That and that alone. Because it will be in you and you will be born again. There'll be within you the life of the risen Son of God to keep you, to strengthen you, to enable you to face mum and dad.

I don't mean to graft them, but yes, to face them. To go into work, into school, wherever, and live before men and women. Not trying to.

See, I get the feeling that there are some who are saying now, yeah, when I get back, I'm going to try. I'll try harder this year than I did last year. I'll get my teeth done and I'll get down to it.

I'll even read my Bible a bit more and I'll pray a bit longer and I'll even go to two meetings in the week. I'm determined this time. Listen, it won't work.

You'll just drive yourself bananas. You'll need to have the life of the Son of God in you. Just as I needed to play rugby like Gareth Edwards, I needed to have the life, the skill, the ability of a Gareth Edwards in me to be able to play that way.

And in order to be a Christian, Christ's man, Christ's woman, you've got to have Christ's life. And if you've got Christ's life in you, you can be absolutely sure that the outside of you will very soon begin to conform to the inside. I heard a story once, I never, I didn't actually meet the lady, but I know of a woman and she was a prostitute.

And God met her. And she got saved quite some years ago in the days when miniskirts were all the thing. I guess they're back in, right? Everything seems to go wrong in circles.

But anyway, she, God met with her and she couldn't get free. She couldn't get free. She really wanted to be able to worship the Lord and God had changed her life.

And, but something was wrong, something was stopping her. And she was in a meeting one day and God spoke to her. Because the outside was not conforming to the inside.

God had done something in here. But the things on the outside were still wrong. And she realised it was this stupid miniskirt that she was wearing.

And she went home and she took the thing off and she got a pair of scissors and she put the scissors to the hem of her miniskirt and she took the thing right off and God set her free. You might think, well that's a funny thing. What's that got to do... Listen, the outside was conforming to the inside.

When you know that you've got that life, you'll be sure that things on the outside will start to come into line. Yes they will. And you'll begin to realise that God has done something that's made you clean inside.

And you can't flaunt yourself. And you don't dress to attract attention to yourself. Now, I'm going to say some pretty strong things to you.

Are you ready? The way you dress. Yeah? Now think about it. Think about it.

If you say you've got the Holy Spirit in here, you've got the life of Jesus Christ in here, you'll be born again. And His life is so different from this world, you can't dress like it. You can't wear its fashions and try to draw attention to yourself because the person who's truly been born no longer wants attention drawn to themselves, they want attention drawn to Jesus Christ.

And the way you dress will draw attention. It'll either draw attention to you or it'll draw attention to the modest way you dress. There's something that's pure and sweet about the way you clothe yourself.

So you don't go around trying to draw attention. And you don't walk into a room, you know, kind of... And everybody's, oh, he's here again. And everybody's eyes are upon you.

And you don't wear things so that everybody kind of follows you around the room. Especially fellas. Yeah, with girls.

Very easy, lads. You know, for girls to dress in a particular way and the boys' eyes are there. And some girls do it on purpose.

Oh, no. Oh, you couldn't believe that. Well, I do.

It's true. Yes, it is. You can lynch me afterwards if you like.

But it's true. And likewise, vice versa. Boys do it.

Yeah. And, oh, these stupid adverts that advocate it and make you think it's the right thing to do. It's all nonsense.

God wants us all to get hold of your life, my dear friend, and get you so that He's got the insides of you and then the outside will conform. The outside will come into line. Yes, it will.

That's why the Bible is very clear that God is not out to patch up the outside. I was brought up in that. You know, there was a particular place I went to and they said, well, you've got to stop drinking and you've got to stop smoking and you've got to stop doing that and you've got to stop doing the other.

Talk about ten commandments. They had commandments. Not what you do do, but what you don't do.

All over the place. And in the end I thought, well, I can keep this silly thing. What a dreary life.

And that's just what it was. Dreary. Bound me all up.

And I gave it up because it didn't work. Not until I got that life inside. Yeah.

Right on the inside. But God's a man in you. If anything, I want to say to you again, you're going to go away from here and you're going to face things and you're going to fall.

And you'll do one of two things then. You'll either blame God and say, well, it's your fault, Lord. You didn't help me.

You should have done this or you should have done that. You should have stopped that from happening. You'll either do that or you'll realize, and I hope that you do, if this is what does happen, Lord, I need something.

That's going to cause this to work in me. Can I ask you, I don't suppose you would remember, but do you know how long it took you to be born? I don't suppose you remember, do you? But actually to be born, I mean, the process that these ladies go through when they have their babies, you know, they go in and they're in for 10 hours or 12 hours and they get the contractions. But the actual time for delivery, well, baby's there.

I was there. So were all my little ones born. Oh, they were so sweet.

There they were. Scraggly. I mean, they don't know, but they don't know.

I mean, but anyway, the actual, just take a moment. And some people struggle and struggle and struggle. Oh, God.

Do something. It takes a moment to be born again. Just a moment.

If you want that to happen, so that you can go from this place knowing I've got in me the life of God. I can go and face it. It'll work.

And now, listen, I want to say something. It's not in this chapter, but I want to say something to those of you who consider that you are, have been, really born of God. I want to tell you a story.

A friend of mine, he leads a church. And there's been some real trouble there. Real difficulties.

And he'd been asked to go and preach somewhere. And so he got in his car and he took his family with him and he drove from where he lived to this place where he'd been asked to preach. And he left with this great cloud over him.

It seemed like everything was going wrong. Problems in the church. One not happy with this.

Another not happy with that. People kind of pouring it all on him and he was real weighed down. So he drove.

And he drove and he drove. And he got to five miles of the place he was going to preach. And he said to his wife, I can't go.

I can't go. Everything's wrong. I can't go.

So he pulled up the road, put the brake on, sat there with his wife and they started to talk. Just five miles away was the place he was going to preach. And they talked about it.

Talked about it. Talked about it. Went over it.

And a little voice from a little girl who's three years old. Three. How about that? Piped up in the back.

And this little voice said, Just go on, Daddy. That's all you can do. Three years old.

Well, never did she get that wrong. Just go on, Daddy. That's all you can do.

He started to talk. He said, Oh, yes. I'll just go on.

I'm just going to go on. There. He drove on.

Conducted his meetings for that weekend. The Lord was with him. And the Lord blessed.

Isn't that a marvellous thing? Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. Three years old. Isn't that a wonderful thing? The problems haven't gone away.

He's phoned me. He's phoned me since that occasion. I've seen him once.

He's phoned me once. The problems are still there. He's not gone back to a nice kind of rosy garden.

Still got the trouble. Well, how wonderful. But there he was.

Ready to despair. Ready to give in. Ready to go back.

And God sent him to his little three year old. Go on. It's all you can do.

Just go on. I want to say that to you. Just go on.

All of you. You especially who own the Lord as your Master. You know that the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Go on. Don't be distracted. Keep going.

And when things are tough, keep going. God knows what he's doing. And that life which is within you will enable you to keep going.

You won't despair. Keep on. And praise God that that life which he gives enables us to go on.

Yeah. You remember the little snip I read to you from Jim Elliot's diary. Do you remember? I did tell you if I remember rightly that his wife went back to South America amongst the Orca Indians took her children and there she and others preached the Gospel.

Women. She kept going on. Kept going.

Yeah. And that's the life that Jesus Christ gives you. And me.

It doesn't mean to say it's all going to be easy. But that life will enable you to keep going. Just step by step going on with God.

In your circumstances. So that you can be above them. Keep going.

That's a wonderful thing. And that's the power of the Spirit of God in the life. But I want to go back now to what I have originally said and ask you now.

Have you been born? Do you know that as certainly as you're sitting there and you've got a mum and dad and you've been born once you've had a second birth. And the Spirit of God has given you that birth and you're alive inside to God. Do you know that? Because if you don't that's what you must be born.

And God says that you can. In fact that's why Jesus Christ came so that you should be. That's the Gospel.

I said to somebody today I think they were sat opposite me and I said I was talking something like this to them. And I said you know what I would do if I could? I would take what I know to be that life and I'd shove it down your throat. I'd shove it down your throat so that you'd have to have it.

How about that? So you'd have to have it. You'd have no choice. But that's not how God deals with this.

You've got to receive that life. He does not force anything upon anybody. You have to receive.

Have you? Now have you? Because I will feel this. That this week as much as I've enjoyed it it would be a sadness to me if I knew that there were people in this room who went away and they hadn't received. Oh yes I believe it's all possible.

Oh yeah I've been blessed. God's been great to me. But they you don't know that in here that birth has taken place.

And just as you by your first birth have a natural mum and dad so by that second one you know you've got a heavenly Father. He's yours. And His life is in you.

And you can go from here tomorrow and you can face everything that God brings your way and you'll know Lord I know that this life in me is sufficient to meet every circumstance. Amen. Now I'm going to stop

there.

Now you might think oh well it's appeal time. Well it's not appeal time. I'm not going to appeal to you.

I'm not going to ask you to do anything. I've told you what you must do. You've got to go and receive.

If you never have. You can receive now. Right where you are.

If you want to. You can go back to your caravan and receive. But at some point you have to receive.

You may not be ready to receive. You may say I'm not prepared to give my life up. I don't want to give my life up.

I don't want God to have mine. But if you're going to have His you've got to come to that. He's got to have everything.

If you're going to have His life He's got to have yours. He's got to deal with all the poison of sin that's in that life of yours. And because you may have been born into a Christian home and you may have been taught the things of God you've still got the poison in your system.

I wonder whether you've ever thought that you if you had not been born in that home that you were born in you could have been capable of the most wicked desperate horrible things as anybody else could. If I said to you you could have become an Adolf Hitler what would you think of that? Just shitty asshole. He murdered 6 million people.

I couldn't have. Oh yes you could. The capacity is in every one of us to be like that.

It's in you and God's got to deal with it and give you an absolutely new life. Amen. I've got one more thing to say we're going to break bread.

Phil I must say this to you if you do not love the Lord Jesus if you do not know that God has done this in your life I want to suggest to you that you don't take it. Now you might think oh well that's not fair I'll be excluded. That makes me different.

Yes it does doesn't it. But I want to tell you what, well Lynn who was here yesterday read it from 1 Corinthians chapter 11 You are not to take the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ without discerning his body. Because of it some are ill some are weak some have died.

I don't understand all of that I confess. But clearly this is to be done by those taken by those who know in their heart Lord I know that this matter is settled I'm yours. I am taking of this bread and this wine in remembrance of thee Lord.

Because I love you because you've done your work in me it's settled and I know it. I receive. If you know it's not be brave enough just to pass it by.

Pass it on. But the choice is yours. I don't know your heart condition but God does.

I'm not standing here to judge anybody but you've got to answer to God as to whether you take it or not. Alright? Glory to God. It's to be a joyous thing that you do and I think it would be rather nice I think it would be rather nice if the people who've been leading the caravans where you've been staying were to come and were just to pass it out to you.

I don't see why I should do it. But there've been those who've been with you and they've lived with you and they've been in the same van with you and they've served you. I think it would be nice if they came and just passed out the bread and the wine.

Now let's pray.

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