



EPILOGUE: THE RUIN OF RELIGION
Or
Why I Am Not A "Born Again Christian"

INTRODUCTION - Living In The REAL World

According to Jesus, "organized religion" is the enemy, not because it is _____ but because it is _____.

TAKE OUT:
The antidote to organized religion is not _____ religion, but organized _____.

The Clash Of Symbols

John 3:1-21

TAKE OUT:
A faith based on _____ is not enough to Jesus. He calls us into a personal _____ of the greatest miracle of all.

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:25-27; Joel 2:28-32

The need for new birth is an offense to anyone who wants to believe that their _____, _____ or religious _____ is their salvation.

NEW BIRTH VS. RELIGION

"Believe" = Faith = _____

The evidence of spiritual birth is not spiritual _____ but spiritual _____.

TAKE OUT:
Only once must you be born apart from your _____.
Only once must you die without your _____.

CONCLUSION - Why Are You Here?

John 3
John 7
John 19

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

1. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one thing that most challenged, encouraged, or perplexed you.
2. Explore and discuss this quote from historian and theologian, N.T. Wright: "Opening the window and letting the breeze in can be very inconvenient, especially for the Nicodemuses of this world who suppose they have got things tidled up, labeled and sorted into neat piles."

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

3. What does the imagery of being spiritually birthed by the Holy Spirit suggest about God as a Father?
4. Many theologians (e.g., N.T. Wright) believe that being "born of water" (John 3:6) refers to baptism as the symbol of one's personal choice to commit to the community of faith, the Messiah movement, as well as to Jesus himself. What role has baptism played in your life?
5. Look up the following verses that talk more about spiritual birth: John 1:12-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:3, 22-23; 1 John 2:29; 4:7; 5:1. a) List what we learn about spiritual birth from these passages. b) What are some of the characteristics of someone who has experienced God's re-creative work in their lives? c) Using verses from John 3 to inform and support your answer, how would you respond to someone who asked "what is the gospel"?

SO WHAT?...

7. Using the analogy of birth and spiritual development, what stage of spiritual growth do you see yourself at, at this point in your life... a) A pre-born spiritual fetus? b) A newborn? c) A struggling toddler? d) A questioning teenager? e) A healthy adult? f) Experiencing a spiritual mid-life crisis?
8. Pray for each other in light of #7 above.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE - June 15 / 22, 2003