

The “born again” experience

Martha, Mary and Lazarus were close friends of Jesus. Lazarus got sick “*so the sisters sent word to Jesus, ‘Lord, the one You love is sick’*” (John 11:3). While Jesus traveled to the home, Lazarus died. Upon arrival Jesus consoled the grieving sisters after which, “*still terribly upset, He went to the tomb, which was a cave with a stone rolled against the entrance. ‘Take away the stone,’ He said. Martha objected, ‘There will be a bad smell, Lord. He has been buried four days!’*” After encouraging Martha, the stone was rolled away. “*Then Jesus shouted, ‘Lazarus, **come out!**’ And the dead man **came out**, his hands and feet **bound** in grave clothes, his face **wrapped** in a head cloth*” (John 11:38-44).

The story illustrates what it means to be “**born again**”—**getting connected to Jesus!** Like Lazarus we’re bound and wrapped in death. Furthermore, our spirits have decomposed to such a degree that, to put it bluntly, we stink! Into our darkness, depravity and death Jesus extends an invitation of grace: “**COME OUT!**”

Lazarus responded to the Word of Life. Slowly shuffling from the tomb, he wobbled his first steps in following Jesus. Note his condition. Lazarus’s spirit was **alive** but his soul and body were still bound in garments of death, a strange situation. Nonetheless, this is how we all begin following Jesus.

To Nicodemus Jesus said: “*You must be **born again**. Humans give life to their children. Yet only God’s Spirit can change you into a child of God.*” Paul described the *born again* condition: “*Friends, I’m completely frustrated. You’re **acting like infants** in relation to Christ, capable of nothing much more than nursing at the breast.*”

Here’s the point. One is *born again* upon responding to the

call of Jesus. Connection person to Person is established. However, no matter what our chronological age, we are at that point *infants in Christ*. The best thing one can do is put on a giant Depends, proceed to the bathroom and look in the mirror and say: "***This is who I am in Christ!***"