

## In 2021, 'BE BORN AGAIN'



*“Lord, make me chaste—but not yet.”* That was the prayer of a man who was not only flirting with Christianity, but was also flirting with a lot of other things. But after being touched by Christ, he became one of the greatest, most influential saints and authors the Church has ever known. He was dramatically changed!

It is said that after his conversion, one of his old girl friends saw him on the street and shouted at him, “Augustine, Augustine!” But he just kept walking. She went just in front of him, blocked his way and said, “Augustine, it is I!” Augustine responded with great calm, **“I know it is you. But, it is no longer Augustine!”** Now, this is what it means - *‘Being Born Again!’*

Jesus told Nicodemus, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.”* **Christianity is not about legalism with its long list of dos and don’ts...it is about ‘Being Born Again’!** And ‘Being Born Again’ is a command, an imperative, and not an option for a true follower of Christ. 2 Cor. 5:17 says, *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away; behold, the new things have come.”*

**Remember, we DO NOT HAVE THE POWER to ‘BE BORN AGAIN’!** In Ezekiel 36:26, the Lord says, *“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”* You and I cannot change ourselves. We **need God’s Spirit to give us a new heart.** Acts 1:8 says, *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and then, you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”*

**The Christian life is not about ‘what we do for God’; it is about ‘what we allow God to do in us and through us!’** If we look at the Holy Bible, the type of men and women God uses, are those who are willing to step out in faith; depending not on themselves, but on the Lord.

I was deeply affected by the testimony of a Pastor. He shared, *“There was somebody I was asked to go and pray for, who was on his death bed. Leave aside praying for him, I didn’t even want to see this guy at all because he had cheated, defamed and betrayed me and my family in a very grave manner. I was telling myself, “Why should I visit this man after all that he has done? What If I pray over him and he really gets well!” But, the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and said, “Peter, are you my follower? I want you to go and pray over him.” Radical Obedience! I didn’t feel like going, but I went! When I knocked at the door and they took me straight to the bedroom and I shook hand with the guy, the most amazing thing happened! When I stretched my hand towards him, something happened that I cannot explain in words – My love for him came back in abundance!”* Now, this is the Power of the Holy Spirit to change our heart and make us ‘Be born again’!

Friends, every time we fail to understand things that happen in our life, and we feel discouraged and even feel abandoned by God, and especially as we step out of the Pandemic-stricken year 2020, let’s make it a point to remind ourselves at every disheartening moment,

*“This is now God’s opportunity to show me His power, His reality.”* Let’s learn to listen to God’s voice and step out in faith...leaving behind the old familiar ways of living that were not in alignment with the whispers of the Holy Spirit, allowing our every moment and movement to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, and thus, ‘Be Born Again’ into a truly New Year of our life! God Bless!

*“The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” (John 3:8)*

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