



# CONNECT

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Christmas 2008



Jerry and Candy Moyer

## Luke 2:1-20

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to his own town to register. 4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her first-born, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. 8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."



Dear friends and partners,

As this year comes to a close, we have looked back over the year at everything we are so grateful for. We feel so blessed to have traveled over 35,000 miles across the United States and have ministered in 37 wonderful churches and saw so many lives touched. In our hearts we cannot think of anything more rewarding than to be able to teach the word of God to children and their families. In our events this year we have seen over 2000 men, women, teens, and children coming forward to receive Jesus and become born again. Praise God there is nothing more exciting than someone receiving internal life! We feel so blessed to have worked in these churches and to have met so many good people that have a heart to reach their community with the gospel. We have seen that here in our own country the message of the "Good News" needs to be preached. It is a mission field here in our own country. Below we would like to share a few praise reports and story's of the people we have touched.

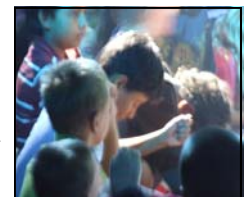
This was written to us from a children's pastor, in Weatherford, OK where we ministered at in October 2007. "Our pastor's wife was teaching a Wednesday night class and a mom was helping. The mom brought in her form that we have everyone fill out before they help in children's church. Pastor's wife looked at the form and saw that the mom got saved in October and asked her about it. The mom's two kids came to the crusade and heard about being born again. The boys came to the front to pray. (That's awesome at that) That night when they got home, they told their mom about being born again and the mom got saved in her living room that night and has been faithful to church ever since."

Another praise report came from a helper at a church in Beckley, WV. She came up to me on the second day of our event to tell me that her nephew had gone forward the night before and was born again. He was so excited that he couldn't wait to call and tell his mother when they got home that night. His nephew was spending the summer with her and she explained that his mother used to go to church but after she married and moved away she stopped going. When she finally got a hold of her sister, she told her that her son really needed to talk to her. Her first reaction was "What did my son do this time." Then they told her it was nothing like that, but that he went forward at church and accepted Christ in his life. The mother said "Now I do need to find a church so I can take my son to church." Isn't that awesome.

This last story is one that breaks my heart but also gives me great hope. I saw a young man come forward the first night of our program in SD. I saw such deep sincerity on his face that I had to ask later from the children's pastor about this young man. He was born in Iraq and raised as a Muslim that he, an older sister, and his mother fled to the US. You see his mother was an interpreter for the American soldiers and the insurgents felt that she was a trader to the Muslim faith. So one night the insurgents stormed their house killing his 16 year old brother in front of the mother, shooting and stabbing the mother leaving her for dead, and taking his father away. An older sister hid her and this child away from the house so they were not found by the insurgents. Then the insurgents burned their home to the ground and they lost everything. The mother did live and the American soldiers help them to get out of the country. To this date the mother does not know where her husband is, or if he is still alive. His older sister who is 19 has joined the US reserves and will be headed back to Iraq when she is through with boot camp to fight side by side with the Americans. The whole family is Muslim and this church has been reaching out to them. Praise God for this child's understanding and accepting Christ as his savior. This story really touched my heart and I pray for this family to all come to Christ. We are so blessed for the freedoms we have in America.

During this Christmas season we wish that you and your family have a wonderful Christmas Holiday. We are so grateful for all our prayer partners, friends, and family. God Bless you and Merry Christmas.

Jerry and Candy Moyer



Young man from Iraq in SD praying to receive Jesus with fist clinched

# Teaching Children about Salvation

## By Jerry Moyer

There is much confusion today about what it means to be a Christian. It is very important that what we teach children about their relationship with God is accurate. When we just teach children that salvation is "being friends with God" or "having Jesus as their best friend" we are not exactly presenting the full scope of what being a Christian really is. I can be friends with you, but it does not change my life for eternity. It does not give me eternal life. Yes, Jesus should be our best friend and we need to develop our relationship with God, but that is a byproduct of the change that occurs in our heart when we are born again.

Some misconceptions in our society about being a Christian are that going to church makes one a Christian, praying and reading the bible makes one a Christian, being born in a Christian family or attending a Christian church makes one a Christian. Or even being religious, following a churches statement of faith, rules, or regulations, or just being a good person makes one a Christian. Most of these things are good and help us grow spiritually, but do not make one a Christian.

When a religious leader came to Jesus in John chapter 3 he asked Jesus what I must do to enter your kingdom. Jesus did not say belong to a certain church, obey more rules, or become more religious. He told Nicodemus you must be born again.

Now there has been a lot of confusion about what exactly being born again is. Is it just a decision to follow Christ, or is it a transformation of the heart of a person? If it is no more than making a decision to follow Christ without a change on the inside being a Christian is no different than being a Buddhist, Hindu, or Muslim. It is simply just a religion that we have joined.

What sets Christianity apart from all other religions is the supernatural change that takes place in our spirit man. This is the good news. We do not have to serve God in our own power. He changes us on the inside and gives us his very life and nature so that we can serve him. Its not just rules and regulations he puts the law in our heart when he puts his love in our heart. Rom. 5:5 says that the love of God has been put in our heart by the Holy Spirit. The bible also says that Love is the fulfillment of the law. If we love God and our neighbor we have fulfilled the law. In Ezek 36:26-28 Ezekiel prophesied "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." Here Ezekiel was talking about the change that would take place in the lives of believers after Jesus came and paid the price for our salvation.

I know the term "born again" was over used a few years ago when everyone from presidential candidates to movie stars said they were born again Christians. The term got drug through the mud and no one really knew what it meant, so we quit using it. The world asked what does "Born Again Christian" mean and no one knew, so we came up with terms like having Jesus in our heart and being friends with God.

When Adam ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and disobeyed God something happened to Adam. He died. Not physically because we know from scripture that he lived for many years after the fall. He died spiritually. He was separated from God. When this happened he laid the foundation for all man kind to be born separated from God or dead spiritually.

That's why the bible calls him the first Adam and calls Jesus the second Adam in 1 Cor. 15:45. In 1 Cor. 15:22 the bible says as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. As in the word of the Christian rapper, Tripp Lee "The bad news we were born in sin, The good news we can be born again." In order to be restored to the place where God had created us to be we needed a total transformation of our spirit man or be born again. When we receive Christ we are born into God's family. We are not just adopted but born into it.

The Bible says in 1 Cor. 1:13 that we were delivered out of the kingdom of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God. Or in other words, we are taken out of the kingdom of darkness and put into the kingdom of God. When I see this word translated I always think of the transporter room in the old Star Trek program. We were taken from one place and put into another into another.

The bible also says in 2 Cor 5:17 that if we are in Christ we are a new creation. Old things have passed away, all things have become new. This does not simply sound like a decision to follow Christ or being friends with God to me. It sounds like a total transformation of the heart.

With out this change in our spirit man we have simply become religious or joined a religion. Without the supernatural element of being born again we have a form of Godliness but deny the power. We have dead religion that we have to strive to be good enough and follow the rules and regulations. When the good news is that Jesus paid the price with his blood on the cross for our salvation, and all we have to do is receive the free gift that God offers us.

Without the blood of Jesus being shed we cannot be born again. Today, we live in a bloodless society. We don't even see our meat being processed any more. We only see the pre packaged meat that we buy in the store. But Christianity is a bloody religion. From the sacrifices of the Old Testament that God commanded to cover the sin of Israel to the Blood of Jesus being shed to take away our sin in the New Testament. The Bible says in Heb. 9:22 without the shedding of blood there is no remission or taking away of sin.

Now, I am not talking about being graphic and gory with children. I would never scare a child for anything. But we cannot leave the blood out of our faith or teaching. It is the very basic element of our faith. That's why Jesus commanded us to take the Lord's Supper or communion, it was to put us in remembrance of his sacrifice for us.

I am not a huge fan of the term "having Jesus in our heart" either. The Bible says that Jesus is at the right hand of the father making intercession for us in Romans 8:34. I understand what we mean when we say that Jesus is living in our heart but Jesus himself is not living in us. His life and nature is in us. His character is in us. The love of God is in us. The 1 Cor. 13 kind of love is what is in us.

I realize that some of this is quit technical and is not presented on a Child's level. Instead of talking about our nature being changed from sin to love, I talk about when Adam disobeyed God he received a sinful heart. We all are born with a sinful heart because of Adam's disobedience. He represented all of us. When we are born again we receive a clean heart. I then explain what this means on a child's level.

I had heard the terms Jesus died on the cross for our sin, born again, being saved, and all the other Christian terminology that is thrown around lightly my entire life growing up as a pastor's child. But I did not understand it, until I became an adult and researched it out for my self. Sadly to say that many people grow up in our churches hearing these terms and never fully understand it. Then walk away from the faith because it was not presented in a way that made sense to them when they were older. It was presented like a fairy tale or Santa Claus and when they were old enough to think for their selves, they realize it did not make sense and walked away from the faith. We as the body of Christ need to get back to teaching what "being born again is" so that the children and teens growing up in our churches understand it. If not when they become adults they will see no difference in Christianity, Buddhism, or Hinduism and will walk away from their faith and the church.

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