

# **Born Again**

## **Basic Theology Training**

New Life//

New Gifts//

Real Love//



**New Horizons**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

## **Pause and Breathe**

Before anything else, take a deep breath. Set aside the distractions, the pressures, the long to-do list. Let's make this a quiet, intentional moment. Invite the Holy Spirit to soften your heart as you reflect on what it means to be "born again."

## **Why This Sermon Matters**

This is part of the Bedrock series — designed to walk through the essential teachings of Christian belief. In the last Bedrock sermon, Ryan led us through atonement and justification: how Jesus' sacrifice once and for all paid for sin and set us right before God.

But here's the next crucial question: once you believe, then what?

This sermon unpacks what it means to be born again — not just in a "label" sense, but in a real, transformative, Spirit-filled way. It's about understanding that salvation isn't just a one-time ticket — it's the gateway to an entirely new life.

### Recap: The Chain of Salvation

Ryan walks us through a clear chain of spiritual events:

- We are sinners.
- Before Jesus, sin required atonement — sacrifices, rituals, and behavior to cover guilt.
- Jesus came as the ultimate atonement, offering Himself as the perfect, once-for-all sacrifice.
- By believing in Jesus, we are justified — made right, declared righteous.
- And then — we receive the Holy Spirit.
- This sets up today's core topic: what happens when we receive the Spirit?

## **Who Is the Holy Spirit?**

Ryan reminds us that the Holy Spirit is not an "it" but a who — the third person of the Trinity, present at creation (Genesis 1:1-2) and promised by Jesus (John 14:15-19) as our Advocate and Helper.

When you believe in Jesus, the Spirit comes to dwell within you. This is what Jesus means when He says you must be "born again" (John 3:3-8) — born of the Spirit, into a new spiritual life.

## **Receiving the Spirit**

Ryan carefully explains that receiving the Spirit is not a formulaic or identical experience for everyone:

For some, it's dramatic — like the Acts 2 Pentecost moment with wind and fire. For others, it's gentle — like the Spirit descending like a dove at Jesus' baptism. Sometimes, it's a slow unfolding over years, as you submit more areas of your life to God.

He shares vulnerably about his own journey: coming to faith in high school, wandering, recommitting, and realizing (much later) that the Holy Spirit had been transforming him all along.

The Spirit is not a “puppet master” — He is a companion, a guide, an advocate, and a transformer.

### **Key Scripture Highlights**

- Acts 2:38 — Repent, be baptized, and receive the Holy Spirit.
- John 14:15-19 — Jesus promises the Advocate, the Spirit of truth, to dwell in believers.
- Galatians 3:2 — We receive the Spirit not by law, but by believing in Christ.
- Ephesians 1:13-14 — The Spirit is God's seal, marking us as His own.
- Romans 8:15-16 — The Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm we are God's children.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 — Anyone in Christ is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

### **Core Takeaways**

- ✓ Being born again means receiving a new life — one that is spiritual, eternal, and transformational.
- ✓ The Holy Spirit's presence is not always flashy or dramatic — but He is always working.
- ✓ Transformation comes as we submit to the Spirit — giving up old patterns, old dreams, and letting God shape us into His image.
- ✓ No matter your past (and Ryan was honest about his!), God's grace can make you new.

### **Dig Deeper Questions**

- What misunderstandings or assumptions have you had about the Holy Spirit's work in your life?
- How do you personally relate to the idea of being “born again”? Does it feel familiar or foreign?
- What areas of your life need fresh submission to the Holy Spirit's transforming work?

- How can you recognize and celebrate the quiet, steady ways the Spirit has been at work over time?
- Where might God be changing your gifts or calling, like He did with Ryan (moving from music to pastoring), and how can you embrace that change?

### **Recommended Next Steps**

- ✓ Read John 3 carefully and reflect on Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.
- ✓ Read Romans 8 — especially focusing on the role of the Spirit in our daily lives.
- ✓ Engage with We Believe (Church of God, Anderson resource) on salvation, the Spirit, and new life.
- ✓ Journal your own testimony: where have you seen the Spirit at work, even if you didn't recognize Him at the time?
- ✓ Pray: ask God to help you submit more fully to His Spirit's guidance and transformation.

### **Final Thought**

Ryan closed by reminding us that new life has begun. Being born again isn't just a label — it's a lived reality.

Even if you don't feel the wind or see the fire, trust: the Spirit is with you, shaping you, loving you, and walking alongside you.

This is the beauty of Christian life: you are not who you were. You are new.

### **Small Group Questions**

- What does it mean to be "born again," and why is it necessary for salvation?  
 Read John 3:1-8 — How does Jesus explain this concept to Nicodemus?
- How does the Holy Spirit work in bringing about new birth and transformation in our lives?  
 Read Titus 3:4-7 — What role does the Spirit play in salvation and renewal?
- How can we tell the difference between religious activity and genuine spiritual rebirth?  
 Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 — What are signs of the "new creation" in someone's life?
- What has your own experience of spiritual rebirth looked like, and how has it changed you?
- How can we help others understand their need for new birth without coming across as judgmental or pushy?