

John 3:11-21

"Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Inauthentic Christianity

There is a lake that my son and I frequent which has a unique characteristic, it supports a floating island. Mostly made of marsh with a few small bushes, this island remains in place by the root system of the plants, there is little solid ground beneath.

This island reminds me of much of what is called "Christianity" today. There is a measure of activity and resemblance of life, however there is no real foundation. This inauthentic Christianity, though claiming Christ, does not hold to the basic prerequisite mentioned by Jesus himself: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) Without new birth, there can be no fellowship with God and no true, spiritual foundation for life and worship.

So what does it mean to be born again you may ask? Jesus gave the answer Himself: "I tell you the truth, no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."(John 3 NIV). Jesus declared that there is a part of man called "spirit" that must be "born", even as the physical part of man has been born.

This birth takes place when a person believes what God says about himself or herself; that they are separated from God because of sin: "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19 NIV). Then, upon accepting God's verdict about personal sin, believes what God has done for him or her: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16 NIV)

This expresses of belief involves a repentant heart and a firm confidence that Jesus died on the cross to take the man's judgement for sin upon himself, and rose from the grave to offer true everlasting life: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18).

Inauthentic Christianity has been described as "a style of Christianity based more on external methods than on internal change, an attempt at godliness that lacks the power." It is religion without relationship to God, an island of activity, adrift on the sea of human preferences and purposes, trusting in human effort and personal goodness. It is void of the sure and true foundation of Jesus, and ignores the very Word of God: "For no-one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:11 NIV).

The storm will some day come and this island will be no more. Be sure of the foundation of your life.

What is my response:
