

THE BORN AGAIN EXPERIENCE



There is an old saying that goes like this:

“Those who are born once will die twice and those who are born twice will die only once.”

Man is a tripartite being, which means we consist of three components: the body, soul and spirit. What is death? Death is simply the cessation of Life. Our **First Death** occurs when we stop breathing, that is, the air which brings life to our body is gone. When this happens, our soul together with our spirit, leaves our body. What is the **Second Death**? Our Second Death occurs when our spirit leaves our soul. This will only happen when we have a wicked soul. All wicked souls will be burnt and destroyed in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:6,14) — *“the soul that sinneth, it shall die”* (Ezek.18:4). Then our spirit that leaves our soul will return to God where it originates.

So the key here is not having a wicked or sinful soul. Our spirit cannot leave our soul when it has an Eternal Life – that is, a Life that came from God which quickened our spirit and transformed our soul. During the fall of man, this Life was cut off which resulted in our spirit being deadened and our soul being darkened. Now if this Life will return and will quicken our spirit, we will have Eternal Life and it will transform our soul from sinful to holy. When this Life is in our soul, our spirit cannot leave it and our soul cannot be a wicked soul for it will transform it. Our soul which contains this Life will return to God together with our spirit. This way, we cannot experience the Second Death.

So the trillion-dollar question is: **How can we have a soul that is not wicked?** How can we have Eternal Life? Does doing good to others will give us a “good soul”? Does doing all the commandments

can give us an immortal soul? Does accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior by confessing it with our mouth just like what many denominational Christians are doing today will give us Eternal Life?

Different Ways for our Soul to be Saved as taught by many Denominational Churches

We all wanted to be saved. I think, no person would want for his/her soul to be annihilated in the Lake of Fire. Therefore, I think it is safe to assume that all of us do not want to experience the Second Death. And because of this, men had proposed many ways in order for our soul to be saved. And they all claim that these are the Biblical and true ways. Here are some of the well-known ways as proposed by men:

1. Do good things to your neighbors and don't do bad things as long as you live

First of all, no man is good, only God alone is good (Mark 10:18, Luke 18:19). Therefore, no one of us can be good unless God is in us. So even if you will do "good" works all your life, unless God is in you, those "good" works are just filthy rags (Isa. 64.6). And according to our Lord in Matthew 7:22-23:

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

So good works cannot definitely save you. In order for us to have a good soul, we must possess God Who alone is good.

2. Do all the Commandments that are written in the Bible

One time, a high school friend of mine who is a member of the Seventh Adventist Church told me that in order for us to be saved, we should all do the commandments of God especially the fourth one which states that: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). She further elaborates that unless we do this, we will not be saved. Well, according to the Bible, there is a man who has kept all the commandments of God since he was young but is still not saved. Mathew 19:16-24 described him as a young man. Mark 10:17-25 described him as a rich man while Luke 18:18-25 described him as a ruler. So we will call him the Rich Young Ruler.

This rich young ruler came to our Lord one day asking Him how he can have Eternal Life. Our Lord told Him that he should keep all the commandments. The rich young ruler then told our Lord that he has kept all of the commandments ever since he is a youth (Mark 10:20) still, he knew that he has no Eternal Life yet. Our Lord knows this, and He also knew that no one is saved by the keeping of the Law and no one is justified by obeying the Law (Rom. 3:20, Gal. 2:16). Therefore, He told the rich young ruler to sell all his possession and to follow Him of which the rich young ruler cannot do.

So we are given here an example of which doing all the commandments of God cannot save a person.

3. Confessing and accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

During my college days, I am a leader of a student organization called the "Campus Crusade for Christ" which aims to introduce our Lord Jesus Christ to any individual who would want to accept Him as their Lord and Savior. We would approach a student and make him/her realized through some Bible verses that he/she is a sinner and that he/she needs a Savior to save him/her. After this student realized that he/she is a sinner, we would recite a prayer of accepting the Lord Jesus as his/her personal Lord and Savior of which this student would repeat the prayer after us. This is the prayer:

"Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving me of my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be."

After praying, we will then congratulate the student that he/she is now saved. And just like that, his/her soul will not be annihilated anymore in the Lake of Fire! We call it soul-winning.

But is this really that simple?

This is also the teaching of most of the denominational Christian Churches today – that you can be saved by reciting this prayer and confessing and accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. We can see them doing this on television like the 700 Club Asia, Jesus is Lord Movement and most of the Born Again Christian denomination channels.

The prayer is actually a good prayer. But does it guarantee us of Eternal Life? Does believing or confessing Jesus to be our Lord and Savior will save us? Remember, the devils also believed and recognized our Lord Jesus Christ to be the Lord and Savior! In Matthew 8:29, the demons cry out to Jesus, *"What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"* And in Mark 1:24, a demon says to Jesus, *"Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One of God."* These phrases *"Son of God"* and *"Holy One of God"* clearly ascribe Lordship to Jesus. They believe and they recognized that Jesus is Lord and Savior. This is even clearer when you see what the demons say what the Lord Jesus can do: "torment us" and "destroy us." The devil knows and confesses also that the Lord Jesus is able to torment and destroy them. Thus, believing and confessing that Jesus is Lord and Savior does not guarantee us of salvation.

How about accepting Jesus to be our Lord and Savior? Well, if accepting Jesus to you only means reciting that prayer and accepting Him by mouth, it will also not give you Eternal Life. No one can accept our Lord except He accepted us first (John 3:27). Remember, there will be people who will not be accepted by the Lord even if they have confessed, proclaimed and shouted the Name of the Lord to be their Lord and Savior, still, they are not saved (Matthew 7:22-23).

Now, granting that you have been also accepted by our Lord, does accepting Him through prayer or through the mouth can guarantee you now that you are saved? The answer to this question is still a

big **"NO"**. If having an Eternal Life will be this simple, then the Lord should have not told us that we need to be born again (John 3:7). And He emphasized that it is a **MUST** "*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye **MUST** be born again.*" (John 3:7)

So just confessing and accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior will not save you.

4. You need to join our church in order to be saved.

This is the most foolish way among all that were mentioned. Some churches named their church as "*The Church of God*" "*The Born-Again Church*" "*Iglesia ni Kristo*" "*The Bride of Christ*" "*The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ*" "*The Church of the Saint*" "*The Church of God in Heaven*" and many more to attract believers. They created these "beautiful" and Biblical names from the Bible and backed it with Bible verses to support their claims that their church is the true church of God and only the members of it will be saved. So they will use these names to attract people to be a member of their church. What sheer foolishness.

Anyone can create beautiful and Biblical names for their church, even Satan can do this. There are many churches that have Biblical names but that doesn't make them the one true church. Salvation is never and will never be through church names and membership to these group will never save your soul. The Church is not a group, organization or building. They are the "called-out" people from these groups and denominations. And the Name that they bear is not an external and a literal one, their Name is the attributes and the Character of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. (For further details about what is a Name, kindly read the article entitled "What Will Be Our New Name").

5. You need to be Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved.

All saved people needs to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, **BUT not all that were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ are saved**. See the difference? Therefore, it should be clear to us that baptism in the name of our Lord cannot save us. If it guarantees us of our salvation, then all that were baptized should have been saved. And if it can save us, then what we need to do to save other people is just to baptize them in the name of our Lord.

We were not baptized because we wanted to be saved, no sir! Baptism cannot save you. Even if how many baptisms you will undergo, it cannot save you. Instead, we were baptized because all saved people needs to be baptized. Wanting to be baptized is just one of the manifestation that the Word of God is growing in you. However, as what I have said, not everyone who wanted to be baptized or has been baptized are saved. Just like not everyone who says they are Christians are actually Christians.

Therefore, Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ will not save us.

6. You need to believe in the Message of the Prophet William M. Branham in order to be saved.

This is pure hogwash. This is what has been propagated by some Endtime Message Believers who are Branham fanatic. Believing in the message will not save you. You must follow the message and come to the Word. It is the Word that will save you.

THE RIGHT WAY

There is an old Tagalog saying that goes like these:

"Marami ang nagsasabi na ang kaligtasan ay madaling makuha. Bago maniwala magisip-isp ka muna. Marami ang namamatay sa maling akala."

(Many says that salvation is easy to get. Before you believe, think first. Many have died for wrong beliefs.)

In opposition of the many ways that men have proposed for the salvation of our soul, the Bible had only given us **ONE WAY** to save us from the Lake of Fire. And every person who wanted to be saved should know this Way. If it's about the salvation of your soul, you should do everything to have It and you must make sure that indeed what you are believing is the true Way. John 14:6 says:

*"Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life**: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

So if our Lord Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life that can give us all our salvation, the next question is: **How can we have Him?** We have known that just by confessing or accepting Him as our Lord and Savior through a prayer does not guarantee us of our salvation. What does **"Accepting the Lord"** really means?

Just like us, there is also one person in Bible who knew how important it is to be saved. And just like us, he wanted also to be saved and he wanted to know how he can have it. And he made the right decision of going to the Lord Jesus to asked about it. His name is Nicodemus.

"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN"

John 3:1-2 "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Nicodemus was not just a common man; he is a Pharisee – a priest of a religious sect within Judaism that time that teaches that all Jews should observe all the laws written in the Torah. And he is not just a mere priest, verse 1 said that he is *"a ruler of the Jew"* which means that he held a high position among all the other as a leader. For better understanding, if we will compare it in today's Christianity,

Nicodemus is like a priest of the Roman Catholic Church. But not just a priest. He is either an Arch Bishop or a Cardinal in order to be called "*a ruler of the Jew*".

Now, this ruler of the Jew came to the Lord to ask Him about salvation. Imagine, he is a ruler of the Jew who taught the people about the Scriptures but he himself doesn't know how he can be saved! And to add further conflict to this, he even looked for answers to our Lord Who is a considered enemy of their sect! Do you have now a picture of what's going on here? In this action of Nicodemus, two things are at stake: First is his reputation as the ruler of the Jews and second is his career as a Priest of their sect. Once people will know that he does not even know how he can be saved, people will not believe him anymore every time he teaches. And if a member of their sect will know that he is asking advice from our Lord, he will be prone to be kicked out from his position and his career.

Now, let's ponder upon this for a while. Are we like Nicodemus who is willing to put his reputation, career, job, friends, family or business at risk for this thing called Salvation? We better be. Just like what Mark 8:36 says:

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Your soul is more important than this whole world my friend. It would be so foolish of you if you will choose to have the whole world for a short time and suffer later for a long period in the Lake of Fire than giving up this world today and spending eternity without suffering later. It's your choice.

But we can say also that Nicodemus is not putting everything at stake here. Knowing that he might lose his reputation and career by approaching our Lord, according to verse 2, he came to our Lord by night! He is being cautious so that no one might see him.

Now, seeing this situation, that a priest with a position approached Him at night will only mean that there is an urgency or emergency on the matter. Our Lord knows this urgency. He knows the heart of every man. He is the discerner of the heart (Matt. 9:4). So even if Nicodemus is still saying the "flowering words" of introduction in verse 2, before he can even ask his question, the Lord had already seen his heart and had given him the answer in verse 3:

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Based on this answer of the Lord, we know that the question in Nicodemus' heart is: ***How can a man see the kingdom of God?*** Or simply: ***How can my soul be saved and see it?*** And Nicodemus affirms on verse 4 this by saying:

"Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

The given answer by the Lord for our soul to be saved is for us to be "**born again**" or to be "**re-born**." It is not just believing, confessing or accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we need to be born again. And being born again is not a group, denomination or the name of a church. It is both an experience and a journey. It has stages. Just like Nicodemus, I also didn't get what being born again means until my first child Von Elkhachee was born.

STAGES OF THE BORN AGAIN EXPERIENCE

Now, in order to understand what being born again means, we will again use the typology approach – studying first the natural for they are the types and shadows of the Spiritual (1 Cor. 15:46). We will then look at the natural birth to understand what spiritual birth is.

Stage 1: Conception

The first stage of natural birth is Conception. Conception is the event on which the mature egg cell of a female is fertilized by the sperm cell of the male and they combined as one cell called the "**Zygote**". Requirements for this to happen is a mature egg cell and a sperm cell.

During this stage, no signs or symptoms can usually be found. The mother may not usually know that she is pregnant. Most mother will only suspect that they are pregnant only after about 3 to 4 weeks from her last menstruation period when she will find out that she missed her period. She will then usually buy a pregnancy test kit to confirm her suspicion. And when the kit says it's positive, the mother will then usually be filled with so much joy that she can't contain it with her.

I remember when my wife Sarah first broke to me the news that she is pregnant with our first child. She is at our house at that time and has just finished the 3 pregnancy test – all were positive. I was in the office having a meeting with some researchers when she called me that she is pregnant. I was so overjoyed that I jumped on my seat and other researchers congratulate me for being a father. I can't really contain the joy that time knowing that we have waited for our first child for about 3 long years.

Same with our spiritual birth. The first requirement for us to experience being born again is to have an egg cell within us. This egg cell is called the seed of God that is within us (Matt. 13:37-43, Gal. 3:29). And there are two kinds of seeds mentioned by our Lord in Matthew 13 and in Genesis 3:15 – the good seed who are His children (the sheep, the wheat, seed of God) and the bad seed who are the children of the wicked one (the goats, the tares, serpent's seed) (Matt. 13:38). Therefore, there are two kinds of people in this world: those who have good seed within them and those who have the bad (Gen 3:15). In order for you to be fertilized, the requirement is for you to be a seed of God (good seed) because according to the law of reproduction, the sperm can only fertilize the egg cell which is its own kind (e.g. human to human, sheep to sheep, goat to goat, apple to apple). So in order for you to be fertilized by God, you must be a seed of God or you should be His kind (Gen. 1:11, 12, 21, 24). And you being the seed of God is determined by God alone before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4, 1 Pet.

1:2), you did not do anything to be a sheep or to be His child. It is purely according to His will before the foundation of the world (2 Pet. 1:10).

On the other hand, if you are not a seed of God, you cannot be fertilized by His Sperm which is His Word (Luke 8:11, 1 Pet. 1:23). If you are a goat or a tare, even if you will hear His Word and received It, you cannot be fertilized by It because you are not His kind and that quickening Word is only intended for the wheat or the sheep. The Word of God which is our Lord Jesus Christ (the Sperm) only came here for the sheep and not to the goats. He only died for the sheep and not for the goats (John 10:11). He is the Lamb of God and can only fertilize those who are His kind which are the sheep (John 1:29). The goats have no capacity to be fertilized by the Word. A wicked seed can only be fertilized by a wicked seed also. That's why they cannot truly accept our Lord. True acceptance of the Word is when there's conception happening, which is the union of the egg cell and the sperm cell. So no matter how many times you heard someone accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior if no conception happens, there is no assurance that that someone will be saved.

Now, let's say that you have been qualified for the first requirement. You are the seed of God who has an egg cell within you. The next requirement is that the egg cell within you must be a MATURE one ready to be fertilized. If it's immature, it cannot be fertilized by the sperm. This is the reason why even if you have been listening to so many preaching of the Word of God since you were young, even if you have been born to a Christian family who goes to church 2 times a week, or even if your father is a true minister of the Lord who always told you about the Word of God, as long as that egg cell within you has not yet matured, no Sperm cell can fertilize it. The Word of God will be of no impact on you. That seed is simply not ready to receive the Word yet. Only in God's time that it can be mature enough.

Just like in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-23, that egg cell needs to be fertile for the Word to grow. It should be mature to be fertile. When that egg cell is mature enough, it will even seek for the sperm cell to fertilize it. It will even make a way for sperm to fertilize it just like a flower which gives fragrance that attracts pollinators or will look like a female insect in order to attract male insects. There is something missing in you that you wanted to be filled. You are actually hungry for that missing something in you. Like a Bride who longed for her Groom, you wanted to be whole. You will eventually feel what King David felt in Psalm 42:1-3:

"As the deer panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?"

Yes, you will long for His Word to fertilize you. And when you finally heard His Word, it is like that empty space within you had been filled! It is like that missing piece is now actually complete. When this egg cell (seed of God) within you finally meet the sperm cell (Word), they will combined and you became whole! It's like you have been quickened or revived (Job 33:4, 1 Cor. 15:45, Psalm 119:107). It has the capacity to bring life! Sometimes you will cry sometimes you will praise Him for joy when you have finally received It but you will eventually know that it is different from just feelings or emotions

which fades as time goes by. You have peace within you. No words in this world can actually define and describe it. Those that you see in televisions or in the internet rolling or climbing or people running around is not necessarily proof that they have been quickened by the Word. Although there's great joy within you like a mother who had just got pregnant, this joy brings satisfaction.

And of course, if the mother was overjoyed when she knew that she is pregnant, how much more is our Heavenly Father? And that even His servants also rejoiced *"there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth"* (Luke 15:10).

Although being conceived by the Word of God is a great experience, this is only the beginning of a born again experience. **You are not yet born at this stage.** Many have mistaken this conception stage to be the born again stage because of the wonderful feeling and experience of being conceived by the Word. **But I repeat, you are not yet born at this stage.** This is only the first stage.

Many people especially those who are already leading in serving the church, believe that they have already been born again. You may find some of these people as the one leading the Praise and Worship service every Sunday, some are even Youth leaders and some are even Pastors. They are very active in their churches. But then later after the church service, you will also find them in disco bars drinking alcohols with some of their unbeliever friends and are committing adultery and fornication. These people are not yet born again. They have only mistaken the conception stage to be a born-again experience. They will justify that they have already been baptized by the Holy Spirit because they have already experience speaking in tongues and that they are very active in the church. The truth is, speaking in tongues and church serving is not the evidence of Holy Spirit Baptism. Even unbelievers can do them. These people need to know what a true born-again experience really is.

Stage 2: Implantation

After conception, the zygote will then move down to the fallopian tube and divides into more and more cells. It reaches your uterus about 3–4 days after conception. The ball of cells attaches to the lining of your uterus is now called the "Embryo" and the attaching process is called "Implantation". It usually starts about 6 days after conception and takes about 3–4 days to be complete.

Implantation is one of the most crucial stage of pregnancy. This is because up to half of all fertilized eggs are pass out of your body when you get your period before implantation is complete. According to studies, about 45% rate of miscarriage happens during this stage. To prevent this, a strong attachment of the embryo to the Uterus is needed. Important nutrients and vitamins like Folate and Iron will help.

This is also the time when the mother starts to crave for foods. This is due to the development of the embryo turning into a fetus. It needed nutrients from the food. So the mother has this "unusual" food cravings. One sign of a healthy embryo is the food cravings of the mother. I remember when my wife

Sarah was at this stage, she would request me to buy food even at around 1 A.M. to cure her cravings for she said that she can't sleep if she can't eat those.

Just like in the natural, after you have been fertilized by the Word, your attachment to It is very important for that born again experience to happen. You should do everything to eat those necessary nutrients and vitamins to develop a strong bond. To do this, you need the nutrients of the Word. If we get the physical nutrients from the physical food that we eat, we have also our spiritual food to where we could get the spiritual nutrients, that is, the Word of God as stated in Matthew 4:4 and Deuteronomy 8:3:

*"But he answered and said, **It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**"*

Now, if a person is sick, he/she would usually refuse to eat. Also, when a person is sick spiritually, you will have a hard time encouraging that person to eat the Word of God. So whenever we see a person who does not want to attend church or refuse to read the Bible, keep in mind that that person is spiritually sick. The only way to cure it is for him/her to force himself/herself to eat in order to get those nutrients and be cured again. You can't really enjoy the Word if you are sick, it will taste bitter to you. I remember when I was young and have flu, I don't want to eat for every food that I ate taste bitter. But then my mom will do everything to force me to eat soups to nourish me again. She knew that it's the only way that I can be healed again.

The opposite is what is happening to those impregnated by the Word. They crave for food. This is actually the way of the embryo developing in you to get its needed nutrients. So after you have been conceived, you crave for more of the Word of God that sometimes, just attending church once a week is not enough. You seek for more Bible sharing and you read your Bible almost every day. There is this great hunger within you. You don't actually really care about what other people will think about you. Your family may even also do everything to stop you from attending church but what matters only to you during this time is only how to satisfy that cravings and hunger. That's why you should be prepared for this time. Because this is the time when most of your family and friends will hate you.

The best thing to do during this stage is to give in to the demands of the Word within you. The embryo within you is doing this so that you will be strong and prepared for the coming battle on the next stage.

Stage 3: Growth

After the eighth week and until birth, your developing embryo baby is now called a fetus and this stage is now called the growth stage because of the distinct growth that occurs in each week and month. This stage is divided into three periods called the trimesters.

a. First Trimester

During the first trimester (first 3 months), the fetus' main organs will be formed. It's extremely important that pregnant women do not take harmful medications. Nausea and vomiting are common during this period. The first trimester is also the period when most miscarriages and birth defects occur. During the third month of pregnancy, bones and muscles begin to grow, buds for future teeth appear, and fingers and toes grow. The intestines begin to form and the skin is almost transparent.

Just like in the physical, after you have been implanted and strongly bonded to the Word, a growth spurt will follow. You will develop "spiritual organs" necessary for your spiritual growth. You have only known few verses during this period and your understanding of the Bible is not that deep but you are actually growing. Vomiting is your response when you have eaten harmful man-made doctrines that contradict the growing Word within you. It will always reject those unbiblical doctrines and traditions.

Like in the implantation period, this period also is prone to miscarriages and spiritual birth defects that's why you should be very careful on what you are eating and you should restrain from any activities that will harm you. **What you do during this period will greatly affect your spiritual development.** Eat only the pure Word of God. It's the only food that will completely nourish you to prevent miscarriages and defects. Don't eat those which are not pure and had been tainted by the opinions of men. Restrain also from your former carnal activities, you should now live in faith and in righteousness (Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38). You need to live righteously now and stop doing sins.

The first trimester is actually the "**Battle**" period. This is where evil forces will do everything to prevent you from growing. This is also the time where most trials occur. What you need to do is to put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:11-18). If you'll do this, nothing can harm you. The Word of Life growing within you will also be the one helping you and your greatest weapon. Once you have won this battle, the second trimester is much easier.

b. Second Trimester

By the second trimester (weeks 13-27), some of the unpleasant symptoms from the first trimester may lessen or disappear as a woman's body adjusts to its changing hormone levels. Sleeping may get easier and energy levels may increase. Nausea and vomiting usually get better and go away. The fetus' hair begins to grow, the eyes begin to open and the brain is rapidly developing. Although the lungs are completely formed, they don't yet function.

As the fetus is getting bigger and a woman is gaining more pregnancy weight, a more visible baby bump appears as the uterus grows beyond a woman's pelvis. A first-time mother may feel the first fluttering movements of the fetus known as "**The Quickening**". Women who had given birth before may feel the fetus kicking. Sometime between 18 and 22 weeks, an ultrasound may reveal the sex of the baby.

The 20th week marks the halfway point of a woman's pregnancy. Doctors encourage soon to be mom to take a **"baby-moon"** — a hassle-free vacation or weekend getaway — the main purpose is to take a rest from the stress of the first trimester. A woman is generally feeling pretty good at this point, there's a lower risk of miscarriage and premature labor.

Like in the physical pregnancy, the second trimester is "heaven" for the overcomer Christians. This is when some unpleasant symptoms from the first trimester lessen due to the stronger presence of the growing Life within you. During this period, you became stronger and courageous about your faith. Even if your family will stop, you now know how to deal with them without sacrificing your hunger for the Word.

You have now adjusted to demands of the Word growing in you. By this time, you may have known and memorized many Bible verses already especially some fundamental Bible doctrines. Man-made doctrines and traditions are now of no effect to you since you have known now the difference between man-made and Biblical. You know already what to eat and not to eat.

This is also the time where a visible "bump" that can't be hidden anymore are obviously visible to the spectators due to the rapidly growing Word. This is the time that your family and friends will notice that you have already changed, you are not the same person anymore. You started to dress modestly and you start to grow your hair. Make-ups and other cosmetics cannot be seen in your face anymore. And from time to time, you will feel the movement of the Word within you. It leads you on what to do. This is actually the best time that you should enjoy these moments.

c. Third Trimester

During the third trimester as the fetus continues to grow, the mother's ankles, hands, feet and face may swell as she retains more fluids and her blood circulation slows. She will need to pee more frequently because more pressure will be placed on her bladder. Her breast will also grow due to the presence of milk.

During the eighth month of pregnancy, the fetus gains weight very quickly. Bones harden, but the skull remains soft and flexible to make delivery easier. This is also the stage where the mother's stress and discomfort may increase due to some false labor as she gets closer to her due date. It will become harder also to find a comfortable sleeping position so she will feel extremely tired.

The ninth month is the home stretch of pregnancy, and the fetus is now fully developed and is getting ready for birth.

This is an uncomfortable stage for a child of God. As the Word continues to grow in us, it demands to be nourished more in preparation for it's bursting out of our spirit.

As you approach this stage of bursting out, persecutions and tribulations continue to advance also. And just like a seed, you need to submerge yourself in the waters of the Word so that those roots and sprouts will burst out. You have now developed some milk which is the source of Life within you.

Stage 4: Birth

Just like in stage 3, this stage is also divided into 3 substages: **Water, Blood and Spirit**. During the actual childbirth, the child must undergo these final 3 substages.

a. Water

During the time of Birth, the first to burst out is the water sac or the amniotic sac. The amniotic sac is filled with clear, pale, straw-colored fluid in which the unborn baby floats and moves during development. Amniotic fluid is mainly water that surrounds the fetus.

According to our Lord in John 3:5 *"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit**, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*

Water sac represents the Word of God where we are submerged during development. So being born of water means that you came from it. Just like during water baptism, our submersion to water represents death to our old self and emerging out of it represents being born again (Rom. 6:3-5). This is the reason why every Christian in the Bible is being water baptized through emersion. It represents this significant spiritual event in our life.

So every child of God who is about to be born again will not hesitate to undergo water baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is also the example done by our Lord Himself with John in the River Jordan.

b. Blood

After the bursting of the water sac, follows the flow of the blood. This is the time where the mother pushes herself to deliver her baby. And with every push of the mother along with her baby coming out, blood came out also. It is safe to say that this is the most exhausting and painful stage.

After water baptism, next is the justification by the blood (Rom. 5:9). You are now being washed by the blood of our Lord Jesus in the cross of Calvary so that you will be declared "Not Guilty" or Justified. The payment for our sin is actually the blood of our Lord. You receive His blood during the process of giving birth. Your sins are already being forgiven so that you are now worthy of the final stage.

c. Spirit

After the baby is already out of the mother's womb, the umbilical cord that ties the mother and her baby is cut. The umbilical cord carries oxygen and nutrients from the placenta into the baby's bloodstream. When it is cut, the baby can no longer get its oxygen and nutrients from the mother's placenta. The baby's lungs should function to inhale oxygen. This is the reason why doctors tend to slap the baby's butt to force the baby to cry. By this, air may enter its lungs to clear its airways with fluid and mucus and to enable the baby to take its first breath.

The final stage of being born again is the breathing of the Spirit of God. This is the stage where the Spirit of the Lord enters into you. **You are now born again.** This is also what the Bible calls "**Baptism of the Holy Spirit**". You are now saved. You now possess the Eternal Life that provides life to your soul. Our spirit now cannot leave our soul and our soul now cannot be called a "wicked soul" for the spirit of God who alone is good is in you now (Mark 10:18, Luke 18:19). It now possesses goodness on it.

This is what the Lord means when He told Nicodemus in John 3:6, "**...that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**" You are now born of the Spirit of God. Anyone that would like to see the Kingdom of God should experience this. Then eventually, this Spirit will grow and will be strong in us (Luke 2:40). We must also remember that according to Hebrews 4:12:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

So eventually after we have been born again, the Word will continue to burst out – next to our soul and then to our physical body transforming us completely! Praise be to God!

Conclusion

This born again experience is not yet the last stage for our spiritual growth. Just like in our physical birth, we are newborn babies before but then we grow up, became teenagers and eventually became an adult able to stand on our own. Same with our spiritual growth also. After we have been born again, we need to grow spiritually for the transformation of our soul and then eventually for the glorification of our body.

Being born in the Spirit only talks about our spirit, our soul is not yet transformed and our body is not yet glorified. And just like being born in the Spirit, the transformation of our soul also comprises different stages. But I guess, that would be for another article.

May the Lord will guide us into all truth in my prayer.