

There is a Birth...

by Carl McMurray

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12-13

This passage reveals to us that once a person “receives” Jesus, i.e. believes in Him as coming from God, there is a birth by which one becomes a child of God. It is an unusual birth, to say the least. It is a birth which is...

...not of blood. That is, it is not a natural, physical birth by which one ordinarily enters the world. It is not a birth which ties us physically, by our DNA, to other believers like being born into the Jewish race linked them to the whole Jewish family. The only ties between those born in this way are simply love and faith. It is *not* of blood. There is no natural connection. There is only the connection that one seeks by the birth itself.

...nor the will of the flesh. This birth is not something that we are drawn to by fleshly instincts. Intimacy with one of the opposite sex, hunger for food, or thirst are instincts within our fleshly selves that drive us in certain directions. When we are cold, we seek to cover ourselves. When we are too warm, we seek cooling. These are natural instincts that come from our flesh, but there is no instinct from the flesh which drives one to be born again. It is a result of reason, that is, of understanding and faith.

...nor of the will of man. The word “man” here is *andr*; not usually the general word for people, whether male or female. It is the word for a male person, a husband, a man, or a fellow. I believe that John is saying that this birth does not come from a man, any man, or is of man at all. This birth comes of God. He is the Father under consideration here and not *any* male figure. Aside from addressing the problems that people sometimes have in focusing too much attention on the one performing a baptism rather than the one being baptized, the Holy Spirit here is plainly saying that this birth has nothing to do with someone else’s intent or desire. It comes from within the one desiring to be born again. It is a natural outgrowth of receiving Jesus, i.e. of faith.

One is born again to become a child of God, not because all Christians are now of one race, nor because one is led instinctively to do it. It is not because some man has come up with this great idea, or because one is forced into it by another. One becomes a child of God by baptism when they understand their need for a Savior and have the faith within that moves them to obey. A unique birth, indeed.