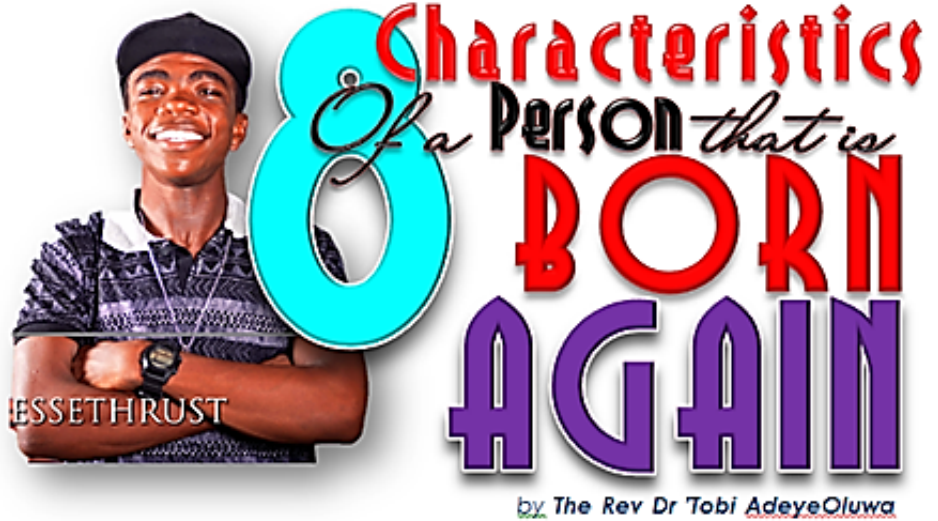


"I am a born-again Christian" is not an uncommon sentence to hear in many circles nowadays. The statement raises the expectation of hearers; they conclude that the person must be a lover of God and one who hates wrongdoing. Unfortunately, many times these expectations are not met when people move closer. Is it possible for a person to assume that he or she is born-again when it is not so? What does it really mean to be born-again, and what indicators can verify whether an individual is truly born-again?



Persons who are born-again have experienced spiritual re-birth. This re-birth happens when they make two important discoveries. First, they discover that specific actions they have carried out in the past or some part of their character or lifestyle are called 'sin' because they are displeasing to God and hinder them from having a close relationship with God; this discovery could occur as they read or hear about what God says about their way of life.

Second, they discover that although they might have made lots of efforts to be good, but no matter how hard they try, they fail to meet God's expectations by using their natural ability. This second discovery makes them realize that they need God's help and that Jesus Christ was the help sent by God to save man and link man back to God. When persons who realize and believe these things talk to God sincerely and ask Him to forgive them of their past sins in the name of Jesus Christ and also ask Him to change their human nature that likes to sin into God's nature that likes to do right, they experience an inner transformation. Quietly, God carries out an inner change that becomes visible to other people as days, weeks and months go by; you have experienced spiritual re-birth.

Here are some of the things that would happen to you when you are born again:

YOU EXPERIENCE A PERSONAL LOVE FOR GOD

When you are born again, you will experience a growing bond between you and God as if He were your personal Father; actually, He has become your Father when you believed in Jesus Christ to save you (John 1:12, Rom 8:15, Gal 4:6). You will discover that you will love to stay longer in His presence in worship, prayers and in the study of His word than you were used to.

PERSONAL LOVE FOR FELLOW BELIEVERS

He loves other children of God because they are his brethren. The love of God has been poured into your heart giving you an extra ability to love everyone (1 John 5:2, Romans 5:5).

YOU DELIGHT TO OBEY GOD COMMANDMENTS

You will love to obey God's instruction and you become more sensitive to avoid things that displease God because of your love for Him; you would no longer see God's commandments as burdensome (1 John 5:3).

YOU WOULD NOT HABITUALLY SIN

When you are born again, the nature of God has been planted into you (1 John 3:9) and you would love to do right and hate wrongdoing. An evidence of your re-birth is that you lose the capacity to continue committing sin without losing your peace of mind. He who claims to be born again and perpetually lives a life of sin is

backslidden or had never been once born-again (1 John 3:8)

YOU HAVE THE ETERNAL LIFE OF GOD IN YOU

Just like biological life keeps your body alive and functional and gives you the ability to communicate and relate with humans on earth, eternal life gives you the ability to communicate and relate with God in heaven. When you are born again, you have eternal life in you (John 3:16, 1 John 5:12). After your life on earth, you pass from death to life; a place for you in heaven is secured. While here on earth, the life of God is expressed through you; as you interact with people, they experience that life in different ways.

GOD HEARS YOUR PRAYERS

Due to the fact that God is your Father, He hears you when you talk with Him in prayer (1 John 5:15). You will begin to have instances of specific things you asked God in prayers happening exactly as you asked. These are called testimonies and they encourage you to pray more and have more confidence in praying.

YOU WOULD 'KEEP' YOURSELF

This means that you would do everything to keep yourself from sin. You would feel like a man dressed in white apparel who avoids stains by being careful. So, you tend to exercise self-control daily. You wouldn't want to live a careless life. Being aware of the ungodly environment in which you may find yourself, you act with wisdom (1 Corinthians 15:31, 9:27).

If you realize that you have not experienced the things written, then it means you have to go to God in prayers, ask him to touch you, ask him to forgive your sins. Tell him that you want to be a new person in Christ. Let him know you are willing for Jesus Christ to be your Lord. When you pray sincerely from your heart, God will not ignore your prayers. He will respond to you and give you the power to become a child of God (John 1:12).



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