

*Thankful
For My*

B.A.

Degree



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Newport, Tennessee
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Take as many copies as you need;
Pray over as many copies as you take;
Distribute as many copies as you pray
over!

I'M THANKFUL FOR MY B.A. DEGREE

(John 3:1) - There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

(John 3:2) - The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are The Teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that You do, except God be with Him".

(John 3:3) - Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

. . .

(John 3:7) - "Don't be amazed that I said to you: You must be born again.

. . .

(John 3:14) - "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must The Son of Man be lifted up:

(John 3:15) - "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

(John 3:16) - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

If you're only born once, you will die twice; But if you are born twice, you will only die once. If you are physically born - but not spiritually - you will die someday a physical death - and then comes the spiritual death - and eternal death! If you are born physically and spiritually, you might someday die physical death, but will be translated into the Presence of Almighty

God.

The "second death" has No Fear for the Christian.

Nicodemus came to Jesus one night and asked Him point blank what He meant when He said, "you must be born again". He didn't understand. He said, "Lord, I'm a full grown man; how can I enter the second time into my mother's womb and be born again?"

Jesus told him (in so many words), "Even if you could do that physically; you would still need to be born again - spiritually".

Jesus was saying that Nicodemus had the physical birth, but he needed the spiritual birth.

Jesus didn't take time to explain all the minute details of the New Birth; and there are some things we still don't

understand - but the New Birth does not have to be understood to be experienced.

I don't understand how God operates to keep the sun, moon, and stars, and universe moving; but I certainly do enjoy the sunrises and the sunsets; and beautiful night starry skies.

We might not understand how The Spirit saves us; but we can certainly enjoy the benefits of being saved!

I. THE MEANING OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

A. IT IS NOT REFORMATION.

You might know that drinking or gambling is not good for you; And so, you want to turn over a new leaf. That's good, but that's not salvation.

Giving up some of the sins of our life

is good; and that might get you "on the road to Salvation" but it does not automatically mean that we have been saved.

A man owned a well that had water that was cool and abundant; but it was poisoned. He fixed it up by painting the pump and bought a new bucket and rope! But that didn't take the poison from the water. It would still make you sick or even kill you when you drank it. You can reform and clean up your act all you want; But your sin is keeping you from God; and your sin must be forgiven if you ever want to be with or even see Jesus in Heaven.

Reformation will make you a better citizen, but it will not take you to Heaven. Reformation does not open the gates to heaven; Only regeneration does that.

Instead of working from the outside to clean up our lives; We must let God work

on the inside and clean us up - then the outward cleansing process begins and has more meaning.

B. IT IS NOT THE ENVIRONMENT.

Oh surely, having cleaner and more pure companions will help us; sure, a better environment will do us good; but it is not Salvation. The trouble is in the heart where sin is lurking. If it were possible, if you could put a sinner in Heaven itself - that would not automatically make him a Saint.

Take a broken watch and hang it up beside all the Rolexes and Swiss Diamond Movements in the world; and that will not make it start working again.

The lost soul has to have a touch from the Master's Hand to be saved. Jesus did not tell Nicodemus to "reform himself", or "turn over a new leaf"; no; He told him to

receive the B.A. degree.

C. IT IS NOT BAPTISM.

Let's get the order correct: the New Birth comes first; then the person is ready to obey Christ by following Him in Believer's Baptism. I could baptize you in every river, stream, creek, pond and puddle of water in the world and that still would not be Salvation to you.

D. IT IS NOT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

The simple act of joining a Church does not mean automatically that that good act makes a person into a Christian!

Nicodemus held a high position in the "church" of that day; but Jesus told him, it wasn't enough. He had to have the B.A. Degree - he had to be Born Again.

E. IT IS AN INNER EXPERIENCE OF

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

It is an inner transformation, not an outer form. It is cleansing of the heart; not simply whitewashing the walls.

An automobile that is not running does not need washing or a new paint job; it needs a mechanic to go into the engine and tear out the old parts and put new stuff in and get it running again.

I don't understand how eating food gives us bone and muscle and hair and skin and blood and brain cells, but I'm not going to sit around starving until I figure it out.

I know a few things about electricity, but there's plenty I do not understand; but I'm not going to sit around in the dark until I figure it out.

All the wisdom in the world; all the money in the world; all the stuff this world

can give can never purchase the New Birth; but without it, a man is forever lost and doomed to hell.

I. THE MEANING OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

II. THE NECESSITY OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

Because the soul is damned in its original state.

Man was made in God's image; but that image was marred and lost by Adam's sin.

Two men were seated in a rail car; And the conductor came in and asked them to go to another car. "why", they ask, "what's wrong with this car?" "Ain't nothing wrong with this car", the conductor said, "except it ain't hooked up to anything and ain't going nowhere".

Are you coupled to sin? It will take

you no place but to hell. Are you coupled to Christ through the new birth? It will take you to heaven.

Because it is the only way to heaven!

A ferry operator was taking a learned professor across a river. "Do you know anything about astronomy?" the professor asked. "No", said the ferry operator. "Then $\frac{1}{4}$ of your life has been wasted".

"By the way", he continued, "Do you know anything about physics?" "No", said the man. "Then $\frac{1}{2}$ of your life has been wasted".

About that time the ferry struck a rock and began to sink; and the operator asked the professor, "Do you know anything about swimming?" "No!" cried the professor. "Then, the operator said sadly, "All of your life has been wasted!"

Knowing all the knowledge in the world will not amount to a hill of beans when we stand before The One who died for us. Nothing will count when Jesus returns except the B. A. Degree.

I. THE MEANING OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

II. THE NECESSITY OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

III. THE METHOD OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

A. THE LOST SOUL MUST EARNESTLY DESIRE IT.

A man has to "get lost" before he can be saved. The drowning man must know he is drowning before he calls out for the life-guard.

B. THE LOST SOUL MUST SURRENDER FULLY TO CHRIST!

Trust Jesus completely and confess Him publicly because you can no more save yourself than you can blow out the sun.

The Halifax River flows SE between mainland Florida and Daytona Beach; but when the tide comes in, it flows backward. So it is with men who flow abundantly in the wrong direction! But when the tides of Jesus come sweeping into that lost soul; it begins to flow in the opposite direction.

C. THE LOST SOUL MUST ALLOW GOD TO WORK SALVATION IN HIM

A soldier distinguished himself in battle, and the king awarded him with a very expensive golden chalice. "I can't take that", the soldier said, "I'm just a soldier; and that is too great a gift for me to receive". "Yes", said the king; "but it is not too great a gift for me to give".

The B.A. Degree is too wonderful for us to receive; but it is not too great for God to grant!

I. THE MEANING OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

II. THE NECESSITY OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

III. THE METHOD OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

IV. THE EVIDENCES OF THE B.A. DEGREE.

A. THE PERSON OF CHRIST IS NEW.

Jesus is no longer a far-off vague figure; He becomes our best friend; always by our side; always making His presence felt.

B. THE MEANING OF THE BIBLE IS NEW.

The Bible is no longer a dry, dead, hard to understand book - but a vital, friendly, Love Letter from Jesus to you.

How you feel towards others becomes a new experience.

C. LIFE DIRECTION BECOMES NEW.

Hurricane Lenny came in from the west to the east, instead of the way it was supposed to happen. Because of that, it was nicknamed "Wrong Way Lenny". They had built their structures to protect from hurricanes from the east, but this one was from the wrong direction. It formed in the Caribbean in November, 1999 and tracked out East to do extensive damage to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Nicodemus was going in the wrong direction; but later, we see him "stepping up to the plate" by taking the body of Jesus down from the cross.

You are not always going to have a perfect life; but the general trend will always be upward toward Jesus Christ.

The Jordan river flows in a meandering path that traverses 120 miles in the 40 to 50 miles of its valley. It flows North and South, East and West, and sometimes even goes around in circles as it meanders along; but its general direction is from North to South.

Although you will sometimes meander from side to side, and sometimes wobble on the shaft, your direction will always generally be from the start: Calvary to the finish: Heaven.

D. THOUGHT PROCESSES ARE NEW.

The sinner faces death with fear and trembling because he does not know what he is facing. He is taking a step into the dark about which he knows nothing. However, the Believer can face death rejoicing knowing that he has a Savior waiting for him.

The believer knows that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, and the door of that awful place is forever closed to that believer!

At the old Ellis Island reception Center for immigrants, the people would come in after a long voyage and have their papers checked; then be released to go to the "kissing post". It was there that they met and hugged and kissed their loved ones from whom they had been separated for so long. Tears flowed and laughter rang out

from reunion after reunion at that "kissing post".

That is what heaven will be like - if you have the B. A. - the Born Again degree!

Everybody can have that degree; it is attained by confessing the sins and accepting The Messiahship of The Lord Jesus!

God bless you as you consider that choice to serve Jesus; and come to the conclusion that it just makes good sense to receive Him as your Lord and Savior.

Let me know if I can be of service to you in making that huge decision!

Tom Mooty; Newport, TN (2025)

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