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Long ago, the seed of God was planted in the womb of a young Jewish girl. The child conceived was God incarnate. If you want to know what God is like, look at His Son. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us, fruit of the seed of God uniting with humanity. He came to be our Savior.

In 1 John 3:9 we read; "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep sinning because he has been born of God." The Greek word for "seed" is "sperma". In human reproduction, all the DNA of an individual is contained in that one seed. It is joined with all the DNA of another individual to form a new person. That person's identity is established by that actual, factual, physical relationship. That new individual has the DNA of his or her parents.

John says in his epistle that the one who has been "born of God" cannot practice sin. "God's seed abides in him!" He has God's "DNA". That's his identity, for he has been "born again". Jesus told Nicodemus "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) This new birth was by means of the Spirit of God, the same Spirit that overshadowed Mary when she conceived. Jesus declared, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. You must be born again." (John 3:8)

One of the most powerful longings in the human heart is to know our identity. Who am I? Am I important? Am I loved? My identity is established by relationships, mostly by my birth parents, who gave me my DNA and my last name. That's who I am in the flesh. However, Jesus said I have been "born again" from above, by the Spirit. John declares, "God's seed abides in" me! The seed of a flower contains the very life of the plant; all the codes and properties needed to form a new plant are contained in that tiny seed. Nothing is missing. It's all there. It just needs to be put in the ground and watered, and its life and identity as a flower will burst out of the ground. (And if you have a seed lying around and you don't know what it is, just plant it and it will soon show you its identity.) I don't need something more to be added to what I received from God. I received Christ in all His fullness. I have been born again. God's seed abides in me. He literally is my Father. "In him (Christ) the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily . . . And ye are complete in him." (Col. 2:9, 10) That is why Peter blessed God, giving Him thanks, because "He has caused us to be born again to a living hope," (1 Peter 1:3) and because God



"according to his divine power has given unto us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3).

So now, I can choose to live according to the old DNA I received through Adam, or I can live according to the new DNA I received from God, having been born again by His Spirit. It isn't just a human wish (based upon the strength of my own desire), it is a living hope (based on the strength of God's declaration of truth). Paul speaks of his own experience as the pattern for my own: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:20)

This Christmas, I am celebrating not only Christ's birth but also my own rebirth in him. Christ was born of Mary that God might be with us and give his life for us. The Spirit imparts a new life, a new seed, a new DNA to all who believe in Jesus. We have been born again! We have the "seed" of God abiding in us. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17)

It has been a while since I last wrote. Much has taken place during this past year. During the past school year, I was meeting twice a week with Hispanic adults who wanted to learn English. These ESL centers have been and continue to be a very effective means to sow the seed of the gospel in the heart of hundreds of people since the beginning of this ministry

six years ago. On Monday nights, I hold a class in my Dual Language 6th grade classroom at Highlands Middle School. On Wednesday nights, I participate in the outreach ministry of Bethel Church in Prosser.



Six years ago, the ESL center at Bethel was started with Mark and Cindy Little and a tremendous team of volunteers. We have seen God grow and expand this ministry beyond anything we imagined. From a class of five students that first night, there are today four ESL classes, a children's ministry, two

citizenship classes and a class to teach Spanish. Dinner is served at each meeting, provided by different small groups from the church. It is running so smoothly, with total ownership by the church, with vision and enthusiasm. I knew in my heart it was time to move on and start over again. So, with joy and thanksgiving, I released the ministry to them, and I am praying about a new place to begin.

There is always the need and tug to return to Benton City, where I live and where the first ESL class began. There are also other opportunities possible in Hispanic ministries starting up in our area. Please continue to pray for me as I seek God's direction.

Have a wonderful Christmas season. We are

Yours for Souls,
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