

## "BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT."

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*Question.*--In DAWN, Vol. I., p. 277, and again in the WATCH TOWER, January 1, 1905, considerable has been said respecting the new birth, discussed by our Lord with Nicodemus, but we do not find a particular comment upon our Lord's statement, "Except a man be born of water and the spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Will you kindly give us a word on this statement--what it imports?

*Answer.*--The Lord seems to have had in mind the natural birth as a figure or illustration of the new birth. Our thought is that water is here used, as frequently elsewhere, as a symbol of the truth, and that these words signify that unless one be first begotten "by the word of truth" he cannot be born of the spirit to the new nature. ([Eph. 5:26](#).) We believe that the Word does teach a water immersion too, and that all of the Lord's people who discern this teaching would and should be glad to obey it, but we fail to see that the Lord has laid such a stress upon water immersion. One of the best evidences that he has not done so is the fact that so many Christian confessors of the past have given evidence of having been begotten of the holy Spirit and of having participated in the real baptism into Christ's death through a full consecration, and yet being ignorant of the Scripture teaching respecting water immersion they were never thus symbolically baptized. To apply the word "water" in this text to water immersion would, therefore, be to exclude from the Kingdom many of the Lord's loyal and faithful ones who have laid down their lives in his service. This fact corroborates our view, above stated, that the Lord did not mean to refer to water baptism, but to the truth which, in the quotation already referred to is mentioned as the begetting power --as primarily related, therefore, to our birth of the Spirit. **[R3601 : page 223]**