What Comes First – Faith or New Birth?

Christian Briem · John 3:8 · May 6, 2025



John 3:8

> 8 The wind blows where it will, and you hear its voice, but know not from where it comes and where it goes: thus is every one that is born of the Spirit.

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These words of the Lord Jesus (verse 8) indicate **the greatness of the mystery of new birth**. They also show that new birth is a sovereign act of God.

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to teach – and sadly, this has happened repeatedly – that new birth precedes faith. The fifth verse (John 3:5) shows – as well as 1 Peter 1:23 and James 1:18 and other passages – that new birth occurs by means of the word of God through the Holy Spirit. New birth cannot be separated from the word of God and faith: "*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*." (Romans 10:17).

The two statements in John 3, "*Except anyone be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God*" (verse 3) and "*that whosoever believes on him may not perish, but have life eternal*" (verse 16), must always go together.

Such an anomaly is not possible: that somebody is already born again but has not yet believed the gospel. **The divine order given in Ephesians 1:13** is: "*heard – believed – sealed*." God gives the right to be called children of God to those who have believed in His name (John 1:12).

Source https://thebiblestudy.site/article/what-comes-first-faith-or-new-birth/