

Finally Alive is a book about the new birth, about regeneration, about what it means to be born again. At issue is that it is undeniable that vast numbers of professing Christians live in ways that are completely at odds with the faith they profess. But the New Testament does not allow us to move from a profession of faith to the label *born again*. Instead, it "moves from the absolute certainty that the new birth radically changes people, to the observation that many professing Christians are indeed not radically changed, to the conclusion that they are not born again. "Born Again" is a term Christians need to understand and protect.

At least three reasons are given for this book. First, so we can understand what God intends when the Bible uses this language of the new birth; second, to help followers of Christ know what happened to them when they were converted; and third, to serve as a possible means for those who do not yet believe to come to faith in Christ.

Piper asks five important questions. "What is the new birth?" "Why must we be born again?" Then "How does the new birth come about?" and "What are the effects of the new birth?" concluding with "How can we help others be born again?" Each of these questions is answered in two, three or four short chapters, each of which can be easily read and digested in a single sitting.

Why does this all matter for Christians? Piper gives a few reasons why believers need to know what happened when they were converted. First, "When you are truly born again... your fellowship with God will be sweet, and your assurance that he is your Father will be deep." Second, "If you know what really happened to you in your new birth, you will treasure God ...and his word more highly than you ever have." This is of foundational importance to the Christian faith.

Piper's tone is gracious and compassionate throughout this book. He shows the heart of a pastor from the first page to the last. But he also shows the skill of a theologian and the passion of a prophet. I believe this is the most important book Piper has written. I cannot recommend this book too highly. I believe it is Piper's best.

Good reading,
Yours fellow bookworm