

Our “Musty” Bible

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Short words are often “long” in their meaning (e.g., *if, no, why? yes*, et al.). *Must* is such a word. Jesus said, “We **must** work the works of him that sent me” (John 9:4), indicating that which is necessary, obligatory, indispensable, required, all of which are in this small word. Let us trace a few of the many appearances of this word in the Bible.

1. Men **must** believe in God to approach Him and please Him: “He that cometh to God **must** believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him” (Heb. 11:6b). Belief in God’s existence, including trust in His promises, is the beginning point of a relationship with Him. The entire context of Hebrews 11 defines faith as obedient trust. Belief in His promises includes “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16).
2. Men **must** be born again: “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye **must** be born anew” (John 3:7). These words summarize Jesus’ earlier statement: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God!” (v. 5). Therefore, one **must** be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom—equivalent to being saved and being added to the church. The Spirit’s part in the new birth is the begetting, accomplished through His Word (Luke 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:23). This spiritual seed results in the birth of water—baptism. Jesus’ own explanation of the new birth is Mark 16:16, quoted and cited above. Jesus made no exceptions.
3. Men **must** worship God in spirit and truth: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **must** worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). *Spirit* is not a reference to the Holy Spirit, but to our human spirits. Our minds and hearts must be sincerely involved, rather than merely “going through the motions.” *Truth* refers to God’s Word (17:17). Our worship must be governed by the only source of religious authority in the Christian age—the New Testament. God does not accept whatever men choose to call “worship,” but only what He has authorized. All other “worship” is false, vain, or will worship (John 4:23; Mat. 15:9; Col. 2:23), and God rejects it, regardless of how sincerely offered.
4. Men **must** give an account of their lives: “For we **must** all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). God has given us free wills, allowing us to choose obedience or disobedience to His will. But make no mistake, no one will avoid the Judgment, at which Jesus’ Word will judge us (John 12:48)

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