

The Gospel of John: That You May Believe
The Need For a New Birth
John 3:1-21 (page 740)

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Jesus reveals the:

- **necessity for the new birth (John 3:1-3)**
 - The new birth is necessary to know God
(v 3; John 1:12-13; Gal 3:25; 4:5-7)

- **evidence of the new birth (John 3:4-8)**
 - The new birth is impossible apart from God
(v 4-7; Titus 3:4-7; Eph 2:4-10)

 - “*Born again*” has a double meaning:
“*again*” = a subsequent birth
“*from above*” = born by God’s power - spiritually

- **basis for the new birth (John 3:9-18)**
 - Repentance from our sin
(Num 21:4-7; Lk 13:3; Acts 17:30; 2 Pet 3:9)

 - Belief in Christ for eternal life
(Num 21:8-9; 3:16-18; 1 Tim 4:10)

- **danger of rejecting the new birth (John 3:19-21)**
 - Judgment for one’s sinful rejection of God’s salvation (John 3:36; Heb 9:27; 1 Pet 4:17-18)

Taking it in....

What is the difference between a religious person and a genuine Christian? What distinctions are evident of this difference in this morning’s passage? _____

What have you learned from the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus that will help you make the gospel clear to those you have opportunity to tell about Jesus? Explain. _____

Are you “born again”? Did you simply “pray a prayer”? Are you content to substitute religious activity and tradition for an intimacy with Christ? Have you had a genuine encounter with the Living Word of God, the Savior of the world? If not, come to Jesus today and believe on Him for what He has done for you. _____

Growth Group
Sermon Study Helps
John 3:1-21 (Week Seven)

(Note: This guide is to help *facilitate* discussion with your Growth Group. Use it as a *RESOURCE* for the group in discovering and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you *do not want to use* and there may be instances where the group *chooses to focus on a particular point, verse or truth*. This guide is to assist the group in growing in their relationship with Christ and the Scriptures, thus, it is not necessary to complete all of the points in the discussion guide...use this with flexibility and not as a rigid task list to get through. God's richest blessing upon you all.)

Intro:

Our passage this week is a well known and yet, very significant and important passage in the Bible, as it defines explicitly the distinction between RELIGION and REGENERATION. Religion is *man's attempts to reach God*...trying to be better, turning over a new leaf, etc. Regeneration is *God's work in reaching man*...His demonstration of love based on grace apart from any merit on our part. A religious man comes to Jesus and finds himself overwhelmed at what he is told about his need and the basis for a relationship with God. Religious people are often the most difficult to bring to Christ because they suffer from a blindness that is almost unable to be penetrated...such an example is found in John 3:1-21.

Discussion Questions:

What was the most significant thing that you learned from the passage? Why?

In these verses there are many *comparisons, contrasts and illustrations*. Identify some of those and then discuss their impact in making the point that Jesus is driving home.

Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night? What is Nicodemus' problem? Why is he confused? Do you know people like that who need Jesus?

Read John 3:16 again....*single out, identify and list the VERBS* in the verse and see if they help to clarify the truth of the gospel.

Discuss the difference between *salvation by works* and *salvation apart from works*. Clarify what it means to *BELIEVE*.

If Jesus came to save and not to condemn as vs 17-18 state, then why do you think people hate Him so much or at least stubbornly resist Him?

Read John 3:21 and Ezekiel 36:23. For whose sakes are we transformed? How does our transformation bring great glory to God? Does your life bring God glory?

Why is the wind compared to the working of the Holy Spirit? Explain. Compare Numbers 21:4-9 with the Cross of Jesus and list the ways that it points to what Jesus did for us.

Taking it to the streets....

Read John 3:21....does your lifestyle indicate that you love darkness or light? How happy would you be if God exposed all of your current practices and attitudes to the light? Does anything in you need to change? If so, what and how?

The ultimate question is: Are you BORN AGAIN? Are you just "religious" or have you had a genuine encounter with Jesus and God's Spirit?