

John 3:1–21

¹ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” ³ Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

1. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, Leader of the Jews –

* Pharisee – Sect sought distinction/praise by outward observance of rites & forms/piety: ceremonial washings/fastings/prayers/ alms giving; often rebuked by Jesus as hypocrites

* Leader of the Jews (Sanhedrin) – the great council at Jerusalem, consisting of the seventy one members – Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, elders, prominent members of the high priestly families, the high priest, the president of the assembly.

Respond - We can be tempted to make our relationship w/God based on outward religious righteousness that will separate us, cause pride/cause us to condemn others when they are not as “good” as us, and condemn ourselves when we are not “as good as we think/should be.”

2. Jesus came up with the term “born again – Jesus said” – In verses 3, 5, 7

* “Unless we are born again, we cannot see the kingdom of God”

* “Unless one is born of water and Spirit we cannot enter the kingdom of God”

* “Do not marvel that I said you must be born again.”

Respond – If Jesus said we must be born again, to see and enter the Kingdom of God, then we must be born again. If we have not, we will not. If we don’t know, we don’t know if we...

* If religion/church not teaching we must be born again, then not teaching what Jesus taught!

* Probably teaching what the Pharisees and Sadducees were teaching, “we must become like them” doing our own works of righteousness to get into the Kingdom of Heaven.

3. Jesus explained what it means to be born again – Jesus said:

* It is a requirement to see and enter into the kingdom of God

* We must be born of water AND the Spirit... Then explains what that means!!!

* That which is born of the flesh is flesh, AND that which is born of the Spirit is spirit

* Don’t marvel I said you must be born again. Then explains again what that looks like.

- Wind blows where/wishes/you hear/sound of it/can’t tell where/comes from/where it goes.

- But you can See/Hear it presence/effects - So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Respond – Do you want to see and enter the kingdom of God?

- What did Jesus say we must do? Be born again.

- Born of the water/flesh AND be born of the Spirit

- When we are born of the Spirit, we won’t be able to see the Spirit, but we will be able to hear and see the effects of the Spirit in our lives, just like the wind!

- We can know we are born again?! By the moving of the Holy Spirit in our lives!!!

¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹ Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

*** Jesus speaks from the reality of His Deity, being eternal and omnipresent.**

- We speak...We know...We have seen...Our witness

- Who came down from heaven...who is in heaven

Respond – Understand the truth about Jesus’ deity while here on earth

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

*** As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness...**

- Jesus is teaching Nicodemus from the Old Testament that he knew very well.

Respond – We need to know the teaching from the Old Testament.

Numbers 21:4–9 (NKJV) *The Bronze Serpent*

⁴ Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. ⁵ And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there is* no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.”

⁶ So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. ⁷ Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” ⁹ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

* What do you think the Bread represented? Life (Jesus)

* When the people rejected the bread God gave them, they chose? Death

* How did death come? Bitten by serpent = Death

* Moses was told to build a BRONZE serpent – This meant judgment on Death

* What happened to whoever looked at Death, judged on the pole? Lived

* Why? Because God’s word said so!

* Who lived? Whoever was bitten that looked at the serpent on the pole!

Respond – Have you been bitten by sin? What does it lead to? What do we need to do?

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

* God did not send Jesus into the world to condemn but to save!

* Who did God send his Son to, and who does he want to be saved? The World!

* How is one saved? By believing in Jesus

* What does saved mean? 1) Should not perish, 2) Have everlasting life!

Respond – Everyone can be saved from sin/death and given everlasting life!

¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

* Believe in His name – Not Condemned; He who does not believe IS condemned – Choice!
- By committing sin, we are already guilty/condemned – Therefore God/loved world...

* Jesus is the light that has come into the world to save the world

* God calls the World to come to Him through Jesus

* It is through our receiving and believing or rejecting that we make our own choice

* God’s choice for everyone is to believe in the Name of His Son Jesus, be saved from our sin, not perish, and have everlasting life, by believing by faith in His word!

Conclusion

1. Our relationship w/God can be based on outward religious righteousness that will separate us, cause pride, cause us to condemn others , and condemn ourselves when we are not “as good as we think we should be.” Or/righteousness we receive believing in Jesus!

2. We know the necessity and what it means to be born again – water/flesh, spirit/Spirit

3. Through the teaching of Jesus and the OT, We can know how to be born again!

4. Just as the serpent was Jesus was lifted up on a cross - That whoever looks upon Him, judged for our sin, His death, takes our place, we do not perish, and are given everlasting life

5. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life!

6. We can know we are born again! By seeing and hearing the moving of the Holy Spirit in our lives!!!