

Born Again ☐ What Does that Mean?

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Recently I was eating breakfast with a few of my friends. I asked one of my friends: "Would you say that you have been born again?" My friend sends email about the Bible, and even talks about praying. She thought for a moment about the question, and then said: "No, I would not say that I have been born again. I did have a spiritual awakening in college, but I would not say that I am born again." So many people today do not know what Jesus meant when He talked about being born again. Jesus explained very clearly what it means to be born again as He talked with a man named Nicodemus. Coming to Jesus at night, Nicodemus began a conversation with Jesus.

Nicodemus had some very nice things to say about Jesus. Nicodemus even believed that God was with Jesus. Of course, we know that Jesus was God. Nicodemus did not understand anything about who Jesus really was, or why He had taken flesh and walked among men. Nicodemus did not immediately recognize Jesus as God in the flesh, standing right in front of Him.

But watch how Jesus came to help Nicodemus understand the spiritual reality of new birth.



John 3:1-2, Page 1657

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"Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to

Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with the Him.'

Everyone Must Be Born Again

Nicodemus thought He had a strong relationship with God. Nicodemus even taught other people about God. But when Jesus Christ talked with Nicodemus for just a few minutes, the entire religious world of Nicodemus collapsed all around him. Jesus transformed Nicodemus from the inside out. Nicodemus experienced new birth in the Spirit of God. You may think you have a strong relationship with God, but let us sit in with Nicodemus the night he met with Jesus. I strongly urge you to open your Bible and follow along as we read through these Bible verses.

Nicodemus said very nice things about Jesus and they all sounded good. Nicodemus said that: (1) Jesus was a teacher, and called him "Rabbi;" (2) Jesus performed miraculous signs; and (3) God was with Jesus. You might be thinking that Nicodemus really understood Jesus, but Jesus told Nicodemus he could not see the kingdom of God without first being born again. You see, until you are born again, you will never know anything about Jesus and the Kingdom of God.



John 3:3, Page 1657

"Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

Unless You Are Born Again, You Cannot See the Kingdom of God.

Jesus shattered the religious world of Nicodemus with a simple

fact: no one can see the kingdom of God unless you are born again. Let me explain. You can be very religious, like Nicodemus, and never see the kingdom of God. You can recognize Jesus as a great teacher—and never see the kingdom of God. You can believe that Jesus worked miracles and great signs—and never see the kingdom of God. You can believe that Jesus was God and God was with Him—and never see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus felt confident that He knew God, and had correctly identified Jesus. But when Jesus listened to Nicodemus, and told him about new birth, Nicodemus had no idea what Jesus was talking about. Nicodemus was a religious man who had never been born again. Maybe you are too.



John 3:4, Page 1657

“Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?’”

How Can a Man Be Born When He Is Old?

Nicodemus asked a vital question, and revealed the first crack in his religious world. “How can a man be born when he is old?” This question, like his second question, reveals that Nicodemus had no inkling that Jesus was talking to him about spiritual truth. Nicodemus did not comprehend that Jesus was telling Nicodemus about being born again of the Spirit of God. Nicomedus was thinking about His mother’s womb, when Jesus was talking about being born of the Holy Spirit.



John 3:5, Page 1657

“Jesus answered, “Truly, Truly I say to you,

unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'”

Unless One Is Born of Water and the Spirit, He Cannot Enter the Kingdom of God

Listen to Jesus explain the truth of being born again of the Holy Spirit. Jesus taught that every person needs to be born twice: the first time of water (natural birth), and the second of the Spirit (Spiritual birth). Without the second birth of the Spirit, you cannot enter the kingdom of God, and you cannot even see the kingdom of God. Whenever you have a question about something, just be like Nicodemus and ask Jesus for help. Jesus listens to prayers everyday from people seeking His help. Jesus loves people and always loves to listen. So, let us keep listening to Jesus teach Nicodemus.

Jesus continued to explain this birth of the Spirit. When you are born of the flesh, you are flesh. In other words, when you came out of your mother's womb, you were human flesh with all the limits of being human. Nicodemus had no understanding of the spiritual life produced by being born of the Spirit of God. He had lived all his life of the flesh, until the day he talked with Jesus. That day, after talking with Jesus, he was born again of the Spirit of God. Jesus amazed Nicodemus. No one had ever gripped his heart like Jesus. No one had ever confronted him with the necessity of being born of the Spirit. Jesus reached into the amazement of Nicodemus and brought spiritual clarity. Jesus wanted Nicodemus to know what it means to be born again of the Holy Spirit, and Jesus wants you to be born of the Holy Spirit today.



John 3:6, Page 1657

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

That which Is Born of the Spirit Is Spirit

Jesus taught that man can be flesh or spirit. Jesus started with the expression “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” Jesus meant that when you are born of your human mother, you live your entire life with physical flesh, and on the spiritual level, you have a fleshly life. You think like a human being, and you fulfill the desires of your flesh.

Your fleshly human desires control you in all that you do. We all lived our lives in the flesh until the day Jesus calls us to be born again of the Holy Spirit.

So, in contrast to our birth in the flesh (think emerging from your mother’s womb), Jesus explained that we can be born the second time of the Holy Spirit (think emerging from the Holy Spirit as a new creature). You become a whole new person by being born of the Holy Spirit. Notice that Jesus did not say He would fix the old fleshly person. Instead, Jesus said a brand new person would be born of the Holy Spirit.



John 3:7, Page 1657

“Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

Do Not Be Amazed—You Must Be Born Again

Jesus knew that Nicodemus was amazed by Jesus telling him he must be born again. Notice that Jesus called it a “must.” In order to see the Kingdom of God, or enter the Kingdom of God, you must be born again. Jesus understands that we do not always get what He is trying to tell us. Jesus will patiently explain what He means because He loves us and wants us to understand the path to new life and salvation from sin and eternal destruction.



John 3:8, Page 1657

“The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.’”

The Wind Blows Where It Wishes

Jesus used the wind to illustrate how the Holy Spirit works in our lives. The wind blows, we feel it and see the trees move by its force. Yet, we do not see the wind, or know where it comes from or where it is going. In the same way, people born of the Holy Spirit have the Holy Spirit living with them. Inside of those believers, the Holy Spirit moves those people and unbelievers have no idea what the Holy Spirit is doing in people born of the Holy Spirit. If you have never been born of the Holy Spirit, then you will have no idea how the Holy Spirit moves people to do God’s will in their lives.

Notice too that Jesus explained that people born of the Holy Spirit act differently. People who have not been born of the the Holy Spirit will not understand the people born of the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave all new information to Nicodemus, but Nicodemus still had questions.



John 3:9, Page 1657

“Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can these things be?’”

How Can These Things Be?

Nicodemus still had a question about what it meant to be born again and born of the Holy Spirit. Maybe you have the same

question. Remember, Nicodemus was a teacher of Israel who had read and studied the Bible. Yet, Jesus told Nicodemus he must be born again. Nicodemus had to learn new spiritual truth from Jesus. Nicodemus needed to be born again. Jesus had just the right answers for Nicodemus.



John 3:10, Page 1657

“Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? ‘”

You Do Not Understand These Things?

Jesus confronted Nicodemus about his ignorance of profound spiritual truth. Nicodemus had no idea about being born again of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had just told him the truth of salvation. Jesus continued in the next few verses to explain more to Nicodemus and I invite you to read them all very carefully. Jesus emphasized the importance of faith in John 3:16 as he spoke to Nicodemus. Let us look at that verse very carefully.



John 3:16, Page 1658

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

God Loved the World

Jesus proclaimed the great love of God to Nicodemus: God loves the world. Jesus further described the love of God by giving His unique Son. Jesus meant that God had given Jesus to the

world as a free gift. Jesus was going to die for the sins of the entire world, so that the world of people just like Nicodemus would not perish, but have eternal life. Jesus emphasized here that only by faith in the gift of God could the world be saved from the death penalty of sin. Faith alone brings salvation, and that faith must be invested in the gift of God: Jesus Christ. Jesus must be lifted up on the cross so that Jesus could die for the sins of the world. He died to bring life to everyone who believes that He died for their sins, in their place on the cross. Remember the great love of the Father in sending His Son Jesus to die on the cross for your sins.



John 3:17, Page 1658

“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

God Sent Jesus To Save the World from Judgment

God started with His love for the world of people just like we are. Because the world had sinned, the world deserved to die. Yet, God loved the world so that He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Let me be more personal. Jesus died on the cross for all of my sins. He died in my place, because I deserved to die for all the sins I did in my lifetime. Notice that Jesus did not come to earth and dwell among men to be their judge. He came to be my Savior and your Savior. He saved me from perishing for my sins. I urge you to believe today that Jesus died on the cross for your sins so that you would not perish, but have eternal life with Jesus and enjoy the love of God in your life today and for all eternity.



“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

Unbelievers Are Judged Already

Jesus also brought very bad news to people who listened to His message, but rejected it. He said all the world had been judged already. So many people say that we should not judge one another, but Jesus said everyone has already been judged. Jesus meant that the whole world must believe in Him to avoid perishing for sin. The world only has one way of salvation: faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. If you reject Jesus and His message of loving salvation, then you have been judged already. Jesus loves everyone, and wants no one to perish. Now is the time to turn to Jesus for salvation. You must believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins and accept His gift of forgiveness and eternal life.

The Prayer of Salvation

You can receive eternal life right now by asking Jesus right now for forgiveness. You can receive the forgiveness right now and enjoy eternal life. If you believe the message of Jesus above, then pray this prayer to Jesus right now.

Lord Jesus, I believe I am a sinner and need your salvation.

Lord Jesus, I repent of my sins and turn to you for help.

Lord Jesus, I believe you died on the cross in my place and paid the death penalty for all my sins.

Lord Jesus, I accept your free gift of forgiveness and eternal life right now by faith alone.

Thank you Lord for being raised from the dead to live in my life forever. I accept you, Lord Jesus, into my life right now.

Amen.

Please use the contact form on the front page to let me know about your prayer for eternal life. If you prayed that prayer and meant it, Jesus promised He saved you from sin right then, and you have eternal life. I look forward to hearing from you.

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