

## THE NEW BIRTH

Text: John 3:1-8, 14-18

Things to note:

1. Nicodemus was religious – A Pharisee
2. Nicodemus was exalted in his position – A Ruler of the Jews – Not political but religious.
3. Nicodemus would have been revered by the community in his position. “If anyone is going to heaven, it’s Nicodemus.”
4. Nicodemus cared about his position in life – He came to Jesus **by night**.
5. Nicodemus could not ignore Jesus’ impact – We know You are from God.
6. Nicodemus could not ignore the manifestation of God’s presence – The miracles.
7. Nicodemus was lost, separated from God, not God’s child – “Except born again, no hope for heaven” (Jesus). Jesus was saying, “You’re going to hell when you die.”
8. Nicodemus, with all his training and study, didn’t understand - “How can a man be born again?”
9. Two Births – Water (First) and Spirit (Second) – Flesh (First) and Spirit (Second).
10. The MUST of Christ – “YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN”
11. It is a decision, not an emotion – The Spirit is like the wind, affects everything differently

- I. To understand “Born Again”, you must understand pre-fall Eden
  - A. Adam and Eve were in relationship with God – together in the garden.
  - B. They were created with free will to choose and a choice was offered. “Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” (Genesis 2:16-17) – Notice closely what God said here – “**THE DAY THAT THOU EATEST THEREOF, THOU SHALT SURELY DIE.**”
  - C. The serpent, yielding itself to Lucifer, became the vessel through which Satan would attack God’s creation. (Genesis 3:1ff)
  - D. Satan attacked by appealing to the fleshly nature of Eve.
    1. He attacked the credibility of God – “What God told you isn’t all the truth”
    2. He attacked the love of God – “If God really loved you, He’d let you eat the fruit.”
    3. He appealed to pride – “You will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
    4. He appealed to “the lust of the flesh” – It was good for food
    5. He appealed to “the lust of the eyes” – It was pleasing to the eyes
    6. He appealed to “the pride of life” – It would make her wise.
    7. He was convincing enough to invoke the fall – She did eat - Adam did eat.
  - E. Sin had immediate consequences.

1. Guilt – They knew they were naked.
  2. Shame - They sewed fig leaves together to cover their nakedness.
  3. Fear – They hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden.
- F. The seeking nature of God.
1. God came into the garden.
  2. God cried out to Adam – “Adam, where are you?” God was the initiator.
    - a. God knew where Adam was.
    - b. God knew what Adam had done.
    - c. God knew what He must do and it grieved Him.
  3. Before a person can come to God, he must first acknowledge his/her condition
- G. The defending nature of man/woman.
1. Adam – The woman **that You gave me**, she coaxed me into it. Adam blamed Eve and God.
  2. Eve – Ever blamed the serpent - The devil made me do it – It was the serpent.
  3. Personal responsibility is a necessity in true repentance and salvation.
- H. The Consequences:
1. The Serpent – Most cursed of creatures, crawl on belly and eat dust.
  2. Satan – Enmity with humanity – The Seed of a woman would bring his demise.
  3. Eve – Sorrow in life and in child rearing.
  4. Nature was cursed – No longer as productive, Thorns and thistles.
  5. Adam – Tiredness, labor, sweat, physical death.
  6. The death of a sacrifice – God clothed them with animal skins.
  7. Separation from God – God exiled them from the garden, never to return.
- I. The hope in the darkest hour – Adam named his wife Eve, “life giver.” He trusted in God’s Word, “a seed would come from the woman that would crush the head of satan.”
- J. But, going back to Genesis 2:16-17, notice God’s statement, “In the **DAY** that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt **SURELY DIE.**”
1. Adam and Eve ate the fruit.
  2. Adam and Eve were cursed.
  3. Adam and Eve did not physically die that day, in fact, Adam lived to be 930 years old.
  4. God cannot lie, so what was God speaking of when He said Adam would “surely” die that day?
    - a. Spiritual death
    - b. Death is separation from life. When life leaves the physical body, the body dies.
    - c. God is LIFE. Apart from Him, there is no life. When Adam and Eve were exiled from the garden, they were also exiled from God. By being exiled from

God, they were separated from Life. Being separated from Life, they died spiritually that day, just as God said. They were physically alive and Spiritually dead.

- K. This “separation from God” did not end with Adam.
  - a. Romans 5:12 “Wherefore as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and **DEATH** by sin, and so DEATH passed upon **all men, for all have sinned.**”
  - b. Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is **DEATH.**”
  - c. Everyone is a sinner (Romans 3:10-23), and so everyone is responsible for their own sin, just as Adam was for his. Pre-Christ, I was dead, separated from God, not because of Adam’s sin, but because of my sins. This is a universal condition and the curse is upon all, because all have sinned.

II. Going back to the story of Nicodemus.

- A. Nicodemus was physically alive and Spiritually dead.
- B. Nicodemus was on his way to hell.
- C. Jesus offered him a way of rescue – Born Again.
- D. Nicodemus didn’t understand – First mention of terminology in Scripture.
- E. Jesus described 2 births
  - a. Water – Spirit: The first birth is Water – The New birth is of God
  - b. Flesh – Spirit: The first birth is flesh and bones – The second birth is Spiritual.
- F. In the first birth, our parents put their lives in us. In the second, God puts His life into us.
- G. The New Birth is not emotional – The wind bloweth..... The wind affects everything differently. A dandelion bloom will blow for miles, but a rock will not show any movement at all. Both are equally affected by the wind. It is the same with the Holy Spirit. Some become very emotional and the move is apparent. Others are stoic, but they are equally moved and affected by the same Spirit.
- H. Nicodemus was without the Life of God. Consider with me some of Jesus’ statements:
  - a. John 10:10 “The thief cometh not but for to kill, to steal, and to destroy. I am come that you might have **LIFE**, and have it more abundantly.”
  - b. John 11:25-26 “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the **LIFE**: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and he that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.”
  - c. John 6:35 “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of **LIFE**: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.
  - d. John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the **LIFE**: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”
  - e. John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting **LIFE.**”

- f. John 3:36 “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting **LIFE**: but he that believeth not the Son shall not see LIFE, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”
- g. In all of these verses, and many more, Jesus makes it plain that He is LIFE and the provider of LIFE. If man’s malady is that he lacks life, then the answer is to go to the Source of LIFE. That is what Jesus is referring to.
- h. If a man/woman is without Christ, they are without LIFE. If they have Christ, they have LIFE. That is the simplicity of the Gospel.
- i. John 1:12-13 states it clearly concerning the new birth, “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on His name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”
  - a. The way to the new birth is by receiving God’s LIFE. Jesus is God’s LIFE. When a person receives Christ, they receive God’s LIFE. If they have God’s LIFE in them, then they are God’s sons and daughters by right of LIFE.
  - b. Interestingly, salvation is called a GIFT. When someone offers you a gift, it will only be yours when you RECEIVE it. Until then, it is just an offer. God offers to us a free GIFT. The GIFT is His Son. By receiving the GIFT, a person receives all that the GIFT embodies. In Christ is God’s LIFE. When Christ comes in, LIFE comes in, and when LIFE comes in, the person becomes God’s child because God’s life is in the person. Just as in the first birth, the parents provided the life, so in the second birth, God provides the LIFE.
  - c. How does a person RECEIVE the GIFT? Simply accept the offer. God says, “Here’s My Son.” Say, “I receive Him.” Friend, everyone who has been born of Adam is without God’s LIFE. God makes His LIFE available in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. Without Christ, you are without LIFE. With Christ, you possess LIFE. It is that simple. The choice is yours.

PRAYER OF SALVATION: “Father, I know I’m a sinner and I’m sorry. I do not want that to be the story of my life. I have violated You and hurt You by my actions. I repent of those actions and ask Your forgiveness. I also know that I am without Christ in my life and understand that without Him, I don’t have Your LIFE. I desire to have Life, and understand that when Christ comes into my life, Your LIFE comes and I will become a child of God. I desire that. I desire to be Your child. Right now, the best I know how, I receive Your gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ my LORD. I ask Jesus to come into my life as my LORD and my Savior. Now, help me daily to live for You. For the sake of Christ I pray this prayer. Amen.”

If you prayed this prayer, tell someone. Then go to the pastor of a Bible believing church and request baptism. Baptism doesn’t save you, Christ already did that, but baptism identifies you as a follower of Christ. It is your way of saying, “I am cleansed. I am new. I am God’s child. I am a follower of Jesus Christ my LORD. I want everyone to know.”