

Born Again
November 8, 2015
John 3

*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into 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 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. **John 3:1-8***

*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. **John 3:16***

WHAT NEW BIRTH MEANS

*But as many as received him, to them gave HE the power to become the sons of God, even to them that 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. **John 1:12-13***

HOW TO KNOW WHEN A CHILD IS OLD ENOUGH TO BE SAVED

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. **John 3:14-15***

Who was Nicodemus?

- Nicodemus himself was "the teacher of the Jews" and he had great respect for the Teacher from Galilee.

Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?"

John 3:10

- He was a Pharisee, which meant he lived by the strictest possible religious rules. Not all of the Pharisees were hypocrites. He came to Jesus by night, not because he was afraid of being seen, but most likely because he wanted to have a quiet uninterrupted conversation with the new Teacher "come from God."

In order to instruct Nicodemus in the basics of Salvation, our Lord used three quite different illustrations:

1. Birth (vv. 1-7).

- Our Lord began with that which was familiar, birth being a universal experience. The word translated "again" also means "from above." Though all human beings have experienced natural birth on earth, if they expect to go to Heaven, they must experience a supernatural spiritual birth from above.

- Once again, we meet with the blindness of sinners: this well-educated religious leader, Nicodemus, did not understand what the Saviour was talking about! Jesus was speaking about a spiritual birth, but Nicodemus thought only of a physical birth.
- The Spirit of God takes the Word of God and, when the sinner believes, imparts the life of God.
- Human birth involves travail (John 16:21), and so does the birth from above. Our Savior had to travail on the cross so that we might become members of the family of God (Isa. 53:11).
- The child inherits the nature of the parents, and so does the child of God. We become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Nature determines appetite, which explains why the Christian has an appetite for the things of God (1 Peter 2:2-3). He has no desire to go back to the foul things of the world that once appealed to him (2 Peter 2:20-22). He feeds on the Word of God and grows into spiritual maturity (Heb. 5:11-14).
- Birth involves a future, and we are "born again to a living hope" (1 Peter 1:3, nasb). A newborn baby cannot be arrested because he or she has no past! When you are born again into God's family, your sins are forgiven and forgotten, and your future is bright with a living hope.

2. **The Wind** (vv. 8-13).

- It is likely that the evening wind was blowing just then as Nicodemus and Jesus sat on the housetop conversing. One of the symbols of the Spirit of God in the Bible is the wind or breath (Job 33:4; John 20:22; Acts 2:2). Like the wind, the Spirit is invisible but powerful; and you cannot explain or predict the movements of the wind.
- The new birth from above is a necessity ("Ye must be born again"), but it is also a mystery. Everyone who is born of the Spirit is like the wind: you cannot fully explain or predict either the wind or the child of God! For that matter, human birth is still a mystery, in spite of all that we know about anatomy and physiology. Each new life is exciting and different.

3. **The Serpent on the Pole** (vv. 14-18).

- The story in Numbers 21:4-9 was certainly familiar to Nicodemus. It is a story of sin, for the nation rebelled against God and had to be punished. God sent fiery serpents that bit the people so that many died.
- The whole world has been bitten by sin, and "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). God sent His Son to die, not only for Israel, but for a whole world. How is a person born from above? How is he or she saved from eternal perishing? By believing on Jesus Christ; by looking to Him in faith.
- The difference between perishing and living, and between condemnation and salvation, is faith in Jesus Christ.

Please note that Nicodemus finally did "come to the light." He was in the "midnight of confusion" (John 3:1-21), but eventually he came out into the "sunlight of confession" when he identified with Christ at Calvary (John 19:38-42). He realized that the uplifted Savior was indeed the Son of God. ***-Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series) - New Testament - The Bible Exposition Commentary – New Testament, Volume 1.***