

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO BE BORN AGAIN?

John 3:1-8 Rev. Thomas Parrish

We often hear Christians talk about being “born again!”

The Bible says that is true. So what does Jesus do in this process and what are we to do in being born again?

John 3:1-8 Now 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.”

Nicodemus comes to Jesus late at night. That tells us a lot about him right away.

He was a Pharisee. He was part of the Sanhedrin ruling counsel. He was a closet follower of Jesus. However He became a true follower of Jesus. After the crucifixion, along with Joseph of Arimathea, he publicly buried Jesus’ body.

Why Did He Follow JESUS? For the exact same reason this sermon is about-**he was born again.**

So power was this spiritual awakening that he defended Jesus before the Sanhedrin when the vast majority of Pharisees wanted Jesus’ dead. **John 7:43-53**

ONLY WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN SPIRITUALLY BORN AGAIN, OR BORN FROM ABOVE, WILL YOU RISK YOUR LIFE TO DECLARE THAT JESUS IS LORD!

“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.”

How does Jesus answer Nicodemus’ statement? ³ *Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, 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?”*

SPIRITUAL REBIRTH IS SOMETHING ONE UNDERGOES NOT SOMETHING HE OR SHE PRODUCES.

How much did you contribute to your conception in your mother’s womb, or development in the womb? This is precisely why St. Paul says in **Ephesians 2:8-9**

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Look at this text and answer aloud these questions:

What saves you and me?

Grace through faith.

How much do we contribute to our salvation?

And this is not your own doing.

What is God’s gift to us?

Salvation by grace through faith.

How much does personal goodness play into our salvation?

Not a result of works.

How much boasting can we do regarding being saved?

So that no one may boast.

There is a key word in vs. 3 that most people miss: *That Key Phrase: CANNOT SEE*

Cannot SEE: perceive, understand, comprehend, attain true Knowledge.

When you are spiritually awakened there is only one **thing you and I must do?**

⁵ Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Vs. 5 What does: born of water and the spirit mean?”

Ezekiel 36:25–27: I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

This is why so many Bible teachers have concluded that both baptism and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit are virtually one act. Peter understood this when the Gentiles, who heard the Gospel began speaking in tongues and what does Peter concluded in the Book of Acts **10: 44** *While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, 47 “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.*

Jesus goes on with these words:

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 its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”*

Jesus is telling us that neither can we! ⁸ *The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”*

Some of you have family members that are spiritually lost. What do you do? Your role is:

To love them.

Offer them many invitations and opportunities to see, experience and study the truth in Jesus’ word.

You must give them over to Jesus and Jesus alone!

So I have learned as a child of God, an ambassador of the Gospel:

I cannot save you, only Jesus can.

My role is to pray for you and others, challenge you, and teach the truth of God’s Word.

My primary role is to give you **COUNTLESS INVITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES.**

Jesus is very straightforward and blunt:

It is Jesus alone, by his grace and love, that we are born again or spiritually awakened.

Our role is to surrender to Jesus every day until his return.

Your role as a disciple of Jesus and my role is to offer others invitations and opportunities to know this Jesus.

Pray that we may give countless invitations and opportunities to those who are hurting, lost, or overwhelmed by life.

Your Faith Alone in Jesus Is the Evidence You Have Been Born Again!

