

How Can You Cause Your Own Birth?

John 3:1-15 ¹ 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.” 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?” 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. 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.” ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

❖ Introduction

- Oh, How Important it is to know that this has happened to you...
- **We will get right to the heart if it this morning...**
 - This is the difference for those in Hell and those in Heaven...
- **The Bible teaches Hell to be a very real place**
 - With very real punishment...
- **You guys know me not to be a person that just tries to scare people into believing...**
 - **Because that does not work...**
 - But fear of punishment after death, does get people to listening...
 - It makes people perk up their ears...
 - **And I would not mention hell, if it wasn’t all over the Bible...**
 - Especially Jesus talking about it all the time...
 - Nice Jesus talked about Hell more than anyone in the Bible...
 - He did so because it was truth, and He cared...
- **So, I am letting you know now... If this “being born again” has never happened to you...**
 - You are not saved... and it is so sad that if you died today you would go to hell...
 - For eternity... with no chances of getting out...
- **That is just a simple truth.... One I believed for myself, and still do...**
- **So please listen today... please...**
 - There is great simplicity in these verses for the simple
 - There is great depth in these verses for the more seasoned Christian...
 - But, be careful to get the simple part, before you think yourself seasoned...

❖ Recap

- **When Believing isn’t believing....**
 - And this sets us up well for what we are looking at this week.
- 1) Jesus knows all things about all People
- 2) Sometimes Believing isn’t Believing

- 3) Man needs Jesus to give Himself to US
- 4) Jesus knows all, yet still loves

❖ **Setting of Chapter 3**

- **It seems as if this follows the Events of chapter 2**
 - Especially that last set of verses...
- **With John... things are not necessarily in chronological order...**
- 1) Jesus does His first Miracle...
- 2) Then it seems as if John moves straight to another event that happened much later
- 3) Then John speaks of those who believed because of the miracles, but... Jesus knew their heart
 - Now... here comes one of those who believed in His name because of the works He did...
- So John naturally transitions from vs 23-25...
 - **To give us an example of a man that was just like this.**
 - Nicodemus...

❖ **Today... there are just some natural things we see in the text.... Within this story... the First...**

❖ **1) Nicodemus' Belief wasn't yet Belief**

¹Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This 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."

- **What do I mean by this... (His belief wasn't yet belief)**
- **A) Believing that Jesus (God) Can do Miracles is not Salvation**
 - **B) Rather... Being Saved is Experiencing that Miracle within You**
 - Attributing power to God is not being saved.
 - Being around His people and seeing Him change others is not salvation
 - Hearing His word... and knowing a lot of things about the Bible doesn't mean a person is saved
- **Nicodemus...**
 - A Ruler of the Jews...
 - One of the most religious people in all of Israel.
 - He knew His Bible... probably had memorized most of the verses concerning Jesus coming
 - But He still did not get it...
- **There are Millions in the Church across the world...**
 - That are dead in their trespasses and sin... that believe in God and in Jesus....
 - But don't Believe....
 - They don't follow
- **All true believers follow Jesus...**
 - Not perfectly... but they follow...
 - If you think for one second you will go to heaven because you go to church...
 - Satan has deceived You....
 - Hell is filled with people that went to church...
 - Nicodemus believed there was something special about Jesus...
 - Even Believed He was from God...
 - But He didn't believe... **Yet...**
- **An Example from the Bible...**
 - Jesus was always saying hard things... Always...

- One time He said something that was just too much for the hearers...
- John 6:60-71 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 **It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.** 64 But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, “This is why I told you that **no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.**” 66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. 67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “**Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.**” 70 Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the Twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” 71 He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, was going to betray him.
- **Wow.....**
- There were people that were in the crowd of believers...
- There were people that sat under the very teachings of Jesus...
 - They looked like believers... they looked like followers...
 - But they did not like what they heard...
 - So they left...
- **AN ASIDE:**
 - You better check yourself if you are the kind of person that likes to get mad at preaching
 - ◆ Sometimes there is a biblical warrant for it...
 - ◆ But most of the time... when the Word is preached faithfully...
 - ◆ It is hard to take...
 - ◆ Don’t get mad at the messenger...
 - ◆ For telling you what the Master has to say...
 - Often we do not like what is being said, because it is being said specifically to us...
 - ◆ Be careful
- **But... His true disciples said this:**
 - **“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”**
 - Did not matter to them how hard it got...
 - Where else would they go...
 - ◆ They couldn’t find any other Belief System out there that was real...
 - WE HAVE COME TO KNOW that YOU ARE THE HOLY ONE OF GOD...
- **They did not just believe... they KNEW HIM**
 - How did they know Him...
 - Because they had been born again... By the Spirit of God...
 - Proof verse... it leads to the next verse...
 - ◆ Matthew 16:15-17 ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

❖ 2) Jesus tells us we Must be Born Again

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?” 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. 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.’”

➤ **You may have been Born-Again, but never knew it...**

- Had never even heard of being born again...
- But it has happened to you...
- Only mentioned 3 times in the Bible...
 - Here in John 3
 - And two different times by Peter in 1 Peter 1

➤ **Born Again in the Bible...**

- 1 Peter 1:3 ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again ...to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- 1 Peter 1:23 ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;
- **We will come back to these verses in a minute**

➤ **What does this mean?**

▪ **Jesus says to Nicodemus:**

- “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
- Truly Truly... This was a way for Jesus to tell his listeners... I am about to tell you something
 - ◆ Important... And True... so listen...

▪ **When Nicodemus hears this it just blows His mind....**

- He doesn’t understand what Jesus is talking about...
- And I like His being so candid...

▪ **Nicodemus is thinking from a natural perspective...**

- He asks the question:
- 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?”

➤ **Jesus answers:**

- “Truly, truly, 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.’”

➤ **Being Born Again Is Having a Spiritual Birth...**

- Jesus is explaining a Spiritual Event from a natural perspective....
- And Nicodemus is still struggling with this idea...
 - Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?”

➤ **Being Born Again is Having a Spiritual Birth....**

- 1) You were born into Sin
- 2) You were dead in your trespasses and sins
 - Ephesians 2:1 ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

➤ **And God Works a Miracle in you....**

- Ezekiel 36... Again... I know...
- Ezekiel 36:25-27 ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
- **Born of Water and Spirit**
 - The Water signifies the cleansing of sin...
 - The Spirit brings new life
- **Ezekiel 36 Proves that true believers will be different...**
 - The world, and the church should stop throwing around the terms:
 - Born Again, and Christian...
 - Millions in the Church and Millions who were in the Church are called Christians...
 - But they look like the rest of the World... Just like it...
- **So We make up doctrines to fit these people into the church and into heaven**
 - And they do NOT fit...
 - We ask... what about the worldly Christian...
 - He is not saved.... He will go to Hell...
 - No... you can not be the same after the Spirit comes to live in you...
- **Clearly....**
 - I will cause you to walk in my statutes (laws)
 - Cause you to be careful to obey my rules...
- **I am not saying... Christians do not sin.... They do...**
 - But the course of their life is striving to be like Jesus...
 - They have to... they have no other choice... even when they do not want to...
 - The Spirit is directing them... Molding them....
- **The Spirit –**
 - Begins to make us look like Christ...
 - What Spirit wants becomes what the man wants...
- **What if You are One of those who is thought to be a Believer but not...**
 - Please do not get offended by the tone of this message...
 - It is to you Jesus is calling...
 - It is to you that Jesus wants to pour out His mercy on...
 - Do not hide, rather come to Jesus in Humility....
 - It always blesses the church when this happens to anyone...

❖ The Spirit Blows When and Where He Wants

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.”

- **Being Born Again is The Free Will of the Spirit of God**
 - ¹ Peter 1:3 ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again
 - **God Causes our New Birth....**
 - NOT US
 - **This is a Hard thing to Accept... But let me say a few things...**
 - 1) You do not come unless God grants it

◆ John 6:44 and 65, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. . . . No one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

● **2) It Depends on God**

◆ In Romans 9:15–16 Paul quotes God, “‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.’ So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.”

● **3) It is not our doing**

◆ Ephesians 2:8–9: “By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”

● **4) It is by the Will of God**

◆ John 1:12-13 ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

▪ **We Want Control... but we do not have it...**

- We want control, because we want to decide when it is the right time for us...
- We want to be able to say... I came to God... it was my choosing... my power...
- There was something good about me and that is why I believed...

➤ **He does what He wants to do...**

- ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes

➤ **Do not Resist the Wind when it blows**

- What a shame that would be...
- I explain all that previously... so you know not to resist...

➤ **How Are We Born Again**

- The Spirit working through His Word in Us...
- 1 Peter 1:23 ²³ since you have been born again, (not of perishable seed but of imperishable,) through the living and abiding word of God;

➤ **Faith is the Result of the Work of the Spirit and the Word**

❖ **Looking to the Son of Man for Saving Brings Life (How can you be Born-Again)**

¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

➤ **By Faith – It is the avenue the Spirit uses to bring us to God**

➤ **Story of the Serpent**

- Numbers 21:4-9 ⁴ From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient 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 we loathe this worthless food.” ⁶ Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. ⁷ And 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 And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” ⁹ So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

➤ **The Serpent Moses made was a sign of the curse on the people**

- **When the People looked, they were saved from their life killing bite**
- **Jesus is Referring to His Death...**
 - **So must the Son of Man be lifted up...**
- **Jesus was a sign of the curse... He was the curse...**
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21** ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 - **Galatians 3:13** ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—
- **And if you look to Him you will be saved... from the curse...**
- **The Story of Spurgeon’s Salvation**
 - A story I read many years ago, and a couple times since... and it has always made an impact
 - The day was January 6, 1850. Spurgeon was not quite 16 years old.

I sometimes think I might have been in darkness and despair until now had it not been for the goodness of God in sending a snowstorm, one Sunday morning, while I was going to a certain place of worship. When I could go no further, I turned down a side street, and came to a little Primitive Methodist chapel. In that chapel there may have been a dozen or fifteen people. . . . The minister did not come that morning; he was snowed up, I suppose. At last, a very thin-looking man, a shoemaker, or tailor, or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach. . . . He was obliged to stick to his text, for the simple reason that he had little else to say. The text was “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth [[Isaiah 45:22](#)].”

He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter. There was, I thought, a glimpse of hope for me in that text. The preacher began thus: “My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says, ‘Look.’ Now lookin’ don’t take a deal of pain. It ain’t liftin’ your foot or your finger; it is just, ‘Look.’ Well, a man needn’t go to college to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man needn’t be worth a thousand a year to be able to look. Anyone can look; even a child can look.

“But then the text says, ‘Look unto Me’. . . . Many of ye are lookin’ to yourselves, but it’s no use lookin’ there. Ye will never find any comfort in yourselves. Some look to God the father. No, look to him by-and-by. Jesus Christ says, ‘Look unto Me.’ Some of ye say, ‘We must wait for the Spirit’s workin’.’ You have no business with that just now. Look to Christ. The text says, ‘Look unto Me.’”

Then the good man followed up his text in this way: “Look unto Me; I am sweatin’ and great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hangin’ on the cross. Look unto Me; I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend to heaven. Look unto Me; I am sittin’ at the Father’s right hand. O poor sinner, look unto Me! Look unto Me!”

When he had gone to about that length, and managed to spin out ten minutes or so he was at the end of his tether. Then he looked at me under the gallery, and I dare say, with so few present he knew me to be a stranger. Just fixing his eyes on me, as if he knew all my heart he said, “Young man, you look very miserable.” Well, I did, but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made from the pulpit on my personal appearance before. However, it was a good blow, struck right home. He continued, “and you always will be miserable—miserable in life, and miserable in death—if you don’t obey my text; but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved.”

Then lifting up his hands, he shouted, as only a primitive Methodists could do, “Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothing to do but to look and live.” I saw at once the way of

salvation. I know not what else he said—I did not take much notice of it—I was so possessed with that one thought. *Like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, the people only looked and were healed*, so it was with me. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard that word, “Look!” What a charming word it seemed to me! Oh! I looked until I could have almost looked my eyes away.

There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to him. . . . And now I can say—

*E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And Shall be till I die.*

❖ ¹⁵ **that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.**

- Faith is how we respond to the Spirit's blowing...
- Whoever believes in Him may have eternal life...
- Do not Resist the blowing of the Spirit of God