



John 3:1-8

3 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 and said to him, "Most assuredly, 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, "Most assuredly, 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 the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

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In John 3, Jesus introduces for the first time the idea that unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

He introduces this idea to a man named Nicodemus.

Nicodemus was a religious ruler of the Jews. He was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem ruled over all the religious affairs of Israel including disputes over the law of Moses. Jesus was already creating a dispute. Jesus had just cleansed the temple during the Passover feast. Some believed Jesus was the promised messiah. Nicodemus wanted to ask Jesus some questions. He says he was convinced Jesus was sent from God. He was not convinced Jesus was the messiah.

Jesus does not give Nicodemus a chance to even ask a question. Nicodemus was a pharisee, a society of scholars and pietists that were in control of all religious teachings in Israel. They strictly adhered to the law of Moses and their oral traditions. They believed they knew the way to the Kingdom of God.

Jesus tells Nicodemus he has got it all wrong. Jesus claims He is the way to the Kingdom of God. Jesus tells Nicodemus that in order to enter the kingdom of God, He must be born again.

This idea confuses and astonishes Nicodemus. He appears to mock the idea by asking a question, "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 the question by saying...

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Of all the accomplishments of Jesus, the most significant accomplishment would be to provide a way for mankind to be born again.

- He claimed that those who believed in Him would be born again.
- He claimed that this experience would be a work of the Holy Spirit within men and women when they received Jesus for the forgiveness of sin.
- He claimed that this new birth would so radically change those who received it that their lives would never be the same.
- He claimed that only those who were born again would enter the Kingdom of God.

I have found that many people that have been baptized and gone to church all their lives are just like Nicodemus. When Jesus told him about his need to be born again, Nicodemus said...

John 3:9

9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

Jesus challenged him by saying...

10 "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?

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I think today Jesus is saying to His church, are you one of my disciples and you do not know these things?

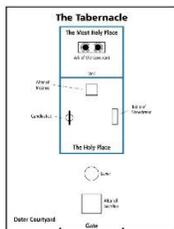
You really don't know something unless you can teach others?

Today, let's learn church what it means to be born again. To understand what it means, let's answer the question...

Why is the new birth necessary?



In the Old Covenant God made with the Jews, the Holy Spirit of God dwelled with the Jews in the temple in Jerusalem.



God designed the temple to have three parts.



The Holy of Holies was the hot spot of God's presence on earth.



There were times in both the tabernacle of Moses in the Wilderness and in the temple of Solomon that God manifested His presence with fire in those temples.



In the new covenant, the followers of Jesus are the hot spot of God's presence on earth. The Holy Spirit came with fire. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

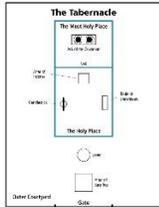
Just as temple in the Old Covenant had three parts, the temple in the new covenant has three parts.

God created us in His image.

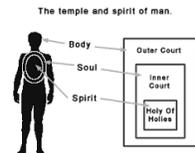
- God is a trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



- God designed the temple in the old covenant to have three parts; the holy of holies, the inner court, and the outer court.



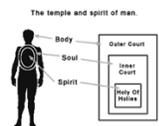
- God created us as a trinity; spirit, soul, and body.



1 Thessalonians 5:23

23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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The three parts of our beings have different functions. The bible says that the most significant part of our being is our spirit and not our bodies. We were created to be spiritual beings that have a soul and live in a body.

- It is our spirit that gives us God consciousness. (1 Peter 4:6)
- It is our spirit that gives us the ability to know God and to know His truth. (1 Cor. 2:14; Ephesians 4:23)
- It is our spirit that gives us the ability to walk with God. (Gal. 5:25)
- It is our spirit that gives us our nature. (Romans 2:29)

In the beginning in Genesis 1 and 2, the first man and the first woman were created to be spiritual beings that had a soul and that lived in a body. The first man and woman were created to express God's glory through their souls and their bodies as they walked with God in the spirit.

They were not created to be primarily physical beings that existed to satisfy their soulish and physical desires like creatures of instinct. It was God's intention from the beginning of creation for our spirit to rule over our soul and our bodies.

As a result of the fall of man, the spirit of man died.

Genesis 2:15-17

15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

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All the abilities of the spirit were lost.

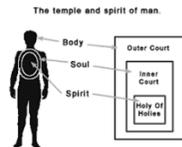
- God consciousness.
- The ability to know God and to know His truth.
- The ability to walk with God.
- The nature of God.

As a result, mankind was lost. That part of mankind's being that made mankind righteous rulers over the earth was dead. All men became subject to their emotions and their physical desires. As a result, evil filled the earth.

God created mankind with a soul that has tremendous will power, brain power, and emotional power. Because of the power God gave to mankind's souls, mankind was able to accomplish incredible things. But the souls of fallen men and women were always subject/slaves to their bodies and its desires. The world was a dark place. There was a reason why every city had walls. There was no respect for human life. There was no respect for women.

Then Jesus came!

- He claimed He was God. (John 5:18)
- He claimed He fulfilled the prophecies given to the Jews (Luke 24:44)
- He claimed that He came to restore what was lost. (Luke 4:17-19)
- He claimed He would die for the sins of the world. (John 3:16)
- He claimed that those who believed in Him would become the children of God. (John 1:12)
- He claimed that He would give His Spirit to those who believed in Him. (John 14:15-17)
- He claimed that those who received His Spirit would be born again by the Spirit. (John 3)



Because of this new birth of the spirit Jesus claimed that those who believed in Him...

- Would have God consciousness.
- Would know God and know His truth.
- Would be able to walk with God.
- Would have the nature of God.

Jesus claimed all the abilities that were lost would be restored. People could become righteous rulers again on the earth.

The new birth in you is like is like light going on in a dark place.

"I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness." John 12:46

It is why John Newton said, I once was blind but now I can see.

Have you been born again? Does the Spirit of God dwell within you? Is your spirit dead or alive?

- If not, your future is like a mine field and you have no ability to know where the mines are.
- If not, you are like a blind man trying to navigate through dangerous terrain.
- If not, you are like the captain of a ship without any navigational tools.
- If not, you are not only going to destroy yourself, but you are going to destroy those that you care about.
- If not, you are going to end up in a hopeless place that everyone wants to leave but there is no escape.
- If not, you are subject to Satan and his desires.

Here is what the apostle Paul said about people that have not been born again in their spirit.

[Eph 2:1-3](#)

[1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,
2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,
3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.](#)
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Have you been born again? If not, what are you waiting for? Believe upon Jesus for the forgiveness of sin. Receive Him as the Lord of your life.

If you have received Jesus for the forgiveness of sin, you have been born again. You need to believe it is true and stop watering down the truth.

You are not just a sinner saved from hell and headed to heaven. You are not just like every human being on the planet except that your sins have been forgiven through Jesus.

Your spirit has been born again by the Spirit of God. You are a new creation in Christ, one with the Holy Spirit, a partaker of God's divine nature, dead to sin and alive to God, a partner with God in the greatest show on earth. You are the masterpiece of God's creation.

There is still a work of sanctification to be done in your soul and in your body. But the work that enables those changes to occur is complete. You are born again! Stop watering down the truth!

Why is faith that you are born again so important to your life as a disciple of Jesus?

[Having faith that you are born again of the Spirit enables you to experience the power of the Holy Spirit of God!](#)



Imagine that you have inherited a billion dollars, but you do not believe it. That billion dollars is worthless to you until you believe the truth that you are a billionaire.



Imagine that you are the child of the most powerful king of the most powerful nation on earth, but you do not believe it. That king's power is worthless to you until you believe the truth that you are the king's son.



Imagine that you are a superhero with incredible powers, but you do not believe it. Those superpowers are worthless to you until you believe the truth that you are a superhero.



Imagine that you are an eagle that can fly but you have been raised with a bunch of turkeys that can't fly so you don't believe you can fly. You think that you are just like all the other turkeys.

You will never fly with the eagles until you believe the truth that you are an eagle and that you can fly.

Faith that you are born again of the Spirit of God enables you to walk in the Spirit and defeat any temptation to sin!

Perhaps you are an addict. As an addict you experience these intense episodes when you crave to medicate yourself with whatever you are addicted to. Through treatment and meetings, you have been given recovery instructions to avoid relapsing. You know them by heart. You know it is wrong to relapse. You know what relapsing is doing to you. You know all the people you will disappoint if you relapse. You are determined as anyone not to relapse, but you want to so bad. Because you know it is wrong you follow the right steps and you walk away from the temptation.

Good for you! But walking away from the addiction is like denying who you really are and what you really want! After all, you have been told that once you are an addict, you will always be an addict. So, you see yourself as addict that is not acting out your addiction by depending upon a higher power.

Jesus promised something far greater to us than a higher power! Jesus promised those who believe in Him would be born again of the Holy Spirit!

Jesus promised that who we were before we received Him would not be the same person after we received Him.

[Instead of just resisting temptation by depending upon something or someone that is outside of you, resist temptation by believing in what has happened within you!](#)

When you are tempted, believe this.

Because I am the temple of God's Spirit...

- I am born again of the Spirit of God
- I am a new creation in Christ
- I am a partaker of God's divine nature
- I am dead to sin and alive to God

Spiritual disciplines are important. But exercising spiritual disciplines without faith that you are born again of the Spirit wears you out. It is like...

- Trying to fight a battle without the main weapon you need to win
- An eagle trying to fly without wind
- Trying to finish a marathon without drinking water

Exercising spiritual disciplines without faith that you are born again causes you to try to fake it until you make it. You will never make it and you will always be faking it and you know it. You will live with this constant accusation that you are a hypocrite and that if you would only do more, you would succeed.

At the foundation of our experience with God is the truth in the gospel of Jesus Christ that we are born again of the Spirit. That new birth provides everything we need for life and godliness.

Church, will you believe the gospel of Jesus Christ?