

Series: Life to the Full; Sermon: **Born Again**

Delivered by: **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; Date: **October 15, 2017**

Bible text explored: John 3:1–15

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.”

³Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again^[a] he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴Nicodemus 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?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit^[b], he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸The 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.”

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

[ESV]

^[a] or “from above” ^[b] or “wind”

Review and application:

Earlier (John 2:18-20), the ruling religious council had demanded credentials from Jesus to justify his disruption of transactions in the temple outer court. They then indignantly rejected his response.

1. How does John’s narrative (vv. 1-2a) reveal that one council member privately wanted to learn more about this peasant preacher from Galilee?
2. What does Nicodemus’ statement (v. 2) imply that he is probing for?
3. What does Jesus’ answer (v. 3) tell us about the nature of the kingdom of God?
4. How (vv. 4-6) does Jesus shift the focus from physical to spiritual birthing?
5. What (vv. 7-8) do the water and wind images tell us about the “extraordinary reality” of how the Spirit works in the human heart? (See also *Titus 3:5; Ezek. 36:25-27*.)
The “you” in these verses is plural. What does the word *must* tell us about the “radical necessity” of spiritual rebirth for each of us?
6. What does the next interchange between Jesus and this respected religious teacher (vv. 9-12) reveal about how mind-blowing to him this was?
7. What (vv. 13-15) would Jesus’ reference to “the Son of Man” have conveyed to Nicodemus about his claimed origin? (See *Dan. 7:13-14*.)
What would Jesus reference to “the serpent in the wilderness” have conveyed about what lay ahead for him? (See *Num. 21:4-9; John 12:32-33*.)
What immediate result did Jesus promise for anyone who looks to him in faith?
8. Does John hint that Nicodemus may have eventually become at least a secret disciple? (See *John 7:50 and 19:39-42*.)