

# Nicodemus and the New Birth

John 3:1-21

February 25, 2018

## A. Nicodemus Questions Jesus about His Identity. (3:1-2)

1. How would you describe Nicodemus? (3:1)
  - a. A member of the \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. A \_\_\_\_\_ of the Jews. (This means he was a member of the \_\_\_\_\_, the Ruling Council of the nation of Israel.)
2. Why did he come to Jesus by night? (3:2)
3. He used two terms to describe Jesus. (3:2)
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
4. What had he (and certain others) concluded about Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (3:2)
5. Why had he concluded this? (3:2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is a "sign" (*sêmeion*, 4592)? (3:2)
  - a. It is a supernatural m\_\_\_\_\_ to prove a m\_\_\_\_\_ and his m\_\_\_\_\_ are from God.
  - b. Just for the record, this word appears in John 2:11, 18, 23; 3:2; 4:48, 54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:37; 20:30.
  - c. John 20:30-31 is exceedingly important. It is the key verse of John. What was John's purpose in writing about all these "signs" Jesus performed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. The Necessity of New Birth. You Can't Enter the Kingdom Unless You are Born Again. (3:3-8)**

1. How in the world was Jesus' answer related to Nicodemus' implied question? (3:3; cf. 3:2)
  - a. Nicodemus' implied question was, "Are you possibly the Messiah?"
  - b. Jesus immediately started talking about how to be part of the kingdom. You had to be born again. How does this relate to Nicodemus' question?
2. What kingdom was Jesus talking about? (3:3)
3. What does the Greek word *ánōthen* (509), translated "again" in the text mean? (3:3)
  - a. It can mean a \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. It can mean f \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_
4. Nicodemus was aghast. Which meaning did he put on Jesus statement? (3:4) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Jesus grew more specific. He said, "Unless a certain one is born of water and the Spirit, it is impossible for him to enter into the kingdom of God" (3:5).
  - a. What does it mean to be "born of water"?
    - 1) If you are a Catholic it means w \_\_\_\_\_ b \_\_\_\_\_.
    - 2) My view (a better one in context) is that it means n \_\_\_\_\_ b \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. What does it mean to be "born of the Spirit"? Answer: The Holy Spirit causes sinful people to be born into God's \_\_\_\_\_ if they welcome / receive Jesus. John has already hinted pretty strongly at this.
  - c. What light does John 1:9-13 cast on this discussion?
  - d. Have you received Jesus and believed in His name? Have you been born into God's family? (John 1:9-13)

6. What did Jesus mean when He said, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again’”? (3:6-7)
7. What did Jesus mean by the following (John 3:8)? “The *pneûma* blows wherever it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know from what place it comes or where it is going. So is every one having been born of the *pneûma*.” (Three similarities. From Thomas Constable, SonicLight.com)
  - a. First, both the Spirit and the wind operate sovereignly. Man does not control either one.
  - b. Second, we perceive the presence of both by their effects.
  - c. Third, we cannot explain the actions of either. They are mysterious.
  - d. The bottom line is that unsaved people cannot understand or control people who are born of the Spirit. The unsaved do not understand the origin or the destiny of the saved.
8. What was Jesus teaching Nicodemus? If you want to participate in Jesus’ coming kingdom, you have to be spiritually reborn from above. If all you have is the depraved human nature with which you were born, you will never make it into Christ’s kingdom.
9. Thought question: Have you ever heard the word “born-again Christian” distinguished from the term “Christian”? What does this mean? Is this a fair question?

**C. Nicodemus’ Spiritual Ignorance. (3:9-12)**

1. Nicodemus was incredulous. (3:9)
2. Jesus was incredulous! (3:10)
3. Jesus’ accusation of unbelief. (3:11)
4. Jesus’ perplexity. (3:12)

**D. The Centrality of Jesus in the New Birth. 3:13-18**

1. The heavenly origin of the Son. (3:13)
2. Belief in the Son is necessary for New Birth. (3:14-18a)
  - a. The analogy of the OT snake. (3:14a) What was Jesus talking about? (See Numbers 21:4-9)
  - b. What connection is Jesus making in John 3:14 between the OT event and Himself?
  - c. John 3:14b speaks of the necessity of the c\_\_\_\_\_.
  - d. What was the purpose of the cross? (3:15)
  - e. The summary of God's plan of salvation. 3:16
    - 1) God's passion: He \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2) God's gift: He \_\_\_\_\_
    - 3) God's requirement: that whoever \_\_\_\_\_
      - a) Negative: shall not \_\_\_\_\_
      - b) Positively: but might have \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. The purpose of Christ's (First) Coming (3:17)
    - 1) Not to \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2) But to \_\_\_\_\_ through Jesus
  - g. The focal point of Christ (3:18)
    - 1) Faith in Jesus eliminates \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2) Unbelief guarantees \_\_\_\_\_
    - 3) The basis of judgment: because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**E. The Judgmental Nature of the Light of the Son. (3:19-21)**

1. The Light condemns evil men. (3:19-20)
  - a. The nature of the judgment (3:19)
    - 1) What is the judgment? The \_\_\_\_\_ has come into the world
    - 2) What do men love? The \_\_\_\_\_ rather than the \_\_\_\_\_
    - 3) Why do they prefer the darkness? Because \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. The assessment of evil-doers: What can be said about those who practice the evil? (3:20)
    - 1) They h\_\_\_\_\_ the Light
    - 2) They a\_\_\_\_\_ the Light
    - 3) Why? They do not wish their evil deeds to be \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Light attracts righteous men. (3:21)
  - a. He who practices the t\_\_\_\_\_ comes to the Light
  - b. So his \_\_\_\_\_ may be recognized as having been performed in God.

**F. What do we learn from John 3:1-21?**

1. People educated in spiritual matters may not really know who Jesus is.
2. We all need to be “born again” or “born from above” because we all came into this world spiritually dead.
3. You can’t see Him, but the Holy Spirit is the one who causes us to be born again/from above.
4. Trusting in Jesus, God’s “only-born” Son assures us of eternal life.
5. Jesus is the Light of the World. People who do bad things avoid the Light like the plague. They don’t want their deeds exposed as being evil. These people have already been judged. They just don’t know it yet.

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Prepared by James T. Bartsch

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Published online on [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)

Email Contact: [jbartsch@wordexplain.com](mailto:jbartsch@wordexplain.com)