

Are You Born Again?

John 3:1-15

Life Group Discussion – August 26th, 2018

The Bible says that if you do not believe in Jesus Christ, you have failed in your life. Even if you accomplish everything in this world and achieve worldly fame and riches, it means nothing if your soul is lost forever. This passage in John addresses this most important fact.

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, comes to Jesus.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 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.” (John 3:1-2)

Even though Nicodemus believed that Jesus was God, the difference between him and the disciples was that they had no nothing while he had much.

1. Nicodemus was within the inner circle of the Pharisees.

The word ‘Pharisee’ means set apart. To be a part of this exclusive group meant to follow the law as strictly as possible to differentiate themselves from the society. There were only around 6,000 Pharisees, and Nicodemus was one of them.

2. Nicodemus was a Jewish government official.

Nicodemus was a part of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was a government body that counseled and ruled over each town. They were the judges and juries of the court and made sure to carry out the law, and Nicodemus was one of them.

3. Nicodemus was extremely wealthy.

After Jesus died on the cross, it was Nicodemus who cleaned and cared for the corpse.

Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. (John 19:39)

To have 75 pounds of a mixture of myrrh and aloe would be an extraordinary amount of money, and it was something Nicodemus had.

Nicodemus was not only a wealthy man, but an extremely respected and influential man in his city.

This was the man who came to Jesus in this passage.

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.” (John 3:2)

Even though Nicodemus knew of the power of Jesus, he still came to Him by night because he was ashamed and embarrassed.

Nicodemus came to Jesus to ask Him a simple question, “I know that you are able to do these things, so tell me exactly who you are.”

Jesus answers this question.

Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3)

Instead of telling Nicodemus to continue to uphold the law, He tells him to “be born again”. Even though Nicodemus had studied the Bible, he did not understand what Jesus was telling him.

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?” (John 3:4)

Nicodemus thought Jesus was talking about a physical rebirth instead of a spiritual one. This is why he asked if he could re-enter his mother’s womb.

So Jesus answers him again.

Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, 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. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ (John 3:5-7)

To be “born again” has three separate meanings inside of it. “Start”, “again”, and “from above” are all within this phrase.

This is why to be born again means to be made new again from above.

How do we become born again?

First, we can be born again through God’s word.

Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)

If you are not born from water and the Spirit, then it is impossible to go to heaven.
The meaning of water here is God's word.

that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word (Ephesians 5:26)

Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God (1 Peter 1:23)

The word of God means making the church your priority and your mission. If you disregard or ignore the word of God and the church, then the mission of the church will be compromised.

Second, in order to be born again we must repent.

To be born again in water also means to be clean. And to be clean means to repent for your sins.
When Jesus first began His public ministry, His first words were for us to repent.

Our members come to the church with many problems and sins that haunt them. But the only way you will be saved from these things is to first repent and bring it before Jesus. When you do this, we believe that your sins will hold you in bondage no longer because the cross of Jesus freed us from it.

Many people have testimonies talking about how Jesus changed their lives. But if that testimony does not have the cross of Jesus, in other words the repenting of their lives, then it no longer becomes a true testimony.

My brothers and sisters,
If you do not truly repent, you will not truly be saved.

When we bring our sins before Jesus and truly repent, that is when we become born again and our lives change. But we need the power of the Holy Spirit in order for us to be experience this change.

In the same way that it is impossible for us to come out of our mother's womb with our own strength, it is only through the full trust and repentance before Jesus that allows us to be born again.

My church,
Even though we've been born in this world, we are born again from Heaven. We start again with the Lord. But this is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This passage is about Nicodemus and his meeting with Jesus.

In John 19:39-42, we see that Nicodemus uses the most expensive oils to clean and care for the body of Jesus. Even though he was embarrassed and met Jesus in the dark, we see that he has no shame anymore and that he loves the Lord. Nicodemus was born again.

Shining Star members, are you born again?
If you are coming to church but are not born again, come before the Lord in repentance and with His word. Only then will you be truly saved.

It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that you can overcome your sin and die to your old self and become new.

I pray that we would become a church that is filled with souls that are born again.

SHARING-----

1. If I were in Nicodemus' shoes, what would I have done? Would I believe Jesus or would I walk away from Him?
2. Even though Nicodemus was respected and had a 'good' spiritual life, he was not born again. What about me? Am I just a person that goes to church and has not truly repented? Are you truly born again?