

"BORN TWICE" **John 3:1-10**

1. It is not about RELIGION.

- A. He is called "a man of the Pharisees" (3:1).
- B. He is called "a ruler of the Jews" (3:1).
- C. He is called "**THE** teacher of Israel" (3:10).

Nicodemus was a very religious man.

He followed a very strict set of religious principles.

He went to church every time the doors were opened.

As a Pharisee, he was a separatist who kept himself from what is considered the evils of this world. He was an abstainer from immorality, liquor, anything that might break the Law of the Word of God.

Some people are counting on religion to get them to heaven. While others say, "I don't want anything to do with religion." Do you know what? One of Nicodemus' problems was his religion. His religion was not going to get him to heaven. Religion alone simply weighs a man down. Why is this so? Because religion tells a person he must perform to please God.

Religion says going to heaven requires works of righteousness. But...

2. It is not about works of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Nicodemus' religion said he had to do many things, perform many works of righteousness. No doubt he had done well. He had risen to the position of a Pharisee. Men recognized his good works. He was referred to as **THE** teacher. Many must have come to him for religious answers. But inside, deep in his heart, Nicodemus knew something was missing.

You see works will keep our hands busy, but our hearts empty. This man had an empty heart. He was busy on the outside, but empty on the inside. He had grown weary trying to work his way to heaven and constantly realizing how far short he fell.

There are thousands of churches today whose lives can be described that way. They are trying to do works of righteousness, trying to earn their way to heaven, trying to live a sinless life. Yet they fail. And every time they fail, they have to go back and start all over. It is an endless cycle. It leaves a man empty.

I believe Nicodemus was empty. He came to Jesus by night looking for answers to his own emptiness. Some want to give Nicodemus a hard time for coming to Jesus at night. Some want to say he was too ashamed to come to Jesus during the bright day light hours. I do not believe that was his intention. I believe Nicodemus knew he had a deep spiritual need and he knew Jesus was the answer. Nicodemus simply wanted to wait until his business of the day had ended and he could get alone with Jesus. You see the business of the new birth is between a person and Jesus. Any person who will be born again can only be born again when he gets with Jesus!

Why must a person come to Jesus? Because going to heaven is not about RELIGION. It is not about works of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

3. It is about a RELATIONSHIP.

Jesus said, "You must be born again." Birth forms a relationship. Christianity is not about a religion per se. It is about a relationship with the Lord Jesus. The power of God is released in our lives when we come into a relationship with Jesus through the new birth.

John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right [power] to become the children of God." Look at I Corinthians 6 9-11. Do you know why a thief can't quit stealing, a drunkard can't quit drinking, a swindler can't quit cheating? It is because they are powerless to do so. They are still dead in their sin and trespasses and have no power over sin.

Oh, but look at verse 11, "But such were some of you..." Hallelujah! Such were...but no more. Why? Washed! Sanctified! Justified! Through the power of Jesus Christ!!! Born again. Born twice. Born from above. Born of the Spirit! You see! Born twice is about a relationship.

And a relationship.....

4. Does require a REDEEMER.

A Redeemer is required to bring forth the birth. No one has been born on their own accord. We were physically born through our mothers. Think about it, what did you do to be born? Nothing. Your mother birthed you. This is what Jesus meant when He said "one is born of water." This is the physical birth.

Then Jesus said unless one is born of "the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The new birth is the work of God. It is something that must be done to us. We cannot birth ourselves into the Kingdom of God spiritually any more than we could have birthed ourselves into this world physically.

1. We must realize our nature.
We are sinners.

2. We must recognize our need.
Our need is met through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

3. We must repent of our sin.

5. Does bring forth RESULTS.

Jesus compared the new birth to the wind in John 3:8. You don't see the wind, but you see the results. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit. You see the results.

I Corinthians 6:9-11 proves that.
I John 3:21 proves that.
I John 5:13 proves that.

Does your life bear the results? Have you been born twice?