

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Lesson #2 -The New Birth

Scripture Reading: John 3:1-5

01/13/19

Introduction:

1. There is nothing quite as good as a fresh start. Jesus gives us this through the shedding of His blood. We benefit when we obey the gospel.
2. Jesus discusses the great importance of the new birth with Nicodemus at mid-night.
3. What is the great significance of the new birth?
4. In our lesson we will identify four great truths about the new birth...

I. NECESSITY OF BEING BORN AGAIN -Jn 3:1-4

A. THE MAN NICODEMUS

1. His name means "Victorious".
2. He was a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews.
 - a. He later defends Jesus -Jn 7:50-52
 - b. He works with Joseph of Arimathea in burying Jesus -Jn 19:38, 39
 - c. He is referred to by Jesus as "the teacher of Israel" -Jn 3:10
3. Although he lacked the depth of knowledge concerning the identity of Jesus, he did not allow any prejudice thoughts to hinder him from finding out more about Jesus. -cf. Jn 8:48, 52; Mk 3:22-ff

B. WHAT THE JEWS UNDERSTOOD ABOUT THE KINGDOM

1. His kingdom would be established forever
 - a. "The Lord shall reign forever and ever." -Ex 15:18
 - b. "The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all" -Ps 103:19
 - c. "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." -Dan 2:44
2. Being of the Jewish lineage was thought to have entrance within the kingdom of God.
 - a. Pagans could become Jews through a process. They would then be called proselytes. In their conversion, they would be thought of a new born.
 - b. When Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born again, it doesn't quite register in the mind of a natural-born Jew.
 - c. We have to receive the kingdom of God as children -Mk 10:15, Lk 8:17, Mt 18:3
3. Nicodemus understood one birth -vs. 4
 - a. There is a physical birth and a spiritual birth.
 - b. Since he did not fully understand, he sought for more information. This was of much greater respect than some of Jesus' disciples -Jn 6:60, 66

II. METHOD OF BEING BORN AGAIN -Jn 3:5-13

A. THE WATER AND SPIRIT IN OT

1. Israel was cleansed with water and received the Spirit -Ez 36:25-28
2. Baptism was used for a pagan to become a proselyte.
3. John the Baptizer was baptizing souls with a baptism of repentance.

B. BORN OF WATER AND SPIRIT IS BAPTISM

1. Even more so than the OT, NT baptism is a new birth that puts one in the kingdom of God.
2. “Henry Alford, one of the translators of the ASV, wrote that ‘all attempts to get rid’ of baptism in this passage, ‘have sprung from doctrinal prejudices by which the views of expositors have been warped,’ ...” (Woods, 62)
3. There is a physical birth and a spiritual birth -vs. 6
4. The Spirit reveals to man the gospel through His word. When man obeys, he is baptized. Thus, he is born of water and of Spirit. -vs. 8
 - a. We do not know exactly how the Spirit through the word operates on the heart of man.
 - b. However, we do see the results that are produced.

III. POSSIBILITY OF BEING BORN AGAIN -Jn 3:14-17

A. AS MOSES LIFTED UP THE SERPENT

1. The people of God complained and were punished with fiery serpents -Nu 21
2. They could be saved if they looked upon the bronze serpent

B. JESUS HAS BEEN LIFTED UP

1. We look to Jesus on the cross for our salvation.
2. Looking means knowing what He has done for us and doing His will -Jn 14:15

IV. CHOICE OF BEING BORN AGAIN

A. LIGHT VS. DARKNESS

1. Those of the light have nothing to be ashamed of.
2. Those in the darkness avoid the light lest their deeds be exposed.

B. THE CHOICE

1. Jesus is the light of the world.
2. Jesus reveals man in sin and the path to salvation.
3. The sincere of heart will seek to follow the light to the path of righteousness.

Conclusion:

1. Jesus gives man all he needs for salvation
2. The question is, “What will our response be?”