

The New Birth

(John 3:3)

Introduction:

1. The beginning of a New Year is a good time to study the "new" blessings associated with Christianity.
 - a. (2 Corinthians 5:17) A Christian is "*a new creature.*"
 - b. (2 Peter 3:13) Christians look for "*new heavens and a new earth.*"
2. These new blessings are available to those who are born again.
3. Today we are studying "the new birth" that Jesus talked about in John 3.

Discussion:

I. (JOHN 3:1-2) JESUS WAS APPROACHED BY NICODEMUS

A. In vs.1 Nicodemus is identified as:

1. a Pharisee (several of their major beliefs are mentioned in Acts 23:8)
2. "*a ruler of the Jews*" (he later spoke up on behalf of Jesus -- John 7:50-51).

B. According to vs.2, when Nicodemus approached Jesus by night, he:

1. showed respect for Jesus by calling Him "*Rabbi*"
2. knew Jesus was a teacher from God because of His miracles (John 2:23).

II. (JOHN 3:3-7) JESUS TALKED TO NICODEMUS ABOUT BEING BORN AGAIN

A. It might seem odd to us that Jesus began immediately to talk to Nicodemus about the new birth; however, we must remember that:

1. Jesus had been preaching about God's kingdom (Matthew 4:17)
2. Jesus "*knew what was in man*" (John 2:24-25).

B. (vs.3) Jesus stated that a person must be born again in order to "*see the kingdom of God.*"

1. In order to become a part of the Jewish kingdom, a person simply had to be born into a Jewish family.
2. Jesus informed Nicodemus that another birth is required for entering God's kingdom that He came to establish.

C. (vs.4) Nicodemus was confused about the Lord's statement.

1. He thought that Jesus was talking about a second physical birth.
2. A second physical birth would be impossible.
3. (vs.6) Jesus showed that the new spiritual birth must not be confused with the physical birth.

D. (vs.5) Jesus explained the new birth to Nicodemus.

1. The new birth consists of being born of water and the Spirit (not 2 births, but 1 birth consisting of 2 elements).

2. (John 3:22) Other people understood what is involved in being born again.
3. Additional passages which explain the new birth:
 - a. (John 1:12-13) We must be "born of God" to become His children.
 - b. (1 Peter 1:22-23) Peter wrote to people who had been born again.
 - 1) They had been born again by the Word of God.
 - 2) When they were born again their souls were purified.
 - 3) This was accomplished when they obeyed the truth (see 3:21).
 - c. See Titus 3:3-7
 - 1) These verses do not specifically mention the new birth, but they do mention "*the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit*" (being born of water and the Spirit).
 - 2) Vs.3 describes the conduct of people before they are born again.
 - 3) The new birth allows us to escape the punishment that this kind of conduct deserves.
 - 4) It is when we are born again that we are justified by God's grace.

E. (vs.7) Jesus told Nicodemus not to marvel because of His requirement to be born again.

Conclusion:

1. The new birth is a command of Christ -- it is a birth of water and the Spirit that we experience when we obey the Gospel of Christ.
2. The new birth is also the beginning of the Christian life.
3. When a new birth occurs, it is a time of great joy (Luke 15:10).