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### **You Must Be Born Again**

**Focus Verse:** John 3:3 – Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

**Lesson Text:** John 3:1-21

**Truth About God:** God's method of salvation remains unchanged since the Passion.

**Truth For My Life:** I will firmly establish my faith on the Apostolic message of new birth.

Nicodemus sought a private meeting with Jesus at night (John 3:2). He opened the conversation with Jesus by calling Him Rabbi. He even acknowledged Jesus was sent from God. Nicodemus opened by showing respect and quickly recognized the miracles Jesus had performed, *"No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him"* (John 3:2). Jesus told him all about the new birth (John 3:3-5). Nicodemus asked, how can a man be born when he is old? Is it even possible to enter his mother's womb a second time and be born? Nicodemus was confused, so Jesus declared plainly, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"* (John 3:5-6).

**New birth is not the physical birth of a person but a rebirth of a person's spiritual life.** It is a spiritual second chance—a do-over. This hope and promise of a second chance is why the Messiah came. He came to make it possible for people to be born again of water and the Spirit. He came to transform our lives through a new-birth experience. People are looking for more out of life, and the answer is found in the new life Jesus offers.

Ask anyone whose life the Lord has transformed, and you will find that God meets each of us where we are. He knows the condition of our lives better than we do. Regardless of what is happening in our world or the mistakes we have made, God always extends an invitation to transform our lives through being born again. At some point we will all ask the question, **"What does it really take to be saved and have this relationship with God?"** This is the most important question any person will ever ask. This question drove Nicodemus to meet Jesus in the middle of the night.

Sadly, many people miss their purpose and cope with lifelong regrets because they refuse to abandon their old life and embrace a new one. While such regrets are disappointing in the natural, reluctance to release the old and embrace new life in Jesus Christ is of eternal significance we must address. The resounding message of Scripture is that surrender to God erases the past as He gives us new life rich with hope and promise.

The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus is symbolized in our lives through the act of repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost. We identify with His burial through water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. Our baptism leads to our new life in the Spirit. Just as Jesus rose from the grave to new life, we rise from the waters of baptism to new life in Christ.

Being born again is merely the beginning of our new life. Philippians 2:12 commands us, *"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."* We must commit every day to living for God. Numerous warnings in Scripture alert us to the dangers of falling away from our relationship with God. Being sure that our personal devotional life is a priority will help us remain committed to the new-birth message of hope and eternal life.

Paul told the church in Galatians 1:9, *"If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."* There is no other gospel than the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. No other way fulfills our right response to the gospel than repentance, water baptism in Jesus' name, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost.

Peter's life story is also a testimony to us how radically new birth can change our lives. Peter became the dynamic, anointed preacher who preached the greatest message of all time on the Day of Pentecost? Peter was born again. He was given a do-over in life. His story shows us the incredible power of transformation the Spirit brings to everyone who is sincerely hungry for a relationship with God.