

In this conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, we gain insight into the Holy Spirit's working in 'new birth' (regeneration) that is available to all people.

1. Nicodemus and his Inquiry (v.1-4)

- ✧ Nicodemus: A Pharisee and member of the Jewish council.
 - He came at night to talk with Jesus – recognizing 'God' in His life.
 - He was later one who argued for justice in Jesus' 'trial,' and after Jesus' death, joined with Joseph of Arimathea in asking for His body for burial.
- ✧ Jesus 'answered' Nic's unasked question...
 - Nicodemus recognized God's presence in Jesus' teaching and ministry and genuinely wanted to understand, but was limited because of spiritual blindness.
 - Jesus said, *Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (v.3).*
- ✧ Nicodemus was thinking only in his understanding of 'physical birth'
 - *"How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"*

2. You must be born again... (v.5-8)

- ✧ *Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, 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.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:5-8)*
 - *Born of water and the Spirit...*
 - Could be referencing natural birth (water) and spiritual birth (Holy Spirit).
 - Reference to Nicodemus' understanding of Ezekiel 36:25-27 which spoke about 'cleansing' with water, a heart 'transplant,' and a work of the Holy Spirit.
 - Could be referencing water baptism and new birth by the Spirit.
 - Jesus clearly says that there is 1) a natural birth (flesh) and 2) spiritual birth (by Spirit).
 - So don't be surprised – *"You must be born again (from above)."*
 - The 'wind' is an example to help understand the Spirit.

3. 'Born Again'

- ✧ What it is not...
 - It's not human effort of trying harder, 'turning over a new leaf,' resolutions...
 - It's not becoming 'religious' – attending church, reading Bible...
 - It is not a 'change' that we make...
- ✧ What it is...
 - A birth (John 1:12,13; John 3:8; 1John 5:1)
 - A cleansing (Tim.3:5 – *washing of regeneration...*)
 - New creation (*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Cor 5:17)*)
 - A resurrection (identifying with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ)
 - It is the entry into new life in Christ!
- ✧ We 'must be born again' because...
 - Otherwise we remain 'dead' spiritually and have no certainty of eternity with God.
 - We remain blind and undiscerning...(Jn.3:3; 1Cor.2:14)
 - Spiritual birth comes as a gift of God (Eph.2:8,9), through faith in Jesus Christ and a turning (repentance) from self-rule and 'my-will' to God-rule and God's will, by a work of the Holy Spirit. Receive God's gift, believe the 'good news' and receive Jesus Christ.