**"You Must Be Born from Heaven"**
John 3:1-8
October 18, 2026
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**Jesus here speaks of <u>earthly</u> things in order to direct attention to <u>spiritual</u> <u>realities</u>.**

**I. Nicodemus apparently <u>feared</u> the <u>repercussions</u> of his <u>interest</u> in Jesus. (v. 1-2a))**

"You have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness" (Matthew 25:23)

**II. Nicodemus realized Jesus had come <u>from</u> <u>God</u> but not (yet) that He <u>was</u> <u>God</u>. (v. 2b)**

**III. Jesus knew, without <u>being</u> <u>told</u>, what Nicodemus was really <u>interested</u> <u>in</u>. (v. 3)**

[Jesus] knew all people. He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each man. (John 2:24b-25)

The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all" (Psalm 103:19).

His kingdom is an eternal kingdom" (Daniel 4:3).

Every authority that exists has been established by God (Romans 13:1).

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit… (Romans 14:17)

**IV. Nicodemus misunderstood and took <u>Jesus'</u> <u>words</u> <u>literally</u>. (v. 4)**

**V. Jesus answers by <u>cryptically</u> pointing Nicodemus toward the divine solution to mankind's <u>sin</u> <u>problem</u>. (v. 5)**

For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.
They will spring up like grass in a meadow,
like poplar trees by flowing streams. (Isaiah 44:3-4)

Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that

they may live.’” **So I prophesied** as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. (Ezekiel 37:9-10)

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:14)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:1-4)

“The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.” (John 6:63)

1) Referring to the natural process of physical birth

2) Christian Water Baptism

3) John’ the baptizer’s ministry

4) The need for spiritual cleansing

5) Accomplished through the Word of God

“My people have committed a double wrong: They have rejected me, the fountain of life-giving water, and they have dug cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns that cannot even hold water.” (Jeremiah 2:13)

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:25-28)

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:11b)

…Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word… (Ephesians 5:25b-26)

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For,

"All people are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;
the grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of the Lord endures forever."

And this is the word that was preached to you. (1 Peter 1:23-25, quoting Isaiah 40:6-8)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Through these [His own glory and goodness] he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4)

**VI. The fleshly nature produces <u>fleshly</u> <u>life</u> while the Holy Spirit produces <u>spiritual</u> <u>life</u>. (v. 6)**

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature [*sarx*: flesh]. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. (Romans 7:18)

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. (Colossians 2:13)

The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:7-8)

What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. (1 Corinthians 2:12-14)

**VII. Jesus gently chides Nicodemus for not correctly <u>understanding</u> mankind's <u>fallen state</u>. (v. 7)**

The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6:5)

Do not bring your servant into judgment,
for no one living is righteous before you. (Psalm 143:2)

Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins. (Ecclesiastes 7:20)

**VIII. The word play used by Jesus points to the <u>sovereignty</u> of God in <u>salvation</u> and to His own <u>identity</u>. (v. 8)**

Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. . . . All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:2, 4).

Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and the name of his son? Tell me if you know! Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. (Proverbs 30:4-5)