



Uniontown Bible Church

Sermon Guide
April 19: John 3:1-18

What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why?

Key Takeaways:

1. Being born again is not about doing better; it's about being made completely new. It's a spiritual birth that comes from above, not a renovation project we accomplish.
2. To believe in Jesus means more than acknowledging facts about Him. It means knowing you are dead in your sin and trusting Him completely for rescue.
3. We cannot climb our way to God through religious performance. Salvation comes down to us as a gift, not up to us as an achievement.
4. Jesus took on the full appearance of our humanity but with no sin. Then on the cross, He became sin for us so we could be saved.
5. The invitation is simple: confess your need and look to Jesus. You don't need to understand everything or clean yourself up first—just look up.

Discussion Questions:

1. Who was Nicodemus? What made him such an important figure in Israel? Why is it significant that even someone of his religious status needed to be "born again"?
2. Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night? What might he have been risking? Can you relate to wanting to seek Jesus but being afraid of what others might think?
3. The Greek word "anothen" means both "again" and "from above." How do these two meanings help us understand what Jesus is saying about salvation?
4. Jesus says the wind is invisible but its effects are visible (John 3:8). What are some visible "effects" you've seen when the Holy Spirit brings someone from death to life? Share examples if you're comfortable. What changes have you noticed in yourself or others after coming to faith that can only be explained by God's Spirit?

5. Nicodemus had spent his entire life climbing the religious ladder through study, discipline, and law-keeping. Why does Jesus tell him he's going in the wrong direction?
6. In what ways do we still try to "climb up" to God instead of receiving what comes "down from above"? What does this look like in modern Christianity?
7. The pastor said many people don't know what it means to "believe" in Jesus. Before this sermon, how would you have defined what it means to believe? Has your understanding changed?
8. In the Numbers 21 story, some people died not because they didn't believe the pole existed, but because they never looked at it. What's the difference between knowing about Jesus and actually looking to Jesus for rescue?
9. Why do you think God chose such a strange method of rescue in Numbers 21? What does this teach us about God's ways versus our expectations?
10. The bronze serpent looked like the thing that was killing them but had no venom. How does this parallel what Jesus did on the cross? (See 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Galatians 3:13)
11. What kept some Israelites from looking at the bronze serpent? (Pride? Waiting to understand it first? Looking for a more "reasonable" solution?) What keeps people from looking to Jesus today?
12. Belief starts with "life-saving humility" about what's inside of us. Why is honest confession about our sin so important? What happens when we skip this step? Spurgeon's simple message was "Young man, just look up." Is there anything keeping you from simply looking to Jesus right now? What would it look like for you to "walk across the camp" this week?

Practical Applications:

1. **Honest Assessment:** Set aside 30 minutes for honest prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you areas where you've been trying to "climb up" to God through your own effort rather than receiving grace "from above."

2. **Share Your Story:** Like the pastor shared about his father's transformation, identify one visible change God has made in your life and share it with someone this week—either a believer who needs encouragement or a non-believer who needs to hear about Jesus.
3. **Just Look Up:** If you've never truly trusted Jesus for salvation, or if you realize you've been relying on religious activity rather than Jesus Himself, take time this week to simply "look up"—confess your sin and trust completely in what Jesus did on the cross.
4. **Help Someone Understand:** Think of someone in your life who might be like Nicodemus—religious, moral, but confused about what it means to be born again. Pray for an opportunity to share this message with them.