

Born of water and of the spirit
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Introduction: This scripture in John three has caused me some difficulty for several years because most everything I would read and those I would talk to had a different idea. My reading sources almost always taught that the water represented baptism and the others taught that the water represented a natural birth, and I had the feeling that it didn't mean either; so I have been digging for the truth and by the grace of God I think I have found what harmonizes with the teachings of the scriptures.

I know the statements that I am going to make in this lesson might shock some of you, but if you will bear with me, I think you too will be able to see the great truth recorded in the scriptures. Sometimes it is so easy to lean to the majority's opinion rather than search for the truth until you are satisfied by the Holy Spirit. It has been my belief for many years that if it is the truth, it can be traced through the entire sixty six books of the old and the New Testament. If it can not be traced through them, then there is a problem. I believe the reason for so many difficulties in studying the scriptures is that there is too much human theology.

2 Pet 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

We have no right to take the scriptures out of context and try to make them fit our thoughts. The dangers of doing such things as this is, if we are wrong and I really think that most of the teachings on this particular subject are wrong; many people could be deceived. I don't want their blood on my hands or yours. If there was no other reason for searching for the truth, this would be enough.

Lesson text John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
Joh 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Joh 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.

Joh 3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, 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.

Joh 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Joh 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Joh 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Joh 3:9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Joh 3:10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Joh 3:11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

Joh 3:12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

Now I want us to take our time and prayerfully dissect these verses and let the Lord show us the truth. This we know for sure that regeneration is not by baptism and this is a heresy that has taking this country by storm. My friend there is no power to save in the water; **our sins are washed away by the blood of the lamb.**

. With that being said, there's no excuse for remaining in the dark about the truth. So let us dig prayerfully through the scriptures until God has satisfied us, and we can feel in both heart and mind that we have truth.

Who is this man that Jesus is talking to? He has come to the only source to find heart felt salvation.

. He isn't just any ordinary run of the mill person; this man is a ruler of the Jews. He is a Pharisee by the name of Nicodemus, a man well known for his lofty position. He is looked up to as a man well versed in the law whether he is or not, we'll soon find out.

The Pharisee was a people who set themselves up as the straightest sect of religion, they held very strict to the rites, ceremonies and the traditions which they had been taught.

This man comes to Jesus by night and why he chose to come by night is immaterial, but it tells me one thing and that is, he realized that there was something different about Jesus because he said we know that you are a teacher come from God. Nicodemus said no man could do the miracles you are doing except God be with him. I think this is good evidence that Nicodemus realized that there was something more to salvation than a Pharisee religion and he had come to the right source to find what he needed.

This man realized that there was something more to this new birth than a Pharisee religion, and I think he was sincerely interested in finding the truth. This man along with most of the world today are using the term that they have been born again and if the truth be known, they don't know a thing about being saved by the grace of God: Nicodemus didn't know but he had come to the place where he wanted to know.

This is what I am interested in today, and that people everywhere can know what it means to be born again from above.

Now these scriptures were written to Nicodemus, a Jew and it was written so this man could understand. I heard a man say once that we ought to put ourselves in Nicodemus's place and see if we can get the message that God intended for Nicodemus to get. The most of the Jews of Johns' day only believed in what they could see, but Nicodemus was different because he understood that there was more to the miracles which Christ did.

Now let us turn to the thirty sixth chapter of Eze, beginning at the twentieth verse.

. Eze 36:20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.

They caused his name to be dishonored among the pagans

Eze 36:21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

Eze 36:22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. They polluted the name of the very God of their salvation and caused the pagans to look at God as one of their earthly gods.

Eze 36:23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

Made holy; consecrated; set apart for sacred service

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Eze 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. The external restoration must be preceded by an internal one. The change in their condition must not be superficial, but must be based on a radical renewal of the heart. Then the heathen, understanding from the regenerated lives of God's people how holy God is,

Eze 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

I believe the clean water here is having reference to the Holy Spirit because in the 27th verse God said I will put my spirit within you. Tit 3:4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

Tit 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

I personally think what these scriptures are teaching is that we have a two fold picture of the new birth. This language was spoken to show that the thing intended was none other than a thorough spiritual purification by the operation of the Holy Spirit. Look again at Eze. 36:27;

Eze 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

In Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, (speaking to Nicodemus) Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. We can see here that the Lord was speaking of a spiritual birth and not a natural. Natural birth puts no one in the family of God nor into the N.T. church.

This man was different from the rest of these Jews because he at least had a honest heart and he wanted to know more. Because Nicodemus was honest about his feelings and desires, Jesus revealed these thing to him. Jesus never reveals himself to anyone who believes because of what they see. I believe this

man had a broken heart; I believe he was convicted by what he had heard, he was different from these other Jews.

This is the Pharisee who came to Jesus by night saying you must be a teacher come from God for no man can do these miracles; You see he knew there was a divine power working in Jesus. It was something that drew him to Jesus's side. I don't really know why Nicodemus came to the Lamb of God except there was something drawing him; if that's not why he came to Jesus by night, I don't know the reason why.

Now before Nicodemus even finished his statement: Jesus said to him, verily verily except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus said how can a man be born again when he is old? He ask, can a man enter a second time into his mothers' womb and be born? Jesus answered, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Jesus told him that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

Joh 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. Joh 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The Lord is trying to tell Nicodemus in a way that he could understand, Jesus never causes our minds to be confused especially when it comes to being born again. Nicodemus had some idea of what it took to see the kingdom and that had to be extracted from his mind; this misunderstanding came from his Pharisee beliefs.

He (Jesus) told Nicodemus that he must be born a new and that of course means to be born from above. Jesus is trying to tell him that something else has got to take place in him that he dosen't have.

Christ is telling this man that he doesn't have the right thinking about what it takes to see the kingdom of God, Jesus keeps telling Nicodemus the he must be born anew but he doesn't seem to understand. I told you earlier that we would soon find out just how well Nicodemus understood the law. He no doubt understood the carnal teachings of the law but he didn't know a thing about being born from above. I think this master of the Jews has just revealed his ignorance.

His question was, could he enter again into his mother's womb and be born again? You see the hardest thing to break down in a sinners mind is his carnal thinking. This man knew that there was something about the teachings of Jesus that he desired, but he hasn't as of yet been able to turn loose of the Pharisee teachings.

If Nicodemus could enter his mother's womb and be born again, he would be no better off than he was at the present time.

The word "flesh" here is used as meaning "corrupt, defiled, sinful." The "flesh" in the Scriptures is often used to denote the sinful passions of our nature.

Jesus was telling him that it wasn't something he could see, he told him that it was something entirely different. Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, 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.**

Now we are going to get into the brass tacks of this subject, and I didn't know that there were so many different beliefs on this subject, but this is what I believe.

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Let us look at some scriptures.

Joh 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

Joh 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:37

In the last day - The eighth day of the festival.

That great day - The day of the holy convocation or solemn assembly, Lev_23:36. This seems to have been called the great day:

1. because of the solemn assembly, and because it was the closing scene.
2. because, according to their traditions, on the previous days they offered sacrifices for the pagan nations as well as for themselves, but on this day for the Jews only.
3. because on this day they abstained from all servile labor Lev_23:39, and regarded it as a holy day.
4. On this day they finished the reading of the law, which they commenced at the beginning of the feast.
5. because on this day probably occurred the ceremony of drawing water from the pool of Siloam.

On the last day of the feast it was customary to perform a solemn ceremony in this manner: The priest filled a golden vial with water from the fount of Siloam

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the **Spirit**, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Then I would like to call our attention to the fourth chapter of John: Joh 4:13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

Joh 4:14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Joh 4:15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. I think he (Christ) was having reference to the **spirit**.

Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Rev 22:17 And the **Spirit** and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Now Jesus refers back to the third verse of the third chapter again: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Here Jesus is beginning to put emphasis on being born again. Here also Nicodemus shows his ignorance about the new birth, so Jesus begins to explain to Nicodemus in a way that he should have understood.

I believe the water and the spirit were linked together to produce a birth and whatever that water is as I can see it, it is linked in with the spirit and as I have already said in a previous thought is that we have a two fold picture of an inward birth. I believe that it was none other than a thorough spiritual purification by the operation Holy Spirit.

To me, it would probably have been somewhat easier to understand if it had been stated (born of water even the spirit or born of the spirit even the spirit).

Let us look in the book of Num 19:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Num 19:2 This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke:

Num 19:3 And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face:

Num 19:4 And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times:

Num 19:5 And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn:

Num 19:6 And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer.

Num 19:7 Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even.

I want to make a very profound statement right here before going any further; there has never been but one plan of salvation from the beginning of time up to now. Every one from Adam up to this time has been saved the same way.

Nicodemus should have understood the law because it taught the same way of salvation as it does today, he should have understood that. Nicodemus should have understood that there had to be a cleansing to take place, and there had to be a renewing of the spirit.

I want to go once again to the book of Titus Tit 3:4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

Tit 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Every commentary that I looked at said that the water was baptism, or physical birth, but I have never read yet where the conscious was cleansed by water. Mankind has a dirty conscious and it needs a cleansing because it was a dead conscious.

This means that the soul was defiled.

In the book of Hebrews the ninth chapter. The book of Hebrews was written to enlighten us on the law because we didn't understand what was being taught concerning the law; the writer explained the sacrifice so we could understand them.

Now let us take up the twelfth verse Heb 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

What are the teachings of these two verses representing; a ceremonial cleansing that they had to go through when they touched death. Their body would be sprinkled with these ashes and that would make them ceremonial clean enough to reenter among the living.

The writer of this book was saying if those things could clean us up, how much more would the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit, offer himself without spot to God, purge your conscious from dead works to a living God

Now I would like to call our attention once again to the purpose of the red heifer, when sprinkled with the ashes, it was to ceremonial cleanse those who had come in contact with death. The soul is dead to God, it is dead in trespasses and in sin. When we are separated from God we have no peace with God, but when the ashes of that red heifer was sprinkled on them it represented the blood of the Lamb of God which ceremonially cleansed the soul.

When that blood of Jesus is applied to our conscious by the working of the Holy Spirit, it cleans us up and makes us alive unto God. Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Nicodemus should have known this, he needed to have his conscious purged from a dead works unto a living God. Nicodemus was asking, how can this spiritually work, how can this spiritual transaction take place?

Jesus didn't say one word about going back into his mother's womb and be born again, neither did he say anything about going down to the river and be baptized.

The scripture in John three has nothing at all to do with physical birth nor being baptized.

As Nicodemus ask the question to Jesus, how can these things be, Jesus began by telling this man that this was spiritual. Jesus goes back to the old testament again and begins to show him a

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picture that Nicodemus should have understood. Jesus was telling him again that this was a spiritual transaction.

Jesus begin telling about when Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, those people who would lift their eyes by faith and look upon that brazen serpent; they lived. This is a representation of the Son of Man being lifted upon the cross of Calvary. The writer was saying that when the sinner looks by faith to the crucified Savior Jesus Christ, their conscious will be purged from dead works by the Holy Spirit and make you alive.

When the soul of an individual has been cleaned up, God puts an earnest of his spirit within us that makes to know that we are alive in Christ.

God was so graciously telling Nicodemus that there was absolutely no way for him to find this peace by traditions, rites, or ceremonies. Anyone who wants this perfect gift of salvation must put their complete faith in the work that Jesus did on calvary's cross. The only way that we can have access to God is by faith, and this is the medium where we can get forgiveness for our sins.

I think the teachings here in John three is having reference to our sin being washed away by the blood of the Lamb of God. The teachings here has nothing to do with baptism nor a physical birth.