

You Must Be Born Again

Pastors Jeff Bucknam, John Nichols | John 3:1-21

NOTE: As a guide, use these questions to help with group and family discussion, or for personal reflection. Not all questions are needed. Select the ones that will best serve your group as you grow in Christ together through His Word. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

Ice Breaker

When was the first time you heard John 3:16? What does it make you think when you hear it?

Understanding the Text in Context

How does Jesus' phrase – “unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:3) – cause Nicodemus confusion? Why are good deeds not enough to see the kingdom of God?

Read Ezekiel 36:25-27. How does this underscore our need for God to meet our needs?

How do the contrasts in John 3:20-21 give evidence for whether a person is born again?

Connecting to Jesus and His Gospel

Right before our section this week, we read that Jesus “knew what was in man” (John 2:25) – that people are sinful, are not trustworthy. How does Ephesians 2:1-3 further describe our need? Does everyone have the same need (see Ephesians 2:3)?

Why are people “condemned already” (John 3:18)?

How can the greatness of the gift that God gave His only Son (John 3:16) prompt non-believers to reconsider who Jesus really is? How does Jesus being “lifted up” (John 3:14 - compare Numbers

21:8-9) underscore Jesus as a gift from God? Ask God for open doors to speak about Jesus and the kingdom of God.

Living Out the Truth

Why is it difficult to accept that new birth is something you *cannot produce* yourself?

How can people's emotions or experiences or actions mask the need to be born again?

Have you been born again?

Pray for those you know who do not believe in Jesus – that the Spirit would give them new birth and that they would then truly believe in Jesus.^f What practical steps can you take to deepen your faith in Jesus this week? Pray for one another.

Parenting Moment and Family Focus

Read John 3:16-21 together. Ask your family why God had to give His Son to save the world. How does that affect us today? Why does belief, and continuing to believe, matter in our walk with the Lord? Pray together as a family that you would believe, even in the midst of unbelief.

Further Study

Some articles to dig a little deeper: “[What Does ‘Born of Water and the Spirit’ Mean in John 3:5?](#)” and “[What Does It Mean to Be ‘Born Again?’](#)” and “[What Does John 3:16 Mean?](#)” and “[Regeneration.](#)” For a book (free online), read [Finally Alive: What Happens When We Are Born Again](#) by John Piper.

For encouraging stories on the life-changing power of being born again, read “[Pastor on Parole](#)” and watch “[God at Work | Dave Lano, April 2026](#)”

Looking ahead to next week's Sermon and Text: Read the three sections in the Scripture Journals for John 3:22-36: “Competition in the Church” and “Are You In the Way or Preparing the Way?” and “Is Christ Everything to You?”