

BORN AGAIN, AGAIN

John 3:1-18

March 17, 2019

*"I tell you the truth, no one can see
the kingdom of God unless he is born again."
John 3:3*

There was a man

*Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council.
He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God.
For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God is not with him."
In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."
John 3:1-3*

1) Nicodemus is expecting CREDENTIALS

2) Jesus challenges NICODEMUS' CREDENTIALS

Bunyan's test

*Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born
of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but Spirit gives birth to spirit
The wind blows wherever it pleases, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going.
So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."
John 3:5-8*

Looking backward to the cross

*Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert,
so the Son of Man must be lifted up that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.
John 3:13-14 (see John 8:28; 12:32; Numbers 21:4-9)*

The progress of faith

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not have perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

1) Faith is FRAGILE

2) Faith without rebirth is IMITATION

3) JESUS!

Resources for further study of John 3

The Belgic Confession, Articles 18-21, at <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/confessions/belgic-confession>.

Doug's favorite definition of faith comes from the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 7, at <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/confessions/heidelberg-catechism>

"Bunyan's Last Sermon" at https://biblehub.com/library/bunyan/the_works_of_john_bunyan_volumes_13/mr_bunyan_s_last_sermon_.htm

James Montgomery Boice's essays at <https://www.monergism.com/these-things-are-written-so-you-may-believe>

Deffinbaugh's study of John's gospel at <https://bible.org/series/you-might-believe-study-gospel-john>

Spurgeon's sermons "None But Jesus" and "Regeneration" at <https://www.monergism.com/none-jesus>

Earl Palmer's *The Intimate Gospel* (Word, 1987).

Merrill Tenney's *John* (Eerdmans, 9148) and G.C. Morgan's *The Gospel According to John* (Revell) are good short commentaries.

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 7

Q 21. What is true faith?

A. True faith is not only a sure knowledge by which I hold as true all that God has revealed to us in Scripture;¹ it is also a wholehearted trust,² which the Holy Spirit creates in me³ by the gospel,⁴ that God has freely granted, not only to others but to me also,⁵ forgiveness of sins, eternal righteousness, and salvation.⁶

These are gifts of sheer grace, granted solely by Christ's merit.⁷

¹ John 17:3, 17; Heb. 11:1-3; James 2:19 ² Rom. 4:18-21; 5:1; 10:10; Heb. 4:14-16 ³ Matt. 16:15-17; John 3:5; Acts 16:14

⁴ Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:21 ⁵ Gal. 2:20;

⁶ Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:10; ⁷ Rom. 3:21-26; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-10

Bunyan's Last Sermon, "The Application"

The first use is this, To make a strict inquiry whether you be born of God or not; examine by those things I laid down before, of a child of nature and a child of grace. Are you brought out of the dark dungeon of this world into Christ? Have you learned to cry, 'My Father?' (Jer 3:4). 'And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father.' All God's children are criers—cannot you be quiet without you have a bellyful of the milk of God's Word? cannot you be satisfied without you have peace with God? Pray you, consider it, and be serious with yourselves; if you have not these marks, you will fall short of the kingdom of God—you shall never have an interest there; 'there' is no intruding. They will say, 'Lord, Lord, open to us; and he will say, I know you not.' No child of God, no heavenly inheritance. We sometimes give something to those that are not our children, but [we do] not [give them] our lands. O do not flatter yourselves with a portion among the sons, unless you live like sons. When we see a king's son play with a beggar, this is unbecoming; so if you be the king's children, live like the king's children; if you be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above, and not on things below; when you come together, talk of what your Father promised you; you should all love your Father's will, and be content and pleased with the exercises you meet with in the world. If you are the children of God, live together lovingly; if the world quarrel with you, it is no matter; but it is sad if you quarrel together; if this be amongst you, it is a sign of ill-breeding; it is not according to the rules you have in the Word of God. Dost thou see a soul that has the image of God in him? Love him, love him; say, This man and I must go to heaven one day; serve one another, do good for one another; and if any wrong you, pray to God to right you, and love the brotherhood.

Lastly, If you be the children of God, learn that lesson—Gird up the loins of your mind, as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to your former conversation; but be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Consider that the holy God is your Father, and let this oblige you to live like the children of God, that you may look your Father in the face, with comfort, another day.