

***THE GOSPEL AND THE NEW BIRTH***

*(John 3:1-8)*

Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus is the definitive instruction on the essential doctrine of the new birth, which is referred to by our Lord as being born-again. In this discourse from Christ, our Lord Jesus teaches us two fundamental truths about the new birth. First, He tells us why the new birth is important. Second, He explains the nature of the new birth.

***1. The New Birth is an \_\_\_\_\_ for entrance into God's kingdom.***

Nicodemus, like many people today, is totally ignorant of the biblical doctrine of the new birth. Contrary to the mistaken notion of our contemporary culture, the new birth is neither a dramatic emotional experience nor a call to a deeper commitment to religion and morality (John 3:1-2). Our Lord Jesus dismisses such misconceptions. Jesus clearly explains that being born-again is not another religious option. The new birth, according to Christ, is the necessary condition for someone to be a citizen of God's eternal kingdom (John 3:3,5,7).

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***2. The New Birth is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.***

In explaining the nature of the new birth to Nicodemus, Jesus uses the metaphor of the water and the wind. The imagery of water alludes to the cleansing and life-giving work of the Holy Spirit while the imagery of the wind depicts the supernatural, sovereign and radical power of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5-8; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Jeremiah 33:8; Titus 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Putting the two metaphors together, Jesus is teaching us that the new birth is the sovereign and supernatural work of God whereby the Holy Spirit cleanses our sinful hearts and implants in us new spiritual life which results to radical change and transformation of our total person.

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