

One Pursuit :: John 3:1-15
A Radical Reorientation :: Kensen Lam

Introduction:

- For John, what you think and know about Jesus is of the utmost importance, because it is a matter of life and death. In our verses today, Jesus would repackage it this way, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see/part/enter the kingdom of God.”
- What Jesus knows of them, He doesn't use to push them away but to help them see themselves rightly so that they can see and receive Him rightly.

1. The DEMAND for our condition.

- Nicodemus, if you only see me as a teacher, after all these signs – you've got a problem here - you can never be born again – you can never enter, be a part of, let alone even see the kingdom of God – IF you are only willing to deal with me as a teacher... you are not seeing me rightly.

4 Implications of being born again.

- **No one is born a Christian.**
 - This was a mistake the Jewish people made, that Nicodemus assumed and taught – that as Jews, descendants of Abraham – we are physically born entitled to the kingdom of God, to heaven.
 - This is the reality - no one comes into the world and is a natural lover of Jesus Christ.
- **Our current condition is hopeless.**
 - We need to recognize that Nicodemus was no chump. He wasn't on the bottom end of the social ladder – he was on the top end. He was very impressive, very accomplished, very smart, very religious, and morally
 - Jesus doesn't mention these other things about him - not because they don't exist, but because they DON'T matter.
 - We are spiritually dead. We are morally selfish and rebellious. We are legally guilty before God's law and under His wrath. We are hopelessly unresponsive to the truth. Jesus calls Nicodemus out in verse 10, “**Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?**”
- **We Cannot Cause this New Birth**
 - Spiritual rebirthing requires a capable parent, not an able infant.
 - To be born again – is decisively and ultimately God's call and God's working through the Holy Spirit.
 - The new birth is not merely affirming the supernatural, but experiencing the supernatural in yourself.
- **We can become something brand new.**

- Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (John 3:5-7)
- In these verses, water represents the need for forgiveness for our old self/old nature. It’s having my guilt washed away. That’s the cleansing with water.
- But forgiveness and cleansing is only one part - I also need to be made new. I need to be transformed. I need a new way of seeing and thinking and valuing and feeling.
- This is a Christianity that is not an addition to what you’ve done. It’s a brand new thing.

2. The DEATH for our condition.

- In verses 13 to 15, Jesus begins to make a transition. For these last 12 verses, He’s been pressing hard at Nicodemus and helping him to see the depravity of his condition, BUT now in these verses Jesus begins to point at Himself.
- The reason God sent snakes into the dessert was only to mirror the image of the venom that was in their hearts.
- Jesus looks at that symbol and says, “What that snake was, I am.”
- This is the message that Nicodemus needs to hear and understand rightly, this is what we all need to hear, this is what needs to pierce our heart – Jesus is NOT HERE TO TEACH YOU. HE IS HERE TO SAVE YOU.



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