

Speaking Truth In Love

To Nicodemus Jesus explained the importance of the new birth when he said, *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"* and *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit; he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"* (Jn 3: 3, 5).

Like Nicodemus, many think only in physical terms and speak of that *"kingdom"* as though it was a future physical kingdom, but Jesus said, *"My kingdom is not of this world"* (Jn 18:36). Neither is the new birth a physical birth (Jn 3:4), for it has to do with one being *"born...of the Spirit"* (Jn 3:5, 6). So Jesus explained to Nicodemus the spiritual nature of the new birth, which grants one the power to *"see"* (*to know*) and to *"enter"* the spiritual kingdom of God (Jn 3:3, 5).

The *"water"* of which one is born in the new birth is water baptism. Jesus commanded the apostles to baptize those who believe the gospel (Matt 28:19). Since the Holy Spirit revealed the teaching that results in the new birth (1 Cor 2:10-13), when one obeys that teaching he is *"born...of the Spirit"* (1 Pet 1:22-23; Rom 6:1-18); he is a new creature (2 Cor 5:17). In that new state, he is a subject in the kingdom of God of which Christ Jesus is King (1 Tim 6:15).

The new birth is not optional Jesus stated, *"You must be born again"* (Jn 3:7). Have you been born again?

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Sunday: 9:30; 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
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