**Regeneration – The Wall between God and Man - BD02-01**

**The Blocks of the Wall**

This is the third in the series of the studies concerning the great wall between God and man. Here we have thus far a summary of the problems that exist between us and God. This wall we have divided into five basic blocks. The first one that we looked at was sin. We saw that God moved in and removed this block by the great work of redemption. The next problem was penalty which is spiritual death. We saw that again God moved in and through the death of His son, He removed this problem by the work of expiation. Jesus Christ died spiritually and thereby paid for our penalty.

**Physical Birth**

This morning we look at the third of these blocks which is physical birth—the problem of the old sin nature. Now whatever man may try to do he simply cannot get through this wall. This is an impossible barrier. He’s on the other side of it, and there is nothing he can do until God has removed it. So this morning we look at this next block. Sin removed by redemption, penalty removed by expiation. Now what will we do about the problem of our physical birth?

Birth itself on the physical level is a miracle. It is a marvel of divine wisdom and God controls the mystery of physical birth. Psalm 127 reminds us that every baby that comes into the world is under the directive control of God Himself. Psalm 127:3 says, “Lo, children are a heritage from the Lord and the fruit of the womb is His reward.” So there is some basis for the idea which is very popular among the Jews that to be blessed with children is to have upon you the hand of God’s blessing, the sign of God’s approval. To have children denied is a certain sign of God’s disapproval. Whatever the case may be, to have children is a sign of God’s touch upon your life because it is a miracle that He is directly in charge of. So a newborn infant is always a sight and a thing of delight, but he has a problem.

**Psa 127:3**  Lo, children *are* an heritage**H5159** of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

**H5159** - (נַחֲלָה) nachălâh (nakh-al-aw'): From H5157 (in its usual sense); properly something inherited, that is, (abstractly) occupancy, or (concretely) an heirloom; generally an estate, patrimony or portion: - heritage, to inherit, inheritance, possession. Compare H5158.

**Spiritual Death**

The moment that he was born he entered a problem. His physical birth gave this child a basic problem with God. That is he was born physically alive, but he was born spiritually dead. The moment that he took his first breath, something happened in his being and he died spiritually. Ephesians 2:1 speaks of us as those who have been made alive who have been dead in trespasses in sin.

**Eph 2:1**  And you *hath he quickened,* who were dead in trespasses**G3900** and (*see note*) sins**G266**

**G3900** - paraptōma (par-ap'-to-mah): (Noun) From G3895; a side slip (lapse or deviation), that is, (unintentional) error or (willful) transgression: - fall, fault, offence, sin, trespass.

Case: Dative (indirect object, "to"; also location "in", "at"; instrument, "with")

Number: Plural

Gender: Neuter

***Note****: The Greek places G3588 definite article “the” before “sins” which is untranslated in the English.*

**G266** - hamartia (ham-ar-tee'-ah): (Noun) From G264; sin (properly abstract): - offence, sin (-ful).

Case: Dative (indirect object, "to"; also location "in", "at"; instrument, "with")

Number: Plural

Gender: Feminine

This refers to the fact of our spiritual condition. Since we are spiritually dead, we have this problem of fellowship with God. It has created a wall between us and there is no way through it. So every baby is born here on the wrong side of this wall. He is born separated from God. **He has earthly life, but he has no spiritual life whatsoever**.

With our bodies, we are able to contact the world around us through our senses. Our bodies act as the house for the soul. Because of our soul, we can understand natural truths. The soul is the real person, the ego. **But man is absolutely unable to grasp spiritual realities**. It makes no difference how educated, how cultured, how refined, or how anything else you may be. **There is no way around the problem that you are born spiritually dead**. Therefore, have no possible ground of contact with God. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, “But the natural man, that is the unsaved man, the man as he is born spiritually dead receives not the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.” **It takes a human spirit that is alive to be able to grasp and understand the things of God.**

**1Co 2:14**  But the natural man receiveth **G1209 notG3756** the things**G3588** of the **G3588** Spirit of God: for they are foolishness**G3472** unto him: neither can he know**G1097** *them,* because they are spiritually discerned**G350**.

**G1209** - dechomai (dekh'-om-ahee):(Verb) Middle voice of a primary verb; to receive (in various applications, literally or figuratively): - accept, receive, take. Compare G2983.

Tense: Present

Voice: middle or passive deponent

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G3756** - ou (oo): (Negative Particle) Also οὐκ ouk ook used before a vowel and οὐχ ouch ookh before an aspirate. A primary word; the absolutely negative (compare G3361) adverb; no or not: - + long, nay, neither, never, no (X man), none, [can-] not, + nothing, + special, un ([-worthy]), when, + without, + yet but. See also G3364, G3372.

**G3588** - ho (ho): The masculine, feminine (second) and neuter (third) forms, in all their inflections**; the definite article**; the (sometimes to be supplied, at others omitted, in English idiom): - the, this, that, one, he, she, it, etc.

Case: Accusative (direct object; motion toward; time: "how long")

Number: Plural

Gender: Neuter

**G3472** - mōria (mo-ree'-ah): (Noun) From G3474; silliness, that is, absurdity: - foolishness.

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Singular

Gender: Feminine

**G1097** - ginōskō (ghin-oce'-ko): A prolonged form of a primary verb; to “know” (absolutely), in a great variety of applications and with many implications (as shown at left, with others not thus clearly expressed): - allow, be aware (of), feel, (have) known (-ledge), perceive, be resolved, can speak, be sure, understand.

Tense: second Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Infinitive

**G350** - anakrinō (an-ak-ree'-no): (Verb) From G303 and G2919; properly to scrutinize, that is, (by implication) investigate, interrogate, determine: - ask, question, discern, examine, judge, search.

Tense: Present

Voice: Passive

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

Here’s a very serious problem. Man is born spiritually dead. Why? Well because the parents in the process of generating the life of that child give him a bad feature. They are unable to keep from passing on something of themselves to this child. **That thing is the old sin nature**. This old sin nature is the thing that causes spiritual death. Romans 5:12 says, “Wherefore as by one man, that is Adam, sin entered into the world and death by sin.” Now this is not only physical death, but it is also spiritual death. So death passed upon all man as all sin. So we are born in this condition of spiritual death. A parent may be a very fine Christian.

**Rom 5:12**  Wherefore, as by one man sin entered**G1525** into **G1519** the world, and death by sin; and so death passed**G1330** upon all men, for that all have sinned**G264**:

**G1525** - eiserchomai (ice-er'-khom-ahee): (Verb) From G1519 and G2064; to enter (literally or figuratively): - X arise, come (in, into), enter in (-to), go in (through).

Tense: second Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G1519** - eis (ice): A primary preposition; to or into (indicating the point reached or entered), of place, time, or (figuratively) purpose (result, etc.); also in adverbial phrases.: - [abundant-] ly, against, among, as, at, [back-] ward, before, by, concerning, + continual, + far more exceeding, for [intent, purpose], fore, + forth, in (among, at unto, -so much that, -to), to the intent that, + of one mind, + never, of, (up-) on, + perish, + set at one again, (so) that, therefore (-unto), throughout, till, to (be, the end, -ward), (here-) until (-to), . . . ward, [where-] fore, with. Often used in composition with the same general import, but only with verbs (etc.) expressing motion (literally or figuratively.

**G1330** - dierchomai (dee-er'-khom-ahee): (Verb) From G1223 and G2064; to traverse (literally): - come, depart, go (about, abroad, everywhere, over, through, throughout), pass (by, over, through, throughout), pierce through, travel, walk through.

Tense: second Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G264** - hamartanō (ham-ar-tan'-o): (Verb) Perhaps from G1 (as a negative particle) and the base of G3313; properly to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize), that is, (figuratively) to err, especially (morally) to sin: - for your faults, offend, sin, trespass.

Tense: second Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [they]

Number: Plural

They may be very godly parents, but they cannot pass on their spiritual lives. This **spiritual life has to come in a different way**. It has to come from being born from a different father and being born into a different family. That is to be born into the family of God. John 3:6 says, “That which is born of the flesh, physical birth produces physical results. That which is born of the spirit is spirit.” A spiritual birth produces spiritual results. 1 Peter 1:23 in speaking of this same problem says, “being born again not of corruptible seed,” a spiritual birth is not of corruptible seed such as natural birth is, “but of incorruptible by the word of God which lives and abides forever.”

**Joh 3:6**  That which is born**G1080** of the flesh **G4561** is **G2076** flesh **G4561**; and that which is born **G1080** of the (*direct article*) Spirit **G4151** is **G2076** spirit **G4151**.

**G1080** - gennaō (ghen-nah'-o): (Verb) From a variation of G1085; to procreate (properly of the father, but by extension of the mother); figuratively to regenerate: - bear, beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, be delivered of, gender, make, spring.

Tense: Perfect

Voice: Passive

Mood: Participle

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Singular

Gender: Neuter

**G4561** - sarx (sarx): (Noun) Probably from the base of G4563; flesh (as stripped of the skin), that is, (strictly) the meat of an animal (as food), or (by extension) the body (as opposed to the soul (or spirit), or as the symbol of what is external, or as the means of kindred, or (by implication) human nature (with its frailties (physically or morally) and passions), or (specifically) a human being (as such): - carnal (-ly, + -ly minded), flesh ([-ly]).

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Feminine

**G2076** - esti (es-tee'): Third person singular present indicative of G1510; he (she or it) is; also (with neuter plural) they are: - are, be (-long), call, X can [-not], come, consisteth, X dure for awhile, + follow, X have, (that) is (to say), make, meaneth, X must needs, + profit, + remaineth, + wrestle.

**G4151** - pneuma (pnyoo'-mah): (Noun) From G4154; a current of air, that is, breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively a spirit, that is, (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, daemon, or (divine) God, Christ’s spirit, the Holy spirit: - ghost, life, spirit (-ual, -ually), mind. Compare G5590.

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Singular

Gender: Neuter

**1Pe 1:23**  Being born again **G313**, not**G3756** of corruptible **G5349** seed, but of incorruptible **G862**, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth **G3306** forever.

**G313** - anagennaō (an-ag-en-nah'-o): (Verb) From G303 and G1080; to beget or (by extension) bear (again): - beget, (bear) X again.

Tense: Present

Voice: Passive

Mood: Participle

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Plural

Gender: Masculine

**G3756** - ou (oo): (Negative Particle) Also οὐκ ouk ook used before a vowel and οὐχ ouch ookh before an aspirate. A primary word; the absolutely negative (compare G3361) adverb; no or not: - + long, nay, neither, never, no (X man), none, [can-] not, + nothing, + special, un ([-worthy]), when, + without, + yet but. See also G3364, G3372**.**

**G5349** - phthartos (fthar-tos'): (Adjective) From G5351; decayed, that is, (by implication) perishable: - corruptible.

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Feminine

**G862** - aphthartos (af'-thar-tos): (Adjective) From G1 (as a negative particle) and a derivative of G5351; undecaying (in essence or continuance): - not (in-, un-) corruptible, immortal.

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Feminine

**G3306** - menō (men'-o): (Verb) A primary verb; to stay (**in a given place, state, relation or expectancy**): - abide, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry (for), X thine own.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Participle

Case: Genative (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Masculine

**Regeneration**

So here’s the situation that we face in this particular block. Everybody needs a birth which gives him spiritual life in addition to the physical birth that he already has. Until he has that spiritual birth, there is no way back to God. So what’s the divine solution for that? The divine solution for that is “**regeneration**”. This word is used twice in the Bible. The Greek word, “polyguinesea”. The first part means “again” and “guineses” such as we get the word “genesis” for the book of Genesis means “origins” or “beginnings”. The English word “regeneration” comes from the Latin “generation” means “birth.” The “re” means “again”. So what we have here is a word that basically means to be “born again”-a new birth. “Polyguinesea” is only used twice in the Bible. Once is in Titus 3:5 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” Here the new birth refers to the individual soul. It’s used again in Matthew 19:28. Matthew 19:28 refers to the rebirth of all of creation. Matthew 19:28, “and Jesus said unto them ‘Verily I send to you He who have followed me in the regeneration when the son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, He also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’“ Here the word refers to the restoration of creation and of God’s natural order.

**Tit 3:5**  Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration **G3824**, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

**Mat 19:28**  And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in (*definite article*) the regeneration **G3824** when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**G3824** - paliggenesia (pal-ing-ghen-es-ee'-ah): (Noun) From G3825 and G1078; (spiritual) rebirth (the state or the act), that is, (figuratively) spiritual renovation; specifically Messianic restoration: - regeneration.

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Feminine

While this word is only used twice, there are other terms in the Bible that mean the same thing as regeneration. Here are a few of them. “Born again”- John 3:3 and 1 Peter 1:23, “Born of God” “Begot or Begotten”- 1 John 5:1, “Born of the spirit”- John 3:6, and “Quickened or to be made alive”- John 5:21, Ephesians 2:5. So what regeneration does is to make twice born men. Everyone is born into the world spiritually dead because of the presence of the old sin nature inherited through your father. Therefore everybody needs a new birth. He needs a new father. He needs to be born into a new family. He needs receive a new nature which is spiritually alive. So here’s what God does. He doesn’t reform the old sin nature. Instead He gives you a new nature to dominate the old sin nature. The sin nature is not removed until you come to the point of death or to the rapture. When you are in the Lord’s presence, it is permanently removed. In the meantime, God simply gives you a new structure of life to solve the problem of this particular barrier. Spiritually dead, I need to have a rebirth. How am I going to do it?

**Joh 3:3**  Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born **G1080** again **G509**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

**1Pe 1:23**  Being born again **G313**, not (*oo)* of **G1537** corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth **G3306** forever.

**1Jn 5:1**  Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born **G1080** of **G575** God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

**G1080** - gennaō (ghen-nah'-o): (Verb) From a variation of G1085; to procreate (properly of the father, but by extension of the mother); figuratively to regenerate: - bear, beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, be delivered of, gender, make, spring.

Tense: Perfect

Voice: Passive

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G509** - anōthen (an'-o-then): (Adverb) From G507; from above; by analogy from the first; by implication anew: - from above, again, from the beginning (very first), the top.

**G313** - anagennaō (an-ag-en-nah'-o): (Verb) From G303 and G1080; to beget or (by extension) bear (again): - beget, (bear) X again.

Tense: Present

Voice: Passive

Mood: Participle

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Plural

Gender: Masculine

**G1537** - ek (ek): A primary preposition denoting origin (the point whence motion or action proceeds), from, out (of place, time or cause; literally or figuratively; direct or remote): - after, among, X are, at betwixt (-yond), by (the means of), exceedingly, (+ abundantly above), for (-th), from (among, forth, up), + grudgingly, + heartily, X heavenly, X hereby, + very highly, in, . . . ly, (because, by reason) of, off (from), on, out among (from, of), over, since, X thenceforth, through, X unto, X vehemently, with (-out). Often used in composition, with the same general import; often of completion.

**G3306** - menō (men'-o): A primary verb; to stay (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy): - abide, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry (for), X thine own.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Participle

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Masculine

**G575** - apo (apo'): (Preposition) A primary particle; “off”, that is, away (from something near), in various senses (of place, time, or relation; literally or figuratively): - (X here-) after, ago, at, because of, before, by (the space of), for (-th), from, in, (out) of, off, (up-) on (-ce), since, with. In composition (as a prefix) it usually denotes separation, departure, cessation, completion, reversal, etc.

**Nicodemus**

Turn to John 3 you have an excellent illustration. Here’s the story of Nicodemus, a very religious man, and an authority among the Jews. “Joh 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus who was a ruler of the Jew.” Nicodemus was the kind of religious man who prayed and who went to the synagogue several times a day. He worked hard at good deeds. Now the question is can such a nice and sincere man need a new birth? That’s the question concerning the nice and sincere people that live up and down our streets in our neighborhoods. The people we rub shoulders with at work. The people we have social contacts with. These nice, sincere people- is it possible that they need a new birth? They’re intelligent, educated, and honest.

A spiritual birth comes hardest to the religious crowd. It is the church members that find spiritual birth the hardest to accept because they have a mistaken concept concerning their condition. So it is that all over this city there are people who are sitting in church this morning and if they were to drop dead in that pew, their souls would immediately go into Hades. There are people all over this city who are members of churches who are completely oblivious to the fact that they sit in those churches at this very moment spiritually dead.

Now that’s the condition of Nicodemus. If you were to meet with Nicodemus in the synagogue someday and say, “Nicodemus, you know if you were to drop dead right here, you would go to hell?” He would look at you in the most appalling unbelief and say, “Do you know who you’re talking to? I’m not only a Pharisee, but I happen to be one of the rulers here. I’m one of the wheels, I’m a VIP in this synagogue. Are you trying to tell me that I would go into the presence of Satan rather than God?” That’s exactly what Jesus was saying. It is the hardest for the religious church attending crowd of all people on the face of the Earth to come to the experience of new birth. So here’s this VIP. He has sins of pride, sins of his legalism, all of which hinder his belief. But he comes to Jesus for some reason. “Joh 3:2  The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him” Nicodemus came to Him at night we are told probably because he was so busy hustling around with his religious rituals all day long he didn’t have time to see the Lord during the day. Finally when he got through going through his religious malarkey, he had time to stop by to see the Lord at night.

**Born Again**

The things that caught his attention were the miracles. The miracles were used to focus attention upon the message of Jesus Christ. Nicodemus however doesn’t recognize that he is speaking to God or even to one who could be his Messiah. He simply calls Him “Rabbi, teacher”. “We know that you come from God because of the miracles that you do. There is a power upon you.” He doesn’t say, “I see that you are God. I see that you are the Messiah as demonstrated by this supernatural power.” He simply says, “You’ve got some kind of a contact with God and I’m interested in it. I’m a religious leader myself and I’m curious to know what you’re contact with God is that enables you to perform these fantastic miracles.” So verse “Joh 3:3  Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born **G1080** again**G509**, he cannot**G3756** see**G3708** the kingdom of God.” So Jesus comes right to the point. He says to this religious church attending gentleman “**there is no place for you in Heaven**. There is no place for a religiously active person who lacks a spiritual birth.” Nicodemus, with all that he knew of the Old Testament Scriptures, did not understand, did not realize that because of his old sin nature that he received from his parents he was on the wrong side of the wall and could not approach God at all. He was born in trespasses, born dead in trespasses and sins. So his natural birth had put him into the wrong family.

**G1080** - gennaō (ghen-nah'-o) (Verb) From a variation of G1085; to procreate (properly of the father, but by extension of the mother); figuratively to regenerate: - bear, beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, be delivered of, gender, make, spring.

Tense: Aorist

Voice: Passive

Mood: Subjunctive

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G509** - anōthen (an'-o-then): (Adverb) From G507; from above; by analogy from the first; by implication anew: - from above, again, from the beginning (very first), the top.

**G3756** - ou (oo)" (Negative Particle) Also οὐκ ouk ook used before a vowel and οὐχ ouch ookh before an aspirate. A primary word; the absolutely negative (compare G3361) adverb; no or not: - + long, nay, neither, never, no (X man), none, [can-] not, + nothing, + special, un ([-worthy]), when, + without, + yet but. See also G3364, G3372.

**G3708** - horaō (hor-ah'-o): (Verb) Properly to stare at (compare G3700), that is, (by implication) to discern clearly (physically or mentally); by extension to attend to; by Hebraism to experience; passively to appear: - behold, perceive, see, take heed.

Tense: second Aorist

Voice: Active

Mood: Infinitive

Genesis 5:3 tells us that Adam reproduced, had a son after his own kind, in his own image. 1 Corinthians 15:22 the first part of the verse tells that in Adam, all **G3956** die, **G599**. Now Nicodemus had not grasped the fact that because of what he had inherited from his parents, he was in serious trouble with God. Natural birth gave him the wrong father. Every one of you who are outside of the family of God, who have never experienced a new birth, your condition is exactly the same as Nicodemus. You are in the wrong family. You have a wrong father. You have Satan as your father. John 8:44 Jesus said to a group of religious leaders, “Joh 8:44  Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” Then in “1 Joh 3:10  In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. ” So if you’re born on the wrong side of the wall, you’re born into the wrong family, **you’re born of the wrong father**. Now Nicodemus was absolutely blind to the spiritual truth, to any kind of spiritual truth and the fact that he was unable to enter into the kingdom of God.

**G3956** - pas (pas): (Adjective) Including all the forms of declension; apparently a primary word; all, any, every, the whole: - all (manner of, means) alway (-s), any (one), X daily, + ever, every (one, way), as many as, + no (-thing), X thoroughly, whatsoever, whole, whosoever.

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Plural

Gender: Masculine

**G599** - apothnēskō (ap-oth-nace'-ko): (Verb) From G575 and G2348; to die off (literally or figuratively): - be dead, death, die, lie a-dying, be slain (X with).

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [they]

Number: Plural

So if you’re spiritually dead this morning, on the authority of the word of God, we tell you that you cannot obey God, you cannot understand God, you cannot please God, and you cannot come to God. This pretty well slams the door shut and about this time you might be saying, “Well what hope is there?” The answer is that there is no hope whatsoever for you. The moment you took that first breath after your birth, your spiritual death experience, because of the sin nature that you had inherited, finished you with God once and for all, unless, God does something to solve the problem for you. You have absolutely no way to solve this problem. You are dead. If you have any doubts about this, I suggest you stop by a few of the funeral parlors and talk to a few of the corpses around and you encourage them to do a few things. You just go up and tell the corpses, “Now you look like a pretty good, husky fellow. If you just try hard enough, you can get up and just forget this whole thing. Now get up here and just move around. What you need is some exercise- that’s why you are where you are.” Now you just give this corpse a good pep talk and see what he can do for himself.

Now that’s the same condition that you’re in spiritually. There’s no amount of pep talk and no amount of interesting stories that we can tell you in church and make you cry. We could do that. We could tell you all kinds of things that could get you emotionally high, then maybe you could walk an aisle, you’d raise a hand, sign a card, and you might even promise to love your mother more. But none of this would serve one bit. You see, you’re dead and it provides nothing in standing before God.

Nicodemus is absolutely blind. If you refuse to meet this requirement of having a new birth- that’s what it takes. If you refuse to have a new birth, to get across this wall to meet God, then I would suggest that you forget all the hypocrisy of attending church and all the religious rituals. I would suggest that you would enjoy anything and everything you can before you experience the hell that is ahead of you. If you refuse to take steps to secure this new birth, you’d better enjoy what you can because you will never come across this wall with God. When death passes, you will never meet Him- except as your Judge.

So verse Joh 3:4  “Nicodemus saith unto him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?’“ Now Nicodemus by this statement proves what Jesus has been saying that he is spiritually dead. This man is so far from being able to grasp any spiritual realities, to understand spiritual things at all, that when Jesus says, “Joh 3:5  Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” **You have to be born again Nicodemus, that’s your problem.** Right away Nicodemus thinks in physical, natural terms. **There are two people that do this**. The **unsaved person** thinks in physical, natural terms, and the **carnal Christian** does. The carnal Christian and the unsaved have this in common. **They think in physical action, natural terms**. The more carnal you are, the more physical, natural, materialistic terms you think in. That’s why Jesus says there are two people that have a real tough time getting into heaven: the person who is wealthy, and the person who is religious. **The religious and the wealthy find it almost impossible to experience a new birth.**

So Nicodemus is a ruler, a leader, a religious leader, and yet he misses the boat completely. You might say, “Well, could he have understood this? Is this a little unfair to say? Because a little later, Nicodemus shakes his head in “Joh 3:10  Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest**G1097** not (oo) these things?” and you wonder, ‘Could Nicodemus have known this?’” Yes he could have. Turn to Ezekiel in the Old Testament, Ezekiel 36:24-26, here is an interesting summary of the very things that Jesus is telling this man. Eze 36:24 “For I will take you from among the nations and gather you out of all countries and will bring you into your own land. Eze 36:25 “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean from all your infirmities and from all your idols will I cleanse you.” Eze 36:26 “A new**H2319** heart also will I give **H5414** you, and a new spirit will I put **H7130** within you. I will take away the stony heart of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh that’s alive- one that’s living.” **Now what you have here is a statement, an actual statement from the Old Testament of the very things that Jesus is talking to Nicodemus about here in the third chapter of John**. So this man, had he understood what the prophets had written, would have understood what Jesus was talking about. So Jesus in Joh 3:5, decides to use words that have spiritual connotation to Nicodemus. Words such as these from Ezekiel that Nicodemus should be able to associate with spiritual reality. Verse 5 says, “Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

**G1097** - ginōskō (ghin-oce'-ko): (Verb) A prolonged form of a primary verb; to “know” (absolutely), in a great variety of applications and with many implications (as shown at left, with others not thus clearly expressed): - allow, be aware (of), feel, (have) known (-ledge), perceive, be resolved, can speak, be sure, understand.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: second [you]

Number: Singular

**H2319** - (חָדָשׁ) châdâsh (khaw-dawsh'): (Adj-fs) From H2318; new: - fresh, new thing.

**H5414** - (נָתַן) nâthan (naw-than'): (V-Qal-Conj/Part-1cs) A primitive root; to give, used with great latitude of application (put, make, etc.): - add, apply, appoint, ascribe, assign, X avenge, X be ([healed]), bestow, bring (forth, hither), cast, cause, charge, come, commit consider, count, + cry, deliver (up), direct, distribute do, X doubtless, X without fail, fasten, frame, X get, give (forth, over, up), grant, hang (up), X have, X indeed, lay (unto charge, up), (give) leave, lend, let (out), + lie, lift up, make, + O that, occupy, offer, ordain, pay, perform, place, pour, print, X pull, put (forth), recompense, render, requite, restore, send (out), set (forth), shew, shoot forth (up). + sing, + slander, strike, [sub-] mit, suffer, X surely, X take, thrust, trade, turn, utter, + weep, X willingly, + withdraw, + would (to) God, yield.

**H7130** - (קֶרֶב) qereb (keh'-reb): (Prep N-mac 2mp) From H7126; properly the nearest part, that is, the centre, whether literally, figuratively or adverbially (especially with preposition): -    X among, X before, bowels, X unto charge, + eat (up), X heart, X him, X in, inward (X -ly, part, -s, thought), midst, + out of, purtenance, X therein, X through, X within self.

**Born of Water and the Spirit**

What Jesus is doing is explaining what He meant by “born again” in verse 3. To be born again means that a **man has to be born of water and of the spirit**. Otherwise, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God. What does it mean to be born of water? In the Bible, water is used in both a literal sense, literal H2O, and when it is, the context will indicate that it is literal H2O. Or it will be used in a spiritual sense. It will have a spiritual meaning. Here in this passage, the literal sense is not indicated. Jesus is not talking about literal things. He is trying to convey spiritual, non-literal things. This water is not water baptism as some people try to make it out to be- which in itself would be contrary to other areas of the word of God. Water baptism is not an element that brings regeneration.

**Water**

Now water is used in the Bible symbolically in a certain ways. Sometimes the Bible speaks of water in terms of the gospel or salvation. You find that in Isaiah 55:1 where he says, “To everyone that thirsts**H6771**, come to the waters**H4325**, and **he that hath no money**, come, buy and eat. Ye come, buy wine and milk **without money**, without price.” He is speaking there about salvation and he is comparing it to water. In Revelation 22:17, “and the Spirit and the bride say ‘come’, and let him that hears say ‘come’, and let him that is of thirst **G1372**, come, and whosoever let him take the water of life**G2222** freely**G1432**.” Here the water of life means salvation.

**H6771** - (צָמֵא) tsâmê' (tsaw-may'): (Adj‑ms) From H6770; thirsty (literally or figuratively): - (that) thirst (-eth, -y).

**H4325** - (מַיִם) mayim (mah'-yim): (Prep‑l, Art | N‑mp) Dual of a primitive noun (but used in a singular sense); water; figuratively juice; by euphemism urine, semen: -  + piss, wasting, water (-ing, [-course, -flood, -spring]).

**G1372** - dipsaō (dip-sah'-o): (Verb) From a variation of G1373; to thirst for (literally or figuratively): - (be, be a-) thirst (-y).

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Participle

Case: Nominative (subject; predicate nominative)

Number: Singular

Gender: Masculine

**G2222** - zōē (dzo-ay'): (Noun) From G2198; life (literally or figuratively): - life (-time). Compare G5590.

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Feminine

G1432 - dōrean (do-reh-an'): (Adverb) Accusative case of G1431 as adverb; gratuitously (literally or figuratively): - without a cause, freely, for naught, in vain.

The second way that water is used symbolically is for the word of God. Ephesians 5:26 is an excellent example of this. Ephesians 5:26, “that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water **G520**4 by the word.” Now every place that the word water is used symbolically it has the idea of cleansing in some way. Here it speaks of washing of the water by the word- that is the word of God having a cleansing effect. 1Peter 1:23, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God which lives and abides forever.” Here the word has the cleansing effect. The word of God is used as water.

**G5204** - hudōr  (hoo'-dor) : (Noun) From the base of G5205; water (as if rainy) literally or figuratively: - water.

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Neuter

A third use is that water sometimes stands for God the Holy Spirit. John 7: 37, “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, ‘If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the scripture has said ‘out of his heart shall flow rivers of living**G2198** water’**G5204**. But this spoke He of the Spirit whom they that believe on Him should receive for the Holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.” So here we have indicated the word “water” used in a symbolic way for the Holy Spirit.

**G2198** - zaō (dzah'-o): (Verb) A primary verb; to live (literally or figuratively): - life (-time), (a-) live (-ly), quick.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Participle

Case: Genitive (possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from")

Number: Singular

Gender: Neuter

Back to John 3:5: Which word was used here? Since Jesus is speaking of spiritual reality, that’s what He’s trying to get across to this man, He’s not talking about doing something with something material so it’s not literal water. He is speaking not about salvation, water does not mean salvation. We can cancel that one out because this is the subject of the whole passage. He gets specifically down to the issue of salvation a little later. It isn’t God the Holy Spirit because that comes in the next phrase, “born of the water and of the Spirit”. So that leaves only one more and that’s the word of God. That is what Jesus is speaking of here. When He says, “A man has to be born of water”, He means he has to be cleansed with the cleansing effect of the word of God. This of course is in keeping with everything else the scripture has to say concerning salvation. Everyone who is saved, everyone whoever comes to salvation, **has the gospel brought to him, directly or indirectly in some way**. Otherwise, he cannot be born again. The apostle Paul said to his Corinthian Christians, “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, ye have not yet many fathers. For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”

**Information**

The point here is that Jesus says that if you’re going to have the new birth, it is impossible without information from the word of God. You must have the information of the gospel received directly by reading the word or having someone reading it to you. Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” **You cannot have faith without the word of God**. Now the other factor is of the spirit which refers of course to the active role of the Holy Spirit in the miracle of regeneration. The person who is not a Christian has a body and he has a soul, but his spirit is dead. He does not have a spirit. You contact the world about you through your body. You are conscious toward people with your soul, but you can only reach God with your spirit. This is why it’s impossible for a person who is born spiritually dead to solve the problem. How am I going to contact God? How am I going to understand the gospel? This was Nicodemus’ condition. At this point John 16:7-11 tell us that God the Holy Spirit comes in and He acts for your dead human spirit and brings to your mentality and your soul an understanding and conviction concerning the gospel. That’s the only thing that the Holy Spirit does for an unbeliever. The unsaved person has no contact with God the Holy Spirit except as He comes in and He substitutes for your dead human spirit at this point to make this spiritual truth alone clear. You see **unless this were made clear, you cannot be born again**. So an unsaved person cannot comprehend the gospel.

**Joh 16:7**  Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient **G4851** for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter **G3875** will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

**Joh 16:8**  And when he is come, he will reprove **G1651** the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

**Joh 16:9**  Of sin, because they believe **G4100** not on me;

**Joh 16:10**  Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

**Joh 16:11**  Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

**G4851** sumpherō (soom-fer'-o): From G4862 and G5342 (including its alternate); to bear together (contribute), that is, (literally) to collect, or (figuratively) to conduce; especially (neuter participle as noun) advantage: - be better for, bring together, be expedient (for), be good, (be) profit (-able for).

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G3875** - paraklētos (par-ak'-lay-tos): (Noun) An intercessor, consoler: - advocate, comforter.

**G1651** - elegchō (el-eng'-kho): (Verb) Of uncertain affinity; to confute, admonish: - convict, convince, tell a fault, rebuke, reprove.

Tense: Future

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [he/she/it]

Number: Singular

**G4100** - pisteuō (pist-yoo'-o): (Verb) From G4102; *to have faith* (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), that is, credit; by implication to entrust (especially one’s spiritual well-being to Christ): - believe (-r), commit (to trust), put in trust with.

Tense: Present

Voice: Active

Mood: Indicative

Person: third [they]

Number: Plural

Romans 3:10 confirms this when it says, “As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one.” Verse 11, “there is none that understand it.” There is none that seek after God. Nobody can understand the word of God. What God uses is His word to bring about this cleansing. 1 Peter 1:23 again, “being born again, not of corruptible seed,” which refers to the physical birth from your parents with their moral corruption of the old sin nature which John 3:6 says, “that which is of the flesh is flesh.” But of the incorruptible, by the word of God, the incorruptible seed refers to the word of God as a spiritual seed. Hebrews 4:12 says, “The word of God is a living thing,” so the last part of John 3:6 says, “but that which is born of the spirit is spirit.” **So the word reveals the need for another birth**. It reveals to us our spiritually dead state. It reveals to us the fact that we are under the sentence of eternal death. It reveals to us the fact that there’s a rescue waiting through Jesus Christ. We have to have a spiritual birth and it should not have surprised Nicodemus. Because you see if you compare the Ezekiel passage, you notice the comparable words. Ezekiel speaks about clean water and John speaks about water. Ezekiel speaks about a new heart, and John speaks about the spirit. Ezekiel speaks about a new spirit and John speaks about being born again, which is what a new spirit means.

All of this should have been clear to Nicodemus. Your first birth gave you a physical body with a soul. Your second birth gives you a living, human spirit. Now John 3:8, let’s carry the story a little farther. Jesus in verse 8 says, “Now this experience in spiritual birth is like the wind, you can’t see it. You observe the effects of its presence.” Then in verse 11 Jesus declares to Nicodemus that he knows what he is talking about. “Verily, verily I say unto thee we speak that which we do know and testify to that which we have seen, and ye receive not our witness.” Jesus says, “You obviously don’t believe me, you are negative toward what I’m saying, but I know what I’m talking about Nicodemus. I’m not just another religious ritualist with a touch of truth and a mountain of spiritual ignorance.” The Pharisees had gone negative on the doctrine of salvation. Verse 12 says, “… if I have told you,” and that’s a first class condition “if”, “if and I have told you of earthly things. I’ve illustrated this and you’ve believed not. How shall you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?” **The answer is you won’t.** **You can’t believe about heavenly things until you accept this first step that you must be born again**.

**Jesus is God**

That raises one more question. What are the mechanics of regeneration? How has God removed the block for me? Well if Nicodemus is to believe Jesus Christ, he has to first accept the fact that Jesus has the unique position has a unique authority as a God-man. That’s what the Lord does in verse 13. He says, “No man hath descended up to heaven,” no man had been to heaven up to this point, “but He that came down from heaven, even the son of man who is in heaven.” Jesus calls Himself “the son of man” that stresses humanity. He says that He has come down from heaven, and He is in heaven. Now you see what He is saying. He is saying, “Nicodemus, you are looking at a person who is human, who has come down from heaven, though no man has yet gone from heaven.” Now how can He say,” I came down from heaven” when no human has come onto heaven? How can He say, “I am still in heaven Nicodemus?” Nicodemus caught the point. He said, “Jesus, are you telling me that you are God? Because only God can be omnipresent. Only God can be here talking to me and still be in heaven.” “That’s right Nicodemus, that’s exactly what I’m telling you.”

The communication was established. Jesus claims to be God, so Nicodemus has to trust Him. If his spiritual death is to be removed, if Nicodemus is to be made alive, he has to trust in the fact that Jesus Christ died spiritually for him on the cross. Now Jesus didn’t do this yet, as of this point, so He had to illustrate it from the Old Testament, verses 14- 15. Nicodemus knew this very well. “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the son of man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” **If you’re going to have eternal life, you’re going to have to do like those Israelites in the wilderness. You’re going to have to believe what God said**. Remember the story that the people were bitten by the poisonous serpents? Moses pled to God for relief. God said to put up a pole and put a serpent made of brass on the pole. Set it up in the camp, and tell anybody who has been bitten by a poisonous snake if they look at that serpent, they will live. A lot of people **looked after the fact was given to them that if they would look they’d live**. A lot of people **didn’t believe it, and they didn’t look and they died**. **Those who lived were immediately healed**.

Apparently it hit Nicodemus because he was one of the pallbearers at Jesus’ funeral. He became a believer. He saw what the Lord was talking about. He realized that those Israelites didn’t do a thing but believed the facts that they were told. **They did nothing to solve their spiritual death but accept what God was telling them**. “Look at the serpent, and you will live.” They **didn’t have to work**, they **didn’t have to pray**. Anybody that tells you that you need to pray to be saved is a liar, or he’s badly mistaken, deluded although sincere people. Anybody tell you to agonize to be saved? He’s way off base. To plead, to promise, to join up, to pay up, the Israelites did none of these things. A fact was given to them from God and they acted on the fact and that’s what we’re trying to do with you. We’re giving you some facts concerning your spiritually dead condition. **God has removed this block through the death of His son, and He’s asking you to believe it so that you may be born of this word and of the spirit**.

**The New Birth**

1 Peter 1 gives the basis of this new birth. Verse 18 “For as much as ye know that you are not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers, from the precious blood,” representing the spiritual death of Christ, ”as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who by Him do believe in God who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.” You see **when Jesus finished paying for your sins, God was satisfied and He raised His son back to life.** For He was guilty Himself of nothing, and therefore He could not be held in death. He paid the price and then Himself was raised.

Alright, we sum up. **The new birth was entirely grace planned**. **The Father planned** it- John 1:13, James 1:18. **The Son provided it**- John 3:16-18, 5:21. **The Holy Spirit performs it**- John 3:5-6, Titus 3:5. What is our part? **Because it’s all of grace**, **it’s to simply accept the facts**. Please remember that reformation is not regeneration, so don’t worry about cleaning up your life and thinking that you’re going to make points with God. All the social betterment programs of our times are a misconception that society will be improved morally. Happy feelings or ecstatic experiences that you may generate are not regeneration. All the rituals and church going that you may perform is not regeneration.

**The Fruits of Regeneration**

Now there are some very beautiful and wonderful things that result from regeneration. **One**, you receive a live human spirit. **Two**, you are given the eternal life of God Himself. **Three**, you become a child of God. **Four**, you enter into God’s family. **Five**, you become a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. **Sixth**, God becomes your Father. **Seven**, you are made a new creation.

If you’ve never received this savior, if you’ve never concerned yourself with the fact that you are spiritually dead and you need to do something about this, now is the time to do it. God has removed the block and He’s pleading with you. He’s offering you the opportunity to simply come across the wall and meet Him. There’s nothing standing between you and God in reference to this block, except your refusal to accept the word of the gospel and to permit the Holy Spirit to do His regenerating work upon your dead human spirit. Wouldn’t you like to be spiritually alive? **All you have to do is look to the savior, and believe that what God said He did, is really true**, just as the Israelites looked at that serpent on that pole and they lived. You may live, or you may die. **The choice is entirely up to you**.

John E. Danish, 1971

Annotated Hebrew and Greek words and morphology by Robert Jameson (pupil of Berean Memorial Christian School and member of Berean Memorial Church).