

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Salvation - Born Again*

*John Chapter Three*



Jesus and Nicodemus by James Tissot Cir 1885

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# Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of John  
SALVATION

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John 3:1–4

*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup> 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 (KJV)?*

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night to talk to Him. Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin and of the Pharisees. He knew that Jesus had come from God because of all the miracles He was doing and he wanted to talk to Jesus about it. His questions were leading to His Messiah-ship. The Jews were looking for the long-awaited Messiah. (the anointed one prophesied in Jewish Scripture for several thousand years) As he began to talk Jesus told Him that he needed to be born again. This was very puzzling to him and he responded with a question about how this was possible to reenter his mother's womb and come out again.

Jesus then gives His profound answer in John 3:5 by saying:

John 3:5

*<sup>5</sup> 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 (KJV).*

To read this passage in the Greek word order the text would say; “Unless one is born of water *even* or *that is* of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”

Water cannot accomplish the new birth and it does not mean the amniotic fluid associated with the natural birth (flesh). He addresses that in the subsequent verse. In John 7:37-39 the Lord clearly confirms that the water represents the Holy Spirit.

John 7:37–39

*<sup>37</sup> In the last day, that great [day] of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. <sup>38</sup> He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

*<sup>39</sup>(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) (KJV)*

The apostle Paul carried this thought through in Titus 3:5. If we read the English words as it would read from the Greek text word order it says:

*God saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of “the again birth” even “remaking” by the Holy spirit.*

Water certainly cannot cleanse us from spiritual filthiness. The Jews knew this fact well. Thus, the water is not literal but, by the statements of Christ in John 3, this water would refer to the work of the Spirit! Jesus further adds to this discussion that it is one thing to be born of human flesh, but it is another issue to be born of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit goes where He will. The Spirit of God is sovereign. He goes where He will.

John 3:8

*<sup>8</sup>The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (KJV).*

Some have said that one does not need to be “born again.” They refer to that as a particular type of Christian. However, Christ told Nicodemus that he *had* to be born again. He did not make it an option for one to enter the family of God. One can only do that by being born again.

Why is that so important? Why did Christ stress this concept with Nicodemus? God wants us to “become” His children by entering His family. This is the only way in! Christ is the only way to heaven and one must be born again to come in to a saving grace knowledge of Jesus the Christ. So nobody on earth will go to heaven if they don’t believe that Christ is the way and if they don’t accept His salvation.

John 14:6

*<sup>6</sup>Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me (KJV).*

Galatians 3:26

*<sup>26</sup>For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (KJV).*

Why do we need to do this at all? Why can’t we simply be in God’s family? He created us and gave us life. Isn’t that enough?

No it is not enough. Since Adam and Eve “fell” and brought sin into the world we have been at enmity with God. This sin is a corruption that is unholy and produced a separation of the human spirit (heart) from God. Eve doubted God’s Word then and much of the world’s population does now too. We have to be cleansed of that sin in order to be “one with God.” Some would say that; “I am not a sinner.” Others maybe but not me! Why I belong to a church, I give to the poor, I don’t kill, I don’t steal etc. Only the real sinners do those things. I don’t!

The apostle Paul in his book of Romans develops the argument for almost the entire first three chapters that every person on the face of the earth is a sinner and therefore “guilty” before God. He starts with the pagan Gentile world and lets us know that they have creation to see which tells them of the existence of God. He then moves on to the “moral Gentile” man and explains his guilt before God too. Finally, he tells us of the Jews who had the Law of Moses and lets us know that they too are “guilty.” He summarizes this section of Scripture with the verse from chapter 3:

Romans 3:23

*<sup>23</sup>For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (KJV);*

What does it mean to be guilty before Him? It means that we missed the mark; we have sinned. The human sinner will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1Corinthians 15:50

*<sup>50</sup>Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (KJV).*

Again, some would try and tell us that they have not sinned. It is interesting that God through the prophet Jeremiah explains the condition of the human heart. This is God’s perspective:

Jeremiah 17:9–10

*<sup>9</sup>The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?<sup>10</sup>I the LORD search the heart, [I] try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, [and] according to the fruit of his doings (KJV).*

In many other sections of Scripture God tells us that the human heart is unwilling to come under the constraints of God’s Spirit. Further it hides from others and thinks that it can hide from God in the same way. *It is evasive.* It thinks God cannot see. However, we have just seen that God searches the heart and knows the hearts of men. Christ said in 1 John 3:20 that He is the *heart knower*. In the Greek, the words are “Cardio Kenosis.” He knows the hearts of *all* humans.

1 John 3:20; 24,25

*<sup>20</sup>For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.<sup>24</sup>But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all [men].<sup>25</sup>And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man (KJV).*

God demands perfection in us and since the fall we are not perfect. He knows us and wants us to enter His kingdom. He will not force us to enter. Many will try to keep out those who are entering from going in. Christ will not stop those efforts to keep People out.

Matthew 23:13

*<sup>13</sup> But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in [yourselves], neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in (KJV).*

What then is the remedy for the situation that the entire human family is in? Again we look to the book of Romans for an answer.

Romans 6:23

*<sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (KJV).*

In order to appropriate a gift one must receive it. That is we must take it. A gift given and not received is not a gift that has any merit or value to the person to whom it was intended to be given.

John 1:12-13

*<sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name.<sup>13</sup> Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (KJV).*

So if this is a gift that God has for us, what do we do to receive it? The Bible tells us what we must do to “receive” Christ. It is actually quite clear. First, we must believe in our hearts. That is we no longer have any doubt. Then we “confess” Him with our mouths. That is, we tell others that we have believed. When we become “born again” we can’t help it, we are compelled to tell others. It is one of the outward signs that we have become believers and entered into Christ kingdom. We have received Christ’s Spirit and the Spirit moves us to share with others this wonderful transformation. This is the first stage and it puts our evasive hearts in direct focus with Christ.

Romans 10:9

*<sup>9</sup> That if thou shalt **confess with thy mouth** the Lord Jesus, and **shalt believe in thine heart** that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved (KJV).*

We call this believing in the Gospel of Christ. The apostle Paul summarized it in 1 Cor 15 this way:

1 Corinthians 15:1–4

*<sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the gospel** which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; <sup>2</sup> By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.<sup>3</sup> For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; <sup>4</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures (KJV):*

God loves us because this is one of His characteristics. He is love.

1 John 4:8

*<sup>8</sup> He that loveth not knoweth not God; for **God is love** (KJV).*

There are only two things God wants us to do after we become believers.

1. He wants us to love God with all of our hearts, mind, soul and strength.
2. He wants us to love other believers the same way we love ourselves.

Mark 12:30–31

*<sup>30</sup> And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this [is] the first commandment.<sup>31</sup> And the second [is] like, [namely] this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these (KJV).*

God simply wants us to absolutely surrender ourselves to Him. It is *total* and *unconditional surrender* to His will in our lives. The lord Jesus taught us the way in the garden of Gethsemane when He prayed to God the Father and said:

Luke 22:42

*<sup>42</sup> Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done (KJV).*

When we give in and surrender our lives to God the Holy Spirit enters us and we become born again. At that time, we receive the “fruits” of the Spirit as further evidence of our new life in Christ. We have become new creatures!

Galatians 5:22-23

*<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law (KJV)*

We have our whole lives to come to Christ. There is no difference to Christ in terms of our salvation as to *when* we become born again. It is definitely better to come in early and walk with Him for our whole lives. Jesus told us of the parable of the householder and the laborers to let us know how He takes this issue. (Matthew 20:1-16) It does not matter when you come. It matters just that you come just as you are now.

John 14:23

*<sup>23</sup>Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (KJV).*

God is love. He loves us and he wants us to love Him. Even though we spend most of our lives apart from God and go our own way He who created us still loves us and wants us to love Him.

Finally:

1 John 4:19

*<sup>19</sup>We love him, because he first loved us.....(KJV)*

When we love God, we connect to Him through the love that He already has for us and we have communion with Him.

There is no other way.