The Gospel of John
**2.6—SEEING AND ENTERING THE KINGDOM – JOHN 3:1–10**

**INTRODUCTION**

LAST WEEK, IN HIS MESSAGE ENTITLED “SAVING A PHARISEE, PASTOR JERRY NOTED THAT JESUS HELD NICODEMUS WHOM HE CALLED “THE TEACHER OF ISRAEL” RESPONSIBLE FOR NOT UNDERSTANDING ASPECTS OF THE NEW BIRTH WHICH WERE FORETOLD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT BY PROPHETS LIKE JEREMIAH (JER 31:31–34) AND EZEKIEL (EZEK 36:24–28).

THIS WEEK WE LOOK AT THE FIRST 10 VERSES OF JOHN 3 AND HOW JESUS EMPHATICALLY SHARES WITH A WEALTHY, HIGHLY-REGARDED, RELIGIOUS LEADER THAT TO SEE AND TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT. WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT BEING BORN AGAIN OF THE WATER AND THE SPIRIT BUT WHAT DO WE SEE WHEN WE “SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD” AND WHAT DOES “ENTERING THE KINGDOM” LOOK LIKE.

DID NOT JESUS TEACH US TO PRAY “YOUR KINGDOM COME YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.”

**LET’S ONCE AGAIN READ JOHN 3:1–10 AS WE EXPLORE SEEING AND ENTERING THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**

**John 3:1–10 (ESV)**

**1**Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. **2**This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” **3**Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” **4**Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” **5**Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **6**That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7**Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ **8**The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” **9**Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” **10**Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?

LET’S DO A QUICK REVIEW OF OUR TEXT

V1–2 – “Now there was a man of the Pharisees … ruler of the Jews … came to Jesus by night … Rabbi … teacher come from God … no one can do these signs … unless God is with him”

**NICODEMUS WAS A PHARISEE** – which meant that he was a church (Temple/synagogue) goer, who believed in God, read the Scriptures daily, prayed, fasted, tithed, and meticulously sought to obey the law. Because of the signs he saw or heard Jesus did, he called **Jesus Rabbi, a teacher come from God, who did the signs he did because God was with him**.

**NICODEMUS WAS A RULER OF THE JEWS -** a member of the Sanhedrin which was a council of priests and religious teachers who were in charge of Jewish affairs in Roman occupied Palestine.

Because he was a Pharisee and a Member of the Sanhedrin, he thought it best, prudent and wise, to come by night to visit Jesus though he implied that other leaders may have had similar views to his though the majority of the religious rulers felt threatened by Jesus.

Most people would have expected an acknowledgement of the flattering words Nicodemus spoke to Jesus but Jesus reply was …

V3 – “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

* Nicodemus had responded to what he saw or heard externally about Jesus but Jesus lead by the Spirit addressed a bigger issue, a most important matter, a cancer that Nicodemus could not see.
	+ **1 Samuel 16:7 (ESV)** **7**But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the **Lord sees not as man sees**: man looks on the outward appearance, but the **Lord looks on the heart**.”
	+ **Isaiah 55:8–9 (ESV)** **8** For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. **9** For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
* Born again: “again” = “anothen” = “from above”
* As we have seen, both “again” and “from above” apply in this case as we see in Jesus reply to Nicodemus who asked

V4 – “How can a man be born when he is old …”

* He cannot be born again naturally but we can experience another birth not a natural one but a spiritual one which Jesus was opening the door to as ‘… the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).”
* **Romans 6:23 (ESV)** **23**For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And Jesus answers how.

V5–7 “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **6**That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7**Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

There must be a transformation a metamorphosis from the inside out.

Born of water through

1. The flesh - natural Birth

Or

1. Baptism:

**Mark 16:16 (ESV)** **16**Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Or

1. Word: **1 Peter 1:23 (ESV)** **23**since you have been **born again**, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, **through the living and abiding word of God**;

Word: **Ephesians 5:25–26 (ESV)** **25**Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, **26**that he might sanctify her, having **cleansed her by the washing of water with the word**, 26that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the **washing of water by the word**,

Born of the Spirit

**John 1:12–13 (ESV)** **12**But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, **13who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God**.

**Luke 1:35 (ESV)** **35**And the angel answered her, “The **Holy Spirit will come upon you**, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

**To see and enter the Kingdom of God** which is to be saved you must be changed from inside out. For some this is a short process, for others it can be a longer and sometimes difficult process making it hard to look back and pin point exactly when the change took place. But your desires, talk, behavior and who has Lordship in your life are all changed.

Testimony – Carl’s salvation was a process

**Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)** **6**And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

V8 – The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

The Greek word for wind and for Spirit is the same in Greek. It is the word “pneuma.”

Just as you cannot see the wind but can see, hear, or feel the effect of the wind so too is what happens with the Holy Spirit.

To be born again something has to happen in you that is a work of heaven – leading to a regeneration, a new creation.

**Titus 3:5 (ESV)** **5**he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of **regeneration** and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

**2 Corinthians 5:17** (ESV) **17**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

**As Pastor Jerry shared last week:**

**WHEN YOU ARE BORN AGAIN, YOU ARE TRANSFORMED AND YOUR SPIRIT BECOMES NEW … YOU ACTUALLY WANT TO SERVE GOD … OBEY HIM … AND PLEASE HIM. AND WHEN YOU ARE FILLED, OR BAPTIZED, WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT… YOU RECEIVE THE POWER TO CARRY OUT WHAT YOU NOW WANT TO DO … THE WILL OF GOD.**

**Philippians 2:12–13 (ESV)** **12**Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**, **13**for **it is God who works in you**, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

V9 – “How can these things be?” = (lit) “How can such things be born, or become, or happen?

V10 – “Are you **the teacher of Israel** and yet you do not understand these things?”

* Why would Jesus say that?
	+ **2 Timothy 3:7 (ESV)** **7**always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

**Jeremiah 31:31–34 (ESV)** “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make **a new covenant** with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, **32** not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. **33** For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: **I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts**. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **34** And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. **For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more**.”

**Ezekiel 36:25–27 (ESV)** **I will sprinkle clean water on you**, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. **26** And **I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you**. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. **27** And **I will put my Spirit within you**, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

But let’s go back to verses 3 and 5:

V3 – “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again **he cannot see the kingdom of God**.”

V5 - “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, **he cannot enter the kingdom of God**.

For many of us, when we think about the Kingdom of God (the rule, authority, realm of God) we think about heaven.

**John 18:36 (ESV)** **36**Jesus answered, “**My kingdom is not of this world**. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. **But my kingdom is not from the world**.”

But Jesus also taught us to pray:

**Matthew 6:9–10 (ESV)** **9**Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. **10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth** as it is in heaven.

Jesus wants His Kingdom which is not of this world to be brought to this world by those who are born again of the water and the spirit. Jesus came not only to pay the price but to literally show us how to bring His Kingdom to wherever we are.

**Acts 1:1–2 (ESV) 1** In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, **2**until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.

**John 14:12 (NKJV)** 12“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

**Luke 11:20 (ESV)** **20**But if it is by the finger of God that I **cast out demons *(a sign which follow those who believe)***, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

**Luke 10:8–9 (ESV)** **8**Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. **9Heal *(one of the gifts of the Spirit)* the sick in it** and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’

**Acts 10:37–38 (ESV)** **37**you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: **38**how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about **doing good and healing all** who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

A word of caution:

**Matthew 7:21 (ESV)** **21**“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Altar Call

Repent

**Matthew 4:17 (ESV)** **17**From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Do not be “not far” but be born of the water and the spirit.

**Mark 12:32–34 (ESV)** **32**And the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. **33**And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” **34**And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.