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 - All notes, etc. available at: www.htchurch.com/john
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Recap

- Last week we saw Nicodemus coming to Jesus by night.
- Explaining the Pharisees, Sadducees, etc., and the Sanhedrin.
- Nicodemus was willing to acknowledge that God was with Jesus, but he really didn't understand the heavenly birth, a spiritual birth caused by God Himself.
- All need the new birth: *I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you... I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes...*
- This born-again experience isn't not only for the age to come, but today.

Discussion on some questions from last week

- About the salvation of Israel at the end of the age and our perseverance
- About the Millennial Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdom of God

The Wind Blows Where It Wishes (John 3:1-8)

1 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 and said to him, "Most assuredly, 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, “Most assuredly, 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 the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

- People must be born again because everything produces after its own kind. Human weakness can only generate human weakness.
- The *flesh* in John’s Gospel is a symbol for humanity in general.
- Being born again is the same as being born of the Spirit. The New Birth, then, is a birth from God. Man cannot perform it.
- Jesus tells Nicodemus not to be amazed: how could we possibly stand in God’s Presence unless He transformed us?
- Jesus compares the operation of the Spirit to the blowing of the wind. We can’t see it, and we don’t know what it’s doing, but we can feel it, and see its effects.
- People born of the Spirit are the same, according to the Lord.

Say What? (John 3:9-10)

9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?”

- Nicodemus couldn't understand this: *“These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* (1 Cor. 2: 13-14)
- Jesus gives him a rebuke:
 - Nicodemus was the teacher of Israel.
 - Second, the mere fact of being a teacher means he should have known.
 - How did he fail to read how the wind of God revived the bones?

The Witness (John 3:11-13)

11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

- Jesus comes back with his own “we know!” Another problem Nicodemus has is that he doesn't receive Jesus' witness.
- Will you receive the witness that people are giving about Jesus?
- When Jesus says *We* he's actually speaking of the whole Trinity.
- The Trinity is testifying as to what they know and have seen, and Nicodemus doesn't receive their testimony.
- The new birth is an earthly concept, but it went over Nicodemus's head.

- Only the Son of Man has been in Heaven. Only the Son of Man can reveal the truth about heavenly matters, and important earthly matters.
- Jesus most often referred to Himself as the Son of Man, not the Son of God. This was a reference to the One in Daniel who was presented to God the Father in Heaven. He received a Kingdom from the Father.
- At Cana, Jesus was greater than man-made religious traditions; at Passover he was greater than the Temple itself. Now He claims to be from Heaven itself – and also the only one who can reveal heavenly things to people!
- Jesus was claiming to be the Heavenly Man seen in Daniel’s vision!

Lifted Up! (John 3:14-15)

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

Look at this important story from Numbers Chapter 21:

4 Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” 6 So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. 7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

8 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

- Notice: Jesus says the Son of Man must be lifted up, which also meant to be crucified. (See also Isa. 52:13: “*My Servant... shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.*”)
- Jesus was indicating what kind of death He was going to die.
- He would have to be lifted up just like Moses had lifted up the serpent.
- Moses was telling them to be cured by looking at the thing that had destroyed them. It was made of bronze, which was a symbol of judgment.
- There is nothing to add to God’s designated process of being saved from sin.
- We need to put aside pride and look to the remedy God made.
- God *made Him who knew no sin to become sin for us, so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.* (2 Cor. 5:21)
- We need to not only trust in the Incarnate Christ or believe in His teachings; we can only be saved by trusting in the crucified Christ.
- MacLaren: “*He came to heal, and you will not get the poison out of men by exhortations, philosophies, moralities, social reforms. Poison cannot be treated by surface applications, but by the cross.*”

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