

Rev. Thomas Emery
“Born from Above” John 3:1-21
Salem Presbyterian Church
Sunday, March 15, 2015

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night looking for a set of rules to add to organized religion’s already lengthy list of guidelines. Nicodemus was asking: “How can I be sure that God loves and accepts me? How can I be Born Again, be Born from Above, and know it for a fact? How is the womb re-entry routine accomplished?”

There is a fascinating thing to notice here about Nicodemus. He knew his scriptures well. But for him, being religious meant knowing what to do and especially what not to do. But Jesus changed all of that.

TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Point One: *What “Born from above” means.* Jesus said that in order to see the Kingdom of God, the emphasis must shift to what God does.

Teaching Point Two: *The New Birth is required of everyone.* The New Testament makes it clear that this "New Birth" is not our doing. We are "Born from Above;" it is God's gift.

Teaching Point Three: *How the New Birth happens.* We can't earn it. We can only accept it in faith. So, to be “Born From Above” means to come alive to the Bible by falling in love with "the author and finisher of our faith."

THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE

Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God” (John 3:3 NLT).

ACTION POINT

People in their natural state became like computers with faulty wiring. They can't work right because they are mis-wired. They cannot correct the problem. God is the only spiritual computer specialist who can fix it. It cost him a cross in order to be able to do it. One of the awful failings of many mainline churches in America is that they no longer preach that it is necessary to be Born Again. They imply that a person can be saved by just hanging around the church. But hanging around the church no more makes you a Christian than hanging around the Lion's Club makes you a lion. Each of us needs to prayerfully ask God what it means to be “Born from Above” and to trust Jesus as the Lord of our lives. May we all enter into the eternal Kingdom of God!