

Do you remember the first time you heard, read, or began to contemplate what the words, “born again” mean? What were your first impressions of the term?

If you are a parent, do you remember the first time you held your child? What were your emotions?

To what degree does a baby play a role in his birth? What does this teach us about spiritual birth?

**1) The possibility of religious deception. (2:23-3:3)**

John 2:23 says Jesus knew what was in those who followed him. What do you think was in the crowd that followed Jesus? What do you think was NOT in them?

The crowd that followed Jesus in John 2 believed in Jesus but he did not believe in them. Why not? This episode teaches us that there is a kind of faith that cannot save. Describe this kind of faith.

How can exposure to religious activity or ceremony deceive one into believing he has genuine faith when he does not?

Do you know people who say they are Christians who show no signs of spiritual life? (No need to name them in your group...unless it is yourself!)

Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night?

Have you ever been immersed in a church or religious system that did not emphasize the importance of being born again? What brought you out of it?

**2) The tragedy of spiritual death. (3:4-8)**

Nicodemus had trouble comprehending Jesus' words about the new birth. Do you have trouble having a spiritual conversation?

Pastor Trent often uses the term “dirty rotten sinner” to explain our sinful condition. Does this ever offend you? Do you think it offends others?

Read the following scriptures describing the tragedy of our spiritual condition. What is our diagnosis before being born again?

- Ephesians 2:1-3, 12
- John 3:19-20
- Romans 3:10-18
- Genesis 8:21

Why does Jesus mention water in reference to the new birth?

How does wind illustrate the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing a person to spiritual life?

**3) The necessity of genuine conversion. (3:9-15)**

The new birth is always accompanied with repentance and faith.

What evidence of repentance accompanied your new birth?

Which of the following statements was harder for you to believe?

- No one is too bad that they can't be born again.

- No one is too good that they don't need to be born again.

When is your spiritual birthday? (It's ok if you don't know the date but you should be able to point to timeframe.)

Ezekiel 36:25-27 tells us three things that happen when we are born again. Do you continue to see evidence of these in your life today?

- We are made clean.
- We are given a new heart.
- We are given a new spirit.

#### Additional Scripture

- John 1:12-13
- 1Peter 1:23
- 1John 3:9
- 1John 5:1,4,18
- 1Peter 2:2