

THE NEW BIRTH

JOHN 03:01–15

Introduction

The new birth, along with God's great love (v. 16-17), is the most important revelation ever made in all of human history. Jesus revealed the new birth.

- I. The setting: Nicodemus approached Jesus (v. 1-2).
- II. The new birth: a necessity (v. 3).
- III. The new birth: a spiritual event (vv. 4-8).
- IV. The new birth: a true experience (vv. 9-11).
- V. The new birth: rejected (vv. 11-12).
- VI. The new birth: revealed only by Jesus (v. 13).
- VII. The new birth: secured by two acts (vv. 14-15).

JOHN 03:01–15

NEW BIRTH, BORN AGAIN, NEW CREATION, REGENERATION

A spiritual birth, a rebirth of one's spirit, a new life, a renewed soul, a regenerated spirit. It is the regeneration and renewal of one's spirit and behaviour (2 Cor. 5:17).

It is the provision or infusion of a new life, of a godly nature (2 Pet. 1:4). The new birth is so radical a change in a person's life that it can be described only as being *born again*. Something so wonderful happens to the soul that it is just like a *new birth*. It is a spiritual birth, a birth beyond the grasp of man's hands and efforts. It is so radical, so life changing, and so wonderful that it can be wrought only by the love and power of God Himself.

The New Testament teaching on the new birth is rich and full.

1. The new birth is a necessity. A person will never see (Jn. 3:3) nor ever enter (Jn. 3:5) the Kingdom of God unless he is born again (Jn. 3:7).
2. The new birth is a spiritual birth, the birth of a new power and spirit in life. It is not reformation of the old nature (Rom. 6:6). It is the actual creation of a new birth within spiritually (Jn. 3:5-6; see Jn. 1:12-13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:24). (See *New Person*, Eph. 4:24.)

A person is spiritually born again:

- a. By water, even the Spirit (See *Water and Spirit*, Jn. 3:5).
- b. By the choice (will) of God (Jas. 1:18).
- c. By imperishable or incorruptible seed, even by the Word of God (1 Pet. 1:23).

- d. By God from above (1 Pet. 1:3). The word again (ana) in the phrase “born again” also means *above*, (Jn. 1:12-13.)
- e. By Christ, who gives both the *power and right* to be born again (Jn. 1:12-13).
3. The new birth is a definite experience, a real experience. A person experiences the new birth:
 - a. By believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (1 Jn. 5:1; Jn. 3:14-15).
 - b. By the gospel as it is shared by believers (1 Cor. 4:15; Phile.10).
 - c. By the Word of God (1 Pet. 1:23) or by the Word of Truth (Jas. 1:18).
4. The new birth is a changed life, a totally new life. A person proves that he is born again:
 - a. By doing righteous acts (1 Jn. 2:29; see Eph. 2:10; 4:24).
 - b. By not practicing sin (1 Jn. 3:9; 5:18).
 - c. By loving other believers (1 Jn. 4:7).
 - d. By overcoming the world (1 Jn. 5:4).
 - e. By keeping himself without sin (1 Jn. 5:18).
 - f. By possessing the divine seed or nature (1 Jn. 3:9; 1 Pet. 1:23; 2 Pet. 1:4; Col. 1:27). □

EPHESIANS 04: 24 NEW PERSON OR SELF

And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 04:24

A man *regenerated, renewed, born again* who has become spiritual minded. It is a *new person* or *self* created by Christ; he has been given a holy nature and an incorruptible life. It is opposed to the *old person* or *self* with a corrupt nature. It is a man who is...

- in fellowship with God
- obedient to God’s will
- devoted to God’s service

There are two Greek words translated by the English word new. There is the word neos which refers to something new that has just been made, but there are already many others existing just like it. There is the word kainos which refers to something new, something just made and there is nothing like it in existence. Kainos is the word used here. Jesus Christ makes a *new man* entirely — a creation unlike any other creation existing. The Gentile believer is not made into a Jew; neither is a Jewish

believer made into a Gentile. Each, through the Lord Jesus Christ, is made into a *new kind of person — a new person or self in God*. Every person can *begin life all over again*; every person can have a new beginning, a new life by coming to Jesus Christ.

How is this possible? By the power of God. When a person believes in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ — really believes and entrusts his life into the hands of Jesus Christ — God creates the spirit of the person in righteousness and true holiness. God takes the faith of the person and *credits it as the righteousness of Jesus Christ*. God actually credits the person's faith *as the perfect righteousness and holiness of Jesus Christ*. Therefore, the person stands before God in the righteousness and holiness of Jesus Christ. But note: this is not all that God does. He does more marvellous things for the believer — all having to do with creating the believer into a new person.

1. God quickens or makes the spirit of the believer alive. Whereas the believer's spirit was dead to God, God creates it and makes it alive to God.
2. God causes the believer to be born again spiritually.
3. God actually places His divine nature into the heart of the believer.
4. God actually creates a new person or self out of the believer.
5. God renews the believer by the Holy Spirit. □

I. John 03:01–02 Nicodemus

Nicodemus approached Jesus. Note these facts about Nicodemus.

1. He was a member of the Jewish ruling (archon) council. This means he was a senator or a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews (See *Sanhedrin*, Mt. 26:59).
 - a. He was a Pharisee (See *Pharisees*, Acts 23:8).
 - b. He was Israel's *teacher* (v. 10, ho didaskalos); that is, he held some official position of the highest rank. He was either the *leading official* or the *leading teacher* of Israel who was either authorized or accepted as such by the public.
 - c. He apparently was wealthy. He spent a great deal of money on the burial of Jesus (Jn. 19:39).
 - d. He was silent at the trial of Jesus, saying nothing to defend Jesus, but he boldly stepped forth after the Lord's death to publicly help in the burial of Jesus (Jn. 19:39-42).
2. He came on behalf of the religionists. He said, "*We know.*" Some of the religionists wondered if Jesus were the true Messiah, thinking that perhaps He was. Some eventually become believers (Lk. 13:31; Acts 6:7; 15:5; 18:8, 17). Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah and performing the spectacular works that were prophesied of the Messiah; therefore, He was the talk of everyone throughout the nation. The rulers were questioning and wondering: Is He really the Messiah? (Mt. 21:8-9; 21:23.) This was

the question, the thing that Nicodemus felt compelled to find out. Note that Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. He apparently did this because he *feared* the other leaders who opposed Jesus. John seemed to be saying this at the burial of Jesus (Jn. 19:39).

3. He acknowledged Jesus only as a teacher from God. He and others saw the miracles Jesus did, and they knew something: only a man from God could do such miracles.
4. In essence, Nicodemus was asking, “Who are you? The miracles show that God is *with you*, but you are claiming to be the Messiah, the Son of God. Are you truthfully in all honesty?”

Note that Jesus did not answer Nicodemus directly. He saw into the empty, searching heart of Nicodemus and saw the honesty of his question. So Jesus went right to the heart of the matter. Miracles and signs were not what was important. What was important was for Nicodemus to be changed: changed spiritually, changed within, and changed completely — a spiritual change that could only be described as being born again.

MATHEW 26:59 SANHEDRIN

Sanhedrin is the ruling body of the nation of Israel, both the governing council and supreme court of the Jews. It had seventy-one members and was presided over by the High Priest. Its membership was made up of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes or lawyers, and the elders who were leaders from among the people. A quorum was twenty-three. The legal power of the Sanhedrin to pass the death sentence was restricted about twenty some years before the trial of Jesus. However, they did retain the right of excommunication (see Jn. 9:22). To secure Jesus’ death, they were forced by law to appeal to the Romans for the death sentence. □

ACTS 23:08 PHARISEES

The word means the *separated ones*. The Pharisees were strict religionists. Their religious sect arose about B.C. 175. A Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, tried to stamp out the Jewish religion and replace it with Greek customs and practices. A number of Jewish men opposed this threat and determined among themselves to save the Jewish religion. They refused to practice Greek customs and dedicated themselves to practicing the Jewish law in the strictest sense. They felt that by carrying out every little detail of the Jewish law and by teaching others to do the same, they could save the Jewish religion and nation and keep it from dying out.

Several things should be noted.

1. They were the orthodox of their day — a sect or school of religious thought. They were organized solely for preserving the law and the Jewish religion. Thereby, they were to save the Jewish nation.

2. They were strict literalists. The Jewish law was expanded into thousands and thousands of little rules and regulations by the Scribes. These rules and regulations were known as the Scribal or Oral Law. More than fifty volumes or books were eventually needed to hold the regulations.
3. The Pharisees were a body of the most zealous religionists.
4. There were never many Pharisees — never more than 6,000. The strictness and demands of the sect were too hard for the common people.
5. They were in dead earnest — dedicated and zealous, self-denying, and moral. No man could give his life to so desperate and restrictive a task unless he was totally genuine.
6. They were self-righteous, heartless, and hypocritical (Lk. 18:9). They lacked any sense of need or sin (Lk. 7:39).
7. They were bitterly opposed to the Sadducees, hating and despising them, feeling that the Sadducees were traitors to the nation.

However, the Pharisees were forced to quietly cooperate with the Sadducees because the Sadducees were the primary ruling party of the nation.

8. They were the main opponents of Jesus Christ and were unsparing in their denunciation of Him. Their savage attacks were primarily for two reasons. First, He was not a graduate of any of their rabbinical schools, nor a member of any of their religious sects. Second, He attacked their rules and regulations which had been added to God's law. □

II. *John 03:03 The New Birth is a Necessity*

The new birth is a necessity. Two facts show this:

1. The strong assertion, “Unless he is born *again*.” The word *again* (anōthen) has three different meanings in Greek. It means...

- *from the first*: from the beginning or completely and fully (see Lk. 1:3)
- *again*: a second time, a repeated act (v.4) (see Gal. 4:9)
- *from above*: from the top, which means from God (see Jn. 19:11)

The point is this. A man must be “born again.” He must be...

- born completely and fully, a complete and full change
 - born all over *again*, in the sense of a second time
 - born *from above*, from God
2. The importance of the words, “no one can see the kingdom of God.” One must be “born again” or else he will never “see” (v. 3) nor “enter” (v. 5) the Kingdom of God. It is an absolute imperative that a person be born again (3:7).

John 3:18 “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Deu 30:19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.

III. **John 03:04–08 The New Birth is Spiritual**

The new birth is a spiritual birth. (See Pt. 2, *New Birth*, Jn. 3:1-15.) Nicodemus was puzzled by the words “born again.” He did not know what Jesus meant. He understood Jesus to be saying that a man must be born a “second time.” Jesus answered Nicodemus by doing five things.

1. Jesus gave the *source of the new birth*. It was being born of water, even of the Spirit. The new birth is a spiritual birth, the birth of a new power and spirit in life. It is not reformation of the old nature (Rom. 6:6). It is the actual creation of a new birth within spiritually (Jn. 3:5-6; see Jn. 1:12-13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:24). (See *Water*, Jn. 3:5.)
2. Jesus *repeated the importance* of being born again. Note what v. 3 says: “no one can see” (grasp, understand, know, experience) the Kingdom of God; v. 5 says “no one can enter” (gain entrance to) the Kingdom of God.
3. Jesus gave the *nature of the new birth*. It is spiritual, not physical and material (See *God’s Blessings*, Eph. 1:3; See *New Person*, Eph. 4:24). The flesh cannot bridge the gap between flesh and spirit. Flesh is only flesh; it has no power to be born again, to become spirit.
4. Jesus re-emphasized the absolute necessity of the new birth. “You must be born again.” The word *must* (*dei*) means absolute necessity, an imperative.
5. Jesus illustrated the point by picturing the wind. The Spirit of God works just like the wind. We may not know how the wind works, but we can see the effects. It is the same with the Spirit of God: we may not know *how* He works, but we can see the effects of His working.

John 1:12-13 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

Titus 3:5 *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

James 1:18 *He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.*

1 Pet 1:3 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

1 Pet 1:23 *For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.*

1 John 2:29 *If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.*

1 John 3:9 *No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.*

1 John 4:7 *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.*

1 John 5:1 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.*

JOHN 03:05 WATER AND SPIRIT

*Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit." **John 03:05***

The word *and* (kai) can also be translated "even." The way it is translated here is left to the translator. In light of the rest of Scripture, it probably should be translated "even." This would mean that water with all of its cleansing power is a symbol of the Holy Spirit: "No one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit." A strong argument for this is in the very next verse. The new birth is spiritual, apart from any natural phenomenon. It has nothing to do with any physical substance, including water. It is not of the flesh, not of any material thing. It is of the Spirit (see Rom. 8:11; Eph. 2:1).

Is it possible that *water* means "baptism" here? When John was writing the gospel, he and the readers of his gospel would have known what was meant by *Christian baptism*. However, when Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, there was no such thing as Christian baptism. It is unlikely that Jesus would say something that Nicodemus could not grasp and understand. Jesus was not out to confuse him, but to lead him to be born again. There was no way Nicodemus could be baptised in order to be born again — not then — for Christian baptism had not yet been instituted. (Regardless of our position on baptism, honesty demands that we note this.) □

EPHESIANS 01:03 GOD'S BLESSINGS

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Ephesians 01:03

God's blessings are spiritual and heavenly, not material blessings. Throughout history God has used two methods of blessings to deal with man. Before Christ, God dealt with man by blessing him with material blessings. He promised Abraham and Israel land, wealth, and fame. (See *Israel, God's Special People*, Jn. 4:22; *Jews, the Seed of Abraham*, Rom. 4:1-25. See Gen. 12:1f; 13:14-17; 15:1-7, 15-19; 22:16-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 31:13; 35:9-12.) But Israel misused and hoarded the material blessings. Instead of sharing its blessings with other nations, Israel isolated itself and claimed superiority and God-given rights over other nations of the earth. However, since Christ, God deals with man spiritually, blessing him with spiritual blessings.

Five things should be noted about this.

1. Spiritual blessings *are of the Spirit*. It is the Spirit that controls man and the circumstances that surround him. A man may feel bad; he may be down, depressed and oppressed; but if his spirit is strong, he arises and conquers his feelings. He controls and overcomes the oppressing circumstances, and he lives a victorious day. But if his spirit is weak, whether at work or at play, he often wallows around in self-pity, grumbling and griping and living a defeated day. And too often the days stretch into weeks and months until a person's life is down more than it is up — all because the spirit is too weak to conquer. Thus, the major blessings of God are bound to be blessings that are spiritual — that enable a person to control his life.
2. Spiritual blessings are the very opposite of temporal blessings. They are the *blessings of the inner man*, the blessings of the immortal. But of all blessings, they are the most glorious and satisfying. They are the blessings that erase the loneliness, alienation, and purposelessness of man. They are the blessings that give man an over-abundance of life.
3. Spiritual blessings are vastly superior to material blessings. They are *permanent and perfect and eternal*, lasting forever. They are of the very same nature as God Himself. Spiritual blessings exist and can be experienced both upon earth (the physical dimension of being) and in heaven (the spiritual dimension of being).
4. Spiritual blessings are found only *in Christ*. Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God the Father. He is in heaven, surrounded by all the heavenly atmosphere and blessings. All heavenly blessings are His;

He is Lord and Possessor of all blessings. Therefore, if a person is to experience the spiritual blessings, he must be *in Christ*. If a person is *in Christ*, then he sits *in heaven* with Christ. How is this possible? When a person *believes in Christ*, truly believes, God takes his faith and counts it as righteousness. God counts the person to be the same as Christ, righteous and acceptable. In God's mind *faith in Christ* makes a person just like Christ: holy and righteous and acceptable for heaven. Therefore, when a person believes in Christ, God's mind sees the person in Christ; God sees the person identified with Christ, seated in heaven. And being seated in heaven, the person can experience all the blessings of heaven. Simply stated, to be *in Christ* means to believe in God's Son so much so that God becomes elated — elated so much that He counts the person to be just like Christ: acceptable and worthy to be blessed with all the blessings of heaven.

5. God dealt with man in material blessings first because man had to learn several things.
 - a. An earthly inheritance does not last. It is subject to being lost or stolen. We either watch our material possessions deteriorate or else we leave our material possessions behind for others.
 - b. An earthly nation and material inheritance cannot bring peace and security. Peace and security are of the spirit. Earthly nations and material things are of the earth, of a corruptible nature. Thus nations and material things do not solve the spiritual struggle that man senses within his own being. Neither can nations and material things erase the spiritual divisions between men and between man and God.
 - c. Man has within his *inner being* a basic selfishness and greed. Man finds a tendency, an unregulated urge, that desires and seeks the material and hoards the corruptible to the neglect of the spiritual.
 - d. Man must undergo a basic change of character to be freed of this urge, this tendency that causes so much bondage, disruption, and division within one's self and between men. Man must be born again, made into a new creation, created into a *new man* — spiritually, permanently, perfectly, eternally. And such a spiritual creation must be performed by Someone much greater than himself. Man must be recreated by the hand of God Himself. □

IV. *John 03:09–11 The New Birth is Real*

The new birth is a true experience, a definite experience (See Pt. 3, *New Birth*, Jn. 3:1-15). Nicodemus' heart was touched by what Jesus was saying, and he wished to know what was meant by being "born again." Note: he did not know, but he wished to know. (Think how many do not even care to know.)

1 Cor 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Note the great tragedy of Nicodemus. He was Israel's teacher, yet he did not know about spiritual things (Jn. 3:1-2). Note the strong assertion of Jesus: "We know...we have seen" (v. 11).

Rom 8:16 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

Gal 4:6 *Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."*

1 Th 1:5 *Because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.*

2 Tim 1:12 *That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.*

1 John 2:3 *We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.*

1 John 3:18 *Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.*

1 John 3:19 *This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence.*

1 John 3:24 *Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.*

1 John 4:13 *We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.*

1 John 5:6 *This is the one who came by water and blood — Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.*

V. Mathew 03:11–12 The New Birth Rejected

The new birth is rejected. There are two tragic facts here.

1. There are the statements: "you people do not accept our testimony" and "you do not believe." Apparently, Nicodemus did not believe and receive Jesus at this point in his life. He did what so many do: he rejected Jesus.
2. It is man's nature not to believe (see 1 Cor. 2:14; Jn. 2:24.)

1 John 5:10 *Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.*

John 1:11 *He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.*

John 12:48 *"There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day."*

VI. *Mathew 03: 13 The New Birth Revealed by Jesus Christ*

The new birth is revealed only by Jesus. Jesus said two things.

1. He came *from* (ek, out of) heaven. No man can go up into heaven; no man can penetrate the spiritual world. Flesh is flesh, that is, born of the earth; therefore, it is earthly (1 Cor. 15:47). However, Jesus Christ was different from all other men. His origin was *out* of heaven, out of the spiritual world and dimension of being. (See *Jesus Christ, From Above*, Jn. 3:31; *Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, Jn. 14:6.)
2. He is timeless, “the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man” means His existence and experience are timeless. He is eternal.

John 6:33, 38 *“For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.”*

John 6:50-51 *“But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”*

John 13:3 *Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.*

John 8:42 *Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.”*

JOHN 03:31 JESUS CHRIST — “FROM ABOVE”

*“The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.” **John 3:31***

Jesus came *out of* (ek) the spiritual world into the physical world, out of the heavenly dimension of being into the earthly dimension of being. Jesus came out of...

- the incorruptible and imperishable world into the corruptible and perishable world.
- the glorious world into the dishonourable world.
- the powerful world into the weak world.
- the spiritual world into the natural world. (See 1 Cor. 15:42-44.)

John 3:13 *“No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man.”*

John 6:33, 38 “For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” “For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.”

John 6:41-42 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” They said, “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I came down from heaven’?”

John 6:50-51 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

John 6:58 “This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.”

John 6:62 “What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!”

John 8:23 But he continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.”

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.”

John 13:3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.

John 16:30 “Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

John 17:5 “And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”

1 Cor 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. □

JOHN 14:06 JESUS THE WAY

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” **John 14:06**

There is a difference between pointing the way to a particular place and taking someone by the hand to lead him there. The person who guides someone to his destination literally becomes the way himself. Jesus Christ not only points out how to walk through life and how to reach God, He personally shows the person the way. Therefore, He Himself is the Way. Note the repetition of the word “way” (v. 4, 5, 6).

Heb 10:19-20 *Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body. □*

JOHN 14:06 JESUS THE TRUTH

*Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." **John 14:06***

There is a difference between telling someone about the truth and living the truth before them. The one who lives the truth literally becomes the truth.

1. Jesus Christ is the *Embodiment* of truth (Jn. 14:6). He is the picture of truth. God not only talks to man about Himself, God shows man what He is like in the person of Jesus Christ. Man can look at Jesus Christ and see a perfect picture of the truth of God.

John 10:30 *"I and the Father are one."*

John 10:37-38 *"Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."*

John 14:10 *"Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work."*

John 17:11 *"I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name — the name you gave me — so that they may be one as we are one."*

2. Jesus Christ is the *Communicator* of truth. He Himself — His Person and His Life — makes things perfectly clear. He reveals the ultimate source and meaning and end of all things. He reveals the truth of man himself and of the world surrounding man. He shows man the right way to the truth, and He enables man to choose the right way to the truth.

John 3:11 *"I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony."*

John 3:23 *Now John also was baptising at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptised.*

John 5:24 *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."*

John 3:34 “For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.”

John 6:63 “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”

John 6:68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

John 8:14 Jesus answered, “Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going.”

John 14:24 “He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

John 17:8 “For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.”

John 17:14 “I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.”

John 18:37 “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-born from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.

3. Jesus Christ is the *Liberator* of truth (Jn. 8:32; 15:3). He sets men free from the great gulf (estrangement) which exists between man and God, between man and his world, and between man and man. He sets man free from the frustrations which he constantly experiences. He frees man from the fears and weaknesses and defects that plague him. Jesus Christ is the only lasting Liberator on earth. (See *Truth*, Jn. 8:32).

John 8:32 “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

John 15:3 “You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.” □

JOHN 14:06 JESUS THE LIFE

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” **John 14:06**

There is a difference between telling someone about life and actually living life. The one who lives is the one who possesses life, and the more perfectly one lives, the

more life one possesses. Jesus Christ lived perfectly; therefore, He possesses life perfectly. He is the Life: the very embodiment, energy, force, and source of life itself.

John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

John 10:10 “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.”

Rom 5:21 So that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Tim 1:10 But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. □

VII. *John 03:14–15 Securing the New Birth*

The new birth is secured by two acts.

1. The first act is Jesus’ death. Jesus illustrated His point by using the Old Testament story of Moses lifting up the bronze snake in the wilderness (Num. 21:4-9). The children of Israel had begun to murmur and grumble about the trials of the wilderness, wishing they had never left Egypt. God disciplined them by sending snakes to plague them. The discipline worked; the people repented and begged for mercy. God met the people’s need by telling Moses to make a bronze image of a snake and to hold it up upon a pole in the midst of the people. The person who looked upon the *lifted up* snake was healed.

Jesus said that He must be lifted up just as the snake was lifted up. What did He mean? There are several pictures here.

- a. The people of Israel had great need, for they were dying from the poison of the snakes. Men today are dying from the poison of the snake, the deadly poison of sin.
- b. The snake is a symbol of the evil one, Satan (Gen. 3:1f; Rev. 12:9; 20:2). Jesus Christ destroyed the works of the devil by being lifted up (Heb. 2:14-15); therefore the snake hanging upon the pole symbolized the defeat of Satan. By looking upon the *defeated evil* (the snake), Israel was healed. Today man is healed by looking upon the Son of Man who has been lifted up upon the cross.

John 12:31-32 “Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.”

Heb 2:14-15 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

- c. The snake was a cursed creature from the very beginning (Gen. 3:14-15). Jesus became a curse for man (Gal. 3:13).

Gal 3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”*

1 Pet 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

2. The second act is man’s belief in Jesus. The man who believes in the Son of Man being lifted up...

- will not perish (See *Perish*, Jn. 3:16)
- but will have eternal life (See *Life (Grace)*, Jn. 1:4; *Life in Jesus Christ*, Jn. 10:10; *Eternal Life*, Jn. 17:2-3)

Note: If an Israelite believed God’s message (the good news of healing), he looked upon the lifted up snake, and he was healed. If a man did not believe God’s message, he did not look, and he died. Thus it is with us today: every man must believe the message of Christ in order to be healed, that is, be born again.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

Isa 53:5 *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ■*

JOHN 03: 16 PERISH, PERISHING (APOLETAI)

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” **John 03:16***

To be lost, to destroy utterly, to lose utterly, to lose eternal life, to be spiritually destitute, to be cut off.

1. Perishing means to be in a lost state in this world. It means to be...

- aging, deteriorating, decaying, dying. (Mt. 8:17; 1 Cor. 15:50; Col. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:4.)

- without life (purpose, meaning, significance). (Jn. 1:4; 10:10; 17:2-3.)
- without peace (assurance, confidence, security in God's keeping). (Jn. 14:27)
- without hope (of living forever). (2 Tim. 4:18.)

2. Perishing means to be in a lost state in the world to come.

It means...

- having to die
- facing judgment
- being condemned
- suffering separation from God and all loved ones
- experiencing all that hell is (Mt. 5:22; Lk. 16:24; Heb. 9:27). □

JOHN 01:04 "IN CHRIST WAS LIFE"

"In Him was life, and that life was the light of men." John 01:04

The simple statement "in Christ was life" means at least three things.

1. Life is the quality and essence, the energy and power, the force and principle of being. Christ is life; He is...

- the very quality of life
- the very essence of life
- the very energy of life
- the very power of life
- the very force of life
- the very principle of life

Without Christ, there would be no life whatsoever. Life is in Him, within His very being. All things exist and have their being (life) in Him.

2. Life is purpose, meaning, and significance of being. Christ is life; He is...

- the very purpose of life.
- the very meaning of life.
- the very significance of life.

3. Life is perfection. Life is all that a man must be and possess in order to live perfectly. This is what is meant by life. Life is completeness of being, absolute satisfaction, the fullness of all good, and the possession of all good things. Life is perfect love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Whatever life is and all that life is, is all in Jesus Christ. Even the legitimate cravings of man that are sometimes entangled with evil — such as power, fame and wealth — are all included in the life given by Jesus Christ. Those who partake of His life shall reign forever as kings and priests (Lk. 16:10-12). This is the very thing that is distinctive about life — it is eternal. It lasts forever and it is

rewarding. It will eventually exalt the believer to the highest life and place and position. (Rev. 21:1f.)

Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the way to life, and He is the truth of life. He is the very substance of life, its very being and energy (Jn. 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2). □

JOHN 10:10 LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Life is one of the great words of the Scriptures. The word life (zoe) and the verb to live or to have life (zen) have a depth of meaning.

1. Life is the energy, the force, the power of being.
2. Life is the opposite of perishing. It is deliverance from condemnation and death. It is the stopping or cessation of deterioration, decay, and corruption (Jn. 3:16; 5:24, 29; 10:28).
3. Life is eternal (aionios). It is forever. It is the very life of God Himself (Jn. 17:3). However, eternal life does not refer just to duration. Living forever would be a curse for some persons. The idea of eternal life is also quality, a certain kind of life, a life that consistently knows love, joy, peace, power, and responsibility.
4. Life is satisfaction (Jn. 6:35).
5. Life is security and enjoyment (Jn. 10:10).
6. Life is found only in God. God is the source and author of life, and it is God who has appointed Jesus Christ to bring life to man. Jesus Christ gives the very life of God Himself (Jn. 5:26; 6:27, 40; 10:28; 17:23).
7. Life has now been revealed. It has been unveiled and is clearly seen in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shows man what life is (Jn. 1:4-5; 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2).
8. Life only comes to a man by believing in Jesus Christ. A man outside Jesus Christ only exists. He merely has the existence of an animal. Real life is found only in God. This is to be expected and it is logically true, for God is the creator of life. As the creator of life, He alone knows what life really is and what it is supposed to be (Jn. 3:36; 5:24; 6:47). This is the reason He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world: to show men what life is. When a person looks at Jesus Christ, he sees exactly what life is, exactly what it involves (Gal. 5:22-23):

=> love	=> patience	=> faithfulness
=> joy	=> kindness	=> gentleness
=> peace	=> goodness	=> self-control □