

## PERSONAL APPLICATION

- Take a moment this week to write down some of the ways your life has changed since being born again. Sins you've left behind. Ways you have followed God. If you haven't yet been born again, write down the potential benefits of being born again and the potential negatives.
- In a four sentences or less, write down your salvation testimony. Include what life was like before salvation, what brought you to Jesus, and how your life has changed. Share your testimony with someone else this week.
- What steps can you take this week to either find out more about Jesus like Nicodemus did, or to help your spirit continue to grow and mature in the Spirit?

## PRAYER

- Prayer, reading the scripture, and Christian fellowship are three ways we grow spiritually. Ask God for the grace to make time every morning to read and pray, and to seek out consistent Christian fellowship.
- What areas of your life need saving right now? Ask God for help.
- Ask God to give you a fresh perspective on how much he loves you.
- Ask God to show you who you can share your 'born again' testimony with and perhaps arouse a curiosity in them to seek out Jesus.

## NOTES

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### Week 1 – Whole Spirit

*"<sup>23</sup>May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

**1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NIV)**

## CONNECT

- Is there anything in your life you wish you could do over again? If so what would it be?
- What were you first told about where babies come from and when did you learn the truth? What stories have you heard about your birth?

## WORD

*"<sup>1</sup>Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. <sup>2</sup>He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." <sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." <sup>4</sup>"How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" <sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. <sup>7</sup>You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'"*

**John 3:1–7 (NIV)**

## THOUGHT

Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader, sought out Jesus under the cover of night in an effort to figure out who Jesus truly was. This is often referred to as the original 'Nick at Night.' In response to Nicodemus revelation that he and the other Jewish religious leaders recognize that Jesus came to them from God, Jesus shares with him that the only way to connect with God's Kingdom is by being 'born again.' Nicodemus didn't understand this second birth, so Jesus broke it down for him. In today's discussion we'll take a look at what it means to be 'born again' and why it is essential to being a part of God's Kingdom.

## DISCUSSION

1. What do you think drew Nicodemus to Jesus? What first drew your attention to Jesus?

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2. Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night? How do you respond when others criticize Christianity, like Nicodemus, keeping your relationship with Jesus secret, or like the other leaders, admiring Jesus privately, but opposing him publicly?

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3. Jesus told Nicodemus he had to be 'born again' in order to see God's Kingdom. This confused Nicodemus who thought Jesus was referring to a second physical birth, but Jesus was referring to a spiritual birth. How would you describe what it means to be born again?

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4. Nicodemus was a religious leader and yet Jesus told him he needed to be born again. What's the difference between being religious and being born again?

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5. Jesus described being born again as being born of water and of the Spirit in verse 5. He was referencing Ezekiel 36:24-28 which says, *"<sup>25</sup>I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. <sup>26</sup>I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."* This indicates that being born again should result in both cleansing our lives from sin and following after God. What are some of the ways that you've left sin behind since being born again? What are some of the ways that you have started following God since being born again?

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6. Our theme verse for the series, 1 Thessalonians 5:23 says that we are spirit, soul, and body. Ever since Adam and Eve fell in the garden, we are born with sin-slain spirits. In John 3, Jesus is making the point that God wants to save our spirits from death by giving us new life, our spirits being born again. When did you begin to see God as wanting to save you, establish a relationship with you, and give you a new start instead of condemning you?

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7. Just like physical birth, being born again spiritually is only the beginning of the life God intended for us. How would you describe your current spiritual life stage?

Not yet conceived

Growing but still in the womb

About to bust out

Still in infancy

Steadily growing and maturing

Other \_\_\_\_\_

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