

# You Must Be Born Again

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you would open up your Bibles to John chapter 3, we're going to be looking at John 3, 1-15. I'll read it in just a second. It's on page 1055 of your pew Bible.

Hear the word of the Lord. Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

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.

Jesus answered him, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 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? Jesus answered, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water in the spirit, isn't that interesting?

[ 1 : 07 ] He cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I say to you, you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.

So it is with everyone who is born of the spirit. Nicodemus said to him, how can these things be? Jesus answered him, are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and bear witness to what we have seen, but you, you all do not receive our testimony.

If I told you all earthly things and you all did not believe me, how can you all believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

[ 2 : 16 ] May God bless the hearing of his word. Amen. Do you see this thing behind me on the screen? Everyone in the room who sees a number, raise your hand.

Yeah, I figured. What number is it? Now, everyone who cannot see the number seven, raise your hand. We are the few.

The anomalies. We are the colorblind. We have this thing in our eyes. It's an anatomical defect of cones.

We can't discern green from reds or have a hard time doing that at least. But there's another kind of blindness. You can take that down. It's called spiritual blindness.

By the way, I didn't even know what the number was until our dear sister Robin Town told me, hey, when do you want me to put up the number seven? I'm like, number seven? You mean the colorblind test?

[ 3 : 15 ] Yeah. There's another kind of blindness. There's another kind of blindness. It's spiritual blindness. And it's not the result of some anatomical defect in us. It's a result of spiritual deadness.

We are born spiritually blind because we're born spiritually dead. And the spiritually dead are unable to see the salvation that God has provided in Jesus Christ, the Son of Man.

So this morning, God has a lesson for us. And it comes from a conversation between this man named Nicodemus, who was a religious leader in Jesus.

The thing is, this highly respected and influential religious leader who knew his Old Testament inside and out. The thing is, he's in the dark.

He is spiritually blind. And Jesus tells him the only cure for that spiritual blindness, you must be born again. This dialogue that we're going to see between Nicodemus and Jesus, it unfolds in three exchanges.

[ 4 : 24 ] And it's kind of like watching a tennis match. Any tennis fans? Didn't think so? Each exchange begins with Nicodemus serving up a statement or a question.

And then Jesus returns volley with a truly, truly. I'm going to walk us through the conversation, then summarize the lesson that God has for us.

And then I'm going to apply it to the non-Christians in the room and to the Christians in the room. Because to be born again is to make a huge difference in our lives. So now let's look at the first exchange in this dialogue between Nicodemus and Jesus.

And it's in verses 1 through 3. So John chapter 3, verses 1 through 3. And in verses 1 and 2, John introduces us to this man named Nicodemus. And we learn he's a Pharisee.

Now a Pharisee was a certain kind of theological school of thought within Judaism at that time. The apostle Paul was a Pharisee. And Nicodemus was a Pharisee.

[ 5 : 26 ] And he was also a ruler of the Jews. Did you see that in verse 1? Which means he was a member of the Jewish ruling council, the Sanhedrin, which was a highly esteemed position with a lot of responsibility and influence.

So this was a well-educated, accomplished, respected, influential guy. This guy named Nicodemus. And in verse 2, he comes to Jesus at night, which is interesting.

So John includes that detail for a reason. Likely two reasons. Nicodemus didn't want to be seen meeting with Jesus.

He doesn't want to give people the wrong impressions because Jesus is already making some waves. But Nicodemus wants to know what's going on with this guy. Secondly, and more symbolically, John includes this detail because Nicodemus is in the dark.

He's living in spiritual night. And we're going to see that unfold as this dialogue continues. So in verse 2, Nicodemus serves up the start of the conversation.

[ 6 : 33 ] Nicodemus is aware of the signs that Jesus has performed. Rabbi, which is a way to respect Jesus. 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. So Nicodemus was aware of signs that Jesus was doing. And we know from the end of the Gospel of John that John doesn't include all the signs that Jesus does.

He says, if I were to conclude that there's not enough books to contain what Jesus has done. So Nicodemus is aware of signs that Jesus has done that John doesn't record. But all of these signs were intended to reveal who Jesus was.

So we can conclude this, that Nicodemus sees something unique about Jesus. I mean, look what he says. He says, Rabbi, we know that you're a teacher come from God.

That's unique. And then he goes on to say, and then you do these signs that no one can do unless God is with him. From God, God is with him.

[ 7 : 41 ] God is with you, Nicodemus starts. Now, this is a great way to start a conversation. Oh, Jesus, I see God's hand on you. But it's interesting what Nicodemus isn't saying.

He's not saying, Jesus, you are the Christ, the Messiah. He doesn't see that Jesus is God in the flesh. He sees Jesus as God with him, not God is him.

And so what we're already getting to see is that Nicodemus has some sense that Jesus is unique, but he doesn't see Jesus for who he truly is.

He's in the dark. So in verse 3, we see Jesus return volley to Nicodemus' greeting. And in verse 3, it's almost like, did Jesus just hear what he said?

Look what he says. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. That just doesn't seem to match. I see God's hand on you.

[ 8 : 47 ] And Jesus is like, truly, truly, unless you're born again, you can't see the kingdom of God. What is going on there? Well, that little phrase, truly, truly, that shows up 25 times in the Gospel of John.

And here's what that does. It's Jesus exercising his authority and bringing clarity to something. It's how Jesus introduces a definitive statement.

It's like Jesus saying, okay, let the Son of Man just be clear on this. Truly, truly, I say to you. That's what's going on.

And in this passage, what makes this passage interesting is that there are three truly, trulies in it. He is repeatedly clarifying things for this highly esteemed teacher of Israel who's in the dark.

Unless one is born again. Let me just be clear. Unless one is born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God. When he says, unless one is born again, Jesus is referring to some kind of second birth, some kind of spiritual event that he does not elaborate on here, but it qualifies something. [10:05] You've got to be spiritually born again in order to see the kingdom of God. What is this kingdom of God?

And why do you need to be born again to see it? Well, the kingdom of God is not this kind of geographic kingdom with boundaries. The kingdom of God is a reign of God that transcends all geographies, borders, and governments.

In fact, if you want to, I want to give you a taste of the kingdom of God, what it is, by pointing you back to the book of Daniel chapter 7. Would you go back in your Bibles to Daniel chapter 7, verse 14?

It's on page 884 of your pew Bible. Now, this was a vision given to Daniel, who was a prophet. And as you're turning there, what we're going to see is that there is a particular kind of kingdom that the ancient of days, God the Father, is going to give the Son of Man.

I'll start in verse 13. I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven, there came one like a Son of Man. Mark that. And he came to the ancient of days, God the Father, and was presented before him.

[11:22] And to him, the Son of Man was given dominion, rule, authority, and glory, and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him, the Son of Man.

His dominion, the Son of Man's dominion, is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away. And his kingdom, the Son of Man's kingdom, one that shall not be destroyed. And so what we're told here is that this kingdom of God is a God kingdom that is everlasting and is indestructible. And the Son of Man has something to do with it. And what we're being told Jesus is saying here is you can't see that kingdom without being born again.

Before you enter this kingdom, you're a rebel against God and you're dead in your sins. But when you enter this kingdom, you are made spiritually alive and you are a child of God forevermore. So how does Jesus' response to Nicodemus make sense? The only way that it makes sense is when you realize that Nicodemus is in the dark.

[12:41] Jesus is explaining something to him that he doesn't get. So here is the spiritually blind Nicodemus looking at Jesus, thinking that he's from God, that God is with him, when it's actually God is him.

So Jesus' response is more like, Hey, Nicodemus, you do not know who you are talking to. Because if you were born again, you would see the king of the kingdom standing in front of you. God with us. This is the first volley. Nicodemus serves. Jesus returns. Point Jesus. Second volley. Verses 4 through 8. It's pretty safe to say that Nicodemus was not expecting Jesus to return volley that way.

He wasn't expecting Jesus to respond to his greeting and his kind, generous greeting like that. Because here is this accomplished, seasoned, influential, Bible teacher who sought after in Israel.

[13:59] And Jesus is implying that Nicodemus can't see the kingdom of God. That he's got to be born again. It's like Jesus is saying, You can't see the kingdom of God when he's staring at you in the face.

Yes. So in verse 4, Nicodemus serves up his next serve with a question. Verse 4.

How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb? Now, if you were inside Nicodemus' head, and you were able to like see what he was thinking on a screen inside of his head, do you know what it would say?

It would be this alarm. Err. Err. Err. Does not compute. Err. Err. Err. He hears what Jesus says about being born again, and it does not compute.

So he is like all people living in darkness, tries to make sense of it in a humanistic way. So he goes to biology. Literally anatomical.

[15:10] He's like, wait, I'm like, you know, 54. How can I be born again? What are you talking about? How can I get back into my mother's womb?

He's not getting it. He thinks born again means something anatomical, something literal. He doesn't get what Jesus is saying. He's spiritually blind.

He's in the dark. Maybe you are in the dark. You hear people talk about Jesus, and you're like, I don't know what the big deal is. What's the big deal? Or this Jesus guy is a major crutch for these

weakling Christians.

In verse 5 through 8, Jesus responds, returns volley with a second truly, truly. Let me just read you what he says in its entirety through verse 8.

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water in the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Do not marvel that I say to you, you must be born again.

[16:21] The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it's going. So it is with everyone who's born of the Spirit. So Jesus returns volley with an explanation of what it means to be born again.

It's going to be very helpful for us to understand what Jesus is saying. So let's unpack this a little bit. First thing I want you to note is that Jesus is kind of raising the bar a little bit.

He's talking about moving from seeing the kingdom of God to now entering the kingdom of God, which has to do with your will. To enter the kingdom of God means you must decide to enter the kingdom of God.

And he says you must be born of water in the Spirit. In other words, if you're not born of water in the Spirit, whatever that means, you cannot enter the kingdom of God.

You cannot come under God's saving reign. You cannot experience the eternal life that is in Christ alone. You've got to be born again. If you want to experience God's salvation that is in Christ Jesus, you must be born again.

[17:38] Otherwise, you remain in a state of spiritual death, spiritual blindness, and under God's wrath for all of your sin. So what does it mean to be born of water in the Spirit? Well, there's been a number of explanations, and I'm guessing many of you in the room have heard some of these.

Some people think, some Christians think that water is a reference to baptism, and the Spirit is Spirit rebirth, regeneration. Other people interpret this, this water in Spirit, as your physical birth. You must be born of water, the water that you, your mom's womb, the water broke, that water, and the Spirit.

But I've been convinced by what Dr. D.A. Carson makes a very convincing case. Have you ever experienced in your Bible where you're reading something, and you're like, I do not know what he's saying here?

One of the best things that you can do at that point is ask, hey, is this making a reference to something back in the Old Testament? Because that's what's going on here. Jesus is very intentionally using water in Spirit for a reason, a reason that Nicodemus should get.

[18:58] what Jesus is doing is referring back to a passage in Ezekiel, chapter 36, verses 24 through 27.

I want you to turn there with me. That's on page 860 of your pew Bible, Ezekiel 36, 24 through 27. And as you're turning there, I just want to let you know, this is Ezekiel's version of a new covenant prophecy.

It's like Jeremiah 31 where Jeremiah spells out the new covenant. that's coming. Here, we see Ezekiel kind of alluding, prophesying to what will come with the new covenant.

In other words, this water in Spirit is rich with theological freight. So let me just read for you chapter 36, verses 24 through 27.

Remember, we're talking about water and Spirit. Let's see if you can see it in the passage. I will take you, this is God speaking, I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land.

[20:07] I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness. And from all your idols, I will cleanse you and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove your heart of stone from you, remove your heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Did you see it in verse 25? There's a reference to water that cleanses from our sin. Did you see in verse 26 this reference to a new heart, a new spirit where God takes the old heart that is hard towards Him and He does this spiritual cardiac surgery and replaces it with a new heart, a new spirit that now has new affections.

What God is showing us here is that this is a prophecy fulfilled that Jesus is talking about. That this being born again by the Spirit, verse 8, is the coming of the new covenant.

And we see in verse 27 that the Spirit comes to indwell us, to cause us to obey. We want to obey now. And there's no coincidence that the Valley of Dry Bones, chapter 37, follows this. Resurrection. This is what it means to be born again. To be made a new creation. The old has gone. If anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation.

[ 21 : 46 ] The old is gone. The new is come. It's a distinct and unique work of the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit can take someone who's spiritually dead and make them spiritually alive, applying the finished work of Christ to them.

In verse 6, we see this distinction of those who are born of the flesh are flesh. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

There are two types of people on the planet. Those who are born of the flesh and are spiritually dead. And those who are born of the flesh and also born of the Spirit, second birth, who have been cleansed from their sin and made alive to God and are children of His through Christ's finished work.

What we're seeing here is Jesus saying, with me comes the age of the Spirit. The age of the Spirit that comes with the new covenant.

And it's set into motion by the death and resurrection of Jesus. In verses 7 and 8, we read, He says to Nicodemus, Nicodemus, do not marvel what I said to you.

[ 23 : 03 ] You must be born again. Nicodemus, you've got Ezekiel 36 memorized. You shouldn't marvel what I'm telling you here. And then he compares this activity of the Holy Spirit to the wind blowing.

The wind blows where it wishes and you hear it sound. You can't see the wind, but you see the effects of the wind. But you do not where it comes from or where it goes. You hear its sound. You see it blowing the leaves.

The leaves rustling, but you actually don't see the wind. You see clouds moving. And Jesus says, so it is with everyone who's born of the Spirit. You can't see the Holy Spirit, but you see the effects of the Holy Spirit in the life of those who are spiritually dead.

Let me tell you some of them. When someone starts to become aware that, that they are doing wrong, this is John 16, 8.

Jesus said, the Spirit will come and when He comes, He will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. And so, when someone is not, is recognizing that they're doing wrong, but they recognize that they're wrong is against God.

[ 24 : 14 ] Not just against other human beings, but against God. That when I sin, when I do something that's wrong, it's grievous in God's sight. When you start, when that starts registering, I think there's a work of the Spirit going on.

Or, when someone recognizes how sinful they are, and they're like, I cannot do anything about this wicked heart. I am so sinful.

I, in God's eyes, I must be condemned. There's nothing that I can do to dig myself out of this.

Nothing I can do. I need some kind of forgiveness.

I need some kind of new work in me. That inclination is something that you don't generate yourself. God's Spirit grants repentance.

When you start recognizing your sinfulness against God, and you're like, oh, that must grieve you. I want to turn from that, and God, through His Spirit, gives you eyes to see Jesus.

[ 25 : 21 ] Remember, John 16, 14, Jesus speaks about the primary ministry of the Spirit in terms of this. He will glorify me. And so, one of the things that the Holy Spirit will do is, He will convict of sin against God, and then He will set your gaze upon Jesus in His finished work on the cross so that you can be saved, so you can believe in Him.

All of these things are from the Spirit. So, we have the second serve and return where Jesus unpacks what it means to be born again, point Jesus.

He's saying, hey, this is Ezekiel 36 being carried out in front of you. The new covenant, this great salvation. The Spirit does what He wills. During the summertime, oftentimes, we see news clips of tornadoes that are ripping through towns in Nebraska, in Oklahoma, and even Wisconsin, and they leave this trail of destruction and death.

It is a windstorm out of control. Destruction, death. The Holy Spirit leaves His own path, not of destruction and death.

new life, recreation, children of God. The Holy Spirit is a person, He's at work, He's moving, and He brings new life.

[ 26 : 56 ] Exchange number three. verses nine through 15. In verse nine, Nicodemus serves up his last question.

How can these things be? How is this possible? It appears as though Nicodemus is having his world rocked.

Are his lights going on? In verse 10, Jesus starts His return with a bit of a rebuke.

Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Do you not know your Bible? Nicodemus, this is clear.

This has been made aware. This has been in your hands. You have read this over and over again. you've just not had eyes to see. In a very subtle way, Jesus is actually claiming to be the true teacher of Israel.

[ 28 : 09 ] And then we see in verse 11, the last of these three truly, truly, I say to you's, truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we, this is Jesus speaking, truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and bear witness to what we have seen, but you, which is literally you all, do not receive our testimony.

This is really interesting. Who, who's the we? Who's the our? I mean, could Jesus be talking about His disciples? No, because a lot of them really don't get it at this point either.

Is Jesus somehow talking about Nicodemus just kind of being friendly like Nicodemus was him when He greeted him? No, because when you see at the end, but you all do not receive our testimony, it kind of defeats that line of thinking.

So who could this we be? And grammatically speaking, from the text, you know what you do? You go back to the last reference of a person. And do you know who it is? The Holy Spirit.

Could this we be Jesus referring to the Holy Spirit in His ministry under the new covenant to bring about salvation?

[ 29 : 25 ] What a we. Jesus and the Holy Spirit speaking of what we know and bear witness to what we've seen?

They know because they're God. They've seen heaven. But you do not receive our testimony. This harkens back to John 1.

Where Jesus came to His own and His own did not receive Him. They don't have eyes to see, hearts to believe. It's further evidence of the spiritual blindness that we see in Nicodemus.

But I just want to let you know, there's a rest of the story with Nicodemus. In chapter 7, verse 15 and 51, the other Jews of the Sanhedrin, they're starting to attack Jesus.

In that sequence, Nicodemus seeks to defend Him. And then at the very end of the Gospel of John in chapter 19, we see Nicodemus present at the death of Jesus and at His burial.

[ 30 : 32 ] Helping His body to be received and buried. That kind of willingness to be identified with Jesus at great cost at that point, I think it's likely that Nicodemus, at this point, at the end of John, the lights have gone on.

He had moved from death to life and he had seen and entered the kingdom of God, the saving reign of God. In verse 12, we read, Jesus says, I have told you earthly things and you did not believe.

How can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? It's like, I've been telling you what it means for Ezekiel 36 to be fulfilled here on earth right now and how you can enter the kingdom of God right now.

How, if you don't believe that, you're not going to believe what I've got to tell you about heavenly things which I have seen firsthand. Again, Jesus is speaking of spiritual blindness.

You must be born again, Nicodemus. In verse 13, Jesus further elaborates on what he's seen.

[ 31 : 53 ] No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. what Jesus is saying here is no one has had an eyewitness view of heaven except me because I am from heaven.

He has eternally existed as a second person of the Trinity and he has eternally existed with God the Father and God the Spirit in heaven together and he left heaven and took on flesh and walked this planet.

He has seen heaven firsthand is what he's saying and then he drops the title, the Son of Man. No one has ascended into heaven except he descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

This is a title that Jesus uses exclusively for himself and it is a big claim and that title is used in a few different places in your Bibles but if you flip back to Daniel chapter 7 I just want to help you see what's going on here in this passage.

Again, page 884 of your Pew Bible. Jesus says or God says through Daniel, Daniel says with these night visions and behold I saw in the night visions and behold with clouds of heaven there came one like a Son of Man and he came to the ancient of days and was presented before him and to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people's nations and languages serve him, the Son of Man.

[ 33 : 33 ] His, the Son of Man's dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and the Son of Man's kingdom one that shall not be destroyed everlasting, indestructible.

This is the kingdom of God that the Son of Man brings with him when he descends from heaven.

The Son of Man is given full authority over this eternal, indestructible, saving reign of God and the Son of Man has descended of heaven from heaven.

He is the word became flesh that has dwelt among us. We beheld his glory. Glory is of the one and only of the Father. How can these things be, says Nicodemus, the Son of Man is standing in front of him.

Ezekiel 36 is fulfilled in front of him. That's how these things can be. God is being faithful to his word.

Nicodemus was looking at the Son of Man. In verse 14 we read, and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

[ 34 : 50 ] That serpent in the wilderness is a reference to Numbers 21. It's an account where Israel grumbles and complains against God and God disciplines them by sending fiery serpents who bite them.

Many of the Israelites die. They realize they've been naughty so they cry out to God and God provides a mercy to them. He tells Moses to construct a brazen serpent, a bronze servant, and to lift it up on a pole and when Israel is bitten they are to look upon this bronze serpent and be healed to live.

And Jesus is saying, you remember that? That was actually in an incredible way pointing to me. so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

We've all been bitten by sin. We're all deserved death because of sin and God has sent Jesus as the Son of Man who brings this kingdom of eternal life and the way to be healed, the way to receive eternal life, to be cleansed from your sin, to be given a new spirit is to look upon the Son of Man hanging on the cross to be lifted up, to believe.

And whoever believes who looks upon him with eyes of faith may have eternal life. You're born again. That life starts immediately. You enter into a relationship with God through Christ and it's the best.

[ 36 : 29 ] it's quite a response. Point Jesus.

Match. Set. Game. Three exchanges. All responded by truly, truly by the Son of Man.

We learn about the kingdom of God, what it means to be born of the Spirit, that Jesus is the Son of Man who's been lifted up on the cross. This is the way to be born again. You know what the lesson is? You must be born again.

You must be born again. And this passage points to three realities. The depth of our sinfulness. Our sinfulness is so deep that we are flat liners spiritually from the get-go.

Our sinfulness is so deep that we have no God-honoring brain activity. We're brain dead when we come out. So in an extraordinary display of God's grace so that we could see and enter the kingdom of God, He gives us spiritual life by the Holy Spirit.

[ 37 : 46 ] We can't self-start our spiritual life. life. So what we see here is apart from Christ we are all in the valley of dry bones, dead in our sins, with only one hope to be made alive by God.

And so the first thing reality that comes to the fore is our utter spiritual sinfulness. Have you come to terms with that? Can you see that? The second reality is the glory of Christ.

The love of God in Christ Jesus. Behold the glory of Jesus who lovingly, willingly left heaven to take on flesh, to live a sinless life and was willingly lifted up on the cross to die for our sins.

He's the Lamb of God. His death ushered in a new era of salvation. He ushered in the kingdom of God, the saving reign of God, the age of the Spirit.

Glory be to Him. Your sin is worse than you can possibly imagine, but God's grace and His love is beyond that still.

[ 39 : 16 ] The third reality is the Spirit alone is able to give us life. The only way to enter God's kingdom of eternal life, the only way to see and enter salvation is you must be born of the Spirit.

You must be born again. You must be able to see you're so dead that there needs to be a work of the Spirit to incline your hearts to Christ. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

The Spirit alone give spiritual eyes to the spiritually blind. You must be born again. Are you born again?

If you're a non-Christian, you cannot save yourself. There's not enough communions to take that will give you life, the life you need. You can't attend church enough times to be born again.

It doesn't come that way. You can't be good enough. You're doing good deeds does not give you new life. Only God's Spirit gives you new life.

[ 40 : 26 ] There's a device called F4 Opter. And if you've been to your optometrist, you've sat in front of it. You sit in a chair and this big metal thing comes in front of your eyes and it's got like thousands of different lens options.

and your optometrist will say, hey, will you look at the letters in front of you on the eye chart? Big E and then there's smaller and smaller lines of letters and she will say something like, hey, can you see that now?

And you're like, yeah, I can see that. And then she'll do some click, click, click, clicks and she'll be like, is that clear or is that clear? And you're like, the second one and then click, click, click, click, click. And then she'll go down to the third line and is that clear or is this clear?

And so what she's doing is she's testing the clarity by what you see. Let me run through a test, non-believer. Do you see your own sin is against God?

Yes. Click, click, click, click. Let's move on. Do you see that you cannot save yourself? Yes. Good. Click, click, click, click, click. Do you see the Son of Man lifted up on the cross died for you?

[ 41 : 34 ] Yes. Click, click, click, click, click. That is the work of God's Spirit. Do you have new desires for God in your heart? A desire to please Him and honor Him?

Do you want that yes? The way to be born again is to put your trust in Jesus Christ. To believe on Him.

And today, you can do that. You simply say, Jesus, I need you. Would you give me the life that's only found in you? Amen. Christians, do you have spiritual glaucoma?

It's not spiritual blindness. It's something that's in the way of you seeing clearly. Maybe it's materialism. Maybe it's your pride. Maybe it's your lust.

But what you do is ask the Holy Spirit, ask your Father to pour out the Holy Spirit upon you and to revitalize your soul that you can see clearly.

[ 42 : 44 ] There's more I can say. Those who've been born again, they see clearly, they are grateful, and in evangelism, they are dependent on the Holy Spirit because it's the Holy Spirit who convicts people of their sin.

Do you remember that little color blindness test that we started this sermon off with? There's no cure for color blindness, but there is a cure for spiritual blindness. You must be born again.

The Holy Spirit gives eyes to see and a heart to believe the Son of Man lifted up for you. It changes what you see in the Bible.

It changes from you looking at the Bible as page after page of blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, to seeing page after page of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man lifted up for you.

You must be born again. Let's pray. Father, you alone give new life to the Spirit based upon the finished work of Jesus, and would you give new life to those who are dead in the room?

[ 44 : 00 ] Would you, God, use our witness of Christ for people to hear what Christ has done and believe?

God, we trust you would you, God, add to our number through conversions more and more who move from being dead to being alive, from being rebels to being children, and for those of us who have already been born again, God, would you just continue to reveal the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ?

It's your name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.