


LIFE 2.0

UPGRADING TO ETERNITY

#TMLife2point0 

Jesus' idea of becoming born again in this life is THE experience that makes the Christian faith radically different to any other belief system on the planet.
~ Ravi Zacharias

Part 1: *Becoming You, Only Better*

(Part 17 in the continuing series "Jesus by John")

APPETIZER – Who Do You Think You Are?

Jesus says...

- You are a BROKEN person, made like God, but you've inherited your ancestors' flaws.
- You're a STUBBORN person, knowing what is right but often choosing the opposite.
- You're a LOVED person, so much so that God wants to help you become the you that you were always supposed to be.
- You can be a PERFECTED person, reborn, remade, renewed, upgraded into the version of yourself you were always meant to be.

Matthew 9:12-13

MAIN COURSE – The Radical New Idea

John 3:1-3

1) WHO WAS/IS NICODEMUS?

2) WHAT IS "THE KINGDOM OF GOD"?

Kingdom of God = a way of being, in tune with God's will and God's way; living like a citizen of a spiritual nation, under God's authority, with a distinct Jesus-shaped culture; a way of living in which God's way holds sway.

3) WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "BORN AGAIN"?

Gennethe (begotten, conceived) *anōthen* (from above)

Titus 3:5-7
1 Peter 1:3, 23-25
John 5:24

(Also see 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; James 1:18; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4)

Although regeneration involves something totally new to us, it does not result in anything foreign to human nature. Rather, the new birth is the restoration of human nature to what it originally was intended to be and what it in fact was before sin entered the human race at the time of the fall. It is simultaneously the beginning of a new life and a return of the original life and activity.
~ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology (Third Edition)*

WHAT HAPPENED TO NICODEMUS?

- **John 7:50-52** – Nicodemus sticks up for Jesus among his fellow Pharisees.
- **John 12:42** – Some of the Jewish religious leaders became Christ-followers, but they did so secretly, because they feared persecution.
- **John 19:38-42** – Nicodemus joins Joseph of Arimathea in preparing Christ's body for burial.

TAKE OUT – Taking the Next Step

Some ideas of potential next steps...

1. Commit to coming back.
2. Get a Bible (in a translation you can read easily) and dive in.
3. Join a home church. (Take notes, keep in Bible, take with you.)
4. Talk to God about your questions
5. Talk to a pastor, elder, or Christian friend about your questions.
6. Talk to a pastor, elder, or Christian friend about getting baptized.
7. Ask God for a new heart, and trust him to answer.

**Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**
~ King David (Psalm 51:10)

John 1:12-13



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Home Church Questions...

HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic]

1. Do you think people are basically good, bad, neutral, or what?
2. How do you think most people you know would answer? Why?

HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture]

3. Read **John 3:1-3**.
 - a. What verse or idea from the text (or Sunday's message) stands out to you? Why?
 - b. Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night? Can you relate to him in any way?
 - c. Nicodemus went to Jesus because he believed Jesus was a teacher who came from God. What are some of the benefits to helping people see Jesus as a great teacher first, before moving on to other ways of knowing Jesus?
 - d. The Kingdom of God is a new way of living as fellow citizens, with Jesus as our King. If you are a Christian, how does living as a Kingdom citizen practically influence your life?
4. Read **Titus 3:3-7**.
 - a. What verse or idea from the text stands out to you? Why?
 - b. Paul stresses that we are saved by God's kindness and NOT by our own righteous works. Why is this idea so liberating?
 - c. Here rebirth is partnered with the idea of being washed by the Holy Spirit. Why do you think washing and rebirth are partner ideas?
 - d. Paul also stresses that we are "justified" (a legal term meaning that we are declared innocent). How does this concept compliment the idea of being born again?

HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together]

5. Would you describe yourself as being "born again"? Talk about it.
6. See the "Next Steps" listed in the notes. Are there any that you feel you can and should take?

Quotes...

One cannot know the meaning of human life without grounding it in the reality of Jesus' life.

~ Gail R. O'Day, *The New Interpreters Bible Commentary*

What Jesus says here to Nicodemus is more sharply focused than we sometimes imagine. The Judaism that Nicodemus and Jesus both knew had a good deal to do with being born into the right family, the right race. Now, Jesus is saying, God is starting a new family.

~ NT Wright, *John for Everyone*

Every human being needs a new birth, a new conception, in order to be a full human being, according to Jesus' surprising teaching in this Gospel. This is radical doctrine.

~ Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Gospel of John*

To be born again, or "born from above," means a transformation of a person so that he or she is able to enter another world and adapt to its conditions.

~ Merrill Tenny, *Expositor's Bible Commentary*

Isn't this desire to be born again in many of us? Don't we often want to start anew, to leave behind past hurts and old ways? The message of Jesus is about transformation.

~ Jean Vanier, *Drawn into the Mystery of Jesus through the Gospel of John*

Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.

~ Jesus