

The question this morning is are you *born again*? This is definitely an interesting question? It's not a question we greet people with, "Good morning, are you born again?"

Although this can be a confusing question, I believe it's an important question for us to ask and for us to understand.

Our question of being 'born again' is in the book of John chapter 3. However, before the division of the Bible the last few verses in John chapter 2 where part of the Nicodemus story.

Open your Bibles with me and let's begin reading John 2:23 to John 2:25

Prayer

Main Statement: Being born again is simple, plain, and easy, and that is the problem.

1. There is a difference between believing in Jesus and being born again.

This is what we see in John 2:23. There were people who believed because they saw the signs. There were some, like Nicodemus, that believed Jesus was from God because they saw the signs. But just believing is not the same as *trusting* Jesus as the one who gives *eternal life*

Turn to John 1:1-4 :

The Bible testifies that Jesus is the Word of Life

- In the beginning = He was not created, He is the Creator
- with God = He is not less than God
- the Word was God = God in the flesh
- in Him is life = Jesus is the light for all mankind.

Let me point out **4 Pretenses of Belief** found in verses 23 -25.

A. We can believe in Jesus as someone less than God

We need to be careful that we do not see Jesus as the people in v. 23 saw Jesus. The people saw the signs Jesus was doing and many believed He was different, special, even a great man, but they did not believe Jesus to be God.

B. We can believe in Jesus as someone we aspire to be

I remember when the WWJD (What Would Jesus Do) phrase was popular a few years ago. The idea was essentially to remember what kind of character Jesus portrayed through out His life and Aspire to do the same. It's not a bad thing to try to be like Jesus, but it's not the same as Jesus changing your life.

C. We can believe in Jesus because of what He does.

There are young people in America that crave attention so much that they will pay \$150, \$250 sometime \$500 to these specialized companies that will add several hundred 'likes' to their social page. The more 'likes' one receives gives that individual a sense of identity and purpose.

People enjoyed the attention and the praise from the crowds.
People enjoy being entertained.

But Jesus wasn't there to entertain them. He was not looking for hundreds of 'likes'. He was hoping they could see that He could give them something much more!

Jesus is always looking to deepen the relationship when He works in our lives.

More than just a few signs that only met their immediate need.
He was showing them that He had the power to give them eternal life!

D. We can believe in Jesus privately without publicly acknowledging Him.

Let's continue reading starting in John 3:1-15

- v.1 – We are introduced to Nicodemus. This man was not a common and ordinary man, but a man of dignity. He was Pharisee, which was a strict religion among the Jews.
- v. 2 – Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night. Why would you meet someone at night? Because you don't want people to see you, you don't want others knowing what you are doing.

E. None of these reasons for believing result in saving faith. (v. 3)

These are only ***Pretenses of Belief*** that you do not want in a relationship. These are not pretenses Jesus is desiring to develop in a relationship with you!

Let's notice in this story some ***identifiers*** for genuine belief (saving faith)

2. Genuine saving faith is always demonstrated by public belief.

A. We are to be born of water (a change of heart demonstrated by baptism)

v. 5 – What does being born of water? Let's look at John 1:6

John 1:6 – A man name John, sent by God, to be a witness and to testify concerning the *light for all mankind*.

How was John to be a witness and testify?

John 1:26 – He was in the open, in front of people, using water baptism as a metaphor for people who want to repent and put their genuine belief in Jesus.

Who told John to baptize with water as a sign of repentance?

John 1:29 – 34: God confirms John's testimony and witness to the people.
And now Jesus will empower those who repent with the power of the Holy Spirit

Witness, testimony, and water. 'born of water' - is a baptism of repentance

The identifier 'born of water' is a metaphor that reminds us that our sins are cleaned by God's cleansing water when we have genuine belief. When we put our faith in Jesus that He is the Word of Life.

B. We are to be born of the Spirit (the mysterious work of God)

v. 8 – when God works there is no explanation. We cannot save ourselves.

Ezekiel 36:25 “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.”

So, what does this all mean?

C. It is not water that saves, but genuine faith is demonstrated by water baptism

-Acts 16:30-31 Believe on the name of Jesus

-Acts 8:35-39 There is genuine belief then a baptism

It is my prayer that this Easter season you will put your trust and faith in Jesus so you can say that you are 'born again'!

Let's Pray!

Are You Born Again?

John 2:23-3:15

Main Statement: Being born again is simple, plain, and easy, and that is the problem.

1. There is a difference between _____ in Jesus and being _____
_____.
 1. We can believe in Jesus as someone _____ than _____.
 2. We can believe in Jesus as someone we _____ to be.
 3. We can believe in Jesus because of _____ he
_____.
 4. We can believe in Jesus _____ without
_____ acknowledging him.
 5. None of these reasons for believing result in _____
_____. (v. 3)
2. Genuine _____ is always demonstrated by _____
belief.
 1. We are to be born of _____ (a change of heart demonstrated by
baptism).
- John 3:11, John 1:6-7, John 1:19-34
 2. We are to be born of the _____ (the mysterious work of God). -
Ezekiel 36:25-27
 3. It is not _____ that saves, but genuine _____ is demonstrated
by _____
baptism. - Acts 16:30-31, Acts 8:35-39