

# WE MUST BE BORN AGAIN

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: I AM AN AMBASSADOR  
SERIES: GOD IS THE MESSAGE - I AM THE MESSENGER

## BIG TRUTH: WE MUST BE BORN AGAIN

1 Peter 1:3; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:13; 1 Peter 3:18

## BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 3:3

*“Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

## BIG IDEAS

- Salvation requires new birth, not self-improvement.
- New birth is a work of the Spirit.
- New birth happens when Jesus becomes your hope.

## BIBLE PASSAGE: JOHN 3:1-16

### KNEEL - I AM AN AMBASSADOR

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28). Worship is not something that is limited to a service once a week, but instead occurs every day, in all of life. We are unceasing worshipers. Worship never stops, it only changes directions. In order to worship God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind, we must embrace our identity as image bearers. It is out of that identity that we can begin to live for God’s glory in all of life (Colossians 3:17).

## SERIES AIMS



### Every student should know that...

- The gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ that brings salvation to sinners.
- Salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
- Jesus followers have been trusted with the gospel in order to share it with others.



### Every student should strive to...

- Share the gospel each month with at least one person who does not know Jesus.
- Practice sharing the gospel using multiple different tools or methods.



### Every student should feel...

- Humbled that as believers we have been entrusted with the glorious gospel of our Savior.
- Satisfied in Jesus as the only true Savior



### Every student should want...

- To grow in awareness of the false saviors they are tempted to put their hope in.
- To have a softened heart and love for people who are lost
- To take advantage of opportunities to share the gospel with people in their lives who need Christ

## GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week’s Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.

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## BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 3:3

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### **Being born again brings new life to those who believe in Jesus.**

*“Jesus answered him, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born again...’”*

- In our natural state, we are all hopeless and dead in our sin. Because we are all born sinful, we are all spiritually dead. Being born again gives us new life; it opens our eyes to the truth of who Jesus is and what He has done and enables us to walk from spiritual death to spiritual life.
- When a person believes in the work of Jesus on the cross, he or she is made new. We receive a new heart that allows us to live for God and to love Him and follow Him.

### **Eternal life requires being born again.**

*“...unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

- Because our sin nature means we are spiritually dead, we have no life without God. In order to know God and to be reconciled to Him, we must know Jesus. We know Jesus when we repent of our sin and believe that His death on the cross is sufficient for our sin.
- When we understand we are sinners and turn to Jesus, we cross over from life to death. Once we have saving faith, we are born again spiritually. This means we are no longer held captive by our sin nature. Instead, we receive a new heart that is free to follow and obey God.

### **Being born again allows one to see God’s kingdom.**

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

- Being born again gives us a new heart and a new perspective. Being made new allows us to see God’s kingdom when this life is over. It means our eternity is spent in the Kingdom of God instead of eternal damnation, separated from God forever.
- The purpose of every believer is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. We live on this earth for the life to come. This means we are living now for the coming kingdom of God. In order to spend our eternity in the kingdom of God, we must first become new creations. Being born again makes us new creations.

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## **BIG IDEA #1: SALVATION REQUIRES NEW BIRTH, NOT SELF-IMPROVEMENT.<sup>1</sup>**

### [ THIS ]

In John 3:1-6, Jesus tells Nicodemus that he can see the kingdom of God if he is born again. Nicodemus questions Jesus and wonders how a person can have eternal life and what it means to be born again. Being a good person is impossible because no one is really good. Often, we fall into the trap of moral therapeutic deism, or the belief that God wants people to be good and nice and that is all. If we are good and nice, we will go to heaven, so the better and nicer we are, the greater our chances of eternal life with God. This idea is lived out when we try to live our best life, do more good things than bad, and attempt to save ourselves from our sinfulness. Because we are all inherently sinful, we could never save ourselves. Even the good things we do are tainted by our selfishness or the desire to bring attention to ourselves. Self-improvement does not bring us salvation.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### **What are some ways in which we fall into the trap of moral therapeutic deism?**

Moral therapeutic deism plays out in the world around us when people practice their own idea of righteousness, such as seeking to be a nice person or to live a moral life. Titus 3:5 speaks to man living a falsely righteous life when it says that we are saved not by our own righteousness, but by faith in Christ and His righteousness. When we attempt to follow our set of rules or the rules of our society, we still fall short of the righteousness required for salvation.

#### **How can we leverage all of the “self-improvement” and “self-worth” language of our culture as a platform to tell others about Jesus?**

Jesus is the only way for a person to be saved. It is the righteousness of Jesus that brings new life that reveals salvation has taken place. We see this in Acts 4:12 and John 10:9. When we show people what God requires for salvation and how our own attempts at goodness fall short, we point them to Jesus and the only way to be born again.

### [ THIS ]

Jesus taught Nicodemus the way for him to be born again. Being born again means becoming a new creation, a new person. Being born again involves dying to ourselves and our sin nature. Repentance is part of our dying to self. We move away from our old sinful life and turn toward God. By doing this, we choose a life of obedience to Him over our sinful desires. In order to truly be saved, we must be born again. Salvation isn't possible without a new birth taking place. We must become the new creations that only faith in Jesus can produce in order to be saved from our sin.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### **Have you been born again? How can you use your story to talk with others about Jesus?**

2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us that any person who has experienced salvation has become a new creation. This means that saving faith in Jesus means we are born again spiritually to follow Christ. The desires of our hearts will be to obey God and to know Him. Romans 6:4 and 6:6 also teach us that our old, sinful selves are crucified when we have saving faith that we might live spiritually in Christ. Your life will look different and as you seek to share the truth about Jesus with others, you can use your own personal experience of salvation as an example. As you share what the new desires of your heart are and how they are not for the things of this world, you will point people to the transforming power of faith in Christ.

1. John 3:3: We all must be born again in order to have eternal life.

**BIG IDEA #2: NEW BIRTH IS A WORK OF THE SPIRIT.<sup>2</sup>****[ THIS ]**

When Jesus taught Nicodemus about being born again, Nicodemus thought the new birth was a physical rebirth. He mistakenly thought that a person had to be physically born again, but the re-birth Jesus talked about is not physical. It is a supernatural event that occurs inside of a person. This rebirth is spiritual and happens within the very core of who we are. We cannot will ourselves to be born again because none of us seek God or even understand our need for Him until His Spirit shows us. God draws people to Himself. It is He who opens a person's eyes to see his or her need for Jesus. It is the Spirit who illuminates our sinfulness and our hopelessness. God uses His Spirit to make us aware of our sinful condition and to show us we really can't save ourselves.

**[ THEREFORE ]****Why is it important to tell others that we cannot save ourselves?**

Part of sharing the gospel is helping others see that man is hopeless in our sin. We cannot save ourselves and as we faithfully share this truth with others, the Spirit works in hearts and minds to illuminate this truth. Mark 7:21-23 teaches us that no one is without sin and we all have wicked hearts. John 3:27 and 6:65 also reminds us that we have access to the Father only through the Son. It's important to help others understand that there is nothing we can do to save ourselves because it helps to point them to the only Savior.

**[ THIS ]**

Jesus taught Nicodemus that the new birth He was talking about wasn't of the flesh. It isn't a work of the flesh or anything that man does. It is the Holy Spirit who works inside of a person to draw them to repentance. The Holy Spirit creates a new heart that is no longer enslaved to sin. The Holy Spirit indwells a person and guides them to choose obedience to God's Word. It is the Spirit who helps people obey and grow more like Jesus. The Spirit's work is one of transformation from rebellious sinner to redeemed child of God. Jesus taught Nicodemus that rebirth is the work of the Spirit and not the accomplishment of man in John 3. This important truth helps us understand ourselves and the salvation that God offers to those who believe.

**[ THEREFORE ]****How did the Holy Spirit open your blinded eyes to the reality of your sin to see Jesus as the true savior?**

Revelation 22:17 shows us that salvation, or rebirth is a work of the Spirit. It is God who draws His people to Himself. Because we are blinded by our sinfulness, we do not even see our need for salvation until the Holy Spirit illuminates our need to us as seen in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. We are blind to our need and to the things of Christ; therefore, we cannot make ourselves new.

**How can you discuss with someone else the way the Holy Spirit brings about rebirth?**

2 Corinthians 5:17 teaches us that everyone who has saving faith is a new creation. The old sinful ways of man pass away as the Spirit rebirths a believer to be more like Christ. Colossians 3:1 shows us that for those who have experienced a rebirth, their eyes and hearts are turned toward the things of God and they seek Him above all else. Romans 7:6 shows us that those who have been reborn are no longer living a futile life of following some moral code, but instead, have been raised to new life in the Spirit who guides them and helps them live for God.

2. John 6:44: The Spirit of God draws people to Him and brings them to saving knowledge of Christ.

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**BIG IDEA #3: NEW BIRTH HAPPENS WHEN JESUS BECOMES YOUR HOPE.<sup>3</sup>****[ THIS ]**

John 3:13 teaches us that Jesus is the only way to have eternal life. The only way to see the kingdom of God is to know Jesus. Without Jesus, we have no hope. Hope is a feeling of expectation or desire for something to happen and a trust that it will happen. We are lost and wandering in the darkness of this world. We look for hope in the things of this world, but they all fall short. Nothing in this world can give us true hope that is eternal. Without real hope, we cannot become new people. There is no new birth when we live in our hopeless state of sinfulness because we are separated from God and unable to bridge the gap that our sin produces between us and God. We often hope in wrong things and turn our eyes away from God to the things of this world.

**[ THEREFORE ]****What are some things you have hoped in that have actually left you feeling hopeless?**

In 1 John 2:17, we see that the things of this world fail in giving true hope because they are all passing away. Nothing in this world is eternal. Only our faith in Christ and the people who are fellow believers are everlasting. Philippians 3:20-21 reminds us that our eternal home is in heaven, not this world. If we hope in anything but Christ, we will find ourselves hopeless again.

**[ THIS ]**

When we hope in the work of Jesus, we can be born again because we will have saving faith. We can cast off this world and any pull it might have had on us and we can live our lives for our eternal life with Jesus. As we trust in the atoning work of Jesus on the cross, we recognize we are sinful and need to become new people. It is this hope and trust that Jesus' death is sufficient to pay our sin debt that results in the Holy Spirit living inside of us and making us new. This new life leads us to follow Christ and to obey God's Word because we believe and trust that it is the only way to have everlasting life. This leads us to put off the sinful desires of this world and to choose instead to be set apart and to live for Christ.

**[ THEREFORE ]****How can you help someone understand that our only hope is Jesus?**

John 3:1-14 can help you explain to someone how the things of this world do not produce lasting hope. Nicodemus had earthly goods, but he was still hopeless. It wasn't until he met Jesus that he found real hope. Jesus is the only hope we have and the only way to have eternal life.

**How can you use the hope of Jesus to share the gospel with someone this week?**

Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that those who hope in Jesus receive the greatest gift, eternal life. They are sustained and live in this world for their eternal home. As you seek to share the gospel with someone else, pointing out the hopelessness of this world will help a person see that Jesus is the only hope. Galatians 6:8 reminds us that those who hope in Christ and sow seeds of righteousness will reap eternal life. This is the hope for everyone—life in eternity with Christ.

3. John 3:12-14: Man's only hope is Christ crucified and when we believe this truth, we have hope for an eternal life with Him.